



WATER BY THE SPOONFUL



PRESS HIGHLIGHTS



REVIEWS



Client Name: The Old Globe
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Page 1 of 3

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Committed cast moves play far beyond
theme of struggles with substance abuse

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

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And don't we all, one way or another, recovering junkies or no? Quiara Alegria Hudes' sharp-edged marvel of a play may revolve around struggles with substance abuse, but part of its power is in how it illuminates the broader human experience of inching through existence in a string of small victories.

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But in "Water," the 2012 Pulitzer Prize-winner now getting an enormously rewarding California premiere at the Old Globe Theatre, spoons are loaded with agonized symbolism.

Not only do they carry the obvious drug connota-

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And it serves as our entree to a second world

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Where: Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Balboa Park.

Tickets: About \$29-\$72 (discounts available).

Phone: (619) 234-5623

Online: theoldglobe.org

Haikumom.

Representing the online realm onstage is hard to do well, but this play and production handle the transition deftly by keeping things simple beyond some quick and trippy audiovisual cues. (The sound design by Mikhail Fiksel, lighting by Jesse Klug and spare sets by Ralph Funicello are crucial here.)

It also helps that the interplay is beautifully authentic (and often scabrously funny) among Haikumom and her three main site-mates: the hipster Japanese-American adoptee Orangutan (Ruibo Quian, who gets some of David Israel Reynoso's best costumes); the sarcastic middle-aged San Diegan and IRS agent Chutes&Ladders (Keith

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The young San Diego actor M. Keala Milles Jr. joins this mostly Broadway-seasoned cast with a spooky turn as a ghost who wafts through Elliot's conscience; he plays two other small roles as well.

When Haikumom assures her online brood that "it's a beautiful day to be sober," a playgoer might substitute any number of words for that last one, and make the sentiment both universal and personal.

Healthy. Free.

Alive.

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Review: Globe's 'Water' a minor-key marvel

Pulitzer-winning play brings deep humanity to story of personal battles

By [James Hebert \(/staff/james-hebert/\)](/staff/james-hebert/) 4:33 p.m. April 18, 2014



Rey Lucas, M. Keala Milles, Jr. and Sarah Nina Hayon in the Old Globe's "Water by the Spoonful." — *Jim Cox*

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When Elliot and his slightly older cousin Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon), a college music teacher, learn their aunt (and his adoptive mom) is on her deathbed, it leads to an intensely contentious family reconnection.

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Review: Bandaging life's battle scars in 'Water by the Spoonful'

The 2012 Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Quiara Alegría Hudes is given a fluid, authentic production at the Old Globe in San Diego.



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Charles McNulty

April 29, 2014 | 6:00 a.m.

SAN DIEGO—

— Elliot, the central figure of Quiara Alegría Hudes' deeply affecting "Water by the Spoonful," has returned from Iraq with battle scars both visible and invisible. He has wires in his leg that make walking painful, and the ping of his own cellphone is enough to startle him.

His story would normally be treated as a special interest report on the plight of returning vets. But Hudes, whose play won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize, does something more radical: She sets Elliot's precarious reintegration into civilian society within the larger context of fractured contemporary America, a place where one needn't have firsthand experience of combat to know something about trauma and recovery.

"Water by the Spoonful" is finally getting its Southern California premiere, thanks to the Old Globe, which is presenting a top-notch production directed by Edward Torres. I am grateful that this vital America drama can be seen in our area, though I can't help feeling dismay at Center Theatre Group, which has been too busy programming solo shows and touring Broadway fare to find an opening at one of its theaters for a work that is as dramatically gripping as it is politically resonant.

Hudes, the author of the book for the Tony Award-winning musical "In the Heights," writes about a concept that has sadly faded from national consciousness in recent years: community.

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"Water by the Spoonful," winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for drama, is presented by the Old Globe. The cast includes Robert Eli and Marilyn Torres. (Jim Cox)



PHOTOS: Hollywood stars on stage

"Water," the middle play in a trilogy of stand-alone works, is set in 2009, largely in Philadelphia. The economy is obviously in a downward spiral, but instead of hearing about the collapse of the real estate market we are introduced to strapped individuals, some related by blood, others related by challenging circumstances.

Imagine that: A portrait of life in recessionary America in which the focus isn't on plunging stock prices but on people holding on for dear life.

Elliot (Rey Lucas), an aspiring actor who works at a Subway sandwich shop outside of his immediate neighborhood so as not to be seen by friends, has a strong bond with his cousin Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon), an adjunct professor of music. They share a deep love for their gravely ill aunt "Mami Ginny," who raised Elliot and has been an anchor not just for their Puerto Rican family but for the entire neighborhood.

Yaz is somewhat distracted by her impending divorce, but after Ginny dies, she's at Elliot's side to help make the funeral arrangements. Short of funds, they seek financial help from Elliot's birth mother, Odessa (Marilyn Torres), Ginny's sister, whom we've already encountered through her role as leader



Review: Daniel Arsham at OHWOW



Actors' Gang takes Shakespeare to China



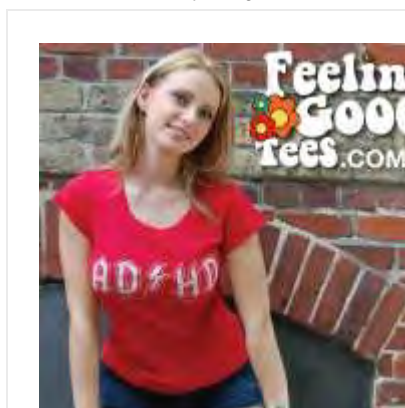
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Review: Baryshnikov and Big Dance Theater experiment with Chekhov



Tony Award nominations are up for grabs

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of an online support group for crack addicts. (Torres' fluid handling of these scenes, on Ralph Funicello's colorful set, makes these cyber moments vividly human.)

Elliot is haunted by his wartime experience. His physical pain, which has led to a substance abuse problem of his own, unleashes harrowing memories. A ghost (M. Keala Milles Jr.) routinely traipses across the stage in a turban repeating the same line in Arabic that Elliot has had translated by an academic colleague of Yaz's: "Can I please have my passport back?"

But it's the wounds from his early childhood that have filled Elliot with rage. The story of what happened in his home when his mother was in the grip of her addiction is inevitably flushed out. But "Water by the Spoonful" extends beyond one family's tragic past to take in a diverse urban cross-section of characters.

The members of the substance abuse recovery forum are identified by their online handles. Chutes&Ladders (Keith Randolph Smith) is an African American man in his 50s from San Diego who roughly calls out the others on their hypocrisy. Orangutan (Ruibo Qian) has traveled to Japan to search out her birth mother. Fountainhead (Robert Eli) is an affluent

white computer programmer living on Philadelphia's Main Line who is new to the chat room and having difficulty accepting that he's not only out of work but a bona fide crack head. (All three actors create richly authentic portraits.)

Odessa, who goes by the name Haikumom, tries to keep the dialogue honest without turning belligerent, which isn't easy with this crew. Hudes presents this woman to us in her role as moderator before we learn about her failures as a mother. In this way, she makes it difficult for us to condemn and dismiss Odessa, invested as we are in her recovery.

Indeed the characters in "Water by the Spoonful" earn our empathy not because of their spotless goodness but because of their muddling imperfect humanity. This sentiment is magnified by the uniformly fine cast Torres has assembled. In both the writing and the acting, the relationships between characters grow.

Marilyn Torres (no relation to the director) infuses Odessa with raw emotion. This is someone who has had to fight for her survival, and her every throaty utterance testifies to the lifetime of combat she has experienced at home.

Hayon's Yaz, girl from the 'hood and scintillating academic, bridges two divergent cultures in the marrow of her being. Lucas' Elliot, as sweet as he is seething, brings a vulnerability that never effaces his vengeful temper.

Yaz's music specialty, the dissonant jazz of John Coltrane, provides Hudes with a structural key. As Coltrane "democratized the notes" and gave "ugliness" a dignified freedom, as Yaz explains in a lecture, so Hudes corrals harsh voices and brutal stories into a magnificent whole that is beautiful not because it is lovely but because it is brokenheartedly tender and true.

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STEVEN STANLEY'S STAGESCENELA.COM: SPOTLIGHTING THE BEST IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

WATER BY THE SPOONFUL

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WOW!

A recovering crack addict offers online counseling to fellow former drug users as a young Iraq vet and his music prof cousin attempt to cope with the impending death of their aunt, the woman who raised him.

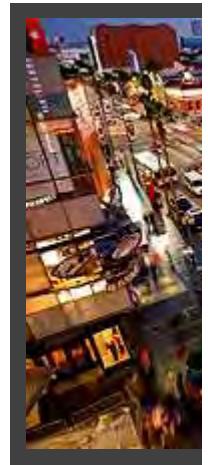
These two initially distinct plot threads come together—and powerfully so—in Quiara Alegria Hudes's Pulitzer Prize winning *Water By The Spoonful*, now getting a superbly acted West Coast Premiere at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre.



The ex-marine is aspiring actor Elliot Ortiz (Rey Lucas), whose tour of duty in Iraq has left him wounded—both physically and emotionally. His cousin is Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon), whose recent divorce has left her with battle scars of her own.



Meanwhile, somewhere in cyberspace, Haikumom (Marilyn Torres) monitors online chats between www.recovertogether.com regulars like Chutes&Ladders (Keith Randolph Smith), an IRS



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man long estranged from his adult son, and Orangutan (Ruibo Qian), a young Asian-American raised by an Anglo family in Maine and teaching English these past three months in Japan, the country of her birth.

New to Haikumom's group is Fountainhead (Robert Eli), a successful computer entrepreneur on Day One of an attempt to kick a Saturday crack habit before it becomes a weekday thing.



A seventh actor (M. Keala Milles, Jr.) plays three roles: the Iraqi ghost haunting Elliot's dreams, the professor who gives Elliot the English translation of the cryptic Arabic phrase said ghost keeps repeating, and a Japanese policeman.

It's not until a dramatic end-of-Act-One revelation that *Water By The Spoonful*'s two plot threads unite—and the Pulitzer winner ignites—but once it does, Hudes's emotionally gripping, ultimately quite moving drama provides Los Angeles theatergoers ample reason to take a drive down San Diego way.

Though only one of *Water By The Spoonful*'s six main characters seems to have escaped drug dependency (even Elliot can't stop popping pain pills prescribed following his four surgeries), Hudes's play is less about recovery from addiction than it is about our need for human connections, even the virtual ones that provide a lifeline for Haikumom and her online "family."



Water By The Spoonful is also that rare play to feature an intentionally multiracial cast. (When was the last time you saw a play with three Latinos, two Asian-Americans, an African-American, and only one WASP?) Not only does this make the recent Pulitzer Prize winner more truly representative of today's racially/ethnically diverse America than just about any play out there these days, its rainbow-hued cast spotlights just how lily-white so much of today's theater remains, or at least ends up being cast. (Be A Good Little Widow and God Of Carnage are two recent Old Globe hits that could have been cast multi-racially ... but weren't—for no other reason that casting decisions are still too often made "inside the box," and not just at the Old Globe.)

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As editor of Stage
 Los Angeles' most
 author of *Morocce*

Playwrights like Hudes, whose book for *In The Heights* scored her a Tony nomination, help remedy this inequity, and theaters and theatergoers are the richer for it.

Water For The Spoonful's West Coast Premiere is performed by an East Coast cast that could hardly be more talented, nor give finer performances than those directed with assurance and nuance by Edward Torres. (One of Torres's most effective choices is to have online conversations played face-to-face—as they *feel* to cyber friends—and not spoken into limbo other WBTS directors have apparently staged them.)

The Old Globe's decision to have *Water By The Spoonful* performed in-the-round in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre proves an inspired one that keeps the audience up-close-and-connected to the world playwright Hudes has created.



Ralph Funicello's eye-catching scenic design features jarring colors to symbolize our differences and intersecting lines to symbolize our connections. Jesse Klug's evocative lighting and Mikhail Fiksel's dramatic sound design (incorporating John Coltrane's trademark dissonance) make *Water By The Spoonful* all the more potent, while David Israel Reynoso's costumes fit each character's personal choices to a T.

Casting out of New York is by Caparelliottis Casting. Jess Slocum is stage manager.

Kristin Leahey is assistant director, Sean Fanning assistant scenic designer, Shelly Williams assistant costume designer, Jan Gist dialect coach, George Yé fight consultant, and Sarah Kolman production assistant.

Only one play can win the Pulitzer Prize for Drama out of the hundreds of new plays produced each year. This fact alone makes *Water By The Spoonful's* arrival at the Old Globe worthy of note. That it receives as all-around fine a production as the one mounted in San Diego gives *Water By The Spoonful's* West Coast Premiere bona fide event status.

Old Globe Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Balboa Park, San Diego. Through May 11. Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:00, Thursdays and Fridays at 8:00, Saturdays at 2:00 and 8:00, Sundays at 2:00 and 7:00. Wednesday matinee on April 30 at 2:00. No matinee performance on Saturday May 3. Reservations: 619 234-5623

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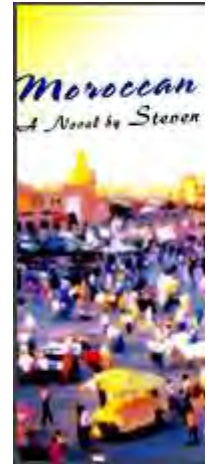
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April 20, 2014

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THEATER REVIEW: "Water By The Spoonful" at The Old Globe

JEAN LOWERISON - SDGLN THEATER CRITIC
April 22nd, 2014

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Most of the characters in Quiara Alegría Hudes' "Water By The Spoonful" are living on the edge – of addiction, of job insecurity, of squalor, perhaps even of reality or the bounds of society.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning play (whose main character Elliot is based on a family member) is the second in her trilogy of "Elliot" plays about a 20-something Iraq war veteran trying to get off pain meds and back to something like a normal life. It plays through May 11 at The Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre.

A war injury has brought Elliot Ortiz (Rey Lucas) home to Philadelphia. Now he makes hoagies in a sandwich shop and tries to avoid the ghost who's been haunting him since Iraq.

Odessa Ortiz (Marilyn Torres) has her own addiction problem. A recovering crack addict, she runs an Internet chat room for fellow addicts, where we will meet Fountainhead aka John (Robert Eli), a computer programmer and entrepreneur; Maine resident Orangutan (Ruibo Qian), and IRS pencil-pusher and San Diegan Chutes&Ladders (Keith Randolph Smith).

Elliot's cousin Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon), a trained pianist and John Coltrane fan, would like to be playing jazz but instead teaches about it as an adjunct professor of music.

These are characters trying to hang on and make their lives better, which for some of them may be happening a spoonful at a time. That spoonful has other connections which I'll leave you to discover.

There is a no dearth of books and plays about addiction. Most of them feature colorful characters with outsized actions and words. Hudes' characters are quieter, human-sized, each with a problem they are ashamed of and want desperately to conquer.

This story plays out between the real world and the online world of Odessa's chat room, the logistical problem of online chat neatly solved by scenic designer Ralph Funicello with Odessa at an onstage computer and the other chatters ranged in the

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Photo credit: Jim Cox

Sarah Nina Hayon and Rey Lucas star in Quiara Alegría Hudes's Pulitzer Prize-winning play "Water by the Spoonful."

White's aisles.

Edward Torres' sensitive direction and a strong cast make this rather flawed script work. Lucas' Elliot, dealing with the triple pains of early maternal abandonment and the wartime scars of injury and the horror of willful killing-to-order, demonstrates both the damage and the hope of a better outcome.

Hayon's Yazmin (the only non-addict in the group) shows the grit she'll need to overcome her own problems: a failed marriage and a second-choice job.

Marilyn Torres will break your heart as the recovering addict Odessa, trying to overcome her dark past and help others in the process.

Qian and Smith are convincing (though Qian's voice doesn't always carry) as denizens of Odessa's chat room, in search of sobriety and human connection.

Eli is recognizable as the addict who first needs to admit the problem to himself and his wife.

This play could use some trimming and a clearer exposition of family relationships. A genealogy chart in the program helps, but any play that requires that (and isn't based on a Russian novel) needs a rewrite.

The details

"Water By The Spoonful" plays through May 11 at The Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

Tuesday and Wednesday at 7 pm; Thursday and Friday at 8 pm; Saturday at 2 and 8 pm.; Sunday at 2 and 7 pm.

Tickets: (619) 234-5623 or [HERE](#).

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Water by the Spoonful

by Rodney Rodriguez

Contributor

Monday Apr 21, 2014

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Sarah Nina Hayon as Yazmin Ortiz and Rey Lucas as Elliot Ortiz in the California Premiere of Quiara Alegria Hudes's play 'Water by the Spoonful' (Source:Jim Cox)

Do one's actions today redeem their poor decisions of yesterday? Is a sin ever truly unforgiveable? And when exactly does the punishment fit the crime?

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Written by Quiara Alegria Hudes this drama is the second part of a three-part series that follows Elliott Ortiz (Rey Lucas), a young Puerto Rican vet who is still dealing with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder from his tours in Iraq. He soon finds his life intersecting with the lives of three complete strangers who have found each other on an Internet chat room and who seem to have everything and nothing in common at the same time. As Elliott tries to differentiate himself from the group, he finds that his life may parallel the lives of these strangers more than he first realized.

Unusually green for an undertaking by The Old Globe, "Water" still delivers a wonderfully rich and complex set of characters, storylines and a keen sense of storytelling providing a glimpse into the uncomfortable lives of a few society would rather forget. No stranger to Hudes' work, Director Edward Torres manages to use his actors to create the necessary rapid-fire discourse needed to realize the full extent of the script's humor.

"Water" would have been far less impressive without that talents of Jessie Klug in lighting design, Mikhail Fieslel in sound design, and David Israel Reynoso in costume design.



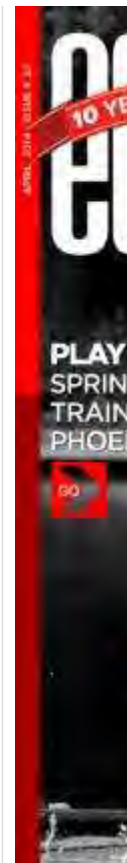
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Eclectic, stylish, and unique this set can also be described as loud, chaotic, and distracting, but Globe resident Ralph Funicello managed to find an organic balance. A tech-savvy show that required extra effort just to arrive at mediocrity (and this show surpassed mediocrity about five minutes in) "Water" would have been far less impressive without that talents of Jessie Klug in lighting design, Mikhail Fieslel in sound design, and David Israel Reynoso in costume design.

