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**MARIN THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF THE 2010 SKY COOPER  
NEW AMERICAN PLAY PRIZE & THE 2010 DAVID CALICCHIO EMERGING  
AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHT PRIZE**

MILL VALLEY, CA— Marin Theatre Company Artistic Director Jasson Minadakis and Producing Director Ryan Rilette are pleased to announce the winners of MTC's two American Play Prizes. The 2010 Sky Cooper New American Play Prize has been awarded to **Bill Cain** for *9 Circles*. (Bill Cain's critically acclaimed *Equivocation* receives its Bay Area premiere at MTC this spring.) Cain will receive a \$10,000 award accompanied by a world premiere production of *9 Circles* in the Lieberman Theatre as part of MTC's 2010–11 season. The 2010 David Calicchio Emerging American Playwright Prize has been awarded to **Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig** for *Lidless*. She will receive \$2,500 and *Lidless* will be included in MTC's New Works series in the 2010–11 season. The winners this year were selected from 380 eligible submissions.

"The entire MTC artistic staff was astounded by the power and grace of *9 Circles*—it was our unanimous choice for the Sky Cooper New American Play Prize. Mr. Cain's highly theatrical vision, so evident in *Equivocation*, is again on dazzling display. The heart of Cain's *9 Circles*, a haunting journey of a young American soldier who must negotiate the consequences of a brutal crime, will leave audiences breathless," says MTC Artistic Director Jasson Minadakis. "MTC is also pleased to introduce a bright, important new voice for the American theater, Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig. Her play *Lidless* focuses on the life of a female Guantanamo interrogator after she has left military service. Ms. Cowhig displays amazing maturity and promise in her storytelling, dialogue, use of structure, and craft."

Winner of the 2010 Sky Cooper New American Play Prize

**9 CIRCLES**

by Bill Cain

A 19-year-old American soldier is on trial for his life. Home from Iraq after being honorably discharged, Daniel Reeves has been arrested, his own government holding

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him accountable for unspeakable acts of brutality he committed in the name of war. Daniel descends through layers of commanding officers, public defenders, lawyers, preachers, and army psychiatrists to an inevitable and chilling conclusion. In this dramatic, compelling, and visceral story inspired by actual events, the audience is the judge and jury in the trial of an American soldier.

**Bill Cain** is the author of the widely-produced play *Stand-Up Tragedy*, which earned six L.A. Critics Awards (including Best Production and Distinguished Writing) in its premiere at the Mark Taper Forum. *Stand Up* later won four Helen Hayes Awards (including Outstanding Production) at Arena Stage in Washington, DC, before its 1990 Broadway engagement where it received the Joe A. Callaway Playwriting Award. His play *Equivocation* received its world premiere at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2009, and has had subsequent productions in Seattle, Los Angeles, New York, and at Marin Theatre Company this season. His play *The Laying on of Hands* was developed at the Ojai Playwrights Conference and NYU's HotInk Series. *How To Write a New Book For The Bible: A Play For An Older Actress* was also developed at Ojai. *9 Circles* was developed at Ojai and South Coast Rep's Pacific Playwrights Festival. Cain was the co-creator/writer/producer of "Nothing Sacred," a dramatic television series which premiered in the fall of 1997 on ABC and was awarded a George Foster Peabody Award for Outstanding Achievement in Television.

Winner of the 2010 David Calicchio Emerging American Playwright Prize

## **LIDLESS**

by Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig

Fifteen years ago, Alice was an interrogator at Guantanamo. The beta-blockers she took during her service have left holes in her memories, a fact she welcomes so she can get on with the new life she has created with her husband and daughter. When Bashir, a former detainee dying of liver disease, arrives to confront Alice, she can't remember ever having seen his face. He refuses to let Alice deny her past, demanding shocking payment for the damage she wreaked on his body and soul during their interrogations. A confrontation about embracing one's true nature and the quest to re-humanize a world losing sight of its common humanity.

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**Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig's** plays have been developed at the Hedgebrook Women Playwrights Festival, Seattle Repertory Theatre, PlayPenn, the Alley Theatre, Ojai Playwrights Conference and Yale Rep. *Lidless* will be published by Yale University Press in 2010 and will appear in the High Tide and Contemporary American Theatre Festivals. A nominee for the Wasserstein and Susan Smith Blackburn Prizes, Cowhig's other honors include the 2009 Keene Prize for Literature, the 2009 Yale Drama Series Award, a Glimmer Train New Writer's Award, and grants from the Playwright's Center, Interact Theatre, Santa Fe Art Institute, the Ragdale Foundation and the MacDowell Colony. She received her MFA in Writing from the James A. Michener Center for Writers of the University of Texas, Austin, her BA in Sociology from Brown University, and a certificate in Ensemble Created Physical Theatre from the Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre. Frances was raised in Philadelphia, Northern Virginia, Okinawa, Taipei, and Beijing.

#### **ABOUT THE MTC PLAY PRIZES**

Norton J. "Sky" Cooper funds the **Sky Cooper New American Play Prize** at Marin Theatre Company, established in 2007 to celebrate the work of the American playwright and to encourage the creation of bold, powerful new voices and plays for the American stage. The Sky Cooper Prize will be awarded annually to either an established or emerging playwright for an outstanding new work. The play selected as the Sky Cooper winner receives a full production at MTC as part of its annual season and will be given regional and national promotion. In addition, the playwright receives a \$10,000 award, as well as travel and accommodations for the MTC rehearsal period. Previous winners include Zayd Dohrn for *Magic Forest Farm* in 2008, and Sharr White for *Sunlight* in 2009.

Norton J. "Sky" Cooper also funds the **David Calicchio Emerging American Playwright Prize** award at Marin Theatre Company, established in 2007 in honor of David Calicchio's lifelong career as a playwright, and in support of MTC's commitment to the discovery and development of new and emerging American playwrights. The Calicchio Prize is awarded annually to a professionally unproduced playwright for a new work that shows outstanding promise and a distinctive new voice for the American theater. The play selected for Calicchio Prize will receive two public staged readings at MTC as part of its annual New Works Series. The playwright will receive a \$2,500

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award, as well as travel and accommodations for the MTC rehearsal period. Previous winners include A. Zell Williams for *Blood/Money* in 2008 and Emily Schwend for *Carthage* in 2009.

## **ABOUT MTC**

Marin Theatre Company is the Bay Area's premiere mid-sized theater and the leading professional theater in the North Bay. We produce a five- to six-show season of provocative plays by passionate playwrights from the 20th century and today in two intimate theaters—a 231-seat proscenium and a 99-seat thrust. We are committed to the development and production of new plays by American playwrights, with a comprehensive New Play Program that includes at least one world premiere each season, two nationally recognized annual playwriting awards, numerous new play readings and workshops by the nation's best emerging playwrights, and a leadership position in the National New Play Network. Our educational programs serve more than 6,000 students each year.

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