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LOVING PRIZE PRESENTATION
HONORS
PIONEERING SCHOLAR PAUL SPICKARD
AND

AWARD-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT VELINA HASU HOUSTON

(Los Angeles, CA) The *Mixed Roots Film & Literary Festival* will present the 4th Annual *Loving Prizes* to leaders in the multiracial community on June 11, 2011 at 6:30pm at the *Japanese American National Museum* in downtown Los Angeles (369 East First Street).

In the Obama age, the Festival, which takes place June 11-12, celebrates stories of the Mixed experience and stories of multiracial Americans, the fastest growing demographic in the U.S. New Census figures reveal that 1 in 5 mixed-race people lives in California!

A **free two-day public event**, the Festival brings together film and book lovers, innovative and emerging artists, and multiracial families and individuals for workshops, readings, film screenings, and a **Target Free Family Day** at the *Japanese American National Museum* on Saturday morning with storytellers, crafts, and dynamic performance.

The *Loving Prizes* are awarded each year to artists who **have shown a dedication to celebrating and illuminating the Mixed experience**. Past recipients include best-selling writer James McBride, NFL star Hines Ward, Hapa artist Kip Fulbeck, scholar Dr. Maria P. P. Root, writer and sister of President Barack Obama Maya Soetoro-Ng, and writer and TV producer Angela Nissel. **Councilwoman Jan Perry will speak at the Loving Prize presentation.**

The 2011 Loving Prize recipients are:

Paul Spickard is a pioneering scholar on issues concerning the Mixed experience. A professor at *University of California Santa Barbara*, Spickard has written some of the most ground-breaking books on this topic including: *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage & Ethnic: Intermarriage And Ethnic Identity In Twentieth Century America*. Spickard has

received accolades and awards as a *Fulbright Research Professor*; *Rockefeller Foundation Residential Fellow*; Distinguished Lecturer by the *Organization of American Historians*; and *Outstanding Teacher of the Year* among others.

Internationally acclaimed playwright **Velina Hasu Houston** has written more than thirty plays including sixteen commissions in a career that began Off-Broadway with *Tea* at *Manhattan Theatre Club* and *American Dreams* at *Negro Ensemble Company*. Her plays have been presented throughout the United States and internationally in Australia, Canada, and across Asia including in the People's Republic of China, Japan, Singapore, and Malaysia. Current projects include two commissions with the *Los Angeles Opera*, *Bliss* as part of the exhibit *Posing Beauty: African American Images from the 1890s to the Present* at the *Fisher Museum of Art*; *Iphigenia* (commission from *Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada* and collaboration with Peggy Shannon, *Ryerson Theatre School*, Candice M. Monson, *National and Kapodistrian University of Athens*, *Hydrama Theatre and Arts Centre*; and *Made in Japan* (*International Federation of Theatre Research Conference*, Osaka, Japan).

She has been honored by *Japan Foundation*, *Rockefeller Foundation*, *California Arts Council*, *The Durfee Foundation*, *Sidney F. Brody Foundation*, *Sidney Poitier*, *American Film Institute*, *Pinter Review Prize for Drama*, *Women in Theatre*, *Susan Smith Blackburn Prize* (finalist), *Harold and Mimi Steinberg/American Theatre Critics New Play Award* (finalist), *Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival Rainbow Award*, and others. For film, she has written for *Columbia Pictures*, *Sidney Poitier*, *PBS*, and several indie producers. She is Co-producer of the documentary *Desert Dreamers (Tivoli Entertainment)*, narrated by Peter Fonda. She is published by *Dramatists' Play Service*, *Vintage Books*, *Smith & Krause*, *Temple University Press*, *University of Massachusetts Press*, *Los Angeles Times*, *American Theatre*, *Pacific Citizen*, *Mademoiselle*, *Kansas City Star* and others. She is a member of *Dramatists' Guild*, *Writers Guild of America-West*, *League of Professional Theatre Women*, and *Alliance of Los Angeles Playwrights*.

Houston serves on the *US Department of State's Japan-US Friendship Commission*, *US-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange*, and *Japan-US Bridging Foundation*. At the *University of Southern California School of Theatre*, she is founder of the Master of Fine Arts in Dramatic Writing, Professor of Theatre, Associate Dean of Faculty, Director of Dramatic Writing, and Resident Playwright.

The Festival, a fiscally sponsored project of the *New York Foundation for the Arts*, a non-profit organization, is produced by the co-hosts of the award-winning weekly podcast *Mixed Chicks Chat* (www.mixedchickschat.com): award-winning educator Fanshen Cox and *New York Times* best-selling author Heidi Durrow.

The event is free and open to the public, however pre-registration is strongly encouraged. The complete Festival schedule can be found on-line at www.mxroots.org.