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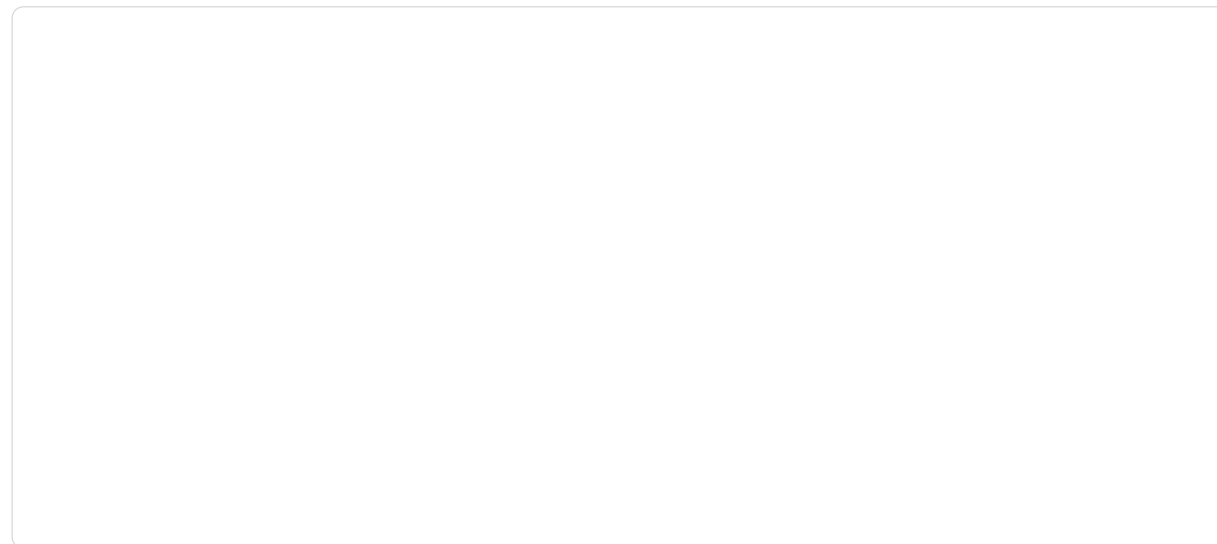


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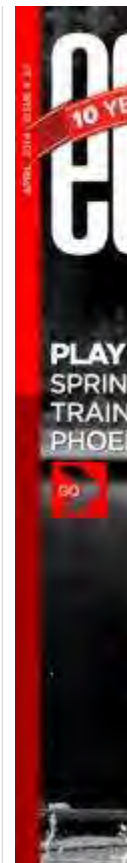
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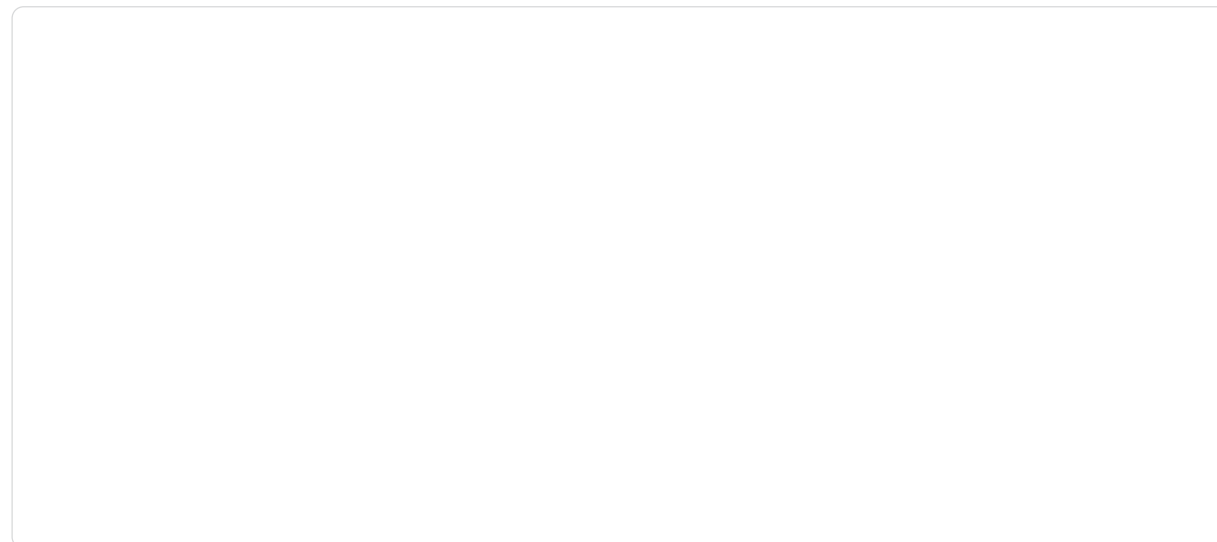


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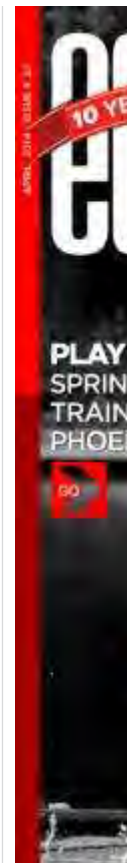
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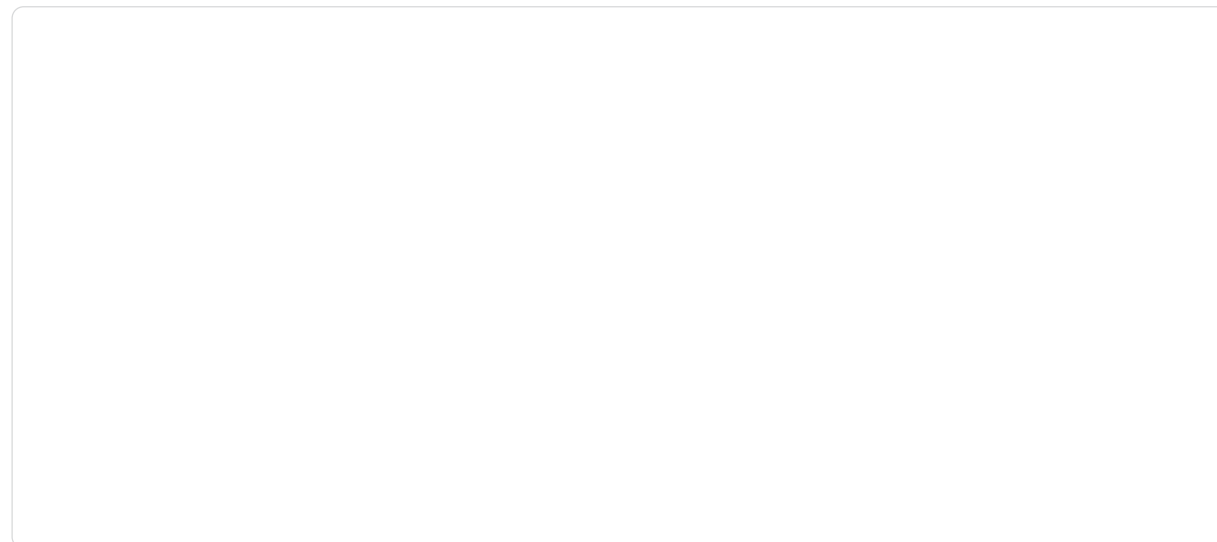


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'Water by the Spoonful' explores PTSD, Internet chats

Posted on 23 April 2014.



(from left) Marilyn Torres as Odessa Ortiz aka Haikumom, Keith Randolph Smith as Chutes&Ladders, Robert Eli as Fountainhead aka John, and Ruibo Qian as Orangutan in the California Premiere of Quiara Alegria Hudes's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Water by the Spoonful*, directed by Edward Torres, April 12 – May 11, 2014 at The Old Globe. Photo by Jim Cox.

By Eric George Tauber



Eric George Tauber

SAN DIEGO — How do you put your life back together after a tour of duty? When you've survived an environment where anyone could be an enemy, how do you get back to "normal"? That's the dilemma faced by our veterans. For them, it's like a mission for which they have not been trained.

This is the world of Elliot Ortiz, played by a rakishly charming Rey Lucas. Ortiz was medically discharged for a condition that haunts his dreams in the image of the first man he ever killed. His PTSD comes not just from Iraq. His anger and pain stem from a childhood with scars that never healed.

"Staying clean is like trying to tap dance in a mine field."

A second plot features Haikumom, the username of a woman who runs an online chat-room for recovering Iraq war veterans. Chutes & Ladders and Fountainhead speak from the aisles of the house, connected by lines of colored lights in the dark. They don't know each other's real names or faces, and yet they share deeply personal details of their lives in the

I loved the chemistry of these characters. Robert Eli –as Fountainhead- tries to put on a brave face at first, but the layers of his facade are stripped away. Marilyn Torres –as Haikumom- was absolutely genuine. She didn't play. Ruibo Quian and Keith Randolph Smith really click as Orangutan and Chutes & Ladders. They “get” each other the best of friends.

The music of John Coltrane underscores the play. Himself a coke fiend, Coltrane's frenetic dissonance captures dissonance was also reflected in Ralph Funicello's set. The floor is an abstract painting of bold colors and strong and rather distracting. It drew attention to itself more than it supported the story.

Water by the Spoonful is a window into a world that most of us will never –and should never- see. But once you see that you cannot look away.

Written by Quiara Alegria Hudes, who also penned the Tony Award-winning musical *In the Heights*, *Water by the Spoonful* is a Drama. It is produced in partnership among the Globe and two local organizations, Combat Arts and So Say We Visual Arts, which provides visual arts classes to veterans. Above the theatre, they have set up an art gallery with examples of Combat Arts work, which is poignant and disturbing, a reflection of wounded souls.

According to the Old Globe's Artistic Director, Barry Edelstein, “Their innovative approaches to helping veterans tell their narrative arts are very much a complement to what we do. The Globe believes, as they do, that art is a powerful tool for healing.”

In that spirit, may we all support the arts, our veterans and *Tikkun Olam*, the mission of repairing a broken world.

*

Eric George Tauber is a freelance writer specializing in the arts. He may be contacted via eric.tauber@sdjewishworld.com or seeks sponsorships to be placed, as this notice is, just below articles that appear on our site. To inquire, call edit contact him via donald.harrison@sdjewishworld.com

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April 21, 2014

Nary a Misstep in Globe's Water by the Spoonful

- [THEATRE REVIEW](#)

by Bill Eadie



Sarah Nina Hayon and Rey Lucas

Photos by Jim Cox

Quiara Alegria Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Water by the Spoonful*, not only captures a rich and dynamic portrayal of seemingly overwhelming struggles in American life but it does so with beauty and grace. And, the Old Globe has mounted a production (its twenty-sixth in a line of Pulitzer Prize recipients) that matches the play's elegance in dramatic construction, use of language, and insight into the human psyche.

The second of a trilogy (the first being *Elliot, a Soldier's Fugue*, which ion Theatre produced in 2010, and the third being *The Happiest Song Plays Last*, which was produced recently off-Broadway), *Water by the Spoonful* follows Elliot (Rey Lucas), a recently discharged Marine who served in Iraq, back to his home in Philadelphia. Elliot, who is haunted by the ghost (M. Keala Milles, Jr.) of the first man he killed in Iraq, is also trying to cope with the death of his aunt, who raised him, and the reappearance of a woman from his past, Odessa (Marilyn Torres). Odessa has been recovering from an addiction to crack cocaine, and using the handle Haikumom she has been moderating an Internet forum for recovering addicts. Among those who participate in her forum are a woman of Japanese ancestry whose handle is Orangutan (Ruibo Qian), an African-American man whose handle is Chutes&Ladders (Keith Randolph Smith), and a newcomer named John (Robert Eli) who adopts the handle Fountainhead.

Along with his close and trusted cousin, Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon), Elliot tries to "marine" his way through the landmines of moving back to civilian society while at the same time suffering maddening bouts of grief. Using a parallel psychology, John tries to be true to the philosophy behind his handle. He wants recovering addicts to tell him how to stop using, but he also wants to compartmentalize his grief and "man" his way through the myriad landmines that recovery entails. Orangutan, whose recovery is fragile, and Chutes&Ladders, whose life is more stable but still not anything to write home about, give Fountainhead a hard time. Haikumom, on the other hand, is more inviting, arranging to meet face-to-face with John and gently confronting him about his denial. At the same time Odessa is facing anger and emotional rejection from Elliot, as well as pressure to help the family to fulfill the saintly "Mami Ginny's" wishes for her funeral and scattering of her ashes.



(from left) Marilyn Torres, Keith Randolph Smith, Robert Eli, and Ruibo Qian

It is only through acceptance of the love available to them that both Elliot and John are able to find their way forward.

There isn't a misstep in Ms. Hudes' portrayal of a close but wounded family whose Puerto Rican cultural customs influence their beliefs and actions despite their many years living on the mainland. Nor is there any misstep in portraying the agonies of recovery from a powerfully addictive substance. The dynamics of the recovery chatroom are as believable as it gets.

Each character has a distinctive dramatic arc, and director Edward Torres has carefully coached not only the individual arcs but how they fit together to advance the arc of the play as a whole. Nothing is overplayed, nothing seems false, and the catharsis experienced by cast and audience alike is a genuinely-felt one.

The White Theatre's configuration is both a help and a hindrance. It's a help, because it brings the audience in close for maximum effect. It's a hindrance because Ralph Funicello's set pieces have to do double and triple duty and occasionally seem like they're in the way. But, Mr. Funicello, lighting designer Jesse Klug, and sound designer Mikhail Fiksel have come up with an ingenious way of portraying the chatroom that works exceedingly well.

Still, I'd like to have seen the play staged in a theater equipped with a proscenium.

It is interesting that two of our most promising young playwrights, Ms. Hudes, and Tarell Alvin McCraney, have both made their marks writing trilogies – and that the Old Globe in both cases has chosen to stage the middle part of each trilogy (in Mr. McCraney's case it was last season's *The Brothers Size*). Perhaps it's the nature of the beast: the middle part might well be the meatiest, and if you're only going to present one of the plays meaty is probably best. But, wouldn't it have been fun to have different theatre companies producing the three plays simultaneously so that audiences could experience the entire scope of the vision created by these fine authors?

Performs Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7pm, Thursdays through Saturdays at 8pm, with Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2pm. Tickets start at \$29 – see the Old Globe's information below for the website and box office phone number. The Old Globe is located at 1363 Old Globe Way. Allow extra time to park, as areas closest to the Old Globe campus are currently closed. Performs April 12 – May 11, 2014.

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[Bill Eadie](#)

In addition to reviewing theatre for San Diego Story, Bill also reviews for [TalkinBroadway.com](#). He is a member of the [San Diego Theatre Critics Circle](#) and a professor in the [School of Journalism and Media Studies](#) at [San Diego State University](#).

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Dance on a minefield

He's so addicted to alienation, he wouldn't march in his "own parade."

Quiara Alegria Hudes's *Water by the Spoonful* won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2012, and deserved it. Judging by the Old Globe Theatre's bland, by-the-numbers opening-night performance, you'd wonder why.

Do you know a crack-head? Know any "rock-heads" addicted to "eight-balls"? Know any "cluckers" in recovery? No? The production doesn't either.

Hudes writes terse, funny, street-authentic dialogue. Her characters are in such hell, a spoonful of water every five minutes would bless beyond price. Those in recovery talk "real"; they power-bomb each other with tough love and "crack humor." The latter triggers laughter and torches illusions.

Two of the most important plays of the past few years — *Water* and Lisa D'Amour's *Detroit* — are about addiction. An unpleasant subject to be sure. But the teachers, the healers — nay, the heroes — in both are recovering addicts, half out of hell, determined to help others. In *Detroit*, where the foreclosed neighborhood resembles a combat zone, they perform a surprising therapy. In *Water*, the gravest sinner, Haikumom, is a saint, at least to her extended, chat-room family.

Both plays call for radical recovery. And not

just from drugs. In *Detroit*, a jobless couple was "addicted" to a middle-class lifestyle that failed them. They're so entrenched, only a severe choice can reinvent them — even if it means torching the old ways.

In *Water*, Elliot Ortiz, a wounded, honorably discharged Marine, had a horrific experience in the Iraq war. Crack users maniacally "chase the ghost" of their first euphoric hit. Elliot's the opposite: a ghost chases him. Traditional coping mechanisms and piles of pain-killers aren't cutting it.

When they were children, Elliot's mother abandoned him and his sister in a time of grave need. It's 2009. Back from the war with re-entry shock and a damaged leg, Elliot works at Subway; he also does TV commercials and aspires to Hollywood stardom (each of Hudes's characters has inner extremes: enough baggage for an airport terminal and occasional glimmers of grace). Except for his cousin Yaz, an adjunct music teacher, Elliot has no connections. He's so addicted to alienation, he wouldn't march in his "own parade."

Haikumom — a name dripping with irony, we learn later — home-schools recovering addicts long-distance. A junkie "who dug lower than the dungeon," she created a chat-room on the

THEATER

JEFF SMITH



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internet. She counsels with strict rules, censors foul language. Among her hyperspace connections: Chutes&Ladders (a “non-confrontational” African-American man in San Diego), Orangutan (Japanese-American woman wanting to see the birth parents who abandoned her), and Fountainhead. A rich “newby,” he takes such pride in his condition, his chat-mates try to gouge him a new one.

Fountainhead, who wrecked his Porsche and once headed a large company, doesn’t fit the “crack-head” stereotype. But then none of the characters do. All are articulate and come from various social classes. What they share is what the Globe’s opening night missed: the desperate, hour-by-hour firefight against giving in. They crave, they burn in hell, but the cast rarely conveyed the tangled immensity of that “jones.”

As one character says, “it’s like trying to dance on a minefield.”

Water should tighten like a tourniquet. Too often the cast played the idea of a “chat” room literally. They spoke in narrow, edgeless tones. There was too much “air” — space between deliveries — in the dialogue. The pace lagged throughout. Portrayals lacked nuance.

Marilyn Torres’s Haikumom always conveyed an inner life; a tormented past bubbled below. The others stayed near the surface in varying degrees. Rey Lucas gave Elliot a viable arc but until the end, was two-dimensional, as were Rubio Qian (Orangutan) and Sarah Nina Hayon (Yazmin).

As Chutes&ladders, Keith Randolph Smith had a stable presence and many of the best lines, though his measured voice felt mannered. As Fountainhead, Robert Eli was obviously playing against the stereotype. But he was so glib it looked like Fountainhead wanted to cut down on calories, not cut away from the “hard iron” of crack (actor note: play the “jones”).

Along with the need for radical recovery — which, given the economic crisis, myriad foreclosures, and joblessness, could be a metaphor for these times — *Water* is also about movement and stasis. The characters communicate globally, via the internet, but are immobile. Ralph Funicello’s set nicely portrays cyberspace: a jazzy, multicolored floor and colored wires flashing above, but passes on Hudes’s homey, “cracked” details: “a duct-taped La-Z-Boy, salvaged trash,” and “busted up” chairs, the “worn-in feel of life.” ■

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In the Old Globe's Water by the Spoonful, recovering addicts find support in a chat room.

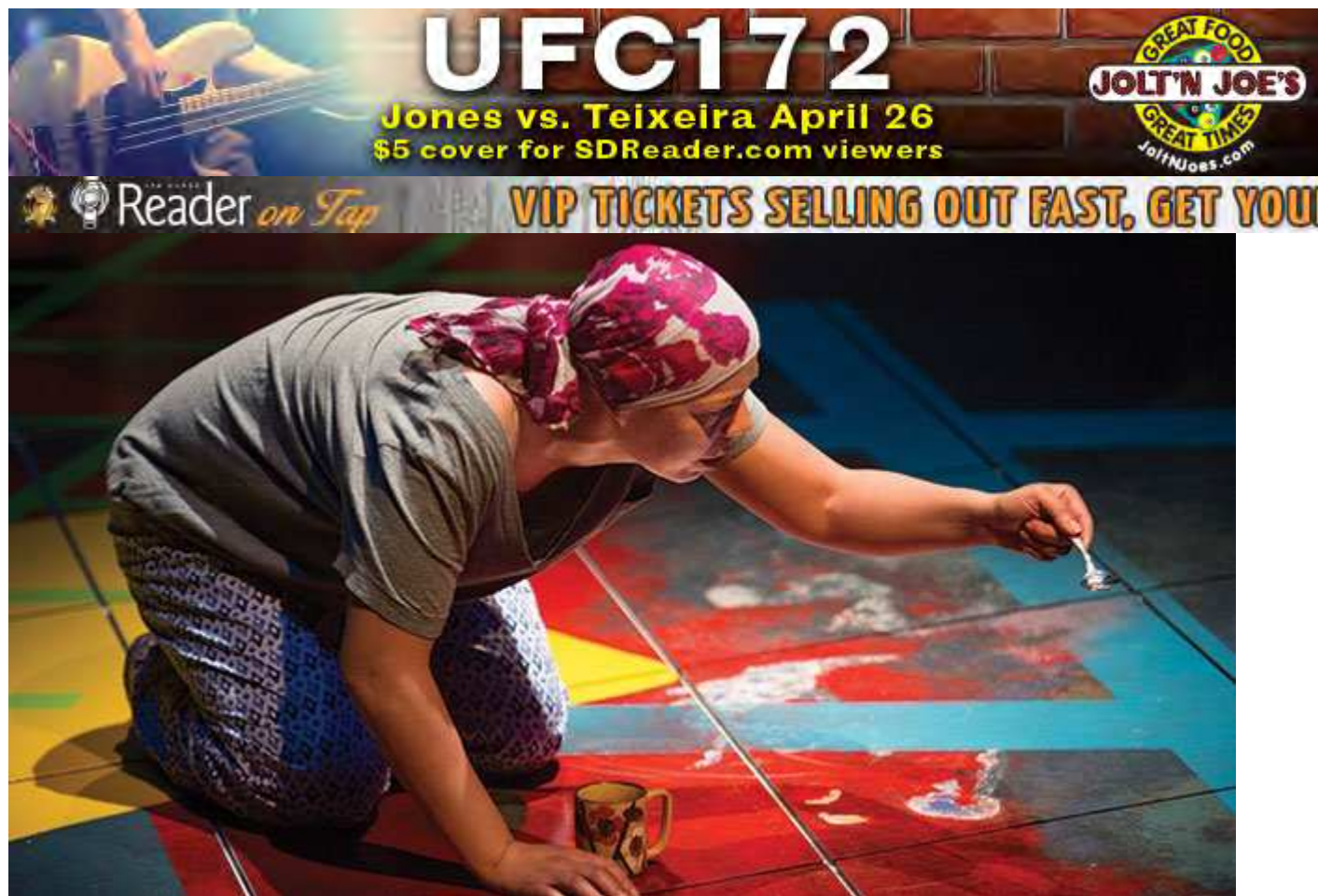
Water by the Spoonful, by Quiara Alegria Hudes

Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park

Directed by Edward Torres; cast: Robert Eli, Sarah Nina Hayon, Rey Lucas, M. Keala Miles, Jr., Rubio Qian, Keith Randolph Smith, Marilyn Torres; scenic design, Ralph Funicello; costumes, David Israel Reynoso; lighting, Jesse Klug; sound, Mikhail Fiksel

Playing through May 11; Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:00 p.m., Thursday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m. Sunday at 7:00 p.m. Matinee Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 p.m. 619-234-5623

San Diego Reader



- In the Old Globe's *Water by the Spoonful*, recovering addicts find support in a chat room.
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Dance on a minefield

The Old Globe serves *Water by the Spoonful*.

