PORTLAND AREA THEATRE ALLIANCE (PATA) ANNOUNCES
2024 FERTILE GROUND FESTIVAL OF NEW WORKS
WITH NEW FESTIVAL DIRECTOR TAMARA CARROLL
& NEW DATES: APRIL 12-21

PORTLAND, OREGON — September 25, 2023 | Portland Area Theatre Alliance (PATA) and Fertile Ground Festival of New Works are thrilled to announce the return of the Fertile Ground, after a one year strategic hiatus. The fifteenth Fertile Ground Festival comes with two significant changes: longtime Portland arts administrator and artist Tamara Carroll (they/them) steps into the role of Festival Director; and the Festival, typically held in January and February, will take place April 12 through 21, 2024.

With the announcement that long-time Festival Director Nicole Lane and Managing Director Dré Slaman were both stepping away, PATA determined it needed to raise funds to hire the next Festival Director—roles that had previously been largely volunteer. A crowd-funding campaign in March of 2023 that was led by Samson Syharath with communications support by Jessica Wallenfels and Lane raised just over $6,600.

With that infusion of funds, PATA sought the next festival director. After a thorough search and interview process, PATA selected Tamara Carroll to be the new Festival Director. They will lead Portland’s longstanding and interdisciplinary new works event into a new chapter. A leader in the local arts community, Carroll’s involvement and direct experience with Fertile Ground makes them the ideal choice to shepherd the festival’s legacy built by Lane and Slaman.

“I feel positively galvanized by this opportunity, and I can’t think of a more important moment to cultivate and celebrate new work,” said Fertile Ground’s new Festival Director Tamara Carroll. “Some of the most incredible projects have not just been showcased at Fertile Ground—they were commissioned, envisioned, or created FOR Fertile Ground. Further, ‘fertile ground’ has always been the exactly perfect metaphor for what this Portland-grown festival is all about: a rich and vital arts community. There are infinite seeds of inspiration waiting to be nurtured to their full potential. Leading as the festival director, I have the privilege of creating a container for new work to grow and thrive. It’s all I can think about right now!”

The 2024 Festival will be held in April, later than in its prior years, in order to allow adequate time to organize Fertile Ground’s successful comeback after the 2023 pause, and under new leadership. The later date is also designed to give producers adequate time to prepare. The Festival’s website is now hosted here, on PATA’s website. Whether this shift to a later Festival will be permanent or just for this year is yet to be decided.

Specifics about registration, participants, format and schedule for the 2024 Fertile Ground Festival of New Works will be announced as they become available.

(more)
ABOUT FERTILE GROUND
The Fertile Ground Festival of New Works, a program of the Portland Area Theatre Alliance (PATA), is an 11-day arts festival held annually in Portland, Oregon. The festival provides art-makers and producers marketing umbrella and professional development opportunities. Fertile Ground offers a platform that fosters relationships between artists, producers and arts patrons, and deepens an appreciation for the abundant “acts of creation” in our community.

A program of the Portland Area Theatre Alliance (PATA), whose mission is to support and celebrate our region’s vibrant theatre community by fostering opportunity, innovation and collaboration, Fertile Ground was launched in 2009 to provide a platform for Portland theatre companies to showcase their commitment to new work. Today, the festival encourages artists of all backgrounds and disciplines to generate an exciting array of arts-centric offerings, illustrating that Portland is truly fertile ground for creativity, innovation and daring acts of performance.

Fertile Ground is committed to continued examination and expansion of efforts toward equity, inclusion, diversity and accessibility at every level. The festival works toward creating an inclusive, welcoming festival platform shared by intersectional identities and underrepresented voices across race, ethnicity, color, age, gender identity and sexual orientation (LGBTQ2IA+), and physical or intellectual ability.

Fertile Ground respectfully acknowledges that the work made for the festival in the Portland metropolitan area was created on the unceded ancestral lands and traditional village sites of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla and many other Tribes who made their homes along the Columbia (Wimahl) and Willamette (Whilamut) rivers. We honor the many diverse Indigenous peoples who reside in this region — past, present, future. With grateful intentions, we humbly recognize the generations of peoples who have stewarded these lands, indeed these fertile grounds, for eons and still do.

For more information about the Fertile Ground Festival of New Works: https://portlandtheatre.com/fertile-ground-festival/

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