

**LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE LAUNCHES  
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE OUTREACH PROGRAM (POP) TOUR:  
EMILY DRIVER'S GREAT RACE THROUGH TIME AND SPACE**

***WORLD-PREMIERE PLAY FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES,  
DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NATIONAL DISABILITY THEATRE,  
FEATURES FULL COMPANY OF ARTISTS WITH DISABILITIES***

***PRODUCTION TO TOUR SAN DIEGO COUNTY SCHOOLS JANUARY 29 – MARCH 27  
PUBLIC PERFORMANCES AT THE PLAYHOUSE ON FEBRUARY 29 & MARCH 1***

La Jolla, CA – La Jolla Playhouse is pleased to launch its 2020 Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour production: *Emily Driver's Great Race through Time and Space*, by A.A. Brenner and Gregg Mozgala, directed by National Disability Theatre (NDT) Co-Executive Directors and Playhouse Artists-in-Residence **Talleri A. McRae** and **Mickey Rowe**. The production will tour schools throughout San Diego County January 29 – March 27. Commissioned by the Playhouse, this world-premiere play for young audiences will also have four public performances on **February 29** and **March 1** at 1:00pm and 3:00pm at La Jolla Playhouse. Tickets are available at [LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://LaJollaPlayhouse.org) or (858) 550-1010.

The cast features **Paúl Araújo** as "Hugh," **Farah Dinga** as "Lady J/Reverend," **Cass Pfann** as "Emily" and **Jaye Wilson** as "Sally/Teddi." The creative team includes: **Sean Fanning**, Scenic Designer; **Mallory Kay Nelson**, Costume Designer; **Evan Eason**, Sound Designer; **Shirley Fishman**, Dramaturg; and **Chandra R. M. Athenill**, Stage Manager.

As a history-obsessed 12-year-old, Emily Driver uses her YouTube channel to celebrate landmark moments of activism and change. So when her request for a needed wheelchair is denied, she takes matters into her own hands – and launches into a time-travelling trip across the country where she meets trailblazing leaders from the past who have fought for equal rights. On the journey, she learns the power of speaking up, and how one voice can motivate others to create a more accessible world. In partnership with National Disability Theatre, a team of actors, writers, and designers with disabilities brings this inventive and original story to life.

"For more than 30 years, the Playhouse POP Tour has taken ideas and topics that resonate with young minds and activated them in fun and ingenious ways," said **Christopher Ashley**, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse. "La Jolla Playhouse is proud to partner with NDT on this year's POP Tour that takes audiences on a wild ride, exploring pioneering activists for accessibility rights, while sharing a universal story of a girl learning to speak up for herself."

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The POP Tour collaboration is part of a three-part Playhouse partnership with **National Disability Theatre**, which also includes the appointment of McRae and Rowe as the theatre's 2019/2020 **Artists-in-Residence**, as well as a co-commission with the Goodman Theatre of renowned playwright and Pulitzer Prize finalist Christopher Shinn (*Dying City*) for a new work, to be developed with NDT.

Launched in 1987, the **POP Tour** travels throughout the county, touring schools, libraries and community centers. The set, costumes and props are designed to fit into a 16-foot truck and, in just 60 minutes, can be unloaded, placed in any space and be ready for children to experience. Prior to each performance, a Playhouse teaching artist visits each school to engage students in an interactive workshop to explore issues and themes at the core of the play. The Playhouse also provides schools with a standards-based online [Engagement Guide](#) that enables educators to integrate the play into their existing curriculum. After each performance, the cast and crew conduct a question and answer session with the audience.

The Playhouse is one of the few theatres in the country that annually commissions world-class artists to create a bold new play for young audiences. Playwrights create an innovative, 45-minute piece that addresses issues in students' lives. Last year's POP Tour, *Light Years Away*, was seen by nearly **20,000** young people, teachers and families.

La Jolla Playhouse offers the **Adopt-A-School** program which provides funding for POP Tour performances at schools that could not otherwise afford it. With the help of the theatre's Education Committee, Playhouse Board members Judy Smith and Barbara ZoBell created the Adopt-A-School program for those who love theatre and feel no child should be without its transformative power. For more information, contact Cristina Hernandez at [chernandez@ljp.org](mailto:chernandez@ljp.org).