By [Jeff Smith](#), [April 23, 2014](#)

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[Water by the Spoonful](#)

- [Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre](#), 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park
- \$29 - \$74

Quiara Alegria Hudes's *Water by the Spoonful* won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2012, and deserved it. Judging by the Old Globe Theatre's bland, by-the-numbers opening-night performance, you'd wonder why.

Do you know a crack-head? Know any "rock-heads" addicted to "eight-balls"? Know any "cluckers" in recovery? No? The production doesn't either.

Hudes writes terse, funny, street-authentic dialogue. Her characters are in such hell, a spoonful of water every five minutes would bless beyond price. Those in recovery talk "real"; they power-bomb each other with tough love and "crack humor." The latter triggers laughter and torches illusions.

Two of the most important plays of the past few years — *Water* and Lisa D'Amour's *Detroit* — are about addiction. An unpleasant subject to be sure. But the teachers, the healers — nay, the heroes — in both are recovering addicts, half out of hell, determined to help others. In *Detroit*, where the foreclosed neighborhood resembles a combat zone, they perform a surprising therapy. In *Water*, the gravest sinner, Haikumom, is a saint, at least to her extended, chat-room family.

Both plays call for radical recovery. And not just from drugs. In *Detroit*, a jobless couple was "addicted" to a middle-class lifestyle that failed them. They're so entrenched, only a severe choice can reinvent them — even if it means torching the old ways.

In *Water*, Elliot Ortiz, a wounded, honorably discharged Marine, had a horrific experience in the Iraq war. Crack users maniacally "chase the ghost" of their first euphoric hit. Elliot's the opposite: a ghost chases him. Traditional coping mechanisms and piles of pain-killers aren't cutting it.

When they were children, Elliot's mother abandoned him and his sister in a time of grave need. It's 2009. Back from the war with re-entry shock and a damaged leg, Elliot works at Subway; he also does TV commercials and aspires to Hollywood stardom (each of Hudes's characters has inner extremes: enough baggage for an airport terminal and occasional glimmers of grace). Except for his cousin Yaz, an adjunct music teacher, Elliot has no connections. He's so addicted to alienation, he wouldn't march in his "own parade."

Haikumom — a name dripping with irony, we learn later — home-schools recovering addicts long-distance. A junkie "who dug lower than the dungeon," she created a chat-room on the internet. She counsels with strict rules, censors foul language. Among her hyperspace connections: Chutes&Ladders (a

“non-confrontational” African-American man in San Diego), Orangutan (Japanese-American woman wanting to see the birth parents who abandoned her), and Fountainhead. A rich “newby,” he takes such pride in his condition, his chat-mates try to gouge him a new one.

Fountainhead, who wrecked his Porsche and once headed a large company, doesn’t fit the “crack-head” stereotype. But then none of the characters do. All are articulate and come from various social classes. What they share is what the Globe’s opening night missed: the desperate, hour-by-hour firefight against giving in. They crave, they burn in hell, but the cast rarely conveyed the tangled immensity of that “jones.”

As one character says, “it’s like trying to dance on a minefield.”

Water should tighten like a tourniquet. Too often the cast played the idea of a “chat” room literally. They spoke in narrow, edgeless tones. There was too much “air” — space between deliveries — in the dialogue. The pace lagged throughout. Portrayals lacked nuance.

Marilyn Torres’s Haikumom always conveyed an inner life; a tormented past bubbled below. The others stayed near the surface in varying degrees. Rey Lucas gave Elliot a viable arc but until the end, was two-dimensional, as were Rubio Qian (Orangutan) and Sarah Nina Hayon (Yazmin). As Chutes&ladders, Keith Randolph Smith had a stable presence and many of the best lines, though his measured voice felt mannered. As Fountainhead, Robert Eli was obviously playing against the stereotype. But he was so glib it looked like Fountainhead wanted to cut down on calories, not cut away from the “hard iron” of crack (actor note: play the “jones”).

Along with the need for radical recovery — which, given the economic crisis, myriad foreclosures, and joblessness, could be a metaphor for these times — *Water* is also about movement and stasis. The characters communicate globally, via the internet, but are immobile. Ralph Funicello’s set nicely portrays cyberspace: a jazzy, multicolored floor and colored wires flashing above, but passes on Hudes’s homey, “cracked” details: “a duct-taped La-Z-Boy, salvaged trash,” and “busted up” chairs, the “worn-in feel of life.”

[Water by the Spoonful](#), by Quiara Alegria Hudes

[Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre](#)

1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park

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Rey Lucas and Sarah Nina Hayon in the Old Globe's "Water by the Spoonful"

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Water by the Spoonful, San Diego

This Pulitzer-winning drama's two threads are woven in alternately sad and funny patterns.

By Quiara Alegría Hudes

Directed by Edward Torres

The Old Globe, San Diego

April 12 – May 11, 2014

There's an old saying that you can't choose your family. It's true, to some extent, but the relationships in "Water by the Spoonful" show it can be a lot more complicated.

Set in Philadelphia, and pretty much everywhere else, the Pulitzer-winning play tracks two parallel, and ultimately intersecting, threads. One follows Elliot Ortiz (Rey Lucas), an Iraq War veteran haunted by a bum leg and an actual ghost. Family is supreme for Elliot, who is devoted to his dying mother and his older cousin Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon), an adjunct music professor. He works at a Subway and is trying to figure out that next elusive step.

The other thread follows a chat room for recovering crack addicts. Profane, sarcastic, self-effacing, the participants supply gallons of tough love for their struggling peers. Their colorful online handles fail to blur the fear that unites them: Orangutan (Ruibo Qian), Chutes&Ladders (Keith Randolph Smith), Fountainhead (Robert Eli), and the site's moderator HaikuMom (Marilyn Torres).

Alternately heart-rending and hilarious, the play's genius hits in layers. There's the ghost with the seemingly innocuous question; the strident vulnerability of the chat room addicts; and the easygoing sibling relationship between Elliot and Yazmin. Every sentence hits its intended target. Even better, "Water by the Spoonful" doesn't over-explain. Some questions linger for a long time.

This is an emotional journey and the cast steps up. Their characters are angry but restrained; fearful but brave. They understand the play's underlying power is its ability to explain complicated histories by simply being in the present. Smith, in particular, stands out for his work as the perpetually exasperated Chutes&Ladders. He might need an eternity to make amends.

The staging and Torres' direction are especially impressive. The relationships between the addicts could easily seem distant. But by (mostly) ditching the keyboards, the production generates a heightened sense of intimacy. Creative lighting (by Jesse Klug) shows us who is tapping out a frenetic message. We get that they are shouting at each other from thousands of miles away.

With all these scarred characters, there's more damage waiting just over the horizon. The beauty of the play is that each injury is paired with redemption and, in the end, a cathartic

finale. I get goose bumps just thinking about it.

Josh Baxt

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Josh Baxt (<http://culturevulture.net/author/joshbaxt/>)

 San Diego, CA

Josh Baxt has an MFA in creative writing from San Diego State University and writes for a local nonprofit. His play, *Like a War*, was produced for the annual Fritz litz. Josh's short fiction has been published in the anthologies *Sunshine Noir* and *Hunger and Thirst*, as well as the journal *City Works*.


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“Water by the Spoonful”– The Old Globe

The title of the 2012 winner of the Pulitzer Prize, “Water by the Spoonful,” refers to doctor’s orders: how a mother can save her two seriously dehydrated young children. In different ways, it doesn’t end well for any of them. The title is also a metaphor for the gut-wrenching play and its colorfully flawed characters. Their heart-rending stories are doled out in small doses. And in each case, it takes one spoonful, one baby step at a time, to reach some semblance of recovery.

An array of seemingly disparate people desperately try to find human connection. They don’t always succeed. But they keep trying, which is the message here... reach out, push on, no matter how dissonant or incomprehensible the world may seem. The music of John Coltrane is also used as a metaphor, but somewhat less effectively.

Acclaimed playwright Quiara Alegría Hudes knows her subjects well. This is the second part of a trilogy set in her native Philadelphia, inspired by her Puerto Rican family. Everyone here is trying to break out of a confining life. Addiction takes many forms. For those in Haiku Mama’s internet chat-room, the escape-hatch is crack cocaine. For Eliot, the angry, confused, haunted Iraq War vet, it’s pain pills from a leg injury and subsequent surgeries. For his cousin Yazmin, education is the way out. She has a music degree, teaches at Swarthmore, tries to distance herself from the family. But when her aunt, Eliot’s surrogate mother, dies, Yaz is sucked back in; it’s the uncontrollable lure of a drug, another neck-snapping ride on the pleasure/pain roller-coaster.

In this California premiere, the Old Globe has mounted a stunning production. The cast is superb; we come to really care about these six damaged souls. Expert director Edward Torres and an exceptional

design team have created a magical space, where a ghost glides by in post-traumatic flashback and iridescent cables flicker during internet interactions. And a glorious final stage picture leaves an indelible, liquid image of bonding and helping and healing.

“Water by the Spoonful” runs through May 11, in the Old Globe’s White Theatre, in Balboa Park.

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“Mandate Memories”– North Coast Repertory Theatre

For sheer infotainment value, a fascinating mix of history and personal drama, you can’t beat “Mandate Memories,” the world premiere at North Coast Repertory Theatre.

The two-hander reunites London-based playwright Lionel Goldstein and director David Ellenstein, who worked together at North Coast on the internationally produced “Halpern and Johnson.” Lately, they’ve been tweaking “Mandate Memories,” and though it can still use some trimming of historical background data, it’s a moving, touching pas de deux.

In the summer of 2009, a middle-aged English homemaker is tending her beloved garden when a visitor arrives with a letter written, during Israel’s war for independence 60 years ago, by the father she never met. The elderly Froelich dances around her many questions, persistently cryptic and enigmatic. An Austrian-born Israeli, a survivor of Bergen-Belsen and a freedom-fighter in Palenstine, he doles out information slowly, gradually preparing her for the shocking revelation of his long-time connection to her life.

The British were intimately involved in the formation of the state of Israel, in many not-so-savory ways, he tells her. She thinks her father, a Captain, was killed by Jewish terrorists – which is true, but not the way she was led to believe.

The historical elements of Goldstein’s tale are factual, especially the hair-raising international game of ‘chicken’ played with soldiers’ lives.

The production is lovely; the beautifully detailed set is elegantly lit. Ellenstein’s sensitive direction allows emotional moments to breathe, and teases all the nuance from these disparate characters, marvelously inhabited by L.A. actor Apollo Dukakis and local favorite Rosina Reynolds. Dukakis’ Froelich is intriguing, a tortured man who has seen – and participated in – more than his share of horrors. Reynolds is equally excellent as the wary, skeptical Jane Sterling who, like the story, gradually unfolds. Their arguments over the current Israeli-Palestine conflict will pique your social and intellectual interest. Their personal journey will touch your heart.

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Battling demons in Balboa Park

Water by the Spoonful, the second play in Quiara Alegria Hudes' three-work *Elliot Cycle*, continues the story of Puerto Rican Elliot Ortiz, an honorably discharged Marine who served in Iraq and returns to America with a fair share of personal demons. The 2012 Pulitzer Prize-winning work is now on stage at The Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, a small space that's conducive to a story that traffics heavily in connections—broken ones and ones aspired to. A prevailing sense of claustrophobia deepens the personal hells of crack addiction, post-traumatic stress disorder and family tragedy.

Still, *Water by the Spoonful* is uplifting in its moments of forgiveness and courage.

Elliot's (Rey Lucas) struggles are many: He's addicted to pain pills and haunted by a specter from his military past, his adoptive mother (his aunt) has died, he wants a Hollywood career instead of one making sandwiches at Subway and his birth mother is a recovering crack head. How much can one angry young man bear?

The play's parallel plot, which becomes one with the main in Act 2, involves a cyberspace chat site for crack addicts. The site manager is Odessa (Marilyn Torres), who happens to be that birth mother from whom Elliot's estranged. Conversing back and forth in cyber-recovery are "Orangutan" (Ruibo Qian) and

"Chutes&Ladders" (Keith Randolph Smith), with a newbie to the site, "Fountainhead" (Robert Eli), fighting a battle of his own against denial. The trouble with this part of the play is that in today's era of instantaneous texting and tweeting, chat-room conversation seems so slow. Before the Odessa and Elliot stories converge in Act 2, the chat-site scenes in Act 1 feel like an interruption of the more urgent events of Elliot's tumbledown life. That said, the Globe's staging of the Internet sequences, with use of laser-like connecting lines on the floor and in the rafters, is inspired, and, to some extent, the fledgling relationship between "Orangutan" and "Chutes&Ladders" is the play's most satisfying element.

Edward Torres directs a visually powerful production that's rife with big statements—perhaps too many. *Water by the Spoonful* will leave you wrung out.

It runs through May 11 at The Old Globe Theatre. \$29 and up. oldglobe.org

—David L. Coddon



MARILYN TORRES AND REY LUCAS



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Wednesday, Apr 23, 2014

'Water by the Spoonful' takes on demons at The Old Globe

Quiara Alegria Hudes' play tops our coverage of local productions

By [David L. Coddon](#)




[Calenda](#)

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Marilyn Torres and Rey Lucas

- Photo by Jim Cox

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Write to davidc@sdcitybeat.com and editor@sdcitybeat.com.

Opening

Jungle Book: In San Diego State University's adaptation of the classic story, the adventures of Mowgli, Bagheera, Baloo and Shere Kahn are set in a secret jungle in Balboa Park. Opens April 25 at SDSU's Don Powell Theatre. theatre.sdsu.edu

Old Jews Telling Jokes: A comedy revue featuring five actors paying homage to classic jokes, inspired by a website of the same name. Opens April 23 at the Lyceum Theatre at Horton Plaza, Downtown. lyceumevents.org

Simply Shakespeare / As You Like It: To celebrate William Shakespeare's birthday (and death day), San Diego Actors Theatre will perform a staged reading of *As You Like It*—right after the actors draw names of characters from a hat. It happens on April 23 in the Crivello Theatre at Francis Parker School in Linda Vista. sdactorstheatre.net

Thrill Me: The Leopold & Loeb Story: A musical based on the true 1924 story of two young





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Marilyn Torres as Odessa Ortiz aka Haikumom in "Water by the Spoonful" at The Old Globe (Photo by Jim Cox)



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About Elliot

Charlene Baldrige
Uptown News

Whether they realize it or not, San Diego audiences may have experienced the work of Pulitzer Prize winner Quiara Alegria Hudes at least twice. Hudes's play "Elliot: a Soldier's Fugue" was produced in its West Coast premiere by ion theatre company in 2010, and Hudes wrote the book for the Tony Award-winning musical "In the Heights," seen here at San Diego Repertory Theatre, and earlier in its Broadway tour when it was presented by Broadway San Diego at the Civic Theatre.

Currently, Hudes's 2012 Pulitzer-winning play, "Water by the Spoonful," may be seen until May 11 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, produced by The Old Globe. "Water by the Spoonful" is the middle part of the playwright's trilogy concerning Elliot Ortiz, a veteran of the Iraq war and member of a family with origins in Puerto Rico.

Elliot's adoptive mother, Ginny, a nurse during in the Vietnam War, was introduced in "Elliot," along

way among Elliot and Yazmin's scenes. Elliot's birth mother Odesa Ortiz (Marilyn Torres), who uses the screen name Haikumom, runs an online support group for other cocaine addicts in various stages of recovery. Their sobriety ranges from one day to many days. All are hanging in, dependent upon one another's cyberspace presence. Among them are Fountainhead (Robert Eli), a businessman

fucked up but at least we had someplace to go," Elliot says. He does not approve of Odesa's online home and her family of addicts. When it comes time to pay for Ginny's cremation and flowers for the memorial service, Elliot berates Odesa unmercifully for her lack of ability to contribute monetarily.

M. Keala Milles, Jr. plays several roles, most chilling of which is the ghost of Elliot's first kill in Iraq. In fact, everyone in Hudes's play is haunted in some way. We discover the ways they have betrayed themselves and others as they expose their pain and human need for love





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"Water by the Spoonful"

Tuesdays through Sundays | through May 11
8 p.m. Thurs.-Sat.; 2 p.m. Sat. and Sun.;
7 p.m. Sun., Tues., and Wed. | The Old Globe Theatre
1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park | tickets start at \$29
theoldglobe.org or 619-23-GLOBE

with Elliot's father, a veteran of that war, and Elliot's grandfather, who fought in the Korean War.

When "Water by the Spoonful" begins, the unseen Ginny is dying. The play is set in 2009, six years after Elliot's original deployment. He still suffers from a serious leg wound and possibly from PTSD and addiction to painkillers. Unable to get on with his life, he works making sandwiches at Subway, lives with Ginny and hangs out with his cousin Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon), an intelligent, high-powered academic and composer.

A separate plot line threads its

on the downward spiral to losing his company and his family, and Orangutan (Ruiho Qian), a Japanese immigrant who is sweet on Chutes&Ladders (Keith Randolph Smith). With the possible exception of Haikumom, none of them has met the others face to face.

When Fountainhead receives unkind criticism from Chutes&Ladders, for instance, Haikumom meets Fountainhead face to face, armed with brochures from a number of recovery facilities, trying to convince him he needs treatment.

"Our family may have been

(l to r) Marilyn Torres as Odessa Ortiz aka "Haikumom," Keith Randolph Smith as "Chutes&Ladders," Robert Eli as "Fountainhead" aka John and Ruiho Qian as "Orangutan" in "Water by the Spoonful" at The Old Globe

(Photo by Jim Cox)

and connection.

Initially, the play requires much of us, but once we're hip to its jazz-inflected rhythms and riffs, its complexity is a joyous challenge. Directed by Edward Torres, the Globe's acting company is magnificent; each character has a backstory that fathoms deep. We already know Elliot's. Even the wisest and proudest among them falls from grace and because of the respect accorded them by the playwright, we identify with their failures, struggles and triumphs. And lest you think oh, how bleak, we laugh a lot too. These people are treasures.

Ralph Funicello's fiber optic-inspired set is wondrous, too, especially as lighted by Jesse Klug and infused with Mikhail Fiksel's Coltrane-inspired sound design. David Israel Raynoso is the costume designer.



About Elliot

Posted: April 25th, 2014 | [Arts & Entertainment](#), [Featured](#), [Theater Reviews](#) | [No Comments](#)

Charlene Baldrige | Uptown News

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A separate plot line threads its way among Elliot and Yazmin's scenes. Elliot's birth



Marilyn Torres as Odessa Ortiz aka "Haikumom," at The Old Globe (Photo by Jim Cox)

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(l to r) Marilyn Torres as Odessa Ortiz aka "Haikumom," Keith Randolph Smith as "Chutes&Ladders," Robert Eli as "Fountainhead" aka John and Ruibo Qian as "Orangutan" in "Water by the Spoonful" at The Old Globe (Photo by Jim Cox)

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(l to r) Marilyn Torres as Odessa Ortiz aka "Haikumom" and Rey Lucas as Elliot Ortiz at The Old Globe (Photo by Jim Cox)

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"Water by the Spoonful"

Tuesdays through Sundays | through May 11

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Jack Lyons
Theatre & Film
Critic

From the pen of the librettist of the 2007 Tony winning musical “In the Heights” comes “Water by the Spoonful”, the second installment in playwright Quiara Alegria Hudes’ exciting Elliot Cycle stories: three stand-alone plays written over an eight-year period depicting the plight of her lead character Elliot Ortiz.

