

DESI MORENO-PENSON'S "BEIGE" WINS ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY'S 2016 NATIONAL LATINO PLAYWRITING AWARD

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Phoenix, AZ (August 11, 2016) – Desi Moreno-Penson's *Beige* has been named the winner of Arizona Theatre Company's 2016 National Latino Playwriting Award, and the recipient of the \$1000 prize.

The National Latino Playwriting Award was established by Arizona Theatre Company Artistic Director David Ira Goldstein and playwright-in-residence Elaine Romero to create a greater awareness of the work being done by Latina/o playwrights across the nation. This year marks the 21st year of the contest.

A surreal tale of self-identity and the sometimes schizophrenic effects of post-colonialism, *Beige* is set in 2001, soon after the tragedy of 9/11, and tells the story of Soledad Iglesias, a Nuyorican journalist who finds herself caught between the reality of her Jewish fiancée and the ideals of the Puerto Rican Nationalist, Lolita Lebron. Existing at the crossroads of history, reality, and cultural imagination, *Beige* is a cautionary tale of race, Puerto Rican politics, and love.

ATC Playwright-in-Residence Elaine Romero says, "*Beige* masterfully brings forth the clash between a woman's sense of Puerto Rican nationalism and the love of her life, who does not neatly fit into her personal narrative. Recently, the conversation about Puerto Rican identity politics has reached new heights. This complex rendering, and clear fusion of character and politics, makes *Beige* perfectly timed to receive this honor." ATC Literary Manager Katherine Monberg adds, "We were thrilled by the theatricality, the depth, and the vibrancy of Desi's voice and the unique coalescence of immediacy and timelessness in *Beige* that speaks to an incredibly powerful story and storyteller."

Desi Moreno-Penson is a New York-based playwright and actor. Her plays have been developed and/or produced at Ensemble Studio Theater, New Georges, INTAR, Henry Street Settlement, Teatro Coribantes (San Juan, PR), Urban Theater Company (Chicago), Perishable Theater (Providence, RI), SPF-Summer Play Festival, The Downtown Urban Theater Festival @the Cherry Lane, among others. Her play *Beige* is a finalist in the 2016 Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, as well as a semifinalist for the 2016 Princess Grace Award for emerging artists. Another play *Comida de Puta* (F%&king Lousy Food) was a finalist for the 2014 O'Neill NPC, received Honorable Mention on [The Kilroys List](#) in 2015 and was given its world premiere production by MultiStages Theater Company at the West End Theater (NYC), directed by Lorca Peress. In addition, she has been a semifinalist for the 2007 Princess Grace Award for her play, *Devil Land*. Her plays *Ghost Light*, *Devil Land*, *Lazarus Disposed*, and *3 to a Session: A Monster's Tale* are published by Broadway Play Publishing and a ten-minute play *Spirit Sex: A Paranormal Romance* was selected for the short plays anthology "Best Ten-Minute Plays of 2010," published by Smith and

Kraus. Ms. Moreno-Penson is a member of the Dramatists Guild, the Screen Actors Guild, as well as a member of the GTTRiver Writers Unit at the Lark.

The finalists for the 2016 National Latino Playwriting Award are Georgina Escobar's *Sweep* and Augusto Federico Amador's *Atacama*.

Sweep by is a femme spec evo story that follows two sisters and hit women of the multi-verse whose initial snafu with Adam and Eve catches up with them lifetimes later. Fighting for a last chance to reset humanity's imperfect patterns, they hunt their targets from biblical times to the modern day in order to accelerate humanity's collective evolution. Georgina Escobar's credits include: *Sweep* (Lincoln Center Theatre's Directors Lab 2016), *The Unbearable Likeness of JONES* (Dixon Place), *Wayfoot* (originated at the O'Neill National Puppetry Conference, 2014), *The Ruin* (Words Afire, 2011), and *Firerock: Pass the Spark* (Lentic, 2012). She is the recipient of the Kennedy Center's National Theatre for Young Audiences Award for *Ash Tree* (Duke City Repertory, ASSITEJ Festival), and is the founder of Fourth Wall/One Blue Cat Productions and a Steering Committee Member for the Latina/o Theatre Commons. www.georginaescobar.com

