



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 19, 2018

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**CATCO, Arts Council Host Free Play Reading for 2017 Playwright Fellowship Winner**

*Lauren Wilkens' winning play, Skinny, set for June 24, 6 p.m.*

CATCO, in partnership with the Greater Columbus Arts Council (Arts Council), will host a free play reading of *Skinny* by Dublin playwright Lauren Wilkens, the recipient of the 2017 Playwrights Fellowship awarded annually by the two arts organizations.

The reading will be performed Sunday, June 24, at 6 p.m., at the Studio Three Theatre, Vern Riffe Center, 77 S. High St., and feature a cast of five actors.

*Skinny*, which is set in the present, explores the national obsession with weight through the perspective of two women in their 30s and their exploration of what is “skinny.”

Wilkens, the owner of the Dublin Theater Academy, teaches improv and acting classes for students age 8 through adults. The Chicago native pursued an acting career in Chicago and New York before moving to Dublin in 2000, where she lives with her husband, Matt, and their three children.

As recipient of the CATCO, Arts Council fellowship, Wilkens received a \$5,000 fellowship and the reading of her play, which will be directed by Kirsten Upchurch, CATCO Production Stage Manager.

Local and regional actors participating in the play reading are: Krista Stauffer (Monica), Vanessa Sawson (Kate), Ralph Scott (Dr. Greene), William Darby IV (Rodger), and Jennifer Collins (Sales Attendant).

Upchurch earned her MFA from Florida Atlantic University and worked in venues including Parker Playhouse, Aventura Arts and Culture Center, Palm Beach Drama Works and The Women's Theatre Project. Before joining CATCO, she worked at Weathervane Playhouse as production manager, stage manager, general manager, theatre education director and actor. Originally from Newark, Upchurch has worked nationwide as a production stage manager for the Broadway national tours of *Jekyll & Hyde* and *Flashdance*.

**About CATCO**

CATCO is central Ohio's professional Equity theatre company, providing quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatre organization has adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development. For more information, visit [catcoistheatre.org](http://catcoistheatre.org). Together, CATCO and CATCO is Kids provide quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatres have adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development.

CATCO's 33rd season is sponsored by support from The Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the theatre with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans, and supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The theatre organization also appreciates the support of the James W. Overstreet Fund of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973. Other supporters include The Shubert Foundation Inc. and Nationwide Foundation.

CATCO's and CATCO is Kids' season sponsor is L Brands; season partner is the Columbus Metropolitan Library. Media Sponsor is WOSU Public Media.

For more information and for 2018-19 season subscriptions, please visit [catcoistheatre.org](http://catcoistheatre.org).

#### **About the Greater Columbus Arts Council**

Through vision and leadership, advocacy and collaboration, the Greater Columbus Arts Council supports art and advances the culture of the region. A catalyst for excellence and innovation, the Arts Council funds exemplary artists and arts organizations and provides programs, events and services of public value that educate and engage all audiences in our community. The Arts Council thanks the City of Columbus and the Ohio Arts Council for their continued support.

#### **CATCO Mission Statement**

Theatre is a shared experience that illuminates the mysteries of our humanity. Its magic has the power to transform us whether on stage, in the classroom or in our diverse communities. CATCO creates theatre that delights, challenges, and transports.

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