

WORD FOR WORD

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Word for Word <http://www.zspace.org/aboutwordforword/>

Z SPACE: <https://www.zspace.org>

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

Word for Word's First Production of the 2018 Season

Lucia Berlin: Stories

By Lucia Berlin

Directed by Nancy Shelby and JoAnne Winter

February 14-March 11

Press Performances February 17 & 18

(previews Feb. 14-16)

Z Below, 470 Florida St.

Word for Word's first production of the 2018 Season is Lucia Berlin:Stories running February 14-March 11, in the Z Below Theater in San Francisco. Lucia Berlin:Stories opens with press performances February 17 & 18, Saturday 8 PM and Sunday 3 PM (previews Feb. 14 - 16). The stories are from Lucia Berlin's posthumously published, critically acclaimed, *A Manual for Cleaning Women* featuring the stories "Her First Detox", "Emergency Room Notebook 1977", "Unmanageable", "502" and "Here It Is Saturday". Directed by Nancy Shelby and JoAnne Winter, **Lucia Berlin:Stories** is set to an evocative jazz score by Marcus Shelby, and illuminated with vibrant projections by Naomie Kremer. Author Lydia Davis in *The New Yorker* described Berlin's work: "Lucia Berlin's stories are electric, they buzz and crackle as the live wires touch....This is exhilarating writing"

Lucia Berlin's 5 harrowing, comic stories feature a very complex woman, balancing motherhood, relationships, and a working life. Set in and around the San Francisco Bay Area, Berlin's stories paint a woman's journey through alcoholism and the unlikely places it takes her. The production is directed by Nancy Shelby and JoAnne Winter, music composed by Marcus Anthony Shelby with scenic design by Oliver DiCicco and Video/co-scenic design by Naomie Kremer. These redemptive Lucia Berlin stories feature Bay Area actress and Word for Word charter members Jeri Lynn Cohen*, and Delia MacDougall*, with actors Cassidy Brown*, Ryan Williams French*, Norman Gee*, Gendell Hing-Hernandez*, Indiia Wilmot, and Phil Wong. *Actors Equity

Lucia Brown Berlin (1936 – 2004) was an American short story writer. She had a small, devoted following, but did not reach a mass audience during her lifetime. She rose to sudden literary fame eleven years after her death, in August 2015, with Farrar, Straus and Giroux's publication of a volume of selected stories, *A Manual For Cleaning Women*, edited by Stephen Emerson. It was enthusiastically recognised coast to coast in the US and abroad. The book hit *The New York Times* Bestseller List in its second week, and within a few weeks, had outsold all her previous books combined. Berlin's book was described at publication as "possessing wit of Lorrie Moore, the grit of Raymond Carver, and a blend of humor and melancholy all her own, Berlin crafts miracles from the everyday, uncovering moments of grace in the cafeterias and Laundromats of the American

Southwest, in the homes of the Bay Area upper class, among switchboard operators and struggling mothers, hitchhikers and bad Christians.” - Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Berlin was born in Juneau, Alaska, and spent her childhood on the move, following her father's career as a mining engineer. The family lived in mining camps in Idaho, Montana and Arizona, and Chile, where Lucia spent most of her youth. As an adult, she lived in New Mexico, Mexico, northern and southern California and Colorado. She became published relatively late in life. Her first small collection, *Angels in the Laundromat*, was published in 1981, but her published stories were written as early as 1960. Several of her stories appeared in magazines such as *The Atlantic* and Saul Bellow's *The Noble Savage*. Berlin published six collections of short stories, but most of her work can be found in three later volumes from Black Sparrow Books: *Homesick: New and Selected Stories* (1990), *So Long: Stories 1987-92* (1993) and *Where I Live Now: Stories 1993-98* (1999).

Lucia Berlin:Stories Team - Actors, Directors, Composer and Designer.

Directed by Nancy Shelby, JoAnne Winter

Marcus Shelby (Composer), Oliver DiCicco (Set Design) Naomie Kremer, (Projection Design)

Actors-Word for Word charter members Jeri Lynn Cohen*, and Delia MacDougall*, with actors Cassidy Brown*, Ryan Williams French*, Norman Gee*, Gendell Hing-Hernandez*, Indii Wilmot, and Phil Wong.

***Actors Equity**

Cassidy Brown (actor) has appeared at TheatreWorks in *Fallen Angels*, *Doubt*, *Distracted*, *The 39 Steps* and *The Loudest Man on Earth*, at Aurora Theatre in *Safe House* and *Bosoms and Neglect*, and most recently at Berkeley Rep in *Imaginary Comforts*. Other Bay Area credits include Center Rep, San Jose Rep, Marin Shakespeare Company, and San Jose Stage. Regionally he has appeared at Capital Stage and in numerous shows at Pacific Repertory Theatre.

Jeri Lynn Cohen (actor) is a Charter Member of Word for Word Performing Arts Company where she has originated roles in over 16 productions. She has performed at theaters throughout the Bay Area and has toured internationally with both Word for Word and the San Francisco Mime Troupe.

Ryan Williams French (actor) is an actor, singer, and writer, who works as an educator. He recently completed a production of James Baldwin, *Blues for Mister Charlie* in Seattle with The Williams Project. Other credits include *Mr. Burns*, *A Christmas Carol* (American Conservatory Theater) *Holy Ghostly* (Campo Santo) *The Guthrie*, Chautauqua Theater Company, and Hudson Guild NYC. He received his MFA in Acting from A.C.T. and B.A. from Dartmouth College.

Norman Gee (actor) just performed in *STORIES FROM SILENCE* at PianoFight, a Utopia Theater #MeToo response. He also did *DEATH OF A SALESMAN* with Ubuntu Theater last year, and played Polonius; the Gravedigger in Arabian Shakespeare Festival's *HAMLET*.