Tickets to the public performances on **February 29** and **March 1** are on sale at [LaJollaPlayhouse.org](http://LaJollaPlayhouse.org). For more information about booking the POP Tour for a school performance, please contact Hannah Reinert at [hreinert@ljp.org](mailto:hreinert@ljp.org).

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## ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

**Paúl Araújo**, a native of San Diego, is very honored to be part of what might be the first ever play about disability rights with La Jolla Playhouse and National Disability Theatre. Other credits: *La Pastorela*, *The Pitch* with Paul Rodriguez, *Anna in the Tropics*, *Lesson 443*, *Logan Heights*, *Journey of the Skeletons*, *Let the Eagle Fly*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Saturday Night at the Palace*, *Zoot Suit*, *The Who's Tommy*, among others. At the American College Theater Festival, Mr. Araujo, a member of Los Amigos del REP, was nominated for an Irene Ryan Award for his work in *Mariachi Quixote*. Aside from theatre, Paul is an advocate for people with developmental disabilities, and has served as a teaching artist for at-risk youth through the Old Globe's educational program. He holds an AA in Theatre Arts from Southwestern College and attended the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City.

**A.A. Brenner** is a playwright, dramaturg and native New Yorker. Their plays have been produced by Shakespeare Theatre Company's Fellows Consortium, Three Muses Theatre Company, Young Playwrights Inc., The Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts, Columbia University, and The Hangar Theatre Lab Company, among others, and they're a winner of the 2012 Young Playwrights Inc. National Playwriting Competition. Brenner's writing blends naturalistic dialogue with heightened verse and magical realism to explore queer, Jewish and disability themes, challenging both societal power structures and theatrical form, and they are a current MFA Playwriting candidate at the Columbia University School of the Arts.

**Farah Dinga** is thrilled to be making her La Jolla Playhouse debut. She recently graduated from UC San Diego with a B.A. in Theatre. Recent theatre credits include; *Around the World in 80 Days* (New Village Arts), *Dance Nation* (Moxie Theatre), *Monster* (WNPF, UCSD), *SERE* (WNPF, UCSD), *Our Town* (UCSD), *1.2.3.4.* (OnTheLine Collective), *2x2* (Cat and Crow) and many more.

**Talleri A. McRae** is a disabled theatre artist based in Louisville, KY. In addition to her work as a visiting teaching artists for grades K-12, Talleri collaborates as an access consultant with organizations like Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts, and Indiana Repertory Theatre. Talleri is the co-founder of National Disability Theatre (established 2018) alongside, advocate and theatre artist Mickey Rowe. Mickey and Talleri (on behalf of NDT) are currently serving as the artists-in-residence at La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego for their 2019/2020 season. Talleri holds a B.S. from Northwestern University, and an M.F.A. from The University of Texas at Austin.

**Gregg Mozgala's** recent credits include *Teenage Dick* at The Public Theater (Drama League Award nomination for Distinguished Performance) and New York Theatre Workshop's revival of *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*. He received a Lucille Lortel Award (Best Featured Actor) for his work in Martyna Majok's Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Cost of Living* at Manhattan Theatre Club. Mozgala is the subject of the documentary, *Enter the Faun*, which aired on the award-winning PBS series, *America Reframed*. He is the Director of Inclusion at Queens Theatre and the Founding Artistic Director of [The Apothetae](#); a theatre company dedicated to producing works that explore and illuminate the "Disabled Experience," as well as a member of NDT's Advisory Company.