As

back-story for “Water by the Spoonful”, which won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for drama, the character of Ortiz is a bright, but haunted, young Puerto Rican returning Iraq war veteran who has been attempting to put his fractured Philadelphia home life back together.

He is haunted by the “ghost” of an Afghan man he shot and killed during his tour of duty, when all the man asked

for was his passport back after being questioned by Elliot. In this second installment Elliot is solidly played by Rey Lucas, who navigates Elliot’s mood swings both with intensity and humor.



Photo by Jim Cox.

It’s a complex story that revolves around an internet Chat Room/Hotline for crack addicts trying to remain clean. New York actor Marilyn Torres shines in a wonderfully nuanced performance as Odessa Ortiz (Elliot’s mother) aka Haikumom, and the manager of the chat room. The entire cast of this powerful, and at times, poignant play, dredge up their personal demons with such moving and insightful performances one gets a real sense what former drug abusers go through and feel in their conflicted desperation to remain clean as they come to grips with their inner demons. Reality checks can be

very scary. The decisions they make are life altering.

Five other



Photo by Jim Cox.

characters fill the Chat Room with their compelling stories that deftly intersect and illuminate the larger issue of “equal-opportunity offending drugs” in today’s American society. In playwright Hudes’ revealing play, rich 1-percenters like Fountainhead/John smoothly played by Robert Eli, are also caught in the drug net of crack users along with internet chat room recovering members Orangutan played by Ruibo Qian, and Chutes & Ladders, played by Keith Randolph Smith. All three turns are nicely drawn performances. Yazmin Ortiz, a cousin of Elliot played by Sarah Nina Hayon, is the most stable and mainstream of Hudes’ characters. Hayon who plays the focused “cooler head” in the explosive moments comes across suspiciously like the alter-ego of playwright Hudes. And that’s not all bad. “Water by the Spoonful” is a play with several narrative threads that have to come to together at the end. What better way to accomplish this than to have the playwright infuse her insights. When combined with the personal vision of director Edward Torres, the audience is treated to a somewhat edgy, but definitely, a very thought-provoking evening in the theatre. It will be interesting to see the third installment in the “Elliot Cycle” and find out the fate of Hudes’ Elliot character.

The creative team led by director Torres along with one of the Globe’s masterful set



Photo by Jim Cox.

designer's Ralph Funicello, has staged this production in the round without losing a dramatic moment or angle in the process. Jesse Klug's lighting is spot on, as are the costumes designed by David Israel Reynoso; who also designed the lush costumes for the Globe's production "Time and the Conways" currently gracing stage of the Darlene and Donald Shiley theatre.

"Water by the Spoonful", on the White stage, runs through May 11, 2014.

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Water by the Spoonful at Old Globe

Pulitzer Prize Winner by Quiara Alegria Hudes

By: Jack Lyons - 04/29/2014

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Quiara Alegria Hudes's
Pulitzer Prize winning play.



Cascading emotions prevail
in taut drama.



At the Old Globe in San
Diego.

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Five other characters fill the Chat Room with their compelling



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The creative team led by director Torres along with one of the Globe’s masterful set designer’s Ralph Funicello, has staged this production in the round without losing a dramatic moment or angle in the process. Jesse Klug’s lighting is spot on, as are the costumes designed by David Israel Reynoso; who also designed the lush costumes for the Globe’s production “Time and the Conways” currently gracing stage of the Darlene and Donald Shiley theatre.

“Water by the Spoonful”, on the White stage, runs through May 11, 2014.

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Let's Review! Tragedies of life flow from 'Water by the Spoonful' at The Old Globe

By Diana Saenger

Let's Review

The bright, multi-colored floor on the set of Quiara Alegría Hudes' "Water by the Spoonful," draws awes from many Globe patrons as they take their seats for the California premiere of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama. The colors reflect the play's characters who are as different and electrifying as those bright hues on the floor.

Director Edward Torres does a great job with a fine cast in balancing the characters' up and down personalities. By the second and third acts, the audience is intrigued to know how everything will end.

Puerto Rican Odessa Ortiz (Marilyn Torres) is a recovering drug addict running a chat room under the name "Hakiumom." She is also the mother of Elliot Ortiz (Rey Lucas), a soldier just home from service in Iraq.



Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon) and her nephew, Elliot, (Rey Lucas) get reacquainted after his military service in 'Water by the Spoonful,' directed by Edward Torres at The Old Globe Theatre. Jim Cox

Elliot is having problems readjusting to his life and gets advice from his Aunt Yazmin (Sarah Nina Hayon), a professor he sometimes listens to and other times shuts out. He's tried several jobs, but has a physical injury from his military service. However, his biggest obstacle seems to be a touch of PTSD, which has him seeing a ghost (M. Keala Milles, Jr.) occasionally walk through the room muttering something in Arabic.

Three characters trying to overcome addictions appear off and on at the bottom of the stairways surrounding the stage, which is slightly confusing when you realize they're supposed to be on their computers at home logging into "Hakiumon's" chat room. Madeleine (Ruibo Qian), aka Orangutan, is a vibrant Japanese-

American as flashy as her dark-red hair. At times she debates with the others in an effort to help them become drug free.

Even though she's never seen him, Orangutan has a particular interest in Clayton (Keith Randolph Smith), aka Chutes & Ladders, an African-American who works for the IRS. At one point, she invites him to go to China with her.

When new chatter, John, (Robert Eli), aka Fountainhead, logs on he's a little too arrogant and is scolded by the others. He's doing heavy drugs and trying to keep it a secret from his wife and daughter, while maintaining a "normal" life. Hakiumom cautions Orangutan and Chutes & Ladders to ease off and give Fountainhead a break.

The characters attribute their addictions to the ongoing trials in their lives — a dying mother, abandonment by parents, the rough road to recovery. Despite their ethnic differences and the fact that they live in different areas of the country, the chatters begin to form a security blanket among themselves congratulating each other for good steps and scolding for the bad.

"Water by the Spoonful," is recommended for mature audiences.

If you go: The play runs through May 11 at The Old Globe Theatre's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Tickets from \$29 at (619) 234-5623. TheOldGlobe.org

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San Diego Theater Review: WATER BY THE SPOONFUL (The Old Globe)

by [Tony Frankel](#) on May 1, 2014

in [Theater-Los Angeles](#), [Theater-Regional](#)



WATER IS THE GIFT OF LIFE



Water by the Spoonful is the second play in Quiara Alegria Hudes' "Elliot Cycle," three stand-alone plays written over an eight-year period. *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue*, the first in the trilogy and a finalist for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize, follows the title character, a perky but troubled Puerto Rican Marine serving a tour of

duty in Iraq, and his family in Philadelphia. The final play, *The Happiest Song Plays Last*, which [I saw at the Goodman in Chicago](#), explores Elliot's journey towards peace and purpose as a lucky break in film and a cousin a half a world away put the realities of life into sharp focus. The second play, *Water by the Spoonful*, which has Elliott back in the States with a bum leg and domestic problems, made its world premiere at Hartford Stage and played Off-Broadway at Second Stage Theatre, winning the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Now, this poetic, bold, clever, and insightful drama that centers on Elliot's guilt, anger, and remorse regarding war and family, arrives at The Old Globe with a sterling ensemble as one of the most satisfying and must-see events of the season.



Tony nominated for the libretto of *In the Heights*, Hudes has degrees in playwriting (a master's from Brown) and music (a bachelor's from Yale). Each play in the triptych uses a different kind of music to trace Elliot's coming of age: *A Soldier's Fugue* utilizes the contrapuntal works of Bach, *The Happiest Song Plays Last* delves into community with Puerto Rican folk music, and *Water by the Spoonful* uses Coltrane's restless harmonic movements to illustrate several narrative threads around a common theme: How do we deal with the past in order to exorcise the demons of the present? This explains Hudes' lyrical, explosive, and stylish dialogue, even when she uses street or online slang.



Hudes draws from true events and real-life family members to tell two concurrent stories. Just how these stories relate would be a spoiler, but know that cultural and familial lamentations will collide. Creating intrigue and suspense, Hudes beautifully evolving structure takes the lives of tormented, flawed characters through a journey of hope that never for a moment feels treacherous or inauthentic.



Fidgety veteran Elliot (Rey Lucas), is not only stuck in a dead-end job at Subway while trying to instigate an acting career, he is tailed by an Iraqi ghost (M. Keala Milles, Jr.) and has an ailing mother; the latter connects him with his patient and successful (though not in love) cousin, a music teacher and composer named Yaz (Sarah Nina Hayon). Told concomitantly is the tale of Odessa (Marilyn Torres), a failed mom and recovering crack addict who spends all her free time serving as a site administrator to a chat room for struggling addicts (her online name is –Haikumom“).



The three online addicts we encounter do not sit at computers but communicate directly to each other and the audience, as if we were part of the online community (a perfect touch for this in-the-round theater, and one of the many inventive ideas by director Edward Torres). The online inhabitants include –Orangutan“ (Ruibo



Qian), a punkish Asian girl with loads of kinetic energy whose road to recovery will send her on a search for her birth parents; –Chutes&Ladders“ (Keith Randolph Smith), a sarcastic, powerful, and righteous black man who has trouble connecting offline; and –Fountainhead“ (Robert Eli), an erstwhile

successful businessman to whom honesty does not come easily— he hides his nose candy problem from his emotionally troubled wife. Just wait and see how the real world and the virtual one overlap in unforeseen and surprising ways. Aiding the journey, which is sometimes filled with symbolism, is Jesse Klug s astounding lighting design with fiber optics and directional spots.



Hudes evokes the futility of war without ever summoning contemporary politics, which makes this a timeless tale. Not everything is resolved in a tiny bundle at the end: Ghosts never completely disappear; forgiveness is an ongoing practice; and relationships are always in flux. Knowing that these co-exist as we move forward is both stirring and life-affirming.



photos by Jim Cox

Water by the Spoonful

The Old Globe

1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park

scheduled to end on through May 11, 2014

for tickets, call (619) 23-GLOBE

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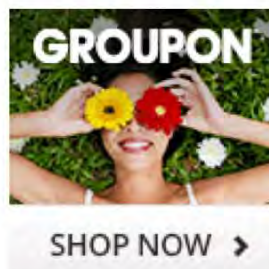
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Old Globe To Premiere Quiara Alegría Hudes' *Water by the Spoonful*

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Rey Lucas appears as Elliot Ortiz in the California Premiere of Quiara Alegría Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Water by the Spoonful*. Photo by Jim Cox.

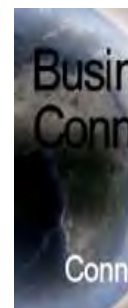
SAN DIEGO—The Old Globe today announced the complete cast and creative team for the California premiere of **Quiara Alegría Hudes' *Water by the Spoonful***, winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Directed by **Edward Torres**, *Water by the Spoonful* will run April 12 to May 11 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, part of the Globe's Conrad Prebys Theatre Center.

Water by the Spoonful is an exciting new play from the playwright behind the Tony Award-winning musical *In the Heights*. Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways. The *Hartford Courant* calls *Water by the Spoonful* "funny, warm, and uplifting, with characters that stay with you long after the play is over!"

Water by the Spoonful is the second play in Hudes' Elliot Cycle, three stand-alone plays written over an eight-year period. Each play uses a different kind of music—Bach, Coltrane, and Puerto Rican

folk music—to trace the coming of age of a bright but haunted young Puerto Rican man. The first in the trilogy, *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue*, which follows the title character as he returns to Philadelphia from serving in Iraq, debuted with Page 73 Productions and Culture Project and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2007. *Water by the Spoonful* made its world premiere at Hartford Stage and played Off Broadway at Second Stage Theatre, winning the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. The final play, *The Happiest Song Plays Last*, which opened Off Broadway in February 2014 at Second Stage Theatre, explores Elliot's journey towards peace and purpose as a lucky break in film and a cousin a half a world away put the realities of life into sharp focus.

"All of us at the Globe are looking forward to sharing this remarkable play with San Diego audiences," said Artistic Director **Barry Edelstein**. "The gifted director Edward Torres has gathered a very strong



and talented cast, and together with a top-notch design team, they are sure to bring to vivid life the extraordinary and moving humanity of one of the best American plays of the past decade.”

He continued, “As excited as I am by the production, I’m also delighted that the Globe is partnering for the first time with two local organizations we very much respect, Combat Arts and So Say We All. Their innovative approaches to helping veterans express themselves through the visual and narrative arts are very much a complement to what we do. The Globe believes, as they do, that art is a powerful force for civic good, and we know that our audiences will gain as much from engaging with their work as they as they do from watching this Pulitzer-winning play.”

Rey Lucas makes his Old Globe debut as Elliot Ortiz. He appeared on Broadway in Roundabout Theatre Company’s revival of *The Rainmaker* and has extensive New York and regional credits, including The Public Theater, Playwrights Horizons, Goodman Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, and Williamstown Theatre Festival, where he appeared in *The Taming of the Shrew* directed by Roger Rees, *Camino Real* directed by Nicholas Martin, and *Christmas in Naples* directed by Dylan Baker. He also has extensive television credits, including NBC’s newest drama, “Believe,” and acclaimed series “The Blacklist,” “The Following,” “Person of Interest,” “Weeds,” and “Army Wives.”

The cast of *Water by the Spoonful* also features **Robert Eli** (Fountainhead aka John; *Tartuffe* on Broadway), **Sarah Nina Hayon** (Yazmin Ortiz; *A Bright New Boise*), San Diego local **M. Keala Milles, Jr.** (Ghost, Professor Aman, Policeman; *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* at ion theatre company), **Ruibo Qian** (Orangutan; *Henry IV*, *Miss Julie*), **Keith Randolph Smith** (Chutes&Ladders, a San Diego resident; Broadway’s *Fences* with Denzel Washington and *Salome* with Al Pacino), and **Marilyn Torres** (Odessa Ortiz aka Haikumom; *The Agony & the Agony*).

The creative team includes Old Globe Associate Artist **Ralph Funicello** (Scenic Design), **David Israel Reynoso** (Costume Design), **Jesse Klug** (Lighting Design), **Mikhail Fiksel** (Sound Design), **Caparelliotis Casting** (Casting), and **Jess Slocum** (Stage Manager).

Water by the Spoonful is supported in part through gifts from **Elaine Lipinsky Family Foundation**, **The Prado at Balboa Park**, and **Gen7 Wines**.

Preview performances run April 12 – April 16. **Opening night is Thursday, April 17 at 8:00 p.m.** Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE, or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. In conjunction with local organizations **Combat Arts** and **So Say We All**, The Globe will also host an ongoing exhibit of art by returning veterans, and an evening of local veterans performing stories they have written about their service.



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ARTS + CULTURE

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Playwright Hudes sees struggle with addiction as a universal theme

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

Lives are in limbo in "Water by the Spoonful" — sidetracked and sabotaged and otherwise laid low by substance abuse.

That's far from the full story of Quiara Alegria Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-winning play, though. Family bonds, of various kinds and in various states of repair, also are a key concern of the work, which is about to receive its California premiere at the Old Globe Theatre.

It was family, in fact, that inspired Hudes to begin writing the plays now referred to as her "Elliot Cycle." And with "Water by the Spoonful," the middle play of the trilogy, that web of kinship stretches all the way to San Diego in a couple of ways.

The trilogy's namesake is Hudes' own cousin, Elliot Ruiz, who was badly injured in battle during the Iraq War.

"It was very quick and very early on in the conflict," the Philadelphia-bred playwright says, talking by phone from her New York home. "He was in the first Marine battalion to cross (the Iraq border) — he was one of the first guys in."

SEE 'WATER' • E2

"Water by the Spoonful"

When: Previews begin Saturday. Opens April 17. Performances: 7 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays (plus 2 p.m. April 30); 8 p.m. Thursdays-Fridays; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays; 2 and 7 p.m. Sundays. (No matinees April 12-13 or May 3.) Through May 11. **Where:** Old Globe's

Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Balboa Park. **Tickets:** About \$29-\$72 (discounts available).

Phone: (619) 234-5623 **Online:** theoldglobe.org

ILLUSTRATION BY CRISTINA BYVIK • U-T



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‘WATER’ • For playwright, recovery resounds beyond drug, alcohol woes

FROM E1

He got injured fairly quickly — he was (only) there for a handful of months.

“He then spent a few months recovering abroad, and then finally made it back to California.”

That final stage of Elliot’s recuperation — at least in an official sense — was at Camp Pendleton in northern San Diego County.

The Marine’s fictionalized theatrical counterpart was first introduced in “Elliot, a Soldier’s Fugue,” a 2007 Pulitzer Prize finalist that received its first (and so far only) San Diego production at Ion Theatre in 2010. That work documented the character’s return stateside after his injury, and also examined the impact of war on three generations of his family.

In “Water” (which premiered in 2011), Elliot is back in Philly, running a sandwich shop and struggling with an addiction to painkillers. His story is set against those of four others also dealing with substance issues; one of them is Elliot’s own mother, a recovering crack addict who heads an online support forum. And one of the people she bonds with via the chat room is a San Diego-based IRS agent who goes by the pseudonym Chutes & Ladders (and prides himself on his Padres cap).

If the flip side to addiction is recovery, though, to Hudes that word resounds far beyond troubles with drugs and alcohol. And its relevance to many areas of a life, she says, is a key reason the play was commissioned in the first place,

by Connecticut’s Hartford Stage.

“I think there’s something in the theme of recovery that is universal,” says the playwright, whose credits also include the book to “In the Heights,” the Tony Award-winning hit musical (and Pulitzer finalist in its own right). “Even though it deals with difficult and dramatic themes, there is a hopeful element to that. There is a sense of reconciliation that can come with recovery.

“And I found in my research, and in visiting various recovery groups, the humility, the kind of self-deprecating sense of humor, the sense of surrender to things in one’s life that are out of control, was really beautiful.

“Though I’ve never dealt with addiction firsthand, I was attracted to it because I’ve had family members who have. I just found recovery to be a metaphor for the human condition.”

An encore collaboration

Speaking of recoveries: The real-life Elliot’s is more or less complete these days, at least in a physical sense, Hudes says.

“He acts as if he is (recovered), but sometimes he takes it a little too far,” she says. “It’s one of those cases where the doctors are telling you, ‘You’re not going to walk again.’ And now he’s going to the boxing gym. He’s a very active guy.”

(Ruiz, who had multiple surgeries and “was really down for the count for a while,” says Hudes, was unable to continue his military career; he received an hon-



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Eddie Torres, director of "Water by the Spoonful" at the Old Globe. EDUARDO CONTRERAS • U-T

orable discharge and now lives in the L.A. area.)

At the Globe, the stage version of his story will be told with help from another ex-military man, director Edward Torres, who has a deep history with the Elliot plays.

Not only did Torres play the father in "A Soldier's Fugue" for the Latino theater company he co-founded, Teatro Vista, in a visiting production at Chicago's renowned Steppenwolf Theatre, but

last year he directed the Goodman Theatre's world premiere of "The Happiest Song Plays Last," the final play in the trilogy.

"His production was actually quite beautiful, and visually just stunning," Hudes says. "So I wanted to see what he would do with 'Water by the Spoonful.' I asked him if he'd be willing to go to California and work on it, and he was up for the challenge."

Torres, who served in the Air Force (though not



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in combat situations) during the 1980s, also shares Puerto Rican heritage with the playwright; his theater experience includes directing the world premiere of yet another Pulitzer Prize finalist, Kristoffer Diaz's wrestling-themed play "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity."

"I just think Eddie has real-life experience with a lot of the kinds of characters I write about," Hudes says. "He knows what it is to be in the diverse, contemporary world but also have deep roots in the Puerto Rican culture. These plays aren't Puerto Rican plays; they're not mainstream plays. They're somewhere in the middle, about the intersection of a diverse 2014, and what that means."

"And I just think he approaches that work from a real place of understanding."

In a chat at the Globe before rehearsal one recent weekday, Torres spoke of how he spent about a day and a half with the real-life Elliot before directing "The Happiest Song," and recently invited veterans to a "Water" rehearsal to offer feedback on the production.

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The view from here

With the off-Broadway production of "The Happiest Song Plays Last" having concluded its run just two weeks ago, Hudes is looking at life beyond the Elliot plays, which have loomed so large in her life and career for going on a decade now. (She also has become a mother twice over in that time.)

"I think the closing is a gradual process," she says. "And of course I'm already writing the next set of projects."

But "Happiest Song," she adds, "really ends with a sense of finality. (And) it was nice to sit in the theater (that day) and feel myself letting go."

