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## **David A. Tucker II to Feature at Inaugural National Latine Playwrights Festival**

**Phoenix, Ariz.** – Arizona Theatre Company is delighted to announce the winner of the 2023 National Latine Playwrights Award. Chicano playwright, David A. Tucker II, has won the award for his black comedy, *The Nude*, for which he will receive \$2500 and a professional workshop and a public reading of the play to launch a National Latine Playwrights Festival, slated for June 2024.

Originally established in 1995 by ATC’s Playwright-in-Residence/National Latine Playwrights Award Festival Director, Elaine Romero, under former Artistic Director David Ira Goldstein, the National Latine Playwrights Award has amplified the Latine voice for nearly two decades. 24 of the 26 recipients of the award have gone on to be produced across the United States and around the World. ATC’s long history of recognizing Latine voices is echoed in its embrace of new work that does not bend to genre, form, or subject.

Notable winners of the National Latine Playwrights Award include Luis Alfaro, Karen Zacarías, Kristoffer Diaz, Octavio Solis, and Charise Castro Smith, co-writer of Disney hit *Encanto* (Golden Globe, Winner, Best Motion Picture, Animated), and more.

“I could not be prouder to see our new A.D., Matt August, grow the NLPA into a bonafide festival that will ensure that these fantastic new works will not only touch our Arizona communities in Phoenix, but reach further into our national and international communities,” said Romero. “The NLPA has always been about launching Latine playwrights into the stratosphere. The National Latine Playwrights Award and Festival increases our commitment to that launch.”

“I am excited to expand the reach of the National Latine Playwrights Award with the launch of a corresponding festival,” said Matt August, Arizona Theatre Company Kasser Family Artistic Director. “Our hope is that as we grow the festival, we will discover, and nurture, new stories and voices that will have a local, national and global impact.”

*The Nude* follows a struggling artist, his investment-savvy girlfriend, a rival painter, and an ambitious gallery owner as they find their lives and work intertwined in more ways than one in this dark art-world comedy. Max is an emerging painter who struggles to gain traction in the elite art world. His girlfriend, Stephanie, is a successful associate in a global investment firm that takes her everywhere but where she really wants to be. Ernst’s artistic labors-of-love adorn hotel

lobbies and restaurant bathrooms when what he dreams of is an actual gallery show. And gallery owner, Marty, needs nothing more than to discover the Next Big Thing.

Taking place in the present-day art world, “*The Nude* wrestles with the idea of what it means to be an artist, who is recognized, who isn’t, and why,” said Romero.

David A. Tucker II has had several plays developed at theaters across the nation. His theatrical works include *Smoke* (2018 O’Neill Theater Conference Finalist and 2018 AITAF Bridge Award Finalist), *Veils, Persistence of Vision, Baghdad* (about his experiences commanding a military unit in Iraq), *Under the Skin and North Wind Blowin’* (Chicago Dramatists’ 2006 Many Voices Project).

Growing up in a Mexican-Anglo family, Tucker’s plays often explore collisions of race, culture and political systems. Since 2008, he has been teaching creative writing to wounded military veterans and their caregivers through the Writers Guild Initiative.

The National Latine Playwrights Festival reading will take place on June 14 at Tempe Center for the Arts. For more information, please visit [ATC.org](http://ATC.org).

### **About Arizona Theatre Company**

Arizona Theatre Company’s (ATC) performances provide space for audiences to share moments of joy, communion, and relief. The company’s diverse range of productions invite individuals to connect, offering an escape from daily pressures and a chance to rediscover the power of community through laughter, love, and reflection. Founded in 1966 and celebrating its 56th season, ATC is led by Kasser Family Artistic Director Matt August and Executive Director Geri Wright. ATC is the only League of Resident Theatres (LORT) member in Arizona; operating in Tucson and Phoenix, and is the preeminent professional theatre in Arizona, recognized as the Official Arizona State Theatre. More at [atc.org](http://atc.org).