

# ANPF

## ASHLAND NEW PLAYS FESTIVAL

VOL. 7 NO. 1

FALL 2015

## THE ANPF 2015 WINNING PLAYS

### THE LUCKIEST PEOPLE by Meridith Friedman # Directed by Kyle Haden

What is our responsibility to our parents? In the days following his mother's funeral, Richard is forced to grapple with that question. When his elderly father, Oscar, proposes moving in with him, Richard, happily settled with his husband, is less than enthusiastic about the idea. Unbeknownst to Oscar, an adopted son will soon be occupying the spare bedroom in Richard's Santa Barbara condo. Years of unspoken hostilities and resentments are unleashed, spiraling the men into a vicious game of finger pointing. Tensions reach a breaking point when Oscar's growing suspicions over the circumstances of his wife's death lead him to make a startling accusation against his son.

Wednesday, October 21, 7:30 p.m. # Saturday, October 24, 1:30 p.m.

### THE RETURN OF TARTUFFE by Brian Mulholland # Directed by Dawn Monique Williams

He's returned—that seventeenth-century swindler whose delicious comic villainy has made him an audience favorite for 350 years. In this sequel to Molière's classic comedy—written, like the original, in rhyming couplets—Tartuffe finds himself exiled to the American colonies, where he targets the famous Boston minister Cotton Mather for his next scam. Mather is a fierce proponent of the controversial theory of inoculation, but it's a battle he's been losing until Tartuffe, armed with a tall tale, swings opinion in Mather's favor. While Tartuffe then borrows a page from "inoculation theory" to seduce a beautiful maid indentured in the Mather household, a family debate rages as to the honesty of his intentions. Schemes are hatched, traps are planned, disguises are donned, and tables are turned (more than once)—and nothing is quite as it seems.

Thursday, October 22, 1:30 p.m. # Friday, October 23, 7:30 p.m.

### AND VASTER by Skye Robinson Hillis # Directed by Lydia Garcia

Married actors Michael and Corinne, in their 15 years together, have stood by their decision to focus on their respective careers and each other and to not have children. When Michael is suddenly confronted with a heretofore unknown 17-year-old daughter begotten from a one-night stand, their years of meticulous planning are rendered useless; they must revisit the decision they made long ago and figure out how to assimilate a nearly grown-up child into their kid-free family dynamic, without losing each other in the process.

Thursday, October 22, 7:30 p.m. # Sunday, October 25, 1:30 p.m.

### THE BOTTLE TREE by Beth Kander # Directed by Jackie Apodaca

Gun violence in America is explored through the story of a small-town girl with a big, bad family legacy. Years after a tragic shooting at East Maple High, all of Maple County, Mississippi, is still traumatized, perhaps no one more so than shy, sarcastic Alley, the little sister of the infamous shooter. With fragility, tenacity, and a sharp sense of humor, Alley is haunted by past ghosts and jolted into new worlds with few easy answers—and as she gradually realizes, so is everyone else. When everyone around you is also a little bit broken, how can anyone begin to piece one's self back together? Young love, old guilt, laughter, and lingering scars all keep the girl, the town, and Alley's symbolic "bottle tree" on the verge of shattering.

Friday, October 23, 1:30 p.m. # Saturday, October 24, 7:30 p.m.

*The Luckiest People* is underwritten by Jane and Bill Bardin. *The Return of Tartuffe* is underwritten by Norma and Fred Wright. *And Vaster* is underwritten by Linda and Rick Young. *The Bottle Tree* is underwritten by James L. Auchincloss.

## Message from the Artistic Director

I must confess that I'm still getting used to the title *artistic director*—it's quite a responsibility! But I'm thrilled to have joined ANPF, which has a wonderful reputation in the theatre community, and I'm looking forward to increasing our visibility as we continue to serve as a home for playwrights to develop their work.