Hudes actually studied to become a composer before turning to playwrighting in earnest, and each play in the trilogy has a loose musical theme — first the Bach fugue for "Elliot," then Coltrane for "Water," and finally Puerto Rican folk music for "Happiest."

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But no composing for her on that one: "I'm words," Hudes says simply.

For this playwright, words to live by.

In Globe's 'Water,' a battle to recover

Pulitzer-winning play, in California premiere here, is part of trilogy about struggling ex-Marine

By [James Hebert \(/staff/james-hebert/\)](#) 2:38 p.m. April 3, 2014



Director Eddie Torres (left) works with Rey Lucas, who plays a former Marine named Elliot Ortiz, during rehearsals for the Old Globe Theatre production of "Water by the Spoonful." — *Eduardo Contreras*

Lives are in limbo in "Water by the Spoonful" — sidetracked and sabotaged and otherwise laid low by substance abuse.

That's far from the full story of Quiara Alegría Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-winning play, though. Family bonds, of various kinds and in various states of repair, also are a key concern of the work, which is about to receive its California premiere at the Old Globe Theatre.

It was family, in fact, that inspired Hudes to begin writing the plays now referred to as her "Elliot Cycle." And with "Water by the Spoonful," the middle play of the trilogy, that web of kinship stretches all the way to San Diego in a couple of ways.

The trilogy's namesake is Hudes' own cousin, Elliot Ruiz, who was badly injured in battle during the Iraq War.

"It was very quick and very early on in the conflict," the Philadelphia-bred playwright says, talking by phone from her New York home. "He was in the first Marine battalion to cross (the Iraq border) — he was one of the first guys in. He got injured fairly quickly — he was (only) there for a handful of months.

"He then spent a few months recovering abroad, and then finally made it back to California."

That final stage of Elliot's recuperation — at least in an official sense — was at Camp Pendleton in northern San Diego County.

The Marine's fictionalized theatrical counterpart was first introduced in "Elliot, a Soldier's Fugue," a 2007 Pulitzer Prize finalist that received its first (and so far only) San Diego production at Ion Theatre in 2010. That work documented the character's return stateside after his injury, and also examined the impact of war on three generations of his family.

In "Water" (which premiered in 2011), Elliot is back in Philly, running a sandwich shop and struggling with an addiction to painkillers. His story is set against those of four others also dealing with substance issues; one of them is Elliot's own mother, a recovering crack addict who heads an online support forum. And one of the people she bonds with via the chat room is a San Diego-based IRS agent who goes by the pseudonym Chutes & Ladders (and prides himself on his Padres cap).

If the flip side to addiction is recovery, though, to Hudes that word resounds far beyond troubles with drugs and alcohol. And its relevance to many areas of a life, she says, is a key reason the play was commissioned in the first place, by Connecticut's Hartford Stage.

"I think there's something in the theme of recovery that is universal," says the playwright, whose other credits include the book to "In

the Heights," the Tony Award-winning hit musical (and a Pulitzer finalist in its own right). "Even though it deals with difficult and dramatic themes, there is a hopeful element to that. There is a sense of reconciliation that can come with recovery.

"And I found in my research, and in visiting various recovery groups, the humility, the kind of self-deprecating sense of humor, the sense of surrender to things in one's life that are out of control, was really beautiful.

"Though I've never dealt with addiction firsthand, I was attracted to it because I've had family members who have. I just found recovery to be a metaphor for the human condition."

An encore collaboration

Speaking of recoveries: The real-life Elliot's is more or less complete these days, at least in a physical sense, Hudes says.

"He acts as if he is (recovered), but sometimes he takes it a little too far," she says. "It's one of those cases where the doctors are telling you, 'You're not going to walk again.' And now he's going to the boxing gym. He's a very active guy."

(Ruiz, who had multiple surgeries and "was really down for the count for a while," says Hudes, was unable to continue his military career; he received an honorable discharge and now lives in the L.A. area.)

At the Globe, the stage version of his story will be told with help from another ex-military man, director Edward Torres, who has a deep history with the Elliot plays.

Not only did Torres play the father in "A Soldier's Fugue" for the Latino theater company he cofounded, Teatro Vista, in a visiting production at Chicago's renowned Steppenwolf Theatre, but last year he directed the Goodman Theatre's world premiere of "The Happiest Song Plays Last," the final play in the trilogy.

"His production was actually quite beautiful, and visually just stunning," Hudes says. "So I wanted to see what he would do with 'Water by the Spoonful.' I asked him if he'd be willing to go to California and work on it, and he was up for the challenge."

Torres, who served in the Air Force (though not in combat situations) during the 1980s, also shares Puerto Rican heritage with the playwright; his theater experience includes directing the world premiere of yet another Pulitzer Prize finalist, Kristoffer Diaz's wrestling-themed play "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity."

"I just think Eddie has real-life experience with a lot of the kinds of characters I write about," Hudes says. "He knows what it is to be in the diverse, contemporary world, but also have deep roots in the Puerto Rican culture. These plays aren't Puerto Rican plays, they're not mainstream plays. They're somewhere in the middle, about the intersection of a diverse 2014, and what that means.

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Vets art show tied to Globe's 'Spoonful'

Balboa Park Theatre will host free exhibits, speaking events tied to play about Iraq war veteran

By Pam Kragen (/staff/pam-kragen/) 1 p.m. April 11, 2014



A painting from the Combat Arts exhibition. A collection of Combat Arts paintings by U.S. veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan will be shown at the Old Globe during its run of "Water by the Spoonful," beginning April 12. — *Combat Arts*

BALBOA PARK — As a tie-in to its upcoming play about a U.S. soldier's troubled return from the war in Iraq, The Old Globe is hosting a series of free art, video and speaking events featuring local veterans' reflections on their war experiences.

Previews begin Saturday at the Old Globe for Quiara Alegria Hudes' 2012 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama about a Puerto Rican veteran struggling with re-integration and addiction issues upon his return to his Philadelphia home. The play, a Southern California premiere, runs through May 11.

To expand the audiences' experience on the subject, the Globe has collaborated with two local organizations — Combat Arts and So Say We All — to create the free exhibit, which will be open inside its second-floor Hattox Hall space for one hour before each performance and all day on Tuesday and April 22.

Curated by local artist and Combat Arts founder Elizabeth Washburn, the exhibit opening Saturday includes artwork created by local veterans that reflect on their war experiences. So Say We All will also create a video installation featuring interviews from its Veteran Writers Program. The videos are part of So Say We All's "Homecoming" project, focusing on the journey veterans and their families experience during the transition from military to civilian life.

At 7 p.m. April 21, So Say We All artists will present stories and readings from "Homecoming" in Hattox Hall. And following the "Spoonful" performance at 2 p.m. May 10, Washburn of Combat Arts and Justin Hudnall of So Say We All will talk about their programs and lead a guided tour of the art show and video installation.

At 7 p.m. Monday, April 14, the Globe will host a free educational Insights panel discussion offering background and educational information on the play. And finally, the audience is invited to stay for post-show discussions with members of the cast and crew following performances on April 22 and 29 and May 7.

For tickets to "Water By the Spoonful," call (619) 234-5623 or visit

theoldglobe.org (<http://theoldglobe.org>). For more information on the art exhibitions, visit sosayweallonline.com (<http://sosayweallonline.com>).

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‘Water by the Spoonful’ explores human need to connect

BY DIANA SAENGER

The California premiere of “Water by the Spoonful,” Quiara Alegría Hudes’ winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, is at The Old Globe’s Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre through May 11. Directing the play is Edward Torres, who recently directed the world premiere of Hudes’ “The Happiest Song Plays Last.”

“Water by the Spoonful,” is the second play in Hudes’ three stand-alone plays, written over an eight-year period about a man named Elliot. Each uses different music types — Bach, Coltrane and Puerto Rican folk music — to trace the coming of age of this bright, but haunted, young Puerto Rican man. Her final play, “The Happiest Song Plays Last,” opened Off Broadway in February 2014.

“I absolutely love Hudes’ writing,” Torres said. “I think ‘Water by the Spoonful’ is a wonderful play about recovery, redemption and the human connection.”

Hudes’ has produced a vast catalog of noted work. She wrote the book for the Broadway musical “In the Heights,” which received the 2008 Tony Award for Best Musical, a Tony nomination for Best Book of a Musical, was a 2009 Pulitzer Prize finalist and garnered Hudes other awards.

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As a director, actor and producer, Torres is certainly qualified to direct this work. He is co-founder and was artistic director of Teatro Vista Theatre in Chicago. He directed the world premiere of Kristoffer Diaz’s “The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity,” which was a Pulitzer Prize finalist.

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■ **IF YOU GO:** "Water by the Spoonful" runs through May 11 at The Old globe Theatre's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Tickets from \$29 at (619) 234-5623. TheOldGlobe.org



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Entrevista con el actor Rey Lucas

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KBNT News
04/24/2014 6:41 AM

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[Transcripción \(CC\) -](#)

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
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Rey Lucas Will Star in Quiara Alegría Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-Winning *Water by the Spoonful* at Old Globe

By [Carey Purcell](#)
26 Mar 2014

The complete cast and creative team have been announced for [The Old Globe's](#) production of Quiara Alegría Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Water by the Spoonful*, which will begin previews April 12 prior to an official opening April 17.

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Performances continue through May 11 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, part of the Globe's Conrad Prebys Theatre Center.

Directed by Edward Torres, *Water by the Spoonful* will feature Rey Lucas ([The Rainmaker](#), "Person of Interest") as Elliot Ortiz with Robert Eli ([Tartuffe](#), *Saturn Returns*) as Fountainhead aka John; Sarah Nina Hayon (*A Bright New Boise*, *The Provenance of Beauty*) as Yazmin Ortiz; M. Keala Milles, Jr. (*Pride and Prejudice*, *Godspell*) as Ghost, Professor Aman, Policeman; Ruibo Qian (*Henry IV*, *King Lear*) as Orangutan; [Keith Randolph Smith](#) ([King Hedley II](#), [Fences](#)) as Chutes&Ladders; and Marilyn Torres (*The Agony & the Agony*, "Maid in Manhattan") as Odessa Ortiz aka Haikumom.

Water by the Spoonful is the second play in Hudes' Elliot Cycle, three stand-alone plays written over an eight-year period. Here's how the production is billed: "Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways."

In conjunction with local organizations Combat Arts and So Say We All, The Globe will host an ongoing exhibit of art by returning veterans and an

evening of local veterans performing stories they have written about their service.

"All of us at the Globe are looking forward to sharing this remarkable play with San Diego audiences," artistic director **Barry Edelstein** said in a statement. "The gifted director Edward Torres has gathered a very strong and talented cast, and together with a top-notch design team, they are sure to bring to vivid life the extraordinary and moving humanity of one of the best American plays of the past decade."

Each play in Hudes' Elliot Cycle uses a different kind of music, including Bach, Coltrane and Puerto Rican folk music, to trace the coming of age of a bright but haunted young Puerto Rican man.

The creative team includes Old Globe associate artist Ralph Funicello (scenic design), David Israel Reynoso (costume design), Jesse Klug (lighting design), Mikhail Fiksel (sound design) and Caparelliotis Casting (casting). Jess Slocum is stage manager.

Call (619) 23-GLOBE or visit TheOldGlobe.org for more information.



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Rey Lucas, Robert Eli & More to Star in The Old Globe's WATER BY THE SPOONFUL, 4/12-5/11

March 26 2:03 PM 2014

by BWW News Desk

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The Old Globe today announced the complete cast and creative team for the California premiere of **Quiara Alegría Hudes'** *Water by the Spoonful*, winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Directed by **Edward Torres**, *Water by the Spoonful* will run April 12 - May 11, 2014 in the Sheryl and **Harvey White** Theatre, part of the Globe's **Conrad Prebys** Theatre Center. Preview performances run April 12 - April 16. Opening night is Thursday, April 17 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE, or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park. In conjunction with local organizations Combat Arts and So Say We All, The Globe will

also host an ongoing exhibit of art by returning veterans, and an evening of local veterans performing stories they have written about their service.

Water by the Spoonful is an exciting new play from the playwright behind the Tony Award-winning musical *In the Heights*. Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways. The Hartford Courant calls *Water by the Spoonful* "funny, warm, and uplifting, with characters that stay with you long after the play is over!"

Water by the Spoonful is the second play in Hudes' Elliot Cycle, three stand-alone plays written over an eight-year period. Each play uses a different kind of music-Bach, Coltrane, and Puerto Rican folk music-to trace the coming of age of a bright but haunted young Puerto Rican man. The first in the trilogy, *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue*, which follows the title character as he returns to Philadelphia from serving in Iraq, debuted with Page 73 Productions and **Culture Project** and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2007. *Water by the Spoonful* made its world premiere at Hartford

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Elliot's journey towards peace and purpose as a lucky break in film and a cousin a half a world away put the realities of life into sharp focus.

"All of us at the Globe are looking forward to sharing this remarkable play with San Diego audiences," said Artistic Director **Barry Edelstein**. "The gifted director **Edward Torres** has gathered a very strong and talented cast, and together with a top-notch design team, they are sure to bring to vivid life the extraordinary and moving humanity of one of the best American plays of the past decade."

He continued, "As excited as I am by the production, I'm also delighted that the Globe is partnering for the first time with two local organizations we very much respect, Combat Arts and So Say We All. Their innovative approaches to helping veterans express themselves through the visual and narrative arts are very much a complement to what we do. The Globe believes, as they do, that art is a powerful force for civic good, and we know that our audiences will gain as much from engaging with their work as they as they do from watching this Pulitzer-winning play."

Rey Lucas makes his Old Globe debut as Elliot Ortiz. He appeared on Broadway in Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of *The Rainmaker* and has extensive New York and regional credits, including **The Public Theater**, **Playwrights Horizons**, **Goodman Theatre**, **Yale Repertory Theatre**, and **Williamstown Theatre Festival**, where he appeared in *The Taming of the Shrew* directed by **Roger Rees**, *Camino Real* directed by **Nicholas Martin**, and *Christmas in Naples* directed by **Dylan Baker**. He also has extensive television credits, including NBC's newest drama, "Believe," and acclaimed series "The Blacklist," "The Following," "Person of Interest," "Weeds," and "Army Wives."

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Rey Lucas, Robert Eli & More to Star in The Old Globe's WATER BY THE SPOONFUL, 4/12-5/11

March 26 2:03 PM 2014

by BWW News Desk

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The cast of Water by the Spoonful also features **Robert Eli** (Fountainhead aka John; Tartuffe on Broadway), **Sarah Nina Hayon** (Yazmin Ortiz; A Bright New Boise), San Diego local M. Keala Milles, Jr. (Ghost, Professor Aman, Policeman; The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity at ion theatre company), Ruibo Qian (Orangutan; Henry IV, Miss Julie), **Keith Randolph Smith** (Chutes&Ladders, a San Diego resident; Broadway's Fences with **Denzel Washington** and Salome with **Al Pacino**), and **Marilyn Torres** (Odessa Ortiz aka Haikumom; The Agony & the Agony).

The creative team includes Old Globe Associate Artist **Ralph Funicello** (Scenic Design), **David Israel Reynoso** (Costume Design), **Jesse Klug** (Lighting Design), Mikhail Fiksel (Sound Design), **Caparelliotis Casting** (Casting), and Jess Slocum (Stage Manager).

Water by the Spoonful is supported in part through gifts from Elaine Lipinsky Family Foundation, The Prado at Balboa Park, and Gen7 Wines.

Photo by **Jim Cox**

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Photo Flash: Meet the Cast of The Old Globe's TIME AND THE CONWAYS

March 20 6:03 PM
2014

by BWW News Desk

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The Old Globe presents a revival of J.B. Priestley's period classic Time and the Conways. Directed by Rebecca Taichman, Time and the Conways will run March 29 - May 4, 2014 on the Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage in the Old Globe Theatre, part of the Globe's Conrad Prebys Theatre Center. Preview performances run March 29 - April 2. Opening night is Thursday, April 3 at 8:00 p.m. Get a first look at the cast below!

The curtain rises on a gorgeous English country home in 1919 in the midst of a game of charades played by the young Conway family at a birthday party with their friends. Flash forward to 1937 in the same house: the grown children have gathered to settle family accounts in a world not so bright as it was. For this family, time is a kind of dream: their precious moments together are fleeting and brief, but their destinies are eternal. Time and the Conways, by the author of An Inspector Calls, is just the kind of theatrical gem Globe audiences love to rediscover, with the kind of sumptuous period scenery, costumes, and artistry for which The Old Globe is renowned.

In his poignant drama of the Conways and their eventful lives in Britain between the wars-a period that Globe audiences who love "Downton Abbey" will recognize-Priestley examines the driving forces of human existence: love, ambition, and most of all, time. He conjures a striking portrait of a family in which past, present, and future are inextricably intertwined.

The cast of Time and the Conways features Leanne Agmon (Carol Conway; upcoming Hybrids), Broadway veterans Jonathan Fielding (Alan Conway; Pygmalion, The Seagull), Morgan Hallett (Madge Conway; Translations, Long Day's Journey Into Night), Rose Hemingway (Hazel Conway; How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying opposite Daniel Radcliffe), Sarah Manton (Joan Helford; One Man, Two Guvnors, London's The Coast of Utopia, South Pacific, Dirty Dancing), Leo Marks (Gerald Thornton; the Globe's Lincolnesque), Kim Martin-Cotten (Mrs. Conway; The Merchant of Venice), Max Gordon Moore (Ernest Beevers; Relatively Speaking), Amanda Quaid (Kay Conway; Equus), and Lee Aaron Rosen (Robin Conway; The Big Knife, The Normal Heart).

The creative team includes Neil Patel (Scenic Design), David Israel Reynoso (Costume Design), Scott Zielinski (Lighting Design), Matt Hubbs (Sound Design), Jan Gist (Vocal and Dialect Coach), Caparellotis Casting (Casting), and Diana Moser (Stage Manager).



Tickets to Time and the Conways can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE, or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

Photo Credit: Ken Jacques

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Leanne Agmon appears as Carol Conway, [Kim Martin-Cotten](#) as [Mrs. Conway](#), and [Amanda Quaid](#) as Kay Conway



The cast of Time and the Conways: (from left) Sarah Manton, Jonathan Fielding, Morgan Hallett, Lee Aaron Rosen, Kim Martin-Cotten (seated), Rose Hemingway, Leo Marks, Leanne Agmon, Amanda Quaid, and Max Gordon Moore.

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Amanda Quaid appears as Kay Conway, **Kim Martin-Cotten** as **Mrs. Conway**, and **Leanne Agmon** as Carol Conway



Rebecca Taichman directs J.B. Priestley's Time and the Conways



Director **Rebecca Taichman** (center) with the cast of Time and the Conways: (from left) **Sarah Manton**, **Jonathan Fielding**, **Morgan Hallett**, **Kim Martin-Cotten**, **Lee Aaron Rosen**, **Rose Hemingway**, **Leo Marks**, **Leanne Agmon**, **Amanda Quaid**, and **Max Gordon Moore**.



Old Globe Artistic Director [Barry Edelstein](#) and director [Rebecca Taichman](#)

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TIME AND THE CONWAYS, 'VANYA AND SONIA' and INTO THE WOODS Coming Up at The Old Globe, April-July 2014

March 21 7:03 PM
2014

by BWW News Desk

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The Old Globe has announced an exciting lineup of shows to kick off the spring and lead patrons into the summer. Featuring the classic Sondheim hit Into The Woods, recent Broadway success Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, and much more, there will be something for everyone in the coming months at The Old Globe. Check out the full lineup below!

From March 29 - May 4, 2014 at the Donald and Darlene Shiley Stage at Old Globe Theatre' Conrad Prebys Theatre Center, The Old Globe will present TIME AND THE CONWAYS by J.B. Priestley and directed by Rebecca

Taichman. The curtain rises on a gorgeous English country home in 1919 in the middle of a game of Blind Man's Bluff played by the young Conway family at a birthday party with their friends. Flash forward to 1937 in the same house: the grown children have gathered to settle family accounts in a world not so bright as it was. Time and the Conways, by the author of An Inspector Calls, is just the kind of theatrical gem Globe audiences love to rediscover, with the kind of sumptuous period scenery, costumes, and artistry for which The Old Globe is renowned. Tickets start at \$29. A seminar series featuring a panel of artists from the current show will take place on Monday, March 31 at 7:00 p.m. An informal question-and-answer session with cast members will take place Tuesdays, April 8 and 15 and Wednesday, April 23. Brief, illuminating post-show discussions with local experts, such as scientists, artists, historians, and scholars will take place Saturday, April 5 following the 2:00 p.m. performance.