Gendell Hing-Hernandez (actor) has performed with Word for Word in *Sorry Fugu*, and has been a lead teaching artist for the company here and in France.

Delia MacDougall (actor) is an actor, director, and is a Charter Member of Word for Word. She last performed with Word for Word in *Smut*. Other Word for Word shows: *Sorry Fugu*, *The Necklace*, *Rose-Johnny*, *The Islanders*, *Friend of My Youth*, *36 Stories* by Sam Shepard, and *In Friendship* which she also directed. Other direction credits for WfW include *Immortal Heart*, *Winesburg, Ohio*, *Oll!: The Ride*, and *Mrs. Dalloway's Party*.

Indii Wilmot (actor) has performed in the Bay with *Zenith*, San Francisco Playhouse, *All of What You Love and None of What You Hate*, San Francisco Playhouse, *Antony and Cleopatra*, African-American Shakespeare Company, and *Bootycandy* at Brava Theater Center/Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience. She is also a teaching artist working American

Conservatory Theater and California Shakespeare Theater.

Phil Wong (actor) is an actor, musician, comedian, and teaching artist from Oakland, last seen with Word for Word in SMUT: An Unseemly Story. He is a Resident Artist with SF Shakes, a graduate of Oberlin College, and received his physical theatre training at the Accademia dell' Arte in Arezzo, Italy.

Nancy Shelby (Director) is a Charter Member of Word for Word, and has appeared in more than fifteen Word for Word productions, most recently - SMUT: The Greening of Mrs. Donaldson. This fall Nancy directed Greg Sarris' How a Mountain was Made, and is at work now preparing for Lucia Berlin: Stories

JoAnne Winter (Director) co-founded Word for Word in 1993, and has helped produce over 100 shows, readings and student performances for the company. She is also Artistic Director of Word for Word's arts education program, Youth Arts, and is an actor, director and teaching artist.

Marcus Shelby (Composer) is a bandleader, composer, arranger, bassist, educator, and activist who currently lives in San Francisco, California. Over the past 25 years he has built a diverse biography as a composer, focusing on sharing the history, present, and future of African American lives, on social movements in the US, and on early childhood music education. Currently, Shelby is an artist in residence with the Yerba Buena Gardens Festival and the Artistic Director of the Marcus Shelby Orchestra. He has received numerous awards, and collaborated with many artists in original composition. For Word for Word, he composed 2008's award-winning score for Sonny's Blues (James Baldwin)

Oliver DiCicco (Set Design) is a multi-talented designer who is a sculptor, fabricator, scientist, engineer, and musician. DiCicco's large-scale kinetic sound sculptures and avant-garde set designs have drawn rave reviews while being used as interactive components in unique theatrical productions. For Word for Word, he designed the kinetic car sculpture featured in Upton Sinclair's Oil!: Chapter One: The Ride. DiCicco has made San Francisco his base of operations for over thirty years. Early in his career he was the owner and chief engineer of Mobius Music Recording, a highly respected, state of the art recording facility. His work in the audio field has been recognized by several Grammy nominations, and RIAA gold record awards. His sculptural work focuses primarily on musical instrument sculpture and kinetic sound sculpture.

Naomie Kremer (Video Artist and co-scenic designer) is a painter, video artist, and stage designer. She has exhibited widely in the US and abroad. Her work is in many private and public collections, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, The Berkeley Art Museum, The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, and the US Embassy, Beijing, China. Her video based set designs include Alcina, by GF Handel, performed in Acre, Israel by the French Baroque orchestra Les Talens Lyriques; the world premiere production of The Secret Garden co-commissioned by San Francisco Opera and Cal performances; Light Moves, a collaboration with Margaret Jenkins Dance Company; and Bluebeard's Castle by Béla Bartók, commissioned by the Berkeley Opera. She recently completed a 40-minute film, In the Beginning was Desire, with documentary filmmaker David Grubin, for which she conceived and created all the visuals.

WORD FOR WORD Performing Arts Company, a program of Z SPACE, is an ensemble whose mission is to tell great stories with elegant theatricality, staging performances of classic and contemporary fiction. Founded in 1993 by Susan Harloe and JoAnne Winter, Word for Word believes in the power of the short story to provide solace, compassion, and insight into our daily lives.

Z SPACE: Operating two venues in San Francisco's historic Mission District, a mainstage and a black box theater, Z Space hosts new works from a variety of performance disciplines year-round. Under Artistic Director Lisa Steindler, keystone initiatives include *New Work*, a development program that supports artists and

ensembles from conception to realization of unique works, *Word for Word*, a resident theatre company that transforms works of literature verbatim to the stage, and *Youth Arts*, an arts education program promoting literacy and engaging students' creativity. We foster opportunities around the nation for these works and we engage diverse audiences through direct interactions with the process, the projects, and the artists.

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For more information about Z SPACE on the web and social media:

WEBSITE: <https://www.zspace.org>

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/zspaceSF/>

TWITTER: <https://twitter.com/zspaceSF>

INSTAGRAM: https://www.instagram.com/zspace_theatre/

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February 14-March 11

Press February 17 & 18,

Special event: March 4 - Marcus Shelby Live! Marcus Shelby and his jazz trio will perform after performance. (\$75) Performance & Concert.

Sat. 8 PM and Sun. 3 PM (previews Feb. 14 - 16)

Z Below, 470 Florida St.

At: Z Below, Z Space's second venue, at 470 Florida St..

Performances; Wednesday-Thursday 7 pm, Friday-Saturday 8 pm, Sunday 3 pm

Ticket prices: Tickets \$20-50. with no additional fees. Tickets:415-626-0453 or at www.zspace.org