We've got an excellent slate of plays for 2015. From almost six hundred submissions—more than double the previous total—our dedicated readers found four fantastic plays, and I can't wait for you to hear them next month. We're assembling impressive casts, with some familiar faces from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and the Rogue Valley as well as a couple of new folks, and our directors are excited to bring these plays to life.

I must take a moment to acknowledge our wonderful readers and volunteers. You are the lifeblood of this organization, and we couldn't do it without you! I've enjoyed my interactions with everyone I've met so far, and if we haven't met yet, I hope you'll come over and say hello during Festival Week. Your engagement is what makes ANPF truly unique, and I look forward to hearing your feedback.

—Kyle Haden

## ANPF 2015 Kicks off October 21

The readings of the winning plays at the Unitarian Center, 87 4th Street, begin Wednesday, October 21, at 7:30 p.m. and run through the Sunday matinee. Each performance is followed by a moderated talkback with host playwright EM Lewis. The **playwriting workshop**, *Finding the Key*, led by Lewis, is on Saturday morning from 9 to 12. Cost is \$10 at the door. RSVP to [gray@ashlandnewplays.org](mailto:gray@ashlandnewplays.org). All events are at the Unitarian Center, 87 4th Street.

### ► See inside for Ticket Presale Order Form

Tickets and presale-only Festival Passes are available now at [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org). Tickets will also be available at Paddington Station October 1–19 (cash or check only).

We are thrilled with the **lineup of talented actors** who will grace our stage. A couple of roles are yet to be filled, but so far Artistic Director Kyle Haden and our directors have cast the following actors:

Kate Berry	Liisa Ivary	Amy Prosser
Sara Bruner	David Kelly	Cesar Perez Rosas
Allison Buck	Terri McMahan	Kimberly Scott
James Edmondson	Galen A. Molk	Emily Serdahl
Al Espinosa	Stephanie Neuerburg	Britney Simpson
Truett Felt	Barret O'Brien	Rafael Untalan
Dominique Francis	Savanna Padilla	Bruce A. Young
		Rex Young

*with more talented folks yet to be announced*

For more information visit [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org).

## SEE YOU AT THE FESTIVAL!

# Order Tickets in Advance for Savings and a Guaranteed Seat

Take advantage of the Festival Pass for \$50 when you purchase one ticket for each of the four readings. Use this Ticket Presale Order Form for both the \$50 Festival Pass and the \$15 individual tickets. Festival Passes and tickets are also on sale at [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org). Tickets will be available at **Paddington Station**, 125 E Main Street, October 1 through 19 (cash or check only). Tickets will also be available at the door and are first come, first served. We recommend advance purchases. All performances are at the Unitarian Center, 87 4th Street in Ashland. **Your tickets will be held in the lobby at Will Call.**

## ANPF 2015 Ticket Presale Order Form

Your order must be received by **Saturday, October 10** for discount to apply. **Questions?** Call (541) 488-7995.

name \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_ city \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

home phone \_\_\_\_\_ mobile phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Each Festival Pass includes one reading of each play.**

***The Luckiest People*** by Meridith Friedman  
Directed by Kyle Haden

Wednesday, 10/21, 7:30 p.m. **or**  
Saturday, 10/24, 1:30 p.m.

Total tickets for this play  
(either time) \_\_\_\_\_

***The Return of Tartuffe*** by Brian Mulholland  
Directed by Dawn Monique Williams

Thursday, 10/22, 1:30 p.m. **or**  
Friday, 10/23, 7:30 p.m.

Total tickets for this play  
(either time) \_\_\_\_\_

***And Vaster*** by Skye Robinson Hillis  
Directed by Lydia Garcia

Thursday, 10/22, 7:30 p.m. **or**  
Sunday, 10/25, 1:30 p.m.

Total tickets for this play  
(either time) \_\_\_\_\_

***The Bottle Tree*** by Beth Kander  
Directed by Jackie Apodaca

Friday, 10/23, 1:30 p.m. **or**  
Saturday, 10/24, 7:30 p.m.