From April 12 - May 11, 2014 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre at Conrad Prebys Theatre Center, The Old Globe will present the California premiere of WATER BY THE SPOONFUL by Quiara Alegría Hudes and directed by Edward Torres. Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Water By The Spoonful is an exciting new play from the

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support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways. Tickets start at \$29. A seminar series features a panel of artists from the current show will take place Monday, April 14 at 7:00 p.m. An informal question-and-answer session with cast members will take place Tuesdays, April 22 and 29 and Wednesday, May 7. Brief, illuminating post-show discussions with local experts, such as scientists, artists, historians, and scholars will be announced at a later time.

The Globe Guilders Fashion Show, one of the premier fashion events in San Diego, will take place on Friday, May 9, 2014 at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel. Proceeds benefit the artistic and education programs of **The Old Globe**, which has over 250,000 theatre admissions and program participants. This year's show will once again feature Naeem Khan, one of the most sought-after fashion designers in the world. The event will include a champagne reception and live and silent auctions followed by a seated luncheon and a fashion show featuring Khan's 2014 Fall Couture Line, presented by Neiman Marcus. Lois Lewis serves as Chair, and Globe Board member Sandra Redman serves as Honorary Chair. Ticket prices start at \$115. For further event information, visit www.globeguilders.org or call Barbara Bolt at (619) 889-7121.

From May 17 - June 22, 2014 at the Donald and **Darlene Shiley** Stage at the **Old Globe Theatre's Conrad Prebys** Theatre Center, **The Old Globe** presents the San Diego premiere of VANYA AND SONIA AND MASHA AND SPIKE by **Christopher Durang** and directed by **Jessica Stone**. Based on the Tony Award-nominated Broadway direction of **Nicholas Martin**, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike is the hilarious winner of the 2013 Tony Award for Best Play. Your heart has to go out to three siblings whose artsy parents named them after characters from Chekhov. Vanya and Sonia have lived at home while sister Masha has travelled the world starring in B-movies. Now Masha is back, with her boy toy Spike in tow, and she's intent on selling the house. Farce ensues. Award-winning playwright **Christopher Durang** and director **Nicholas Martin** (Pygmalion) are in sidesplitting top form with this riotous Broadway smash. Tickets start at \$29. A seminar series features a panel of artists from the current show on Monday, May 19 at 7:00 p.m. An informal question-and-answer session with cast members will take place Tuesdays, May 27 and June 3 and Wednesday, June 11.

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The Old Globe to Present Works by Veterans in During WATER BY THE SPOONFUL Run

April 10 2:04 PM 2014

by BWW News Desk

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-2012 Pulitzer Prize winner Water by the Spoonful is an exciting new play from [Quiara Alegría Hudes](#), the playwright behind the Tony Award-winning musical In the Heights. Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways.

The Old Globe begins performances on April 12 of the California premiere of this award-winning play. Directed by [Edward Torres](#), Water by the Spoonful will run through May

11 in the Sheryl and [Harvey White](#) Theatre, part of the Globe's [Conrad Prebys](#) Theatre Center. Preview performances run April 12 - April 16. Opening night is Thursday, April 17 at 8:00 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE, or by visiting the Box Office at 1363 Old Globe Way in Balboa Park.

As part of its continuing commitment to new ways of better serving the community through its art, The Old Globe has partnered with with local organizations Combat Arts and So Say We All and is happy to host an exhibit of art by returning veterans in Hattox Hall, above the Sheryl and [Harvey White](#) Theatre, part of the Globe's [Conrad Prebys](#) Theatre Center. Curated by local artist and Combat Arts founder [Elizabeth Washburn](#), the exhibit opens with a kick-off celebration on April 12 and will remain on display throughout the run of Water by the Spoonful. Exhibit hours will be one hour prior to performance, as well as full days on free Tuesdays, April 15 and April 22.

As part of the exhibit, a video installation from So Say We All showcases selected interviews from its Veteran Writers Program. So Say We All received seed money from Cal Humanities and The Center for the Book, in partnership with Oceanside and Downtown Central Libraries, to institute and facilitate a creative writing program and publication that serves veterans throughout the Southern California region. Its 2014 program, "Homecoming,"

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In conjunction with So Say We All Executive Director Justin Hudnall, the Globe will also host an evening of local veterans performing stories they have written about their service on Monday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m. Selected participants from So Say We All's Veteran Writers Program take the stage to perform stories from the forthcoming 2014 anthology, "Homecoming," featuring darkly funny and surprising stories from those who served.

INSIGHTS SEMINAR: Monday, April 14 at 7:00 p.m. FREE. Informal presentations of ideas and insights to enhance the theatregoing experience. The seminar features a panel selected from the artistic company of the production and takes place in the theatre where the production is performed. Reception, 6:30 p.m. Seminar, 7:00 p.m. Admission is free and reservations are not required.

POST-SHOW FORUMS: Tuesdays, April 22 and 29 and Wednesday, May 7. FREE. Discuss the play with members of the Water by the Spoonful cast and crew at post-show discussions led by the Globe's creative staff after the performances.

SUBJECT MATTERS: Saturday, May 10. FREE. Following the 2:00 p.m. performance, explore the ideas and issues raised by the production through brief, illuminating post-show discussions with local experts. Guest speakers [Elizabeth Washburn](#) of Combat Arts and Justin Hudnall of So Say We All will speak about their work with returning veterans and will offer audience members a guided tour of the exhibit of artwork by local veteran artists and writers.

Photo by [Jim Cox](#)

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Quiara Alegria Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-Winning *Water by the Spoonful* Begins Performances at Old Globe April 12

By [Carey Purcell](#)

12 Apr 2014



Rey Lucas
Photo by Jim Cox

The Old Globe's production of Quiara Alegria Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Water by the Spoonful* begins previews April 12 prior to an official opening April 17.

Performances continue through May 11 in the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, part of the Globe's Conrad Prebys Theatre Center.

Directed by Edward Torres, *Water by the Spoonful* features Rey Lucas (***The Rainmaker***, "Person of Interest") as Elliot Ortiz with Robert Eli (***Tartuffe***, *Saturn Returns*) as Fountainhead aka John; Sarah Nina Hayon (*A Bright New Boise*, *The Provenance of Beauty*) as Yazmin Ortiz; M. Keala Milles, Jr. (*Pride and Prejudice*, *Godspell*) as Ghost,

Professor Aman, Policeman; Ruibo Qian (*Henry IV*, *King Lear*) as Orangutan; **Keith Randolph Smith** (*King Hedley II*, *Fences*) as Chutes&Ladders; and Marilyn Torres (*The Agony & the Agony*, "Maid in Manhattan") as Odessa Ortiz aka Haikumom.

Water by the Spoonful is the second play in Hudes' Elliot Cycle, three stand-alone plays written over an eight-year period. Here's how the production is billed: "Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in

unexpected ways."

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In conjunction with local organizations Combat Arts and So Say We All, The Globe is hosting an ongoing exhibit of art by returning veterans and an evening of local veterans performing stories they have written about their service.

"All of us at the Globe are looking forward to sharing this remarkable play with San Diego audiences," artistic director **Barry Edelstein** said in a previous statement. "The gifted director Edward Torres has gathered a very strong and talented cast, and together with a top-notch design team, they are sure to bring to vivid life the extraordinary and moving humanity of one of the best American plays of the past decade."

Each play in Hudes' Elliot Cycle uses a different kind of music, including Bach, Coltrane and Puerto Rican folk music, to trace the coming of age of a bright but haunted young Puerto Rican man.

The creative team includes Old Globe associate artist Ralph Funicello (scenic design), David Israel Reynoso (costume design), Jesse Klug (lighting design), Mikhail Fiksel (sound design) and Caparelliots Casting (casting). Jess Slocum is stage manager.

Call (619) 23-GLOBE or visit TheOldGlobe.org for more information.



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Photo Flash: First Look at Old Globe's WATER BY THE SPOONFUL

April 16 2:04 PM
2014

by BWW News Desk

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Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, an exciting new play from the playwright behind the Tony Award-winning musical *In the Heights*. Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways.

Water by the Spoonful runs through May 11, 2014 at the Sheryl and [Harvey White](#) Theatre ([Conrad Prebys](#) Theatre Center). BroadwayWorld brings you a first look at the cast in action below!

As part of its continuing commitment to new ways of better serving the community through its art, [The Old Globe](#) has partnered with with local organizations Combat Arts and So Say We All and is happy to host an exhibit of art by returning veterans in Hattox Hall, above the Sheryl and [Harvey White](#) Theatre, part of the Globe's [Conrad Prebys](#) Theatre Center. Curated by local artist and Combat Arts founder [Elizabeth Washburn](#), the exhibit opens with a kick-off celebration on April 12 and will remain on display throughout the run of *Water by the Spoonful*. Exhibit hours will be one hour prior to performance, as well as full days on free Tuesdays, April 15 and April 22.

Photo Credit: [Jim Cox](#)



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Robert Eli and Marilyn Torres



Rey Lucas and Sarah Nina Hayon



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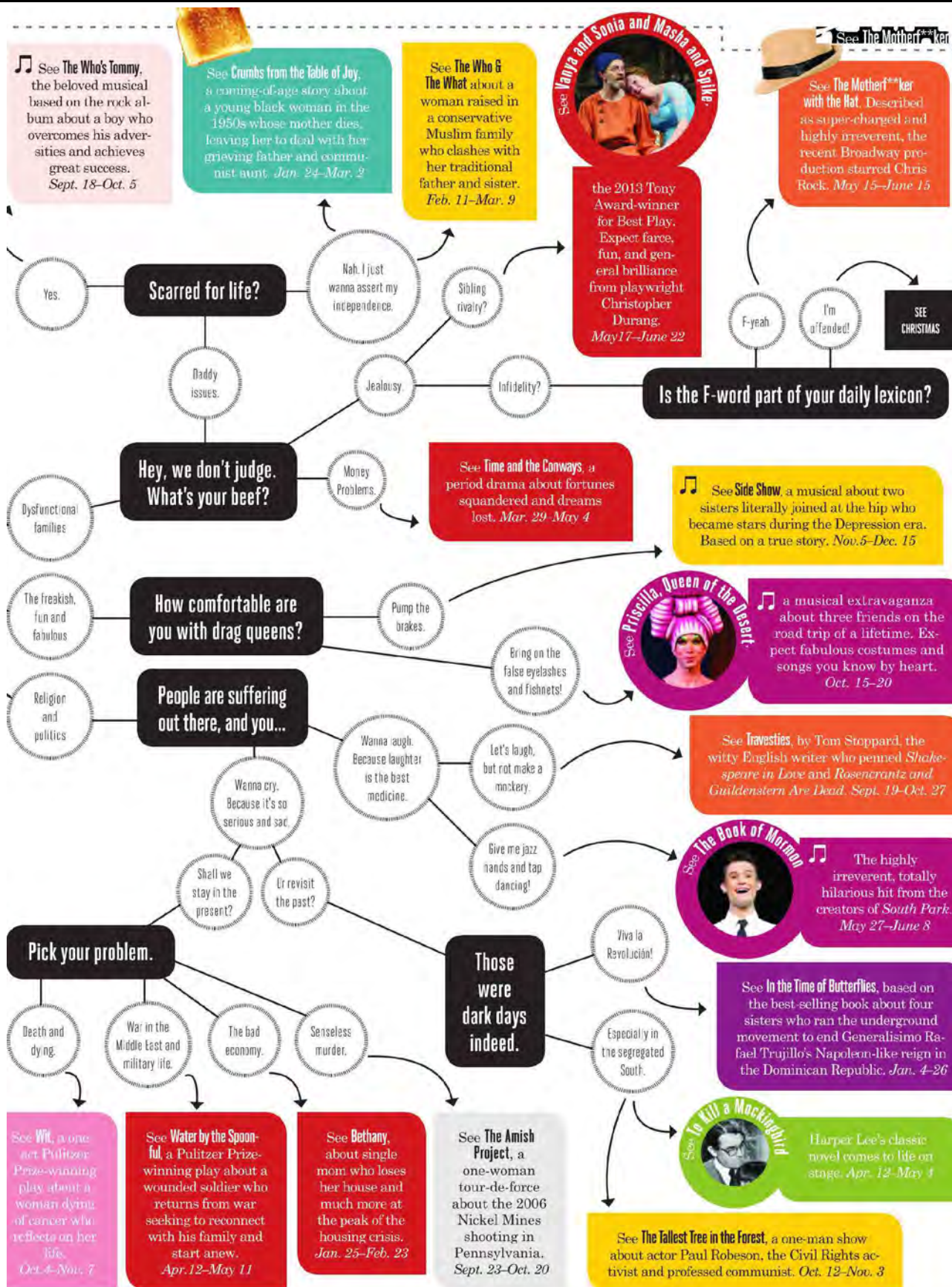
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Spring arts 2014: Theater

Spring theater highlights include 'A Song at Twilight,' 'Rest' and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream.'

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By Charles McNulty, Los Angeles Times Theater Critic

March 14, 2014 | 6:15 a.m.

Shakespeare with puppets, a legendary director still breaking ground in his 80s, and a couple of Pulitzer Prize-winning dramas are just some of the highlights of the spring theater season. As for new work, there's a brand new play by one of America's rising playwriting talents. But even the classics are being served in novel ways and the prospect of Annette Bening performing monologues by Ruth Draper has all the charge of a world premiere.

MARCH 18-APRIL 13

'A Song at Twilight'

This late work by Noël Coward is in the capable hands of director Art Manke, who has been shining a spotlight on the lesser-known reaches of the Coward canon. Manke's production of "Fallen Angels" at the Playhouse last year was a farcical treat. "Song," which boldly deals with discreet matters of love and sexual identity, is a more somber affair. The protagonist, a successful writer forced to confront his past, is said to be based on Somerset Maugham, though the playwright himself was familiar with this terrain. As we learned from the Antaeus Company's superb 2011 production of "Peace in Our

C Cor

Recomm

'Water by the Spoonful'

Quiara Alegría Hudes' 2012 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama finally has its Southern California premiere. The second play in a trilogy of works about an Iraq war veteran's reentry into society, "Water" explores the subject of trauma, domestic as well as combat, from communal perspectives. For Hudes' battle-weary characters, the families they improvise are every bit as important as the families they were born into. A tender, humane play in which comedy and tragedy entwine just as naturally as they do in our off-stage lives.

INTERACTIVE: Hollywood's Theatre Row

The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego, tickets start at \$29,
<http://www.theoldglobe.org> or (619) 234-5623

APRIL 19-JUNE 15

'A Delicate Balance'

One of Edward Albee's finest plays, this portrait of the precarious stability of family life demonstrates that existence, even for well-heeled, martini-sipping suburbanites, is no sturdier than a house of cards. Robin Larsen, who directed the superb 2011 Rogue Machine production of "Blackbird," stages this revival of a Pulitzer Prize-winning drama that offers mature actors a feast of brilliant barbs and tragicomic sentiment.

Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, 2055 S. Sepulveda Blvd., L.A., \$25-\$30, (310) 477-2055, Ext. 2 or
<http://www.odysseytheatre.com>

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PHOTOS: Arts and culture in pictures

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Client Name: The Old Globe
Publication Name: U-T San Diego
Publication Date: March 16, 2014
Page Number: E6
Circulation: 408,825
Size: 90 sq inch
Value: \$13,921.27

Knock knock

Riotous Broadway smash 'Book of Mormon' makes its way to San Diego's doorstep

"The Book of Mormon"

When: May 27 through June 8

Where: San Diego Civic Theatre, 1100 Third Ave., downtown

Tickets: About \$70-\$170

Phone: (619) 570-1100

Online: broadwaysd.com

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

Behold, ye of little faith and yet massive fan-itude: After what might seem an eternity, San Diegans finally will get to say "Hello" (as the show's signature tune goes) to this megahit musical.

"The Book of Mormon" — not to be confused with the sacred text of the same

name (and verily, there's little danger of that) — flew into Broadway three years ago on the wings of some exceedingly sassy angels.

The show, created by the dastardly masterminds behind TV's "South Park" and co-directed by San Diego-bred theater ace Casey Nicholaw, went on to land nine Tony Awards (including best musical) and gobble up positively biblical sums of theatergo-

ers' cash. (And it continues to do so — "Mormon" is typically Broadway's top-grossing show week after week.)

Now the touring version is making its way to San Diego for a nearly two-week run presented at the Civic Theatre by Broadway/San Diego.

The show is not for the faint of heart, nor the delicate of ear: It relentlessly and often profanely sends up aspects of the Mormon tradition (and religion in general), as it tells an entirely gonzo story of rogue missionaries in Africa.

But it does so with such loving attention to old-fashioned Broadway convention that Mormons (who've been very good sports about the whole thing) apparently couldn't get too mad; the church has even taken the opportunity to advertise in the show's program.

Tickets for the San Diego visit went on sale in late February, so they may be scarce at this point. But if you can get a seat, say hallelujah and get ready for some very serious irreverence.



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SPRING PICKS

1 **"Red":** The play by the San Diego-born writer John Logan (who also has credits for such movies as "The Gladiator" and "The Aviator") won the Tony Award as best play in 2010. It documents a pivotal moment in the life of the abstract impressionist painter Mark Rothko; the San Diego Rep production, directed by Michael Arabian, is a San Diego premiere. *March 29 to April 27. Lyceum Theatre, 79 Horton Plaza, downtown. (619) 544-1000 or sandiegorep.org*

2 **"Water by the Spoonful":** Quiara Alegria Hudes won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for this work, part of a trilogy focusing on the fallout from a Marine's deployment to Iraq. Edward Torres directs the California premiere. *April 12 to May 11. Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. (619) 234-5623 or theoldglobe.org*

3 **"Chasing the Song":** La Jolla Playhouse artistic director Christopher Ashley reteams with composer David Bryan and writer-lyricist Joe DiPietro (his collaborators

on the Tony Award-winning "Memphis") for this new musical about a young songwriter striving to find her voice in the early '60s. The piece, workshopped at the Playhouse last year, returns as a Page to Stage production. *May 13 to June 15. Playhouse's Sheila and Hughes Potiker Theatre, 2910 La Jolla Village Drive (UC San Diego campus). (858) 550-1010 or lajollaplayhouse.org*

4 **"Happy Days":** The long-dormant Sledgehammer Theatre, which has a colorful alternative-theater legacy in San Diego dating to the mid-1980s, returns with a production of Samuel Beckett's surreal classic. *May 15 to June 8. 10th Avenue Theatre and Arts Centre, 930 10th Ave., downtown. (619) 354-5888 or sledgehammerlives.com*

5 **"Twelfth Night":** Lamb's revisits Shakespeare's beloved romantic comedy — this time set at the Hotel del Coronado in the 1930s. *May 23 to June 29. Lamb's Players Theatre's resident theater, 1142 Orange Ave., Coronado. (619) 437-6000 or lambsplayers.org*

jim.hebert@utsandiego.com
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Andrew Rannells and the cast of “The Book of Mormon” at the Eugene O’Neill Theatre in New York. The touring version of the musical arrives in San Diego in late May. **JOAN MARCUS • BONEAU/BRYAN-BROWN/AP**



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From left: Frank Vlastnik, Nikki Renée Daniels and Jay Klaitz in a concert reading for “Chasing the Song” at La Jolla Playhouse. SANDY HUFFAKER

Spring Preview: Stage favorites

A look at some San Diego theater highlights for the coming season

By [James Hebert \(/staff/james-hebert/\)](/staff/james-hebert/) 3:17 p.m. March 14, 2014



A scene from the touring production of "The Book of Mormon." — *Joan Marcus*

Behold, ye of little faith and yet massive fan-itude: After what might seem an eternity, San Diegans finally will get to say "Hello" (as the show's signature tune goes) this spring to Broadway's latest megahit musical.

"The Book of Mormon" — not to be confused with the sacred text of the same name (and verily, there's little danger of that) — flew into New York three years ago on the wings of some exceedingly sassy angels.

The show, created by the dastardly masterminds behind TV's "South Park" and co-directed by San Diego-bred theater ace Casey Nicholaw, went on to land nine Tony Awards (including best musical) and gobble up positively biblical sums of theatergoers' cash. (And it continues to do so — "Mormon" is typically Broadway's top-grossing show week after week.)

