



NEWS RELEASE

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1st COVID-DRIVEN NEW WORKS COLLABORATION WITH MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES, “CORONALOGS,” AIRS ON JAN. 22

New Student Works Center Around the Human Experience During Pandemic; Mesa Community College Production Will be the First to Air

The first ***Coronatalogs: Explorations of Identity, Culture and Well-Being During COVID-19***, a partnership between Arizona Theatre Company (ATC) and local community colleges to create new works by student playwrights focusing on the human experience during the COVID-19 pandemic, will air during ATC’s digital podcast of **Hang & Focus** at 4 p.m. (Mountain Standard Time) on Friday, Jan. 22.

Hang & Focus is available on Apple Podcasts, Spotify and YouTube. The production will then live on the ATC website (www.arizonatheatre.org).

The ***Coronatalogs*** project launched with a production by Mesa Community College (MCC) students in collaboration with ATC Associate Artistic Director Chanel Bragg, Director of Learning & Education Jasmine Roth, Artistic Associate christoper oscar pena, Community Engagement Manager Will Rogers and Playwright in Residence Elaine Romero.

“This is a multifaceted project that provides a way for theatre students to express their feelings about living in a COVID environment and share those feelings with the community at large,” said Kevin Dressler, director of the MCC Theatre and Film Arts program. “It’s an opportunity for students to express a wide variety of aspects of life under COVID-19: the tragic, the comic and mundane through the use of script writing, performance and media.”

The concept for ***Coronatalogs*** developed from a passion project between Bragg and Ruth Sager, the theatre and film program production manager.

“As the State Theatre of Arizona, we value building partnerships with all arts institutions within the community,” Bragg said. “We are excited to nurture such an incredible opportunity to create a long lasting collaboration with the diverse Associate degree-bearing institutions in our state.”

The effort also has received national attention with the Kennedy Center American Theatre including one of the ***Coronatalogs*** plays – *The D&D Thursday Night Scene* written by MCC student Robert

O'Brien – in a curated night of invited scenes as part of its virtual festival highlighting “the amazingly innovative work witnessed by their board and adjudicators as colleges went online during the pandemic and continued creating productions and storytelling,” according to a congratulatory letter sent to MCC.

The team handling production at MCC included Dressler, Sager and Kara Thomson from the design faculty along with Technical Director Benton Guy, Costume Shop Manager Adriana Diaz, Electrics Shop Manager Josh Hontz and the editing team of Tyler Foree, Trenton Flores and Michaela Wooldridge.

“ATC was incredibly generous with their expertise with everything from playwriting techniques, to design guidance, to the art of filmmaking,” Dressler said. “I know our students benefited by having quality professionals helping guide them through this project from the beginning to the finished, polished product. I know I speak for all of our students when I say how grateful I am for ATC to reach out and play with MCC Theatre & Film Arts.”

The ATC team also included Richard Giuliani, graphic design; Sound Supervisor Matthew DeVore and Marketing Manager Bitty Rosenberg.

The MCC production will be followed this spring with presentations from students at Glendale Community College and Paradise Valley Community College.

For more information about Arizona Theatre Company, visit www.arizonatheatre.org.

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About Arizona Theatre Company:

Under new leadership and now celebrating its 54th Season, Arizona Theatre Company is truly “The State Theatre,” with the largest subscriber base of any performing arts organization in Arizona. More than 130,000 people each year attend performances at the historic Temple of Music and Art in Tucson and the elegant Herberger Theater Center in downtown Phoenix.

Each season of high-quality productions reflects the rich variety of world theatre – from classic to contemporary plays, from musicals to new works – and audiences enjoy the rich emotional experience and joy that can only be captured through live theatre. ATC is the preeminent professional theatre in the state of Arizona. Under the direction of Artistic Director Sean Daniels and Managing Director Geri Wright, ATC operates in two cities – unlike any other League of Resident Theaters (LORT) company in the country.

ATC shares the passion of the theatre through a wide array of outreach programs, educational opportunities, access initiatives and community events. With more than 800 Education & Engagement activities through schools and summer programs, ATC focuses on teaching Arizona’s youth about the creative power of dramatic literature and how it can enrich their own lives in multiple ways

ATC reaches far beyond the metropolitan areas of Tucson and Phoenix, enriching the theatre learning experience nationally for current and future audiences.