

FOOLSFURY WELCOMES CLAUDIA ALICK AS GUEST FESTIVAL DIRECTOR OF THE 2020 FURY FACTORY FESTIVAL OF ENSEMBLE AND DEvised THEATER



foolsFURY.org

“FURY Factory redefines live theater!” — SF/Arts

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, August 13, 2019 – **FoolsFURY Theater Company** today announced the appointment of **Claudia Alick** as Guest Festival Director of the 2020 FURY Factory Festival of Ensemble and Devised Theater. Alick joins foolsFURY Co-Artistic Directors **Ben Yalom** and **Debórah Eliezer** in the festival’s planning and programming with a focus on lifting up artists of color and artists from marginalized communities. FURY Factory will take place July 7 – 19, 2020 in San Francisco, CA.

Alick is the founding executive producer of Calling Up, a transmedia company raising awareness around issues of social justice through the development and production of scripted works, among many other activities. Organizations Alick has consulted with include the Doris Duke Foundation, NEFA, Collins Foundation, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Oregon Community Foundation, Shotgun Players, The Playwrights Foundation and Aurora Theatre, among others.

Her extensive leadership experience includes managing an arts program at The George Washington University; founding and directing Smokin' Word Productions, a hip-hop theater company based in New York; serving on the boards of The Community Dish and Community Works; and for a decade serving as community producer at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival where she produced more than 100 programs yearly, including *The Green Show*, *Juneteenth Celebration*, as well as an original audio play series, nominated for a Grammy.

Alick is a poet, performer, producer and intersectional inclusion expert in equal measure. She is an Oakland Slam team winner who's been featured on HBO's Def Poetry Jam; she's a New York Neo-Futurist alum and a TedXFargo speaker; she's a published playwright and journalist; and a recipient of New York City's Fresh Fruit directing award and MRG Foundation's Lilla Jewel Award; and she's currently co-president of the Board of the Network of Ensemble Theaters. Named by *American Theatre* magazine as one of 25 theater artists who will shape American theater in the next 25 years, Alick is a recognized thought leader in her field.

"I am ecstatic to be working with Claudia," said Yalom. "We couldn't have found a better person to help us move the festival forward artistically and culturally. She is a brilliant mind, and a great collaborator. And she is deeply passionate about discovering and lifting up great work wherever it is found. I look forward to working with her and learning from her."

"FURY Factory is a vital opportunity for Bay Area audiences to be exposed to the best of our national ensemble performance community," said Alick. "Collaborating with foolsFURY is exciting because we share the goals of devising new models of ensemble leadership for greater equity."

"To stay vital to our community we need to develop better practices for inclusivity, diversity and equity," said Eliezer. "As artists and cultural provocateurs, it is our responsibility to walk the walk, to do the work of looking closely at ourselves and our practices, and to choose to make them better, even when that work is difficult. Claudia's participation in FURY Factory will be an essential piece of this ongoing process."

"Together we are designing a new position, 'Guest Festival Director,' which will rotate to other theater practitioners in the future," said Yalom. "It's a radical idea – the sharing of power! – but it's one in keeping with the original values of foolsFURY."

Since 2005, FURY Factory has made the San Francisco Bay Area a national hub for devised theater, presenting a cross-section of the field with works by more than 120 companies from around the U.S. and beyond. The festival has evolved to encompass a series of Main Stage performances, a series of works-in-progress or "Raw Materials," workshops led by participating artists, and a series of convenings where artists, audience members, academics and others discuss issues critical to the ensemble theater field.

Applications to take part in next year's festival can be found at foolsfury.org/fury-factory-2020. The deadline for submissions is August 31, 2019. For more information, contact furyfactorysubmissions2020@foolsfury.org.

ABOUT FOOLSFURY THEATER COMPANY

FoolsFURY, founded in 1998 by Ben Yalom, is a physically oriented theater ensemble based in San Francisco. FoolsFURY has been hailed as San Francisco's "Best Theater Company" (*SF Weekly*), "One of the brightest stars of the San Francisco experimental theater scene" (*SF/Arts*), and it was awarded the GOLDIE award for theater by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*. FoolsFURY strives to innovate constantly, focusing on inspired uses of the body in creating narrative, and offering visceral experiences for audiences that cannot be replicated on film or television. Current productions include the West Coast premiere of Kate Tarker's *Dionysus Was Such a Nice Man*, opening in September 2019, Debórah Eliezer's *(dis)Place[d]*, touring in 2020, and a new as-of-yet untitled collaboration with Katie Pearl. In addition to creating and touring new works, foolsFURY produces FURY Factory, a festival of ensemble and devised theater presenting works from companies across the U.S. and beyond.