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CMCO, Pasadena Playhouse:

Kory Kelly –

“With humor and warmth, STEW challenges us to consider the life recipes that offer stability and comfort, and the ones that only taste like heartbreak.”
– Theatermania

Not your ordinary kitchen-sink drama.

The Los Angeles Premiere of
STEW
by Zora Howard
Directed by Tyler Thomas

July 12 – August 6, 2023

Tickets at www.pasadenaplayhouse.org or by calling 626-356-7529

May 31, 2023, Pasadena, CA | Producing Artistic Director Danny Feldman announces the Los Angeles premiere of ***Stew*** by Pulitzer Prize-finalist Zora Howard at Pasadena Playhouse, the recipient of the 2023 Regional Tony Award. Performances are scheduled from July 12 through August 6; the press opening is Sunday, July 16. Tickets are on sale now, starting at \$35 at pasadenaplayhouse.org.

The production stars LisaGay Hamilton (Broadway’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*, ABC’s *The Practice*) as “Mama,” Roslyn Ruff (Broadway’s *The Skin of Our Teeth*, CBS’ *Blue Bloods*) as “Lillian,” Jasmine Ashanti (Berkeley Rep and La Jolla Playhouse’s *The Last Tiger in Haiti*) as “Nelly,” and Samantha Miller (Oregon Shakespeare Festivals’ *Sense and Sensibility*) as “Lil’ Mama.” The production will be directed by Tyler Thomas, with scenic design by Tanya Orellana, costume design by Samantha Jones, lighting design by Elizabeth Harper and Yajayra Franco, and sound design by Elton Bradman. Nikki Hyde serves as the Production Stage Manager.

In ***Stew***, Mama’s in the kitchen early preparing her famous stew for a big event, but even as her daughters and granddaughter help, she still feels like time is running out. Soon these three generations of Black women begin to feel their past and present closing in. A finalist for the 2021 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, Zora Howard’s hilarious, haunting, and taut 90-minute drama has a lot more cooking underneath the surface.

"A 2021 Pulitzer Prize Finalist, **Stew** "feels familiar without being cliché, delivering a captivating story that's intimate, funny, and heartbreaking in equal measure." – *The New Yorker*

LisaGay Hamilton

Mama

—

LisaGay Hamilton was recently seen in Netflix's *Lincoln Lawyer*, HBO's *Winning Time*, Hulu's *The Dropout*, and ABC's *Will Trent*. Upcoming projects include National Geographic's anthology series, *Genius: MLK/X* as Alberta King, and *Days When The Rains Came* starring opposite Beau Bridges.

She is well-known for starring in the hit ABC television series *The Practice*, TNT's *Men of a Certain Age*, Hulu's *The First* and Netflix's *House of Cards*. Her notable film credits include *Vice*, *Beautiful Boy*, *The Boogeyman*, John Sayles' *Go For Sisters* and *Honey Dripper*, Sony's *Take Shelter* opposite Michael Shannon, Joe Wright's *The Soloist*, Clint Eastwood's *True Crime*, as well as her critically acclaimed performance in Jonathan Demme's *Beloved* based on Toni Morrison's novel. Hamilton directed the Peabody Award winning documentary for HBO *Beah: A Black Woman Speaks*.

A Juilliard graduate, some of her New York theater credits include the Broadway production of *To Kill A Mockingbird* opposite Ed Harris. She won Obie Awards for both *Valley Song* with and written by Athol Fugard and *Ohio State Murders* by Adrienne Kennedy.

Roslyn Ruff

Lillian

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Broadway: *Skin of our Teeth* (Richard Seff Award), *All The Way*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Fences*. Off-Broadway: *The Piano Lesson* (Lucille Lortel Award; Audelco Award; Drama League nomination), *Seven Guitars* (Obie Award), *X or Betty Shabazz v. The Nation* and *Things of Dry Hours* (Drama League nominations), *Fairview*, *Death of the Last Blackman in the Whole Entire World*, *Macbeth*, *Familiar*, *Scenes from a Marriage*, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, and *The Cherry Orchard*. Regional: McCarter Theatre Center, People's Light and Theatre Company, Yale Repertory Theatre, American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Two River Theater, Long Wharf Theatre, Alliance Theatre, Geva Theatre Center, Geffen Playhouse, Alabama Shakespeare Festival. Film: *Marriage Story*, *The Help*, *Salt*, *Rachel Getting Married*. TV: *Evil*, *Blue Bloods*, *The Godfather of Harlem*, *Lincoln Rhyme*, *Pose*, *Divorce*.

