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Sundance Institute Selects Seven Artists for 2016 Playwrights & Composers Retreat at Ucross Foundation

**Fellows are Heather Christian, Michael R. Jackson, Tony Meneses, A. Rey Pamatmat,
Andrew Schneider, Lucy Thurber, Bridgette A. Wimberly**

New York, NY — Sundance Institute today announced the seven artists selected for the 2016 Playwrights & Composers Retreat at Ucross Foundation in Wyoming, February 1-19. The retreat is one of the 25 residency Labs the Institute hosts each year for independent artists in theatre, film, new media and episodic content, and is made possible through the generosity of the Ucross Foundation. Over 90 Sundance artists have benefitted from time at Ucross Foundation including Charlayne Woodard, Jeanine Tesori, Doug Wright, Annie Baker, Adam Guettel, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Tanya Saracho.

Under the supervision of Artistic Director Philip Himberg and Producing Director Christopher Hibma, the 18-day writing colony will support five emerging and established playwrights and two theatre composers will begin developing new work. Sundance Institute dramaturg, Mame Hunt, will be on hand to respond to new pages. The retreat provides Fellows with an environment of peer mentorship, professional growth and uninhibited creativity.

Himberg said, "For 16 years, our Playwrights & Composers Retreat at Ucross Foundation has provided a rare opportunity for theatre-makers at different stages of their careers to convene and share stories. In the unique Wyoming landscape, writers find time and inspiration to begin new work or refine works in progress."

The artists selected for the 2016 Playwrights & Composers Retreat at Ucross Foundation are:

Heather Christian (Composer)

Heather Christian is an Obie Award winning composer/performer for *Mission Drift* (Nat'l Theater London), *The World Is Round* (BAM), *Annie Salem* (Ars Nova/Sundance Institute Theatre Lab) as well as the film, *Gregory Go Boom* (Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize). She teaches an Atelier at Princeton University and was named a "TimeOut NY Downtown Innovator To Watch." Primarily a songstress with her band, the Arbornauts, she has released four records and can be seen all over the world avant-torching.

Michael R. Jackson (Composer)

Michael R. Jackson holds a BFA and MFA in Playwriting and Musical Theatre Writing from the NYU Tisch School of the Arts. He wrote the book, music and lyrics for the musical *A Strange Loop* and wrote the book and lyrics for the musical *Only Children* with composer Rachel Peters. He is currently writing the book and lyrics for the musical adaptation of the 2007 comedy horror film *Teeth* with composer Anna Jacobs.

Tony Meneses (Playwright)

Tony Meneses is a Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab member and resident playwright in the Ars Nova Play Group. His play *Guadalupe in the Guest Room* had its world premiere at Two River Theater and is now published by Dramatists Play Service. Previously a Playwrights Realm Writing fellow and developed at the



LARK Playwrights' Week; he's also the recipient of the 2010 Kennedy Center ACTF Latino Playwriting Award.

A. Rey Pamatmat (Playwright)

A. Rey Pamatmat's play, *House Rules*, will premiere at Ma-Yi Theatre this Spring. Recently, Boston celebrated his work with the Huntington and Company One Theatres concurrently presenting *after all the terrible things I do* and *Edith Can Shoot Things and Hit Them* in the Calderwood Pavilion. Other recent plays: *Thunder Above*, *Deeps Below* and *A Power Play, Or, What's-its-name*. Rey is Co-Director of the Ma-Yi Writers Lab and was a PoNY, Hodder, and NYFA Fellow.

Andrew Schneider (Playwright)

Andrew Schneider is an OBIE award-winning performer, writer, and interactive-electronics artist based in Brooklyn, New York. Schneider creates and performs original performance works, builds interactive electronic art works and installations and was a Wooster Group company member from 2007-2014. Andrew's original performance work in NYC includes the OBIE award winning *YOUARENOWHERE*, *DANCE/FIELD*, *TIDAL* and *WOW+FLUTTER* among others. Andrew holds a Masters Degree in Interactive Telecommunications from NYU.

Lucy Thurber (Playwright)

Lucy Thurber's theater homes are the Rattlestick Playwright's Theater, The Atlantic Theater, and Labyrinth Theater. She won an OBIE for her five play cycle *The Hill Town Plays*. Lucy wrote the text for *Quixote*, conceived and directed by Lear deBessonet, a site-specific performance with the Psalters made with The Broad Street Community. Thurber is an alumni of New Dramatists, a member of 13P, Labyrinth Theater Company and Rising Phoenix Rep. She is a proud recipient of a LILLY AWARD.

Bridgette A. Wimberly (Playwright)

Bridgette A. Wimberly has been commissioned and produced by several theaters Off-Broadway and across the country. She is the Founding Artistic Director of *From Breast Cancer to Broadway*, presenting short plays by breast cancer survivors on stage to empower, educate and motivate women to be more proactive about their breast health and save lives. She wrote the libretto for the critically acclaimed opera, *Charlie Parker's Yardbird*, scheduled for production in Chicago, Milwaukee and New York.

The Sundance Institute Theatre Program is supported by an endowment from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, with generous additional support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; Time Warner Foundation; Perry and Martin Granoff; LUMA Foundation; the John and Marcia Price Family Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; The Shubert Foundation, Inc.; Wendy vanden Heuvel; The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust; Karen Lauder; and Joan and George Hornig.

Sundance Institute

Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and new media to create and thrive. The Institute's signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences to artists in igniting new ideas, discovering original voices, and building a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Sin Nombre*, *The Invisible War*, *The Square*, *Dirty Wars*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Gentleman's*



Guide to Love and Murder and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

Ucross Foundation

Founded in 1981 by Raymond Plank, Ucross Foundation is a nonprofit organization that operates an internationally known retreat for visual artists, writers, composers, and choreographers. Located on a 20,000-acre cattle ranch in northeastern Wyoming, Ucross provides living accommodations, studio space, uninterrupted time and the experience of the extraordinary High Plains landscape to competitively selected individuals. Ucross supports individuals whose work reflects innovative thinking, a depth of creative exploration, and the potential for significant future accomplishments. A number of residents have won recognition such as the Pulitzer Prize, Tony Award, National Book Award, MacArthur Fellowship, Guggenheim Fellowship, USA Artist Fellowship and many other honors. Through its Residency Program, art gallery, and associated activities, Ucross Foundation actively seeks to support an appreciation for vibrant human creativity and aims to cast a reflection into the future from the cultural mirror of our lives and times.

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