

QUIARA ALEGRIA HUDES: EMMA PRATTE



Water by the Spoonful *and* The Happiest Song Plays Last

➤ If you've heard of Quiara Alegria Hudes, it's probably because you've seen Lin-Manuel Miranda's *In the Heights*—she wrote the book for the Tony-winning Broadway smash. But don't sleep on the shows in her Elliot Trilogy, a progression of plays about Puerto Rican Iraq War veteran Elliot Ortiz (who's based on Hudes's real-life Marine cousin). Each of the three installments was inspired by a different musical tradition—Hudes is a composer and musician—and can stand on its own, but they've been playing concurrently in L.A. since January (a first). Even though the opening chapter, *Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue* (musical inspo: Bach) wrapped at the Kirk Douglas Theater in February, you've still got time to see the other two. Here's what to expect:

WATER BY THE SPOONFUL

THROUGH MARCH 11 AT THE MARK TAPER FORUM

THE MUSICAL INSPO: The dissonant works of saxophonist and composer John Coltrane

THE STORY: The Pulitzer Prize-winning play sees Elliot back in Philadelphia after his tour overseas. He's injured, working at Subway, and taking care of his sick aunt. Scenes tack between his life and the lives of four recovering drug addicts who participate in an online chat room. The threads seem unrelated until Elliot's birth mother—the chat room's administrator—gets in touch when his aunt dies. centertheatre.org

THE HAPPIEST SONG PLAYS LAST

THROUGH MARCH 19 AT THE LOS ANGELES THEATRE CENTER

THE MUSICAL INSPO: Jibaro folk music from Puerto Rico

THE STORY: Elliot returns to the Middle East to act in a documentary-style film about the Iraq War in which he relives many of his own experiences from the first play, *Elliot, a Soldier's Fugue*. True life: Hudes's cousin, also named Elliot, starred in a real-life doc on the subject (Nick Broomfield's *Battle for Haditha*). thelac.org