UA’s Studio Series Mounts New Play, *Mother of Exiles*, by UA Theatre Professor & Award-Winning Playwright Elaine Romero - & Presents Timely Issues of Race, Politics & Fear

Directed by John Muszynski

*Tucson, AZ* – A powerful and timely new play, *Mother of Exiles*, is about to open through the University of Arizona’s Studio Series, a program that provides theatre-making opportunities for Bachelor of Arts students, while offering audiences thought-provoking theatre. In *Mother of Exiles*, an undercover Latina returns to her hometown on the Arizona/Mexican border to teach the next generation about what it means to be free, only to be handed a gun by her superiors. She finds herself and her students held hostage by the politics of fear. This new play demonstrates how work in the Studio Series packs a punch.

Elaine Romero is not only an Assistant UA Theatre Professor. She is an award-winning Resident Playwright at Chicago Dramatists and is Playwright-in-Residence at Arizona Theatre Company. *Mother of Exiles* is the second installment of her social justice border trilogy, which includes *Wetback* and *Title IX*. *Mother of Exiles* received a Saturday Series reading at Chicago Dramatists and was written on commission for Cornell University. Romero wrote the play shortly after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Romero said, “There had been rumblings in the state government in Arizona about arming teachers. I ran with that premise. When I write, I often think about how the outside world pressurizes the inside world, about how outward societal impressions begin to warp our own view of what we know to be true. Magda loves her students, but when she begins to see them through the eyes of others, she becomes estranged from them.”

Guest director, John Muszynski, who said he’s thrilled to have been invited back after directing last year’s *Tribes* for the Studio Series, knows the value of a great playwright. “I have worked in the theatre for many years and have come to understand that actors and directors come and go, but a good playwright is the lasting artist in the art for theatre,” Muszynski said. “I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work alongside a gifted playwright like Elaine. She has such vision and passion for her work and knows how to craft a play to affect an audience. That is awe inspiring.”

UA Theatre students will be presented with another rare learning experience since Tanya Palmer is the guest dramaturg for this production of *Mother of Exiles*. From the world-renowned Goodman Theatre in Chicago, Palmer is the Director of New Play Development where she coordinates New Stages, the theatre’s new play program. Palmer has served as the production dramaturg on a number of plays, including the world premieres of *Vigils* by Noah Haidle, *Magnolia* by Regina Taylor, *The Long Red Road* by Brett C. Leonard and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Ruined* by Lynn Nottage. While on campus before *Mother of Exiles* opens, Palmer will continue her work with the creative team, visit two undergraduate Bachelor of Arts classes – dramaturgy and playwriting – and hold a salon discussion with the Master of Fine Arts Generative Dramaturgy students.

**Dates & Times:** Evenings: Apr 20 - 22 at 8pm | Matinee: Apr 23 at 2pm  
**Place:** Harold Dixon Directing Studio, Drama Bldg, Rm #116, on UA campus (SE corner of Speedway Blvd/Park)  
**Cost/Admission:** All seats $7 | **Ticket Information:** UA Fine Arts Box Office (520) 621-1162 or tickets.arizona.edu  
**Parking:** Park Avenue Garage, located on Park Avenue just north of Speedway Blvd. Pre-paid parking is available for weekday evening performances. Saturday and Sunday there is no charge to park. If you have special needs for parking, please call UA Parking & Transportation Services at (520) 621-3550.

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Approx Run Time: 75 minutes • No Intermission • Dr. Bobbi McKean, Studio Series Artistic Director • 520-621-5620  
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