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MORE SPRING PICKS

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RECOMMENDED

Theater guide: 8 for April

A look at some major stage productions opening around the county this month

By [James Hebert \(/staff/james-hebert/\)](#) 10:53 A.M. APRIL 2, 2014

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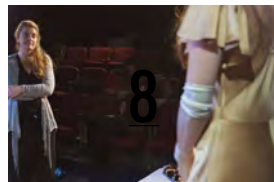
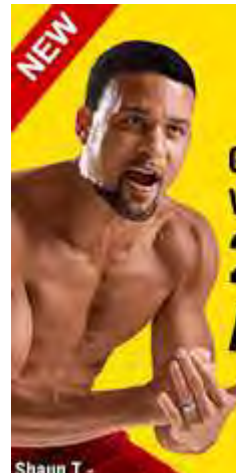
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'Water by the Spoonful,' Old Globe

Quiara Alegría Hudes won the Pulitzer Prize in 2012 for this play (after being named a finalist previously for "Elliot, a Soldier's Fugue" and the book to the musical "In the Heights"). Edward Torres directs the Globe's California premiere of the piece about addiction, recovery and the lingering traumas of war. (Look for a full preview here this week and in Sunday Arts.) The production runs April 12 to May 11.



'Water by the Spoonful...' Wagner New Play Fes... '18 Mighty Mountain W... 'Passion,' Ion Theatre

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McCarthy, lighting design by Jeff Croiter and Cory Pattak, sound design by Nevin Steinberg, scenic design by Wilson Chin and costume design by Alison Heryer.

The world premiere takes place with previews beginning April 11 and the official opening set for May 11 at the Copaken Stage of the Kansas City Rep in Kansas City, MO.

SOUTH PACIFIC the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, adapted from the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Tales of the South Pacific* by James A. Michener.

Directed by Rob Ruggiero and choreographed by Ralph Perkins.

Starring Mike McGowan as Emile DeBecque, Erin Mackey as Ensign Nellie Forbush, Tony Award nominee Loretta Ables Sayre as Bloody Mary, Tally Sessions as Luther Billis, Doug Carpenter as Lt. Joe Cable and Jessica Wu as Liat.

The company will also feature Jordan Lage (Capt. George Brackett), Rob Richardson (Cmdr. William Harbison) and Ryan Andes (Stewpot). Young actors Bonale Fambrini and Gabby Gutierrez will play Jerome and Ngana, respectively. Avery Espiritu and Sydney Veloso are the alternates for those roles.

Rounding out the ensemble are Andrés Acosta, Faye Bautista, Grady McLeod Bowman, Will Burton, Meggie Canslerr, Matt Faucher, Joanne Javien, Caitlin Maloney, Christian Marriner, George Merrick, Brian Ogilvie, Samantha Joy Pearlman, Michael Scirrotto, Paige Sommerer, Ryan Steer, Jeff Sullivan, Teddy Tinson, Grace Wales and Gregory Williams.

The creative team also includes scenic designer Michael Yeargan, costume design by Catherine Zuber, lighting designer John Lasiter, sound designer Randy Hansen, costume coordinator and additional designer Leon Dobkowski, hair and wig designer Leah J. Loukas and production stage manager Gary Mickelson.

Performances begin at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey on April 9 with the official opening slated for April 13. The production continues through May 4.

WATER BY THE SPOONFUL by Quiara Alegría Hudes.

Directed by Edward Torres.

Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected

ways. Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Starring Robert Eli (Fountainhead aka John), Sarah Nina Hayon (Yazmin Ortiz), Rey Lucas (Elliot Ortiz), M. Keala Milles, Jr. (Ghost, Professor Aman, Policeman), Ruibo Qian (Orangutan), Keith Randolph Smith (Chutes&Ladders), and Marilyn Torres (Odessa Ortiz aka Haikumom).

Scenic Design by Ralph Funicello. Costume design by David Israel Reynoso. Lighting design by Jesse Klug Mikhail Fiksel Sound Design, with Jess Slocum serving as Stage Manager.

April 12 – May 11, 2014 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Conrad Prebys Theatre Center of the Old Globe in San Diego, CA.

THE HEAD HUNTER by Mark Borkowski.

Directed by Richard Hymes-Esposito.

A dramatic encounter between a screenwriter and his mobster cousin, The play is written by Mark Borkowski, a New York-based playwright, screenwriter and actor who is best known for playing Paul Sagorsky in the third and fourth seasons of HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*. This is the first revival of a horrific yet hilarious two-hander that made its debut in 2000.

In the play, Casmir, a screenwriter, has sold the exclusive rights of his screenplay to a sleazy Hollywood producer. He confesses what he has done to his cousin Salvatore, a hit man for the mob. The screenplay, a bio-pic, contains truths about Sal's father that are more than incriminating. Enraged, Salvatore vows to get the screenplay's rights back to Casmir even if it means eliminating the producer. The two cousins are forced to deal with issues that tore their family apart and drove them to be who they are: one an artist, the other a ruthless killer.

The play debuted Off-off Broadway 14 years ago to little notice. In its only review, Elias Stimac announced in *Backstage*, "The new year has barely begun, and already one of the best plays of 2000 has emerged on the New York theatre scene at The Common Basis Theatre. Mark Borkowski's 'The Head Hunter' is an intensely inventive and fiercely funny new drama which mixes shades of Shepard and Mamet while painting a horrific yet hilarious portrait of both modern-day mob life and the equally precarious film industry."

He continued, "Borkowski fills his play with wicked twists and turns that catch viewers off-guard each step of the way. He also has an uncanny ear for dialogue, resulting in sly soliloquies and rapid-fire repartee."



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HOT TICKETS

Must-sees on stage, on screen, and in the gallery

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The Jazz Age comes alive at the Westgate Hotel's dinner and show, ***A Salute to Billie Holiday and Dizzy Gillespie***. April 3
- 2**
San Diego Ballet dancers will perform ***Choreographer's Concert***. San Diego Dance Place, April 5
- 3**
Tony-award-winning musical ***Spring Awakening*** lands at Cygnet Theatre. March 6-April 27
- 4**
The Pulitzer-winning tale of a returning Iraqi veteran, ***Water by the Spoonful*** debuts at the ***Old Globe***. April 12-May 11
- 5**
Learn about the red light district during the late 1800s at ***Sin Diego: The Stingaree's Transformation from Vice to Nice***. San Diego History Center, April 1-October 31
- 6**
Timken Museum's lecture series includes ***Colorism and The Flemish Connection in 18th-Century French Painting*** featuring Eik Kahng. April 14

EDITOR'S PICK



APR

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The Show Goes on Year-Round in San Diego Theaters



by Sarah

Like 14

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1 [Theater choices in San Diego](#) can range from Tony® Award-winning, Broadway-bound classic and contemporary plays to

esoteric puppetry in the Pacific Ocean. Here are some of the goings-on in the dramatic world of San Diego theater.

The Old Globe



Time and the Conways at the Old Globe Theatre in Balboa Park

[Old Globe](#) is a Tony® Award winning theater complex located in Balboa Park featuring Shakespearean classics, contemporary plays and popular musicals. Upcoming shows include:

***Time and the Conways* by J.B. Priestley**

This story opens in a gorgeous English country home in 1919 and later flash forwards to 1937 in the same house: the grown children have gathered to settle family accounts in a world not so bright as it was.

Run Dates: Now through May 4, 2014

[> Find out more about *Time and the Conways*](#)

Water by the Spoonful by Quiara Alegría Hudes.

Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. This exciting new play from the playwright behind the Tony Award-winning musical *In the Heights* follows Elliot Ortiz back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways.

Run Dates: April 12 – May 11, 2014

[> Find out more about *Water by the Spoonful*](#)

Other upcoming shows include [What You Will](#), [Thinking Shakespeare Live](#), [Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike](#), [Dog and Pony](#), [Othello](#), [Two Gentlemen of Verona](#), [Into the Woods](#), and [Quartet](#).

La Jolla Playhouse



Shakespeare goes vato in the La Jolla Playhouse's *WithOut Walls* adaptation of *Henry IV, Part 1* playing at the Makers Quarter in downtown's East Village

[La Jolla Playhouse](#), another of San Diego's Tony® Award-winning theatre complexes, presents bold and innovative productions on the University of California, San Diego campus in La Jolla. Upcoming shows include:

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Pulitzer-Winning 'Water by the Spoonful' Opens at Old Globe

 POSTED BY CHRIS JENNEWEIN ON APRIL 12, 2014 IN ARTS | 18 VIEWS | [LEAVE A RESPONSE](#)
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1

"Water by the Spoonful," a Pulitzer-Prize winning play about a man returning from military service in Iraq, will have it's California premiere Saturday at the [The Old Globe](#).

The play, which received a [Pulitzer](#) in 2012, is the second in a trilogy of works by [Quiara Alegría Hudes](#) over an eight-year period. Each play uses a different kind of music—Bach, Coltrane, and Puerto Rican folk music—to trace the coming of age of a bright but haunted young Puerto Rican man.



Sarah Nina Hayon (left), Rey Lucas, and Marilyn Torres in the California Premiere of Quiara Alegría Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-winning play "Water by the Spoonful" at The Old Globe. Photo by Jim Cox.

In "Water by the Spoonful," Elliot Ortiz is back in the U.S., reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an Internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways.

[Rey Lucas](#) makes his Old Globe debut as Elliot Ortiz. He appeared on Broadway in Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of "The Rainmaker,"

and appears in NBC's newest drama, "Believe."

FORECAST

Today



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In conjunction with local organizations [Combat Arts](#) and [So Say We All](#), The Globe will also host an ongoing exhibit of art by returning veterans, and an evening of local veterans performing stories they have written about their service.

The play runs through May 11 at the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre. Tickets start at \$29 and can be purchased online at www.TheOldGlobe.org, by phone at (619) 23-GLOBE.

— *From an Old Globe press release*

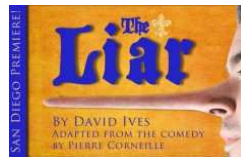
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Old Globe's New Play Focus On Combat Veterans

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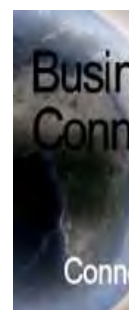
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Marilyn Torres as Odessa Ortiz aka Haikumom and Rey Lucas as Elliot Ortiz in the California premiere of Quiara Alegria Hudes's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Water by the Spoonful* at The Old Globe. Photo by Jim Cox.

SAN DIEGO—The playwright behind the Tony Award-winning musical, *In the Heights*, is back with a new play, *Water by the Spoonful*.

Elliot Ortiz is back in the states after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways.



As part of its continuing commitment to serve the community through its art, The Old Globe has partnered with local organizations *Combat Arts* and *So Say We All*. An exhibit of art by returning veterans will be displayed in the Hattox Hall, above the Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, part of the Globe's Conrad Prebys Theatre Center.

Curated by local artist and *Combat Arts* founder Elizabeth Washburn, the exhibit will remain on display throughout the run of *Water by the Spoonful*. Exhibit hours will be one hour prior to performance, as well as full days through April 22.

As part of the exhibit, a video installation from *So Say We All* showcases selected interviews from its *Veteran Writers Program*. *So Say We All* received seed money from Cal Humanities and The Center for the Book, in partnership with Oceanside and Downtown Central Libraries, to institute and facilitate a creative writing program and publication that serves veterans throughout the Southern California region. Its 2014 program, "Homecoming," focuses on the journey veterans and their families experience during the transition from military to civilian life.

In conjunction with *So Say We All* Executive Director Justin Hudnall, the Globe will also host an evening of local veterans performing stories they have written about their service on April 21 at 7 p.m. Selected participants from *So Say We All*'s *Veteran Writers Program* take the stage to perform stories from the forthcoming 2014 anthology, "Homecoming," featuring darkly funny and surprising stories from those who served.



Comments

comments

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Client Name: The Old Globe
Publication Name: U-T San Diego
Publication Date: April 27, 2014
Page Number: E2
Circulation: 408,825
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Value: \$3,101.63



Water by the Spoonful"

**7 p.m. Tuesdays-Wednesdays (plus 2 p.m. April 30);
8 p.m. Thursdays-Fridays; 2 and 8 p.m. Saturdays; 2
and 7 p.m. Sundays. (No matinee May 3.) Through
May 11. Old Globe's Sheryl and Harvey White
Theatre, Balboa Park. About \$29-\$72 (discounts
available); (619) 234-5623 or theoldglobe.org**

Quiara Alegría Hudes' Pulitzer Prize-winning play is immersed in dualities: Addiction meeting recovery, biological families vs. spiritual ones, the real world vs. the virtual. But the sharp-edged yet lyrical story, part of a trilogy centered on a struggling Iraq War veteran, finds cohesion and a feel of the universal in its stories of people doggedly inching their way through adversity. The Globe's production — whose theater-in-the-round staging gives it added intimacy and intensity — illuminates both the play's dark corners and its sense of hard-earned redemption.

JAMES HEBERT • U-T

Client Name: The Old Globe
 Publication Name: UT San Diego-Night & Day
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 Page Number: 027
 Circulation: 408,825
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 Value: \$7,817.63



At left, Robin Williams in the Broadway production of "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo." CAROL ROSEGG • AP

N+D

27

MAY 2-8, 2013
 U-T SAN DIEGO

THEATER



BY

JAMES HEBERT

JIM.HEBERT
 @UTSANDIEGO.COM
 (619) 293-2040

BEASTLY CONFLICT

'BENGAL TIGER' IS NO 'LION KING' BUT RATHER A SOUL-SEARCHING LOOK AT THE CONSEQUENCES OF WAR

Yes, Ion Theatre's latest play features a person playing a tiger. Yes, that person in the Broadway production was the comic renegade Robin Williams.

And no, this show is not anything like "The Lion King."

Rajiv Joseph's "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo," a Pulitzer Prize finalist in 2010, has its moments of mordant humor. But the acclaimed work is mostly concerned with the chaos and consequences of war, and of finding some meaning amid the carnage.

Ron Choularton, the distinguished San Diego actor who plays the tiger in Ion's production, says the character is a beast more in name than in appearance.

"He's basically a regular person," Choularton says. "He's kind of an untidy, scruffy-looking character. But there's nothing feline about him."

He also "swears like a trooper, this tiger. We didn't know Bengal tigers had such foul mouths."

The play takes its cues from a real-life incident at the Baghdad Zoo in 2003, after the U.S. invasion. A

Bengal tiger, one of the zoo's relatively few surviving animals, bit and mauled an Army sergeant and then was fatally shot. (The soldier died four years later of complications from his injuries.)

In the play, says Choularton, the tiger becomes a kind of wandering narrator, pondering such questions as "where is God, why does he let these things happen? He's really searching for God for a good part of the play."

The play, a San Diego premiere, is teeming with ghosts (including that of Saddam Hussein's son Uday). It's being directed for Ion by co-founder and executive artistic director Claudio Raygoza, who appears in the show along with Choularton, Brian Abraham, Evan Kendig, Linda Permenter, Jake Rosko and Olivia Ruiz.

None of whom you're likely to find singing "Hakuna Matata" in this soul-searching work.

Pulitzer parade

Ion's staging of "Bengal Tiger" is the first locally for the work, a Pulitzer

Prize finalist in 2010. (The play and two others. "The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity" and "In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play)," were chosen by the Pulitzer jury but controversially passed over by the full Pulitzer board in favor of "Next to Normal.") Here's a look at the five most recent Pulitzer-winning plays and their San Diego productions:

2009: "Ruined," by Lynn Nottage. Local premiere at La Jolla Playhouse. 2010.

2010: "Next to Normal," by Brian Yorkey and Tom Kitt. Touring version of Broadway production at Balboa Theatre in 2011; locally produced premiere by Arts Off Broadway. 2012.

2011: "Clybourne Park," by Bruce Norris. Produced at San Diego Rep earlier this year.

2012: "Water by the Spoonful," by Quiara Alegria Hudes. Just announced as part of the Old Globe Theatre's 2013-14 season; it will go up in April 2014.

2013: "Disgraced," by Ayad Akhtar. No local production yet, but Akhtar's "The Who & The What" will get a world premiere at La Jolla Playhouse in February.



DID YOU KNOW?

THE REAL-LIFE BAGHDAD ZOO WAS ONCE THE LARGEST IN THE MIDDLE EAST; MANY OF ITS ANIMALS WERE LOST TO POST-INVASION LOOTING.

< ION THEATRE'S "BENGAL TIGER AT THE BAGHDAD ZOO"

When: Previews begin May 10. Opens May 18. 8 p.m. Thursdays-Fridays; 4 and 8 p.m. Saturdays. Through June 1.

Where: BLKBOX Theatre, 3704 Sixth Ave., Hillcrest
Tickets: \$15-\$33

Phone: (619) 600-5020
Online: iontheatre.com

Client Name: The Old Globe
Publication Name: San Diego Business Journal
Publication Date: April 14, 2014
Page Number: 03
Circulation: 13,505
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Value: \$2,274.11

Panel Spotlights Corporate-based Venture Funding



SDBJ INSIDER

Tom York

Increasingly, the corporate world is moving in to reflate the funding ranks left behind as the number of venture capital firms continue to shrink. Companies such as **Qualcomm Inc.** are helping to fund and nurture the next generation of businesses. So on the evening of April 17 at Qualcomm, in a break from the usual monthly breakfast meetings, the **San Diego Venture Group** will sponsor a dinner panel discussion on corporate venturing. The panelists scheduled to appear are **Nagraj Kashyap**, the head of **Qualcomm Ventures**; **John Somorjai**, senior vice president of corporate development and strategy of **SalesForce.com**; and **Dave Piacquad**, senior vice president of business development of **Amgen Inc.** **Bruce Steel**, managing director of **BioMed Ventures** and a SDVG board member, will serve as moderator. For details and tickets, go to sdvg.org. ... Kudos are in order for a small but very influential collegiate business school. A recent issue of **Bloomberg Businessweek** ranks the **University of San Diego's** undergraduate program at No. 41 in its annual list of the top 50 schools in the nation. The school jumped five spots from last year's ranking. The **University of California, Berkeley's** Haas School of Business and the **University of Southern California's** school of business were the only other two West Coast campuses to make the rankings. Cal ranked No. 15, while USC's Marshall School of Business ranked No. 28. ... A 2,000-foot piece of the Coastal Rail Trail — a bike path that will eventually cover 44 miles from Oceanside to San Diego — is now accessible to riders in the north part of the county. Local officials includ-

ing Oceanside Mayor **Jim Wood** and **Oceanside Chamber of Commerce** CEO **David Nydegger** took part in the ribbon cutting April 7 to mark completion of the new \$2.45 million link. Regional transportation agency **Sandag** allotted money for the project; the bike trail is built on land owned by the **North County Transit District**. ... Grammy winning blues artist **Keb' Mo'** will headline **Scripps Concert for Cancer** on May 19 at popular entertainment site **Humphreys** on Shelter Island. The program, the fourth presented by **Scripps Health**, will be an early kickoff to National Cancer Survivors Day, which is in June. Tickets are available at scripps.org/concertforcancer. ... Finally: The **Old Globe** continues its 2013-14 season with the California premiere of Quiara Alegria Hudes' "Water by the Spoonful," which won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for drama. The production runs through May 11. The Old Globe's presentation of **J.B. Priestley's** masterpiece "Time and the Conways" continues its run through May 4. More information is at theoldglobe.org. Till next week.

Contributing Editor Tom York writes the SDBJ Insider, and you can reach him at tom.york@gmail.com or tyork@sdbj.com. Tweet to him @tom2cents.

PETER AND THE STARCATCHER

A company of a dozen actors play more than 100 unforgettable characters, all on a journey to answer the century-old question: How did Peter Pan become "The Boy Who Never Grew Up"? McCallum Theatre, 73000 Fred Waring Drive, Palm Desert. \$35-\$75. (760) 340-2787. mccallumtheatre.com.

SATURDAY, MARCH 29

TIME AND THE CONWAYS

The curtain rises on an English country home in 1919 in the middle of a game of Blind Man's Bluff played by the young Conway family at a birthday party with their friends. Flash forward to 1937 in the same house: the grown children have gathered to settle family accounts in a world not so bright as it once was. Old Globe Theatre, Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Conrad Prebys Theatre Center, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Through May 4. \$29-plus. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

SUNDAY, MARCH 30

AGATHA CHRISTIE'S SPIDER'S WEB

Adept at spinning tales of adventure for their bored diplomatic circle, Clarissa finds coping with live drama much more difficult when an actual murder takes place in her own drawing room. Anxious to clear the matter up before her husband Henry arrives with a VIP in tow, Clarissa hides the body and attempts to solve the murder, only to wind involved in some hair-raising experiences. Will everything manage to be back to normal by the time Henry gets home or will scandal ensue? Riverside Community Players, 4026 14th St., Riverside. Through April 13. \$15-\$18. (951) 686-4030. riversidecommunityplayers.org.

