

LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE'S 2025 PERFORMANCE OUTREACH PROGRAM (POP) TOUR, *THE WEATHER BUSTERS OF BEACHCASTLE*, TO TOUR SCHOOLS MARCH – APRIL, WITH FREE PUBLIC PERFORMANCES AT 2025 WOW FESTIVAL

Playhouse Continues 30+ Year Tradition of Commissioning Work for Young Audiences with New Play by Christin Eve Cato

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse announces the tour of its 2025 Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour production, *The Weather Busters of Beachcastle*, by **Christin Eve Cato**, directed by Playhouse Directing Fellow **Kat Yen**. This delightful and uplifting new play for young audiences will tour San Diego County elementary schools throughout March and April. The Playhouse will also present two free public performances of *The Weather Busters of Beachcastle* on **April 26** and **27** as part of the Playhouse's 2025 WOW Festival.

The cast features **Jamaelya Hines** as “Kori,” **Giancarlo Lugo** as “Ari,” **Mikaela Rae Macias** as “Jayce” and **Maybelle Shimizu** as “Quinn Li”, along with understudy **Lisette Velandia**.

The Weather Busters of Beachcastle creative team includes **Jonathan Gilmer**, Scenic Designer; **Eliza Vedar**, Sound Designer; **Jazmine Logan**, Dramaturg; **Claire Peterson**, Costume Designer; and **Brian Salvanera**, Stage Manager.

The Weather Busters of Beachcastle, a world-premiere play, is set in the fictional California town of Beachcastle, where unsettling and bizarre weather patterns have forced residents to grapple with questions and heartache. When 12-year-old Jayce and their tech-savvy best friend, Kori, meet a mysterious explorer from beyond the stars, they discover their own extraordinary talents can impact the fate of their community forever. Together, they embark on a journey that blends curiosity with courage, uncovering their power to make a meaningful difference.

Launched in 1987, the POP Tour travels throughout the county, touring schools, libraries and community centers. The set, costumes and props are designed to fit into a 16-foot truck and, in just 60 minutes, can be unloaded, placed in nearly any space and be ready for children to experience. Prior to each performance, a Playhouse teaching artist visits each school to engage students in an interactive workshop to explore issues and themes at the core of the play. The Playhouse also provides schools with a standards-based online engagement guide that enables educators to integrate the play into their existing curriculum. After each performance, the cast and crew conduct a question-and-answer session with the audience.

The Playhouse is one of the few theatres in the country that annually commissions world-class artists to create a bold new play for young audiences. Playwrights create an innovative, 45-minute piece for the POP Tour that addresses issues in students' lives and is typically seen by tens of thousands of young people, teachers and families each year.

La Jolla Playhouse offers the **Adopt-A-School** program which provides funding for POP Tour performances at schools that could not otherwise afford it. For more information, contact Keely Daximillion at kdaximillion@ljp.org.

For more information about booking the POP Tour for a school performance, please contact Hannah Reinert at hreinert@ljp.org. More information about the free public performances of the POP Tour on April 26 and 27 at WOW Festival 2025 will be available in mid-March at WOWFestival.org.

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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. Founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer, the Playhouse is currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz. The Playhouse is internationally renowned for the development of new plays and musicals, including mounting 120 world premieres, commissioning 70 new works, and sending 37 productions to Broadway, garnering a total of 42 Tony Awards, as well as the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.

Artist Biographies

Jamaelya Hines (Kori; she/her) is an actor, singer and dancer that is currently based in San Diego, CA. She is ecstatic to be making her debut with La Jolla Playhouse 2025 POP Tour! She loves being a part of stories that have important messages that make all people feel safe, welcome and understood and allows them to open their mind to new ideas. Some of her most favorite credits include *Footloose* and *Elements* (Norwegian Cruise Lines), *In the Heights* (San Diego Musical Theatre), *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *42nd Street* (Moonlight Amphitheater) and *Stew* (Scripps Ranch Theatre). Along with theatre, Jamaelya has dived into commercial, TV and film acting for the past two years. Jamaelya would like to give many thanks to her team at Aqua Talent Agency, family and mentors for their loving guidance and support. jamaelyahines.com @jamaelyahines

Giancarlo Lugo (Ari; he/him) is a San Diego based artist who is a lover of storytelling. He is absolutely ecstatic to be back at La Jolla Playhouse for his second POP Tour! He was last seen in the 2024 POP Tour production of *Abeba in the Tall Grass*. Some other productions he's been a part of include: *Murder on the Orient Express* (Old Globe), *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Legally Blonde*, *Urinetown: The Musical* (San Diego Musical Theatre), *La Lucha* (Optika Moderna, MCASD, La Jolla Playhouse WOW), *James and the Giant Peach* (Southwestern College), *Pasale Pasale* (Tuyo Theatre), and *The Pros and Cons of Feeding Stray Cats* (Playwrights Project). Education: San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts. He is incredibly thankful for his loved ones and those who have given him guidance on this journey to tell stories to all. You can keep up with his journey on instagram: @giancarlo.lugois