Total tickets for this play  
(either time) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Festival Passes at \$50 each \_\_\_\_\_ Total tickets \_\_\_\_\_ Total cost \_\_\_\_\_

Number of individual tickets at \$15 each \_\_\_\_\_ Total cost \_\_\_\_\_

**Become a member of ANPF\* (see below)** Tax-deductible\* membership contribution \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit via US mail:** Ashland New Plays Festival  
PO Box 3314  
Ashland, OR 97520

**Total enclosed** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make check payable to ANPF*

**To qualify for the discounted Festival Pass, your order must be received by Saturday, October 10, 2015.**

**Your tickets will be held at Will Call in the lobby of the Unitarian Center during Festival Week.**

The playwriting workshop on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the Unitarian Center is \$10 and payable at the door.

## BECOME A MEMBER OF ANPF

As a volunteer-run nonprofit organization, ANPF relies on tax-deductible contributions.\* Every dollar helps us remain one of the country's premier new plays festivals. For contributions of \$50 or more, you can now become a member of ANPF.\* For \$100 and more, there are benefits ranging from Festival Passes and reception invitations to briefings by the artistic director and underwriter recognition. Check out our donor levels on the back panel of this newsletter or at [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org) > **Support ANPF** and become part of the ANPF family. We appreciate your support!

\*Support of ANPF is tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

# SPOTLIGHT ON THE WINNING PLAYWRIGHTS

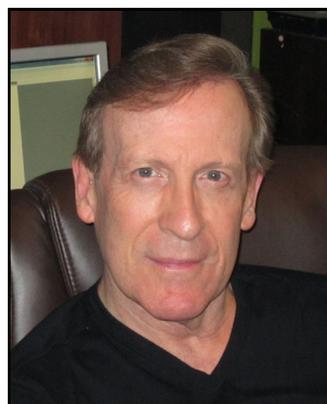


**BETH KANDER** # I am absolutely thrilled to be heading to Ashland this fall. My husband and I moved from Mississippi to Chicago just last year, so it still feels odd to call myself a “Chicago playwright”—but upon arrival here, diving in was my only option, and the amount of theater and creative opportunity in this city has quickly drawn me in and kept me busy. In addition to *The Bottle Tree*, I’m working on several other writing projects, including a play called *Blue June* (about a girl born with blue skin) in development with The New Colony Writer’s Room; a novel called *Original/Syn*; and a children’s book about a little girl who knows she’s a superhero. I even managed to surprise myself by getting onstage last fall/winter, performing in a production at The Neo-Futurists. # I’ve participated in play festivals in the past, but rarely have I had the opportunity to travel across the country and take up residence for a week to immerse in a process like this one. I’ve never been to Ashland, but have many friends who have rushed to assure me that once I get there I’ll never want to leave. Back in Mississippi, I helped create a theater group whose simple mission statement was to be “not a community theater, but a theatre community.” The phrase *true theatre community* has been used to describe Ashland to me more than once already, and I can’t wait to become a part of your community, even if only for a week. (For now, at least. Who knows...the food and art and everything in Chicago is amazing, but the winters really are brutal, y’all...)

**MERIDITH FRIEDMAN** # I was born in Wisconsin and moved to Hawaii when I was eight. Culture shock doesn’t even begin to describe the tectonic shift. My new classmates called their sandals “slippers.” I called them flip-flops. They ate spam musubi for lunch. I ate a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. The Midwestern standard of beauty I had grown accustomed to changed completely. Stick-thin, Hawaiian beauties with jet-black hair and enviable year-round tans replaced the fleshy, pasty white girls I grew up with. # In all of my plays, I endeavor to (figuratively) move my characters from Wisconsin to Hawaii. I drop my characters in the middle of a situation that is decidedly out of their element and watch who they become in their new surroundings. I am interested in situations that push characters past the point of politeness and drive them to act from the most basic and primal part of their psyche. In my estimation, life is constantly vacillating (in the words of my favorite Billy Joel song) between sadness and euphoria, and in my writing I explore the everyday tragedies and triumphs that bring us to the heights and depths of these emotional chasms.



