

Crowded Fire Theater

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**CROWDED FIRE THEATER'S 20th ANNIVERSARY 2018 SEASON
WITH PLAYS BY ALICE BIRCH AND YOUNG JEAN LEE
DIRECTED BY 20 YEARS OF CROWDED FIRE ARTISTIC DIRECTORS**

REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN. by Alice Birch March 1 – March 24

CHURCH by Young Jean Lee September 13 – October 6

**Presented at the Potrero Stage
1695 18th St, San Francisco**

San Francisco – Crowded Fire Theater (CFT) Crowded Fire's Artistic Director Mina Morita unveiled the 20th Anniversary 2018 mainstage season lineup including two contemporary plays that continue to uphold the company's long tradition of creating boundary-pushing theater. At a season announcement party on Saturday, November 18, Morita addressed Crowded Fire donors, patrons, and artists, saying "It is a remarkable act to celebrate two decades of making revolutionary theater; of inspiring interrogation and revolt against the artistic and cultural norms which placate us. We are charging forward with arms raised high and voices loud!"

Crowded Fire's 2018 season will celebrate the company's 20 years of producing thought-provoking theater in San Francisco, with a return of the artistic directors who founded, built, and continue to grow the theater into what it is today: a vital home for artists who are exploring what culture means in our rapidly shifting world.

The season begins with the West Coast premiere of Alice Birch's **REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN** (3/1-3/24), a darkly comic manifesto that explodes the ways women are held and manicured to fit society's expectations. **REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN** will be directed by Crowded Fire's founding artistic director Rebecca Novick. The mainstage season concludes with the Bay Area premiere of Young Jean Lee's **CHURCH** (9/13-10/6), a transformation of Lee's lifelong struggle with Christianity into an exuberant church service that tests the expectations of religious and non-religious alike. **CHURCH** will be directed by current artistic director, Mina Morita.

In addition to the mainstage productions presented at the Potrero Stage, Crowded Fire will continue to develop new plays through the Matchbox: New Play Development Program which commissions, facilitates workshops & writing labs, and presents public readings of new plays in progress. During this special 20th Anniversary season, the Matchbox Reading Series, which traditionally takes place in November, will be expanded in celebration of the many artists who have called Crowded Fire home over the last two decades. Former artistic director Marissa Wolf will return to direct a special extended workshop in the series, details of which will be announced in the months to come.

THE PLAYS

REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN. by Alice Birch

Crowded Fire presents the West Coast Premiere REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN. by London-based playwright Alice Birch, directed by Rebecca Novick March 1-March 24. For all the #NastyWomen (or anyone who can say #MeToo) looking for #GirlsLikeUs, wondering why #NeverthelessShePersisted, who want to #AskHerMore: Revolt. Exhilaratingly wild, fearless and playful, REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN. is feminism at its messy edge. Alice Birch morphs language and explodes boundaries in this darkly comic manifesto exploring the myriad ways women are styled, shaped, and confined to fit society's expectations, asking us: What happens when we rebel?

CHURCH by Young Jean Lee

The author of 2016's THE SHIPMENT, Young Jean Lee returns to Crowded Fire with CHURCH, directed by Mina Morita September 13-October 6. What does it mean to lose, gain and question faith? In CHURCH, Young Jean Lee transforms her lifelong struggle with Christianity into an exuberant church service. A traveling group of earnest reverends testify through narrative, song, and dance, testing the expectations of religious and non-religious alike. In its New York City premiere, *Time Out New York* described CHURCH as "no cheap satire of piety. Instead, it is an earnestly warped attempt to explore what gives religion its insidious appeal."

THE PLAYWRIGHTS AND DIRECTORS

Alice Birch (playwright) is a London-based playwright. Her play ANATOMY OF A SUICIDE recently premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in June. In May of 2016, her play REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN ran at Soho Rep. Alice was the winner of the George Devine Award for Most Promising Playwright 2014 and the Arts Foundation Award for Playwriting 2014. Her writing also includes LITTLE ON THE INSIDE (Edinburgh 2014/ Almeida / Clean Break), SO MUCH ONCE (24 Hour Celebrity Gala Old Vic), OPEN COURT SOAP OPERA (Royal Court), SALT (Comedie de Valence),

Many Moons (Theatre503), Flying The Nest (BBC Radio 4), and LITTLE LIGHT (Orange Tree Theatre). Alice's screenplay LADY MACBETH was produced by the BFI/BBC under the iFeatures initiative and premiered at last year's Toronto International Film Festival. It was also named one of Variety's 10 Best Films of the Festival and was directed by William Oldroyd and stars Florence Pugh. Roadside Attractions will distribute domestically in 2017.