Jasmine Ashanti

Nelly

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Jasmine, originally from Maryland, received a BA in Theatre from Temple University and an MFA in Acting from UC San Diego. Her notable theater credits include *Little Children Dream of God* and *In the Red and Brown Water* at UC San Diego; *Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea* at Skylight Theater; *The Last Tiger in Haiti*, which was a co-production with Berkeley Repertory and La Jolla Playhouse; and *Ready Steady Yeti Go* at Rogue Machine Theatre.

Jasmine was also part of the *ABC Discovers Talent Showcase 2020* and has also made notable appearances on television with credits including *Shameless*, *The Good Doctor*, *Lucifer*, *Black-Ish*, *On My Block*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Wu-Tang: An American Saga*, and *East New York*.

Samantha Miller

Lil' Mama

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Samantha is ecstatic to be making her Pasadena Playhouse debut! Samantha is an actor and writer based in Los Angeles. Recent credits include Margaret Dashwood and Lucy Steele in *Sense & Sensibility* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), Zoey in *stand. Up. HIT!* for the Young Playwrights Festival (The Blank Theatre), Candance in *MEISNER* (Playhouse West), and Glo in the regional and national tour of *The Password* (Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre). As an awarded playwright, Samantha's latest work *DragonSoul Offline* is being published for licensing release in late 2023. Samantha holds a BFA in Acting from Southern Oregon University.

www.samanthawmiller.com

Zora Howard

Playwright

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Zora is a Harlem-bred writer. Her plays include *HANG TIME* (The Flea Theater), *STEW* (2021 Pulitzer Prize Finalist; Page 73 Productions), *THE MASTER'S TOOLS* (Williamstown Theatre Festival); *BUST* (Susan Smith Blackburn Prize Finalist; L. Arnold Weissberger New Play Award Finalist); and *GOOD FAITH*. In 2020, her film *Premature* (2020 Film Independent John Cassavetes Award nominee), which she co-wrote with director Rashaad Ernesto Green, opened in theaters following its world premiere at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival. Zora is the inaugural Judith Champion Fellow at Manhattan Theatre Club, a 2022 Lilly Award and Helen Merrill Award recipient and is currently under commission from Seattle Rep, MTC, and Wessex Grove. zoramakes.com

Tyler Thomas

Director

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Tyler is a New York-based theater director and Susan Stroman Directing Award recipient. Most recently, she has developed and directed new work at the Vineyard Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Rattlestick Playwrights, Geva Theatre, Northern Stage, The Flea, and the New Ohio Theatre. She is also the Associate Artistic Director of One Nation/One Project, a national arts and wellness initiative in partnership with the National League of Cities. Tyler is a former 2050 Fellow with New York Theater Workshop, Foeller Fellow at Williamstown Theatre Festival, member of the Lincoln Center Directors' Lab, Visiting Artist at the Athens Conservatoire in Greece, and Guest Artist at UCLA and UC Santa Cruz. She holds a BFA in Drama and MA in Arts Politics from the Tisch School of Drama.

COVID-19 POLICY

Pasadena Playhouse continues to follow all Covid-19 safety protocols put forth by Los Angeles County and the City of Pasadena. The most up-to-date requirements can be found at pasadenaplayhouse.org/covid-19/.

ABOUT PASADENA PLAYHOUSE

Pasadena Playhouse, the official State Theater of California and recipient of the 2023 Regional Theatre Tony Award, is one of the most prolific theaters in the country. The Playhouse has staged thousands of original productions since its founding in 1917 including premieres of works by Tennessee Williams, Eugene O'Neill, Suzan Lori Parks and hundreds more. For decades, its pioneering School for Theater Arts was a training ground for actors and theatermakers who went on to make significant contributions to the entertainment industry. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Danny Feldman since 2016, Pasadena Playhouse's productions and community programs are centered on its founding idea of being a living force in its community, making theater for everyone.

Calendar Listing for *Stew*

Stew

by Zora Howard

Not your ordinary kitchen-sink drama.

Venue: Pasadena Playhouse, 39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Dates: Wednesday, July 12 to Sunday, August 6
Press opening Sunday, July 16 at 5:00 p.m.

Tickets: Prices start at \$35
Online -- PasadenaPlayhouse.org
By phone at 626-356-7529
In person -- Pasadena Playhouse Box Office, located at 39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Performance Schedule: Wednesday-Friday evenings at 8:00 p.m.
Saturday at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.; Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 7 p.m.