

## LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR MARTYNA MAJOK'S *QUEENS*

### ***POWERFUL NEW PLAY BY 2018 PULITZER PRIZE WINNER MAKES WEST COAST PREMIERE***

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announces the cast and creative team for its west coast premiere production of *QUEENS*, by **Martyna Majok**, winner of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for her play *Cost of Living*, directed by **Carey Perloff** (Playhouse's *The Orphan of Zhao*), running **July 3 – 29** in the Playhouse's Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre.

The cast features **Jolly Abraham** (Off-Broadway's *Cost of Living*) as "Aamani/Yara," **Leslie Fray** (TV's *Elementary*) as "Pelagiya/Dragana," **Rae Gray** (TV's *Fear the Walking Dead*) as "Inna/Tanya," **Brenda Meaney** (Off-Broadway's *Party Face*) as "Renia," **Melissa Miller** (Roundabout Theatre's *Tartuffe*) as "Agata" and **Xochitl Romero** (Playhouse's *Kill Local*) as "Isabela/Glenys."

The creative team includes **David Israel Reynoso** (Playhouse's *Healing Wars, Waking La Llorona*), Scenic Designer; **Denitsa Bliznakova** (Playhouse's *The Cake*), Costume Designer; **Lap Chi Chu** (Playhouse's *At the Old Place, Ruined*), Lighting Designer; **Mark Bennett** (Playhouse's *Junk, An Iliad*), Sound Designer/Composer; **Shirley Fishman**, Dramaturg; and **Katrina Herrmann**, Stage Manager.

"We are deeply honored to host this exquisite new play by Martyna Majok, fresh off winning the Pulitzer Prize," said **Playhouse Artistic Director Christopher Ashley**. "Searing, powerful and compassionate, *QUEENS* explores the contemporary immigrant experience and the cost of leaving behind a life in one country for the tenuous promise of something better in another."

In 2017, a young immigrant arrives at a tenement in Queens, New York. She is met by her new landlord, who stood on the same doorstep 16 years earlier. As they get to know one another, the old brownstone reverberates with the voices of the fierce and proud women who preceded them. Hailed by *The New York Times* as "thrilling...delivering emotion and surprise with empathy and wit," this timely piece is a moving study of the things we run from and toward, and the people who shepherd us along the way.

-- more --

**Martyna Majok** won the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for her play *Cost of Living*. Her plays have been presented at Williamstown Theatre Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Steppenwolf Theatre, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater/WP Theater, The O'Neill and The Kennedy Center, among others. Awards include The Lanford Wilson Award, Helen Merrill Emerging Playwriting Award, Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding Original New Play (Helen Hayes Award), David Calicchio Emerging American Playwright Prize, New York Theatre Workshop's 2050 Fellowship, The Kennedy Center's Jean Kennedy Smith Prize and NNPN/Smith Prize for Political Playwriting. She received her B.A. from the University of Chicago and her M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama, Juilliard. Commissions include Lincoln Center Theater, Bush Theatre in London, Geffen Playhouse, La Jolla Playhouse, South Coast Rep and Manhattan Theatre Club. Majok was the 2015–2016 PoNY (Playwrights of New York) Fellow at the Lark Play Development Center and is a 2018/19 Hodder Fellow at Princeton University.

**Carey Perloff** directed La Jolla Playhouse's production of *The Orphan of Zhao* and wrote *Higher*, which was part of the 2014 DNA New Work Festival. She served for 25 seasons as Artistic Director of American Conservatory Theater, where she is known for innovative productions of classics and championing new writing and new forms of theatre, including 10 plays by Tom Stoppard and many productions by favorite contemporary writers such as Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, José Rivera, Timberlake Wertenbaker and Philip Kan Gotanda. Ms. Perloff is an award-winning playwright (*Kinship*, *Higher*, *Luminescence Dating*, *The Fit*) and author. Her book, *Beautiful Chaos: A Life in the Theater* (City Lights Press), was selected as SF Public Library's One City One Book selection for 2016. Named a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French government, Ms. Perloff received a B.A. Phi Beta Kappa in Classics and Comparative Literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford.

**La Jolla Playhouse** is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Currently led by 2017 Tony Award-winning Artistic Director Christopher Ashley and Managing Director Debby Buchholz, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer. Playhouse artists and audiences have taken part in the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 95 world premieres, commissioning 50 new works, and sending 32 productions to Broadway, among them the currently-running hit musicals *Come From Away*, *Escape to Margaritaville* and *SUMMER: The Donna Summer Musical* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, including the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. For more information, visit [LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://LaJollaPlayhouse.org).

# # #

## FACT SHEET

**WHAT:** *queens*  
By Martyna Majok  
Directed by Carey Perloff

**WHEN:** **June 3 – 29** (Press Opening: Sunday, July 8 at 7pm)  
Tue/Wed at 7:30pm; Thu/Fri/Sat at 8pm; Sun at 7pm; Sat/Sun at 2pm

**WHERE:** **Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse**  
2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037

**WHO:** Scenic Design: David Reynoso  
Lighting Design: Lap Chi Chu  
Dramaturg: Shirley Fishman  
Casting: Tara Rubin Casting

Costume Design: Denitsa Bliznakova  
Sound Design/Composer: Mark Bennett  
Dialect Coach: Christine Adaire  
Stage Manager: Katrina Herrmann

Cast: *Aamani/Yara*  
*Pelagiya/Dragana*  
*Inna/Tanya*  
*Renia*  
*Agata*  
*Isabela/Glenys*

Jolly Abraham  
Leslie Fray  
Rae Gray  
Brenda Meaney  
Melissa Miller  
Xochitl Romero

**BACKGROUND:** In 2017, a young immigrant arrives at a tenement in Queens, New York. She is met by her new landlord, who stood on the same doorstep 16 years earlier. As they get to know one another, the old brownstone reverberates with the voices of the fierce and proud women who preceded them. This exquisite new play from Pulitzer Prize winner Martyna Majok is a moving study of the things we run from and toward, and the people who shepherd us along the way.

### ADDITIONAL EVENTS:

- **Foodie Fridays:** July 6, 13, 20, 27; pre-show food trucks starting at 6pm
- **Sonic Saturdays:** July 7, 14, 21, 28; pre-show, live band entertainment
- **Talkback Tuesdays:** July 17, following the 7:30pm performance
- **Insider Events:** Wed, July 25 at 6:45pm and Sat, July 28 at 1:15pm
- **Discovery Sunday:** July 29, following the 2pm performance
- **ACCESS Performance:** Saturday, July 21 at 2pm

**TICKETS:** (858) 550-1010; [LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://LaJollaPlayhouse.org)

**SPONSORS:** Brian and Silvija Devine