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## **ATC Launches Inaugural National Latine Playwrights Award & Festival in Tempe; Amplifying Diverse Voices in Theatre**

**Phoenix, Ariz.** – Arizona Theatre Company (ATC) is proud to launch its inaugural National Latine Playwrights Award & Festival after nearly 30 years of recognizing Latine artists with the National Latine Playwrights Award. This groundbreaking event expands upon the prestigious award’s mission to champion historically excluded Latine writers. Set to showcase *The Nude* by David A. Tucker II, winner of the 2023 National Latine Playwrights Award, the festival is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and promises to be a celebration of Latine voices in American theatre.

“The NLPA was created with the expressed intent of amplifying the stories Latine playwrights want to tell on any subject.” says ATC playwright-in-residence and NLP Award & Festival director Elaine Romero. “For this award, the playwright is the leader. The National Latine Playwrights Award & Festival fortifies our commitment to that representation.”

ATC’s NLP Award & Festival at Tempe Center for the Arts on Friday, June 14 at 6 p.m. will include a panel discussion with leading Arizona art experts, the play reading of *The Nude* (90 minutes), an awards presentation honoring Tucker and a post-show roundtable discussion. Monica Villalobos, president of the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, is emceeding the festival, and the play reading is directed by Professor Micha Espinosa from Arizona State University’s School of Music, Dance and Theatre. Both Espinosa and Romero serve on the Steering Committee for the National Latinx Theatre Commons. A one-of-a-kind award crafted by notable Phoenix artist Zarco Guerrero will be presented to Tucker during the festival. Other NLP Festival partners include Phoenix Art Museum and Xico.

“When I joined the ATC family, the NLPA and the importance of that award struck me immediately,” says Matt August, Kasser Family Artistic Director. “I knew I wanted to build upon it by putting the work of these artists on the stage, and grow the event into a much larger festival. This year is our first exciting step in that direction.”

*The Nude* delves into the lives of a diverse cast of characters – a struggling artist, his investment-savvy girlfriend, a rival painter, and an ambitious gallery owner – whose paths intersect in the vibrant yet complex world of contemporary art. Set against the backdrop of present-day Los

Angeles, the play offers a humorous and thought-provoking exploration of artistry, ambition, and the pursuit of success.

Max, a pot-smoking painter, finds himself theorizing art more than creating it, while Stephanie grapples with the demands of a corporate career that pulls her away from her true passions. Ernst dreams of a day when his art will be showcased beyond hotel lobbies and into a gallery, while Marti wishes she could just stop representing artists.

The public is invited to ATC's National Latine Playwrights Award & Festival on Friday, June 14, with a panel discussion starting at 6 p.m. followed by the play reading of *The Nude*, awards ceremony and post-show roundtable at 7 p.m. Tickets are free but must be reserved online in advance at [atc.org/nlpa](http://atc.org/nlpa) or by calling the ATC box office at 833-ATC-SEAT. Tickets can also be purchased at the ATC Ticket and Information Office at Tempe Center for the Arts the evening of the show.

### **About David A. Tucker II**

David A. Tucker II has had several plays developed at theaters across the nation, including Seattle Repertory Theatre, Abingdon Theater Co., ACT, Tacoma Actors Guild, and Foothill Theater Co. His theatrical works include *Smoke* (2018 O'Neill Theater Conference Finalist and 2018 AITAF Bridge Award Finalist), *The Nude* (winner of Arizona Theatre Company's National Latine Playwright Award), *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 bicultural family of Mexican/Anglo descent, 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.

### **About Arizona Theatre Company**

Arizona Theatre Company's (ATC) performances provide space for individuals to share moments of joy, communion, and relief. The company's diverse range of productions invite audiences 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).