RED

The story is set in 1958 at a critical point in the career of the superstar abstract expressionist painter. Rothko has been challenged to create a definitive work of art for the exclusive Four Seasons restaurant. His problem: the threatening presence of a neophyte assistant, a voice of a new generation of artists that question Rothko's theories and label him a sell-out. San Diego Repertory Theatre at the Lyceum Space, Lyceum Stage, 79 Horton Plaza, San Diego. Through April 27. Prices vary. (619) 544-1000. sdrep.org.

APRIL

TUESDAY, APRIL 1

CELTIC WOMAN: THE EMERALD TOUR

A unique ensemble showcasing the talent and charisma of four gifted Irish women whose dazzling performances combine the sound and sensibility of Irish traditional music with contemporary pop standards and memorable original compositions. This one-of-a-kind concert incorporates the talents of a group of world-class musicians, the Aontas Choir, bagpipers and championship Irish dancers.

Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Segerstrom Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. \$50-plus. (714) 556-2787. scfta.org.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

JAZZ WEDNESDAYS

Critically acclaimed jazz vocalist Sara Gazarek performs with her trio. Laguna Beach Live, 891 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach. \$15-\$20. (949) 715-9713. lagunabeachlive.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 3

JAZZ AT THE MERC

Old Town Temecula Community Theater, The Merc, 42051 Main St., Temecula. Sundays. \$15. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

YESTERDAY AND TODAY

Rock to the music of The Beatles in an all new interactive concert experience where the audience creates the playlist for the night. No awkward wigs, no bad accents – just the music of the Fab Four presented with dead-on musical precision in a unique concert environment. Audience members will fill out request cards selecting their favorite Beatles songs and why they selected it. Poway Center for the Performing Arts, 15498 Espola Rd., Poway. \$43-\$53. powayarts.org.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5

FLUFF

Enjoy this unique and humorous story of the Gingham family and how they demonstrate their great concern and compassion for lost and discarded hand-made toys by traveling the globe to find them and welcome them into their colorful home. Part of the Segerstrom Center's Family Series. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Samuelli Theater, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. Also April 6. \$20. (714) 556-2787. scfta.org.

COUNTRY AT THE MERC

Live country music in the frontier heart of Old Town Temecula in the historic Mercantile building. The local house band, The Ranch Rockers, backs up the performers. Old Town Temecula Community Theater, The Merc, 42051 Main St., Temecula. Saturdays. \$15. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

AMY HANAIALI'I

"Remembering Napua." Experience a night of entertainment and aloha as Hanaiali'i honors her beloved tutu and their love of Hawaii. Soka Performing Arts Center, Soka University, 1 University Dr., Aliso Viejo. \$28-\$38. (949) 480-4000. performingarts.soka.edu.

A DAY IN THE GARDEN SPRING CRAFT FAIR

Enjoy music and gourmet food, wander through the farmhouse gift shop, historic barns, around the lily pond, edible gardens, fruit trees, vegetables and flowers. A perfect day for artisans, crafters and garden enthusiasts. Myrtle Creek Garden Nursery, 2940 Reche Rd., Fallbrook. Also April 6. Free. (760) 728-5340. myrtlecreeknursery.com.

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

CLASSICS AT THE MERC

Chamber performances by the region's best professional musicians. Old Town Temecula Community Theater, The Merc, 42051 Main St., Temecula. Sundays. \$12. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

TUESDAY, APRIL 8

MAMMA MIA!

On the eve of her wedding, a daughter's quest to discover the identity of her father brings three men from her mother's past back to the island they last visited 20 years ago. The story-telling magic of ABBA's timeless songs propels this enchanting tale of love, laughter and friendship, and every night everyone's having the time of their lives. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Renée and Henry Segerstrom Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. Through April 13. \$29-\$99. (714) 556-2787. scfta.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 10

TOM SAWYER

Drawing on the beloved novel by Mark Twain, all the famous adventures are included, climaxing with the life-or-death battle with Injun Joe in the cave along with eight musical numbers, like "Paintin' the Fence." Old Town Temecula Community Theater, 42051 Main St., Temecula. Thurs.-Sun. through April 20. \$20-\$25. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

THE ERIC ALEXANDER/HARRY ALLEN QUINTET

Enjoy tenor sax phenom, Eric Alexander as he is joined by fellow tenor man, Harry

Allen, pianist Harold Mabern, bassist Jon Webber and Joe Farnsworth on drums. Soka Performing Arts Center, Soka University, 1 University Dr., Aliso Viejo. \$21-\$28. (949) 480-4000. performingarts.soka.edu.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12

WATER BY THE SPOONFUL

Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways. Old Globe Theatre, Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Conrad Prebys Theatre Center, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Through May 11. \$29-plus. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

RE-TRIM YOUR EASTER BONNET

Have a hat from last year that you want to wear with this year's outfit or a beachy hat you want to dress up for the occasion? Design your "new" Easter bonnet. Choose from hundreds of ribbons, flowers and feather creations along with miles of fabric in any color you can imagine. Students must have basic hand sewing experience. Jill Courtemanche Millinery, 410 South Cedros Ave., Solana Beach. \$45. (858) 876-6353. jillCourtemanche.com.

EXHIBITIONS

SATURDAY, MARCH 15

JEAN WELLS: ICONS OF DESIRE

The San Diego-based artist is known for her large-scale, eye-dazzling mosaic sculptures inspired by iconic popular culture and brand name products. Wells explores our growing



TUESDAY, MARCH 18

I LOVE LUCY

It's 1952 and you are a member of the Desilu Playhouse studio audience awaiting the filming of two hilarious and oh-so-familiar "I Love Lucy" episodes. A charming host entertains and enlightens you to the behind-the-scenes filming process of this brand new thing called "television." Enjoy the Crystalstone Singers perform advertising jingles in perfect '50s-style harmony and the sidesplitting antics of America's favorite foursome – Lucy, Ricky, Fred and Ethel. Segerstrom Center for the Arts, Segerstrom Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. Through March 23. \$29-\$99. (714) 556-2787. scfta.org.



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“Water by the Spoonful”: April 12-May 11. The Old Globe – Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. \$65-\$67. (619) 234-5623, theoldglobe.org
Wagner New Play Festival 2014: April 15-26. UC San Diego, 2910 La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla. \$10-\$20. (858) 534-4574, theatre.ucsd.edu



Client Name: The Old Globe
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"Water by the Spoonful": April 12-May 11. The Old Globe – Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. \$65-\$67. (619) 234-5623, theoldglobe.org



Client Name: The Old Globe
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"Water by the Spoonful": April
12-May 11. The Old Globe – Sheryl &
Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe
Way, San Diego. \$65-\$67. (619) 234-
5623, theoldglobe.org

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




BREAKING NEWS Stephen Colbert to replace David Letterman as 'Late Show' host



CULTURE MONSTER
ALL ARTS, ALL THE TIME

More Arts --ToP

L.A. theater openings, April 13-20: 'The Tallest Tree in the Forest' and more

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Compiled by Matt Cooper

April 10, 2014 | 9:00 a.m.

Celebrations of legendary performers abound when Frank Ferrante plays Groucho Marx, Annette Bening salutes Ruth Draper, and Daniel Beaty portrays Paul Robeson. Plus, a return engagement for a remembrance of Gene Kelly.

An Afternoon With Groucho Frank Ferrante portrays the mustachioed Marx brother in this one-man show. Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts, 12700 Center Court Drive, Cerritos. Sunday, 3 p.m. \$20-\$50. (562) 467-8818.

Glory, Glory Hallelujah Benefit show features songs and stories of the Civil War. Sierra Madre Playhouse, 87 W. Sierra Madre Blvd., Sierra Madre. Sunday, 7 p.m. \$12-\$25. (626) 355-4318.

Celebrity Autobiography: The Music Edition, Volume 4 Fred Willard and others put a comic spin on selections from musicians' memoirs. Grammy Museum, 800 W. Olympic Blvd., L.A. Wed., 8 p.m. \$45. (213) 765-6803.

Ruth Draper's Monologues Annette Bening pays homage to the legendary stage actress in this world premiere. Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse, 10886 Le Conte Ave., Westwood. Wed.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 3 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 2 p.m.; ends May 18. \$37-\$77. (310) 208-5454.

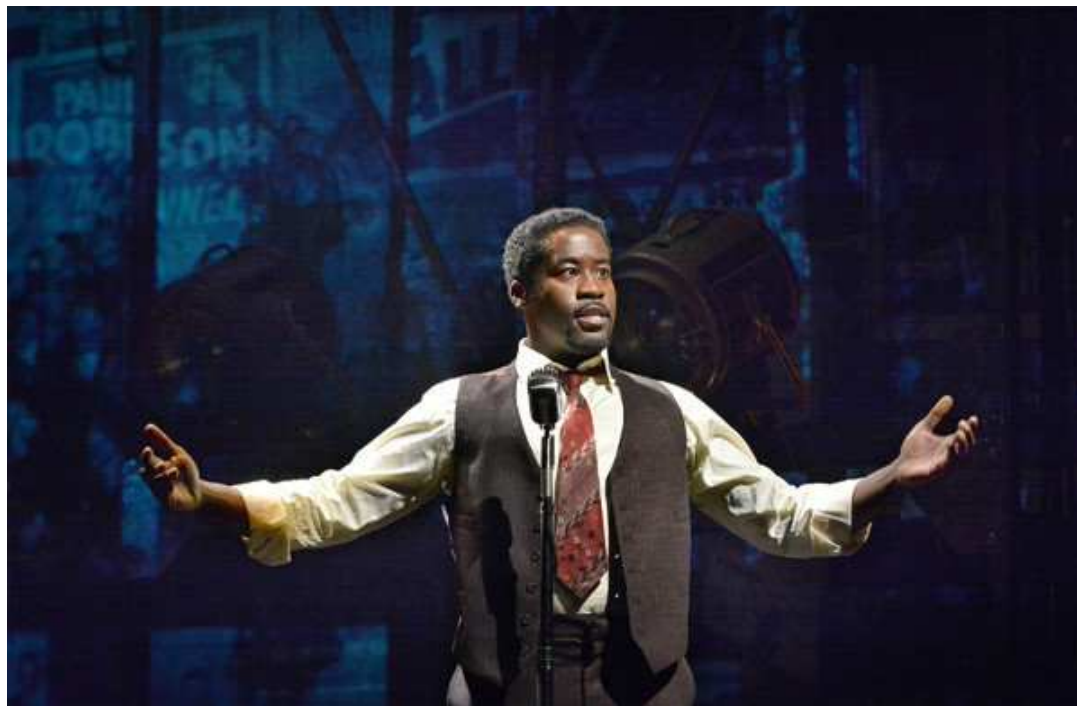
Taking the Plunge SHINE's storytelling series presents true tales of risky undertakings. YWCA

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Daniel Beaty portrays Paul Robeson in "The Tallest Tree in the Forest" at the Mark Taper Forum. (Don Ipock / April 8, 2014)

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Ads

Santa Monica/Westside, 2019 14th St., Santa Monica. Thu., 7:30 p.m. \$10 suggested donation. (310) 452-3881.

CRITICS' PICKS: What to watch, where to go, what to eat



Photos: Arts and culture in pictures by The Times



Spring arts 2014: Theater



Review: Wendy Graf's 'Closely Related Keys' a complicated affair



Water by the Spoonful An Iraq war veteran readjusts to civilian life, while four strangers connect in an internet chat room, in the California premiere of Quiara Alegria Hudes' Pulitzer-winning drama. The Old Globe, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. Thu.-Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 2 and 7 p.m.; ends May 11. \$29 and up. (619) 234-5623.

ABBAMEMNON Workshop production of Troubadour Theater Company's irreverent, ABBA-infused spin on Aeschylus' classic tragedy. Getty Villa, 17985 Pacific Coast Highway, Pacific Palisades. Fri., 8 p.m.; Sat., 3 and 8 p.m.; next Sun., 3 p.m. 310-440-7300.

Be a Good Little Widow A young woman navigates bereavement in the L.A. premiere of Bekah Brunstetter's comedy. NoHo Arts Center, 11136 Magnolia Blvd., North Hollywood. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; next Sun., 3 p.m.; ends May 25. \$25. (323) 388-3874.

Detective Partner Hero Villain West Coast premiere of Brett Neveu's mash-up of the crime noir and superhero genres. NoHo Actors' Studio, 5215 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m.; ends May 3. \$20. (800) 838-3006.



Photos of the D

Most Viewed Latest

Oscar Pistorius rambles



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Value: \$14.21



Water by the Spoonful: The life of an Iraq War veteran intersects with those of four strangers in an Internet chat room for recovering drug addicts. Opens April 12 at The Old Globe Theatre. oldglobe.org



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Publication Name: UT San Diego-Night & Day
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"Water by the Spoonful": Through
May 11. The Old Globe – Sheryl &
Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe
Way, San Diego. \$65-\$67. (619) 234-
5623, theoldglobe.org

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Publication Date: April 09, 2014
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Value: \$26.05



Combat Arts Exhibition at Old Globe Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park. Paralleling the Old Globe Theater's production of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize winning drama *Water by the Spoonful*, Combat Arts is exhibiting new art created by Iraq War veterans. Opening from 6:30 to 8 p.m. **Saturday, April 12.** oldglobe.org



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Water by the Spoonful

The Old Globe Theatre stages Quiara Alergria Hudes's Pulitzer Prize-winning comedy-drama (2012) about Elliott Ortiz's return from service in Iraq and an Internet chat room of recovering addicts also in culture shock. Edward Torres directs.

SHERYL AND HARVEY WHITE THEATRE,
1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK.
619-234-5623. 8PM THURSDAYS &
FRIDAYS, 2PM & 8PM SATURDAYS, 2PM
& 7PM SUNDAYS, 7PM TUESDAYS &
WEDNESDAYS, THROUGH MAY 11.

LET'S GET OUT

A Preview of Upcoming Events for April/May By Claire Yezbak Fadden

San Diego/Orange County/Inland Empire
April/May 2014



REAL PIRATES

The Untold Story of the Whydah from Slave Ship to Pirate Ship. The exhibition features more than 200 artifacts recovered from the ocean floor. Telling the true story of the Whydah—a real pirate ship that sank off the coast of Cape Cod nearly 300 years ago—the exhibit showcases treasure chests of coins and gold, jewelry, weaponry such as cannons, pistols, and knives and a replica of the actual ship that visitors can board. San Diego Natural History Museum, 1788 El Prado, Balboa Park, San Diego. 15-\$27. Through Sept. 1. (619) 232-3821. sdnhm.org.

ENTERTAINMENT

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

PLAY BALL! PRESIDENTS AND BASEBALL

This new exhibit showcases the colorful history between U.S. presidents and the game of baseball through rare memorabilia and one-of-a-kind artifacts. The exhibition includes personal letters written by President Nixon to some of his favorite players, including notes to Yankees pitcher Dave Righetti on his Fourth of July no-hitter, Mets outfielder Darryl Strawberry with words of encouragement on a 1986 hitting slump and a congratulatory letter to Hall of Famer Nolan Ryan on his Major League-record seventh no-hitter. Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, 18001 Yorba Linda Blvd., Yorba Linda. Through Sept. 2. \$8.50-\$12. (714) 993-5075. nixonfoundation.org.

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

THE FLOWER FIELDS AT CARLSBAD RANCH

For more than 60 years, giant tecolote ranunculus flowers bloom, transforming the rolling hills of North San Diego County into a spectacular and coordinated display of natural color and beauty. This annual burst of color is also one of nature's official ways of announcing the arrival of spring. Explore 50-acres including the one-acre Orchid Showcase and the 4,000 sq. ft. Paul Ecke Jr. Family Barn designed to recall even more of a ranch setting. The Flower Fields at Carlsbad Ranch, Paseo Del Norte, Carlsbad. Through May 11. \$11-\$12. (760) 431-0352. theflowerfields.com.

LIVE ARTS FEST

This festival of living art spans 10 days featuring modern dance, puppetry, singing and storytelling. White Box Live Arts, NTC @ Liberty Station, 2590 Truxtun Rd., 2ND FL., San Diego. \$20. Through April 27. (619) 225-1803. sandiegodancetheater.org.

QUILTERS

A well-crafted quilt needs a skilled hand, a hopeful spirit and an eye for the order

of things. This gem of a musical uses the beautiful variety of quilt squares in celebration of the extraordinary yet everyday pioneer women who helped settle America's West. Lamb's Players Theatre, 1142 Orange Ave., Coronado. \$22-\$620. Tues.-Sun through April 27. (619) 437-6000. lambplayers.org.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

JAZZ WEDNESDAYS

Guitarist Graham Dechter Quartet featuring world-renowned drummer Jeff Hamilton. Laguna Beach Live, 891 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach. \$15-\$20. (949) 715-9713. lagunabeachlive.org.

WATER BY THE SPOONFUL

Elliot Ortiz is back in the States after serving in Iraq, reconnecting with family and starting a new life. At the same time, four strangers in an internet chat room seek support to face demons of their own, and soon the real world and the virtual one start to intersect in unexpected ways. Old Globe Theatre, Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Conrad Prebys

Theatre Center, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Through May 11. \$29-plus. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

TIME AND THE CONWAYS

The curtain rises on an English country home in 1919 in the middle of a game of Blind Man's Bluff played by the young Conway family at a birthday party with their friends. Flash forward to 1937 in the same house: the grown children have gathered to settle family accounts in a world not so bright as it once was. Old Globe Theatre, Sheryl and Harvey White Theatre, Conrad Prebys Theatre Center, 1363 Old Globe Way, Balboa Park, San Diego. Through May 4. \$29-plus. (619) 234-5623. theoldglobe.org.



LIFEBLOOD HARMONY

For the first time ever, Malashock Dance and Art of Élan are collaborating to present three evenings of original choreography set to live music by three of today's most exciting and appealing contemporary composers: David Bruce, Judd Greenstein and Osvaldo Golijov. UCSD Campus, Mandell Weiss Theatre, 2910 La Jolla Village Dr., La Jolla. Through April 19. \$35-\$45. (800) 838-3006. artofelan.org.

TOM SAWYER

Drawing on the beloved novel by Mark Twain, all the famous adventures are included, climaxing with the life-or-death battle with Injun Joe in the cave along with eight musical numbers, like "Paintin' the Fence." Old Town Temecula Community Theater, 42051 Main St., Temecula. Thurs.-Sun. through April 20. \$20-\$25. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.

RED

The story is set in 1958 at a critical point in the career of the superstar abstract expressionist painter. Rothko has been challenged to create a definitive work of art for the exclusive Four Seasons restaurant. His problem: the threatening presence of a neophyte assistant, a voice of a new generation of artists that question Rothko's theories and label him a sell-out. San Diego Repertory Theatre at the Lyceum Space, Lyceum Stage, 79 Horton Plaza, San Diego. Through April 27. Prices vary. (619) 544-1000. sdrep.org.

JAZZ AT THE MERC

Dick Weller Trio. Old Town Temecula Community Theater, The Merc, 42051 Main St., Temecula. Sundays. \$15. (866) 653-8696. temeculatheater.org.



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Critic's Choice

“Water by the Spoonful”: Through May 11. The 2012 Pulitzer Prize-winner by Quiara Alegria Hudes is getting an enormously rewarding California premiere, with assured direction from Edward Torres and excellent acting by a committed cast. Although the piece (part of a trilogy) revolves around recovering addicts and an Iraq War veteran named Elliot, much of its power is in how it illuminates the broader human experience of inching through existence in a string of small victories. (Hebert) The Old Globe – Sheryl & Harvey White Theatre, 1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego. \$65-\$67. (619) 234-5623, theoldglobe.org



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Water by the Spoonful

The Old Globe Theatre stages Quiara Alergria Hudes's Pulitzer Prize-winning comedy-drama (2012) about Elliott Ortiz's return from service in Iraq and an internet chat room of recovering addicts also in culture shock. Edward Torres directs.

SHERYL AND HARVEY WHITE THEATRE,
1363 OLD GLOBE WAY, BALBOA PARK.
619-234-5623. 8PM THURSDAYS &
FRIDAYS, 2PM & 8PM SATURDAYS,
2PM & 7PM SUNDAYS, 7PM TUESDAYS
& WEDNESDAYS, THROUGH MAY 11.