Atacama is placed thirty years after the dirty wars waged by the General Pinochet regime on the Chilean people. Two strangers: a mother and father, search the Atacama Desert for their buried loved ones and discover that there are darker truths awaiting them underneath the hard sands of the Atacama. Augusto Federico Amador was born and raised in Silicon Valley, CA and is the son of a Peruvian composer and an Austrian chef. Previously, he was a playwriting fellow at the Public Theater in NY. *Atacama* was developed through the Center Theater Group/The Humanitas Prize in Los Angeles, CA and is part of his Latin American dictator play trilogy which includes *Kissing Che* and *The Book of Leonidas*, both of which are published in the Proscenium Theater Journal. Mr. Amador's latest screenplay, *Ratcatcher*, placed in the 2015 Top 50 Academy Nicholl Fellowship Screenplays and begins film production in January 2017

Previous winners of the National Latino Playwriting Award have been finalists for the Pulitzer Prize, featured at the Humana Festival and at regional theaters across the country. Recent winner *The River Bride* by Marisela Treviño Orta will be produced as part of ATC's current 50th Anniversary Season. Edwin Sánchez's *La Bella Familia*, Michael Mejias's *Ghetto Babylon*, Caridad Svich's *Spark*, and Kristiana Colón's *Octagon* were given staged readings in ATC's Café Bohemia new play reading series as part of the award. Other past recipients include Matthew Paul Olmos, Kristoffer Diaz, Carlos Murillo, Luis Alfaro, Octavio Solis, Raul Garza and Karen Zacarías. Felix Pire's winning play *The Origins of Happiness in Latin* was previously produced by ATC.

The 2016 National Latino Playwriting Award is supported by an Art Works grant from the National Endowment of the Arts as part of the Voices of a New America company-wide initiative.

Submissions for the 2017 National Latino Playwriting Award are now open. Latino playwrights residing in the United States, its territories or Mexico are encouraged to submit scripts for the award. Each script will be read and evaluated by a culturally diverse panel of theatre artists; finalists will be judged by ATC artistic staff.

Submission Procedure

We respectfully ask that you adhere to the following application requirements:

Submit a single script **via U.S. mail and email**. Scripts must be postmarked by December 31, 2016.

Please include a title page on the script that includes the play's title, the author's name, and contact information (including a phone number, mailing address and email).

Include a cover letter of no more than one page, describing the play's developmental history, and how the play fits into the playwright's broader career trajectory.

Submit manuscripts to:

National Latino Playwriting Award
ATTN: Katherine Monberg, Literary Manager
Arizona Theatre Company
343 S. Scott Ave. Tucson, AZ 85701

AND

kmonberg@arizonatheatre.org.

Eligibility

The award is open to all Latino playwrights currently residing in the United States, its territories, or Mexico.

Scripts may be in English, English and Spanish, or solely in Spanish. (Spanish-language and bilingual scripts must be accompanied by an English translation.)

Plays must be unpublished and professionally unproduced at the time of submission.

Full-length and one-act plays (minimum length: 50 pages) on any subject will be accepted.

Scripts

The physical scripts become the property of Arizona Theatre Company and will not be returned. In this case, "property" means the physical property of the theatre, not the intellectual property or any rights to the play.

The winner will be notified by August 1, 2017.

For more information contact Katherine Monberg, ATC Literary Manager (520) 884-8210 x 7508 or kmonberg@arizonatheatre.org.

About Arizona Theatre Company:

Now celebrating its 50th Anniversary Season, Arizona Theatre Company (ATC) boasts the largest subscriber base of any performing arts organization in Arizona, with more than 130,000 people each year attending performances at the historic Temple of Music and Art in Tucson, and the elegant Herberger Theater Center in downtown Phoenix. Each season of carefully selected productions reflects the rich variety of world drama – from classic to contemporary plays, from musicals to new works, as audiences enjoy a rich emotional experience that can only be captured through live theatre. Touching lives through the power of theatre, ATC is the preeminent professional theatre in the state of Arizona. Under the direction of Artistic Director David Ira Goldstein. ATC operates in two cities – unlike any other League of Resident Theatres (LORT) company in the country.