Mikaela Rae Macias (Jayce; she/her) is a San Diego-based actor, singer, dancer, teaching artist and collaborator. She is more than delighted to perform in the 2025 POP Tour with this talented and imaginative company! The last production you may have seen her in was Moxie Theatre's Shows in Rep as Jo March in *Little Women* and Kit in *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord*. You may have seen her work at: Scripps Ranch Theatre, The Roustabouts Theatre, Oceanside Theatre Company, Cygnet Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Moxie Theatre (Craig Noel Nomination), North Coast Repertory Theatre, Wildsong Productions, Teatros San Diego (BroadwayWorld SD Nominations) and San Diego Symphony. She is also the co-founder of a community reading space for theatre artists and creatives called The Playground. Education: BA in Theatre Performance at San Diego State University. Instagram: @mikaelarmacias; <https://mikaelaraemacias.godaddysites.com/>

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Maybelle Shimizu (Quinn Li; they/she) is a San Diego actor and musician thrilled to be making their La Jolla Playhouse POP Tour debut this spring in *The Weather Busters of Beachcastle*. Recent credits include *Into the Woods*, *School of Rock*, *Tootsie* (Moonlight), *Bottle Shock!* (CCA), and *The Marvelous Wonderettes* (Point Loma Playhouse). Other acting credit highlights: *Bull in a China Shop* (Diversions), *As Bees in Honey Drown* (Onstage Playhouse), *25th Annual Spelling Bee* (USD), *Tartuffe* (USD MFA), *Fault of Falling* (SD Fringe 2017). After coming to San Diego from Japan at the age of 6, Maybelle found a love of theatre during primary school education and went on to graduate from the University of San Diego with a BA in Theatre and a minor in Psychology. You can find out more about their work on Instagram @maybelle.shimizu.

Lisette Velandia (Understudy; they/she/he) is excited to be working with such a lovely group of people on this year's POP Tour! She is a Latine Asian actor originally from Sacramento, CA. Recently, they graduated from UC San Diego with a major in Theatre and Psychology. In the past, he trained at the British American Drama Academy and at Sacramento Theatre Company. Credits: *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Scripps Ranch Theatre); *Fun Home* (New Village Arts); *I Found a Zipper*, *blu*, *Limp Wrist on the Lever*, *Sotoba Komachi*, *As You Like It*, *Orlando* (UC San Diego); *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Tempest*, *A Christmas Carol* (Sacramento Theatre Company); *The Wolves* (Company 157). They also work with kNOWMORE, an educational program that goes to local San Diego high schools and uses theatre to inform students about human trafficking. Lisette truly believes in the power of educational theatre and its ability to change the lives of younger folks for the better!

Christin Eve Cato (Playwright; she/her) is an award-winning playwright, dramaturg, poet, educator, lyricist, songwriter and performing artist, emerging from the vibrant streets of the Bronx, bringing with her a profound artistic narrative steeped in the rich tapestry of her Puerto Rican and Jamaican roots. Cato's voice is often distinguished for her ability to create universal stories grounded in advocacy for human rights and social justice. She holds esteemed positions such as ensemble member and former Resident Dramaturg at Pregones/PRTT, a founding UNIT 52 ensemble member at INTAR Theatre and a playwright in the WP Theater 2022-2024 Pipeline Lab. Additionally, she is an affiliated artist at the Playwrights Center, a member of The Latinx Playwrights Circle, an associated artist with The Sol Project and a seasonal roundtable dramaturg at the Musical Theatre Factory. Recent productions include her 2024 Obie Award-winning play, *Sancocho* (Off-Broadway debut at the WP Theater); *The Diamond* (The People's Theatre Project at Pregones Theatre); *American Made* (Samuel French OOB Festival at Playwrights Horizons); and an audio play journey, *The Mayor of Hell's Kitchen Presents: A Time Traveling Journey Through NYC's Wild West* (The Parsnip Ship and Playwrights Horizons). Some of her other recognitions include the 2020 Greater Good Commission recipient for Afro-Latinx writers; the 2021 ReImagine: New Plays in TYA grant; second place prize winner in the 2023 Miranda Family Voces Latinx Competition; the 2023 HOLA award nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Playwriting; and an awardee of the 2023 Negocios Now: 40 Under 40 celebrating Latinx excellence in New York City. She has an MFA in Playwriting from Indiana University and a BA in Political Science and Philosophy from Fordham University.