Young Jean Lee (playwright) is a writer, director, and filmmaker who has been called "the most adventurous downtown playwright of her generation" by the New York Times and "one of the best experimental playwrights in America" by Time Out New York. She has written and directed ten shows in New York with Young Jean Lee's Theater Company, and toured her work to over thirty cities around the world. Her play STRAIGHT WHITE MEN will premiere on Broadway at Second Stage Theatre in summer 2018. Her plays have been published by Dramatists Play Service (STRAIGHT WHITE MEN and CHURCH), Theatre Communications Group (SONGS OF THE DRAGONS FLYING TO HEAVEN AND OTHER PLAYS; THE SHIPMENT AND LEAR; and WE'RE GONNA DIE) and by Samuel French (THREE PLAYS BY YOUNG JEAN LEE). Her first short film, HERE COME THE GIRLS, was presented at The Locarno International Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, and BAMcinemaFest. In 2013, she released her debut album, *We're Gonna Die*, with her band, Future Wife. Lee is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, two OBIE Awards, a Prize in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and a PEN Literary Award.

Mina Morita (director) is the Artistic Director of Crowded Fire Theater, a critically acclaimed, intrepid, female-led company dedicated to developing a fierce contemporary theater canon that reflects the plurality of our world. Previously, she served as the Artistic Associate at Berkeley Repertory Theatre—and a founding member of its Ground Floor program; as Board President of Shotgun Players; as a 2014 Lincoln Center Director's Lab participant; as one of the founding members of Bay Area Children's Theatre; as Community Arts Panelist with the Zellerbach Family Foundation; and Guest Artist at UC Berkeley and Stanford University. She is a recipient of Theatre Bay Area's 2014 award for Best Director of a Musical: Tier II and TBA's 2016, 40@40 award for her impact on Bay Area Theater. In 2015, Mina was honored to share her story on TEDx, and in 2016, she was chosen as one of the YBCA100, for "asking questions and making provocations that will shape the future of culture." She has had the privilege of directing the following plays among many: AULIS: AN ACT OF NIHILISM IN ONE LONG ACT by Christopher Chen @ Zellerbach Playhouse, SISTERS MATSUMOTO by Philip Kan Gotanda @ CenterRep (Shellie nominated for best direction), BY AND BY by Lauren Gunderson & THE GREAT DIVIDE by Adam Chanzit @ Shotgun Players, and

co-directed THE SHIPMENT by Young Jean Lee (TBA nominated for best direction), BLACKADEMICS by Idris Goodwin, and A TALE OF AUTUMN by Christopher Chen @ Crowded Fire. Special assistant directing credits include Tony Kushner's THE INTELLIGENT HOMOSEXUAL'S GUIDE... and Sarah Ruhl's Tony-nominated IN THE NEXT ROOM... @ Berkeley Rep. In 2012, Mina worked with Anna Deavere Smith as the artistic coordinator for ON GRACE.

Rebecca Novick (director) is a theater-maker based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Recent projects have included ELECTRA at Ten Thousand Things in Minneapolis, GHOST TOWN, a world premiere by Juliette Carillo for Cornerstone Theater in Los Angeles, a production of Shakespeare's TEMPEST for Cal Shakes that toured homeless shelters, prisons, and community centers, and a production of Erik Ehn's DOGSBODY was presented at La Mama in New York. She has also worked with the Magic Theatre, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, the Aurora Theatre, the EXIT Theatre, Shotgun Players, Berkeley Opera, Playground, and Woman's Will, among others. Her directing has been recognized with the SF Bay Guardian's Goldie Award for Outstanding Local Artists. Rebecca was the founding artistic director of Crowded Fire Theater Company and led the company for ten years. She also developed and led the Triangle Lab, a collaboration between California Shakespeare Theater and Intersection for the Arts that explored how art can be more deeply integrated into community life, and then went on to serve as Cal Shakes' associate artistic director.

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For Calendar Editors:

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REVOLT. SHE SAID. REVOLT AGAIN. by Alice Birch

An explosive #feminism manifesto

directed by Rebecca Novick

March 1-24 (Press Opening March 5)

Potrero Stage, 1695 18th Street, San Francisco

CHURCH by Young Jean Lee

A religious experience that provokes and delights

September 13-October 6 (Press Opening September 17)
Potrero Stage, 1695 18th Street, San Francisco

PERFORMANCES:

Wed-Saturdays 8 PM with Special Opening Night Performances on Mondays, 8 PM

Tickets: Prices range from \$10-35 progressively during the course of the run.

We offer Pay-What-You-Can Preview performances and student/senior/group rates.

Tickets: Visit www.crowdedfire.org for more information and to purchase tickets.

Box Office by phone (415) 523-0034 ext 1