**BRIAN MULHOLLAND** # I’ve come to the playwriting game rather belatedly; this is my first play, and I wrote it at age 58 (so I guess it’s never too late to start). I grew up in Rhode Island, spent 25 years on the left coast, and these days live in Cincinnati, where I make my living dealing poker. My adult life has been split between acting and the poker industry, which provides its own kind of theatre (lots of improvisation and more than a little acting). This trip is a return to the Rogue Valley for me, having been a member of the acting company at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in a previous millennium. The year after I left, OSF mounted a production of *Tartuffe*, and here I am, returning to Ashland all these years later with *The Return of Tartuffe*. Given this town’s storied tradition of classical theatre—of plays featuring heightened language—I can’t think of anywhere I’d rather come for a new plays festival with a verse play under my arm. Currently, I’m working on a political play called *Trying My Patients*—about a psychotherapy practice that’s been infiltrated by government agents and profilers.



**SKYE ROBINSON HILLIS** # Like many playwrights I wear a few different hats. I’m also a dramaturg and a director, and actually have my degree in directing from Columbia College, the school that originally brought me to Chicago, where I am now based. I’m an East Coast girl through and through—Boston, Philadelphia, DC—but am proud to now call the Midwest home. Here in Chicago I am also the box office manager at The Royal George Theatre, which takes up much of my time. At the moment I have two short plays being produced here in town—*Fugitive Awareness* with First Floor Theater and *Privateers* with Fury Theatre—and I’ve been in rehearsal and working on those before I begin rehearsal for Neil Simon’s *Jake’s Women*, the play I’m directing for Spartan Theatre Company. I’m wildly excited and thrilled to be part of ANPF 2015 this fall. I first visited the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and spent a few days in Ashland about five years ago, and since then have been an unabashed fangirl. My play *And Vaster* recently had a residency at the New Works Lab at Stratford, and I’m looking forward to continuing the play’s journey at Ashland New Plays Festival.



## FESTIVAL WEEK

### ***The Luckiest People***

Wednesday, 10/21, 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, 10/24, 1:30 p.m.

### ***The Return of Tartuffe***

Thursday, 10/22, 1:30 p.m.  
Friday, 10/23, 7:30 p.m.

### ***And Vaster***

Thursday, 10/22, 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday, 10/25, 1:30 p.m.

### ***The Bottle Tree***

Friday, 10/23, 1:30 p.m.  
Saturday, 10/24, 7:30 p.m.

### **Playwriting Workshop: Finding the Key**

Saturday, 10/25, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

## Become a Member of ANPF!

Be a part of ANPF as we evolve and grow.  
Join today at [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org).

### **\$1,000+**

Benefits listed below, plus underwriting of any performance, with autographed playbill and special briefings by the artistic director each season

### **\$500–\$999**

Benefits listed below, plus underwriting of directors and actors, with autographed playbill and invitation to all receptions

### **\$250–\$499**

Benefits listed below, plus an additional Festival Pass (two total) and first rights to purchase tickets

### **\$100–\$249**

Benefit listed below, plus one Festival Pass

### **\$50–\$99**

Membership recognition in all playbills

**Please note:** Membership is solely in support of ANPF and does not convey voting rights. Support of ANPF is tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

## Board of Directors

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## ANPF Staff

**Kyle Haden**  
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**Elizabeth von Radics**  
*Marketing Director*

**William M. Faiia**  
*System Administrator  
Emeritus*



## Our Mission

Ashland New Plays Festival assists playwrights in the development of new works through public readings and offers an educational forum to the community through discussions and workshops.

## Visit Us Online! [ashlandnewplays.org](http://ashlandnewplays.org)

Send us your contact info  
to receive advance  
notice of special events

[info@ashlandnewplays.org](mailto:info@ashlandnewplays.org)



BECOME A FAN

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