Kat Yen (Director) is a Taiwanese-American theatre director, born and raised in NYC. Recent productions include *Pipe Dream* by Rodgers and Hammerstein at Berkshire Theatre Group, *Heart Strings* by Lee Cataluna at Atlantic Theater for Kids, and *Happy Life* by Kathy Ng with The Hearth. Recent associate directing credits include *Redwood*, written and directed by Tina Landau and conceived with Idina Menzel, *The Untitled Unauthorized Hunter S. Thompson Musical*, by Joe Iconis and directed by Christopher Ashley, and *The Comeuppance* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins and directed by Eric Ting. Upcoming productions include *The Heart Sellers* by Lloyd Suh at North Coast Repertory Theatre and *All The Men Who've Frightened Me* by Noah Diaz at La Jolla Playhouse. Kat is the inaugural Directing Fellow at La Jolla Playhouse, a former Resident Director at The Flea, a Van Lier Directing Fellow at Second Stage and the co-founder and former Artistic Director of Spookfish Theatre Company. MFA in Directing: Yale School of Drama. www.katyen.com

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Jonathan Gilmer (Scenic Designer) is a San Diego-based director and designer with work spanning theater, opera, and symphony performances. He is thrilled to return to La Jolla Playhouse, where he previously designed *Pick Me Last, Hoopla!* and WOW Festivals. Jonathan is the founder of Waterbug Productions, a multidisciplinary design, technical, and production company. Other credits include *Noel Noel* (San Diego Symphony), *As One* (San Diego Opera), *Shostakovich Day* (Barbican Centre), and he was part of the design team for the UK Student Exhibit at the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space. Most recently, Mr. Gilmer served as the Scenery Supervisor at La Jolla Playhouse. He holds a BA Honours in Technical Theatre Arts from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

Jazmine Logan (Dramaturg) is a fourth-year PhD student in Theatre and Drama from University of California: San Diego. She holds a BA in Theatre Arts and Politics from University of California, Santa Cruz, and a MA in Theatre Arts from San Francisco State University. She is an Artist - Scholar (Actor, Dancer, Researcher) who specializes in Dramaturgy work and has presented theater research in various conferences such as the American Society for Theater Research, Association for Theater in Higher Education, and the Black Theater Network Conference. La Jolla Playhouse Dramaturg credits: *Abeba in the Tall Grass (2024 POP Tour Production - Dramaturg)*, *Manning (2023 Latinx New Play Festival- Dramaturg)*. UC San Diego Dramaturg credits: *The Half Sibling Play (2024 Wagner New Play Festival)*, *Thicker Than (2023 Wagner New Play Festival-Dramaturg)*, *Dance Nation* and *In the Red and Brown Water*.

Claire Peterson (Costume Designer; she/they) works in both theatre and film with an MFA in Costume Design and Technology from San Diego State University. Originally from a small town in Montana, she found interest in art through theatre and design. With a main focus in theatre for social change, Claire strives to create a space where all people have the opportunity to feel safe and represented. She currently is working as a Costume Design Assistant at La Jolla Playhouse, along with doing freelance design around the country. Some design credits include *Midnight at the Never Get* (Diversions Theatre), *Man and Moon* (MOXIE Theatre), *The Fog* (Montana Repertory Theatre), *The House of Bernarda Alba* (SDSU), *Cabaret* (SDSU), *Spring Awakening* (University of Montana), *A Year with Frog and Toad* (Grandstreet Theatre).

Eliza Vedar (Sound Designer; she/they) is a sound designer, composer, music director and pianist based in Southern California. Their work has been featured in theatrical productions with La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, TuYo Theatre, IAMA Theatre, Diversions Theatre, Moxie Theatre and more, in addition to various educational institutions including San Diego State University, CSU San Marcos, University of San Diego and San Diego Junior Theatre. Eliza holds a Bachelor's degree in Music Performance: Piano from San Diego State University. <https://www.elizavedar.com/>

Brian Salvenera (Stage Manager; he/him) is excited to return to POP Tour as the Stage Manager. Originally from Los Angeles, he graduated from UC San Diego and has continued to work regionally around San Diego. Other credits include: *Abeba in the Tall Grass*, *Sumo*, *Jin vs. The Beach* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors*, *The Comedy of Errors* (The Old Globe); *Tick Tick Boom!*, *Sharon*, *Cabaret* (Cygnet Theatre). He has also performed with the dance team Sleepless Collective.

FACT SHEET

- WHAT:** 2025 Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour:
The Weather Busters of Beachcastle
World-Premiere; La Jolla Playhouse Commission
By Christin Eve Cato; Directed by Kat Yen
- WHEN:** Touring San Diego County Elementary Schools March - April 2025
Free public performances April 26 and 27 at La Jolla Playhouse WOW Festival 2025
- BOOKING:** For information about booking the POP Tour: hreinert@ljp.org
[POP Tour Website](#)
- SPONSORS:** La Jolla Playhouse is able to offer the POP Tour to the community at no cost due to the generous support we receive from individuals and institutions whose donations cover all expenses. We are pleased to thank the following corporate, foundation and government entities for their sponsorship:
- Corporate support provided by Morrison Foerster Foundation, Qualcomm, ResMed Foundation and US Bank.
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