UC SANTA BARBARA
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Jim Logan

A National Treasure

In Shakespeare's time, female characters were played by men. In Jennifer Barclay's "Yellowstone" the men — a bunch of conservative white guys in rural Wyoming — are played by a multiracial company of women.

Casting is just one of the quirks of the play, which will be performed as a staged reading Friday, Sept. 24, at 5 p.m. in the Theater/Dance West Court at UC Santa Barbara's Department of Theater and Dance. Register for this outdoor event here. Bring a chair or blanket.

For this reading, LAUNCH PAD, UCSB's acclaimed new-play development program, is in partnership with Boulder-based Local Theater Company, recognized nationally as a leader in developing new works.

Risa Brainin, professor of theater and dance and artistic director of LAUNCH PAD, said teaming up with the Colorado company was a natural fit. She'd met Pesha Rudnick, Local Theater Company's artistic director, in 2015 while directing James Still's "Appoggiatura" at the Denver Center Theatre Company.

Still later connected Brainin and Rudnick, who lives in Santa Barbara part time. After a beach walk and a series of conversations about potential collaborations, "Yellowstone" was on. Rudnick will direct the reading.

"Pesha brought the play to us," Brainin said. "She and playwright Jennifer Barclay have been in collaboration on this piece. I instantly fell in love with 'Yellowstone.' I especially like that all of the characters are male, but are meant to be played by

women. This allows for comedy while providing insight into how we experience gender roles."

Anne Torsiglieri, professor of theater and dance and director of the BFA actor training program, is a featured guest artist. UCSB students Maison "Bub" Bray, Taylor Kirk, Val Murillo and Ahlora Smith are also in the cast. The cast will collaborate in rehearsals starting Monday, Sept. 20.

"Yellowstone" is a dark comedy set at the border of Yellowstone National Park, and is the first of Barclay's national parks trilogy.

To continue COVID-19 safety practices, patrons will be asked to show proof of vaccination or negative COVID test. Read more about the COVID policy here.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.