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**Cass Pfann** is a San Diego-based actor who is making her professional debut in this production. Her favorite roles have been Ragtime (grandfather/ensemble), Sunday in the Park with George staged reading (Marie) both with J\*Company Youth Theatre. She also loved her experience with 8000M (assistant director) with Golden Shards productions. She is grateful to Morgan Carberry, her inspiration and teacher

**Jaye Wilson** is a multifaceted performer, having worked as an actor, singer, dancer, musician, drag artist, and more. They have graced stages from coast to coast, ranging from nightclubs and cabarets to theatres and Carnegie Hall. A few of their favorite roles include Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Argemone (et al.) in *Allegory* (La Jolla Playhouse WOW Festival), and their critically acclaimed turn as Hedwig in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (Diversionary Theatre). They are thrilled to be joining La Jolla Playhouse and National Disability Theatre for this wonderful project.

**Mickey Rowe** was the first autistic actor to play Christopher Boone in the Tony Award winning play *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. This also made him the first autistic actor to get to play any autistic character ever professionally. He has been featured in the New York Times, PBS, Teen Vogue, Playbill, NPR, CNN, Huffington Post, Salon, has keynoted at organizations including Lincoln Center, The Kennedy Center, Yale School of Drama, The Gershwin Theatre and more. Mickey is a co-founder of National Disability Theatre. Up next he will be starring as Mozart in *Amadeus*.

**National Disability Theatre** is a professional theatre company employing only professionals with disabilities to create fully accessible, world-class theatre and storytelling; changing social policy and the nation's narrative about what people with disabilities can do; and providing a guiding model in audience accessibility for the arts and culture sector. Their goals are to show that a large professional theatre company can be run entirely by people with disabilities; radically transform theatrical practices by telling stories through a lens of disability culture; lead the nation in inclusion, representation, and access with support from the top leaders in disability and entertainment; and powerfully spark greater inclusion for people with disabilities in other economic sectors.

[La Jolla Playhouse](#) is a place where artists and audiences come together to create what's new and next in the American theatre, from Tony Award-winning productions, to imaginative programs for young audiences, to interactive experiences outside our theatre walls. Currently led by Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley, the Rich Family Artistic Director of La Jolla Playhouse, and Managing Director Debby Buchholz, the Playhouse was founded in 1947 by Gregory Peck, Dorothy McGuire and Mel Ferrer. Renowned for its development of new plays and musicals, the Playhouse has mounted 105 world premieres, commissioned 58 new works, and sent 33 productions to Broadway – among them the currently-running hit musical *Come From Away* – garnering a total of 38 Tony Awards, plus the 1993 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre.

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## FACT SHEET

**WHAT:** **2020 Performance Outreach Program (POP) Tour: *Emily Driver's Great Race Through Time and Space***

By A.A. Brenner and Gregg Mozgala  
Directed by Talleri A. McRae and Mickey Rowe

**WHEN:** Touring Dates: January 29 – March 27 at schools across San Diego County  
Public Performances at the Playhouse: February 29 and March 1 at 1:00pm & 3:00pm

**CAST:**

Paúl Araújo	<i>Hugh</i>
Farah Dinga	<i>Lady J/Reverend</i>
Cass Pfann	<i>Emily</i>
Jaye Wilson	<i>Sally/Teddi</i>

**CREATIVE:**

Scenic Designer:	Sean Fanning
Costume Designer:	Mallory Kay Nelson
Sound Designer:	Evan Eason
Dramaturg	Shirley Fishman
Stage Manager:	Chandra R.M. Anthenill

**ABOUT:** As a history-obsessed 12-year-old, Emily Driver uses her YouTube channel to celebrate landmark moments of activism and change. So when her request for a needed wheelchair is denied, she takes matters into her own hands – and launches into a time-travelling trip across the country where she meets trailblazing leaders from the past who have fought for equal rights. On the journey, she learns the power of speaking up, and how one voice can motivate others to create a more accessible world. In partnership with National Disability Theatre, a team of actors, writers, and designers with disabilities brings this inventive and original story to life.

**BOOKING:** For information about booking the POP Tour for a school performance, please contact Hannah Reinert at [hreinert@ljp.org](mailto:hreinert@ljp.org). For more information about the Adopt-A-School program, please contact Cristina Hernandez at [chernandez@ljp.org](mailto:chernandez@ljp.org).

**TICKETS:** LaJollaPlayhouse.org or (858) 550-1010. Tickets are \$9 (12 and under); \$12 for adults

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