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## El Camino College Compton Center to Host Playwright Valina Hasu Houston for Book Signing and Reading

The internationally acclaimed playwright of over 30 plays, Valina Hasu Houston, will be at El Camino College Compton Center on Wednesday, March 23, 2011. She will conduct a reading and book signing in the Student Lounge beginning at 9:00 a.m. The themes in Houston's prolific body of work relate to conversations about culture, identity, race, gender and war.

Refreshments will be served at this complimentary event open to the public and sponsored by Academic Affairs, the English Department and the Office of Student Life.

Houston is of Japanese, Native American, Cuban, European and African American descent. As a transnational of the United States and Japan, Houston will likely have personal interpretation and insight to share about the recent natural disasters in Japan, and attendees will be able to ask her questions.

*Calligraphy*, one of Houston's most recent plays, premiered in 2010 at Los Angeles Theatre Center presented by the Playwrights' Arena/Latino Theatre Company. Reflecting on the meaning of the title Houston says, "It's called *Calligraphy* because when you draw with that black India ink, you make bold strokes. That's how we live life—with bold strokes."

In addition to writing for the stage, Houston has found time to pen books, poems, essays and screenplays. She has also written journalistically for the *Los Angeles Times*, *American Theatre Magazine*, *Pacific Citizen* and the *Kansas City Star*.

Currently, Houston serves on the U.S. Department of State's Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission, U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange and Japan-U.S. Bridging Foundation. At the University of Southern California's School of Theatre she is associate dean of faculty, professor of theatre, resident playwright and creator/director of the Masters of Fine Arts program in Dramatic Writing. For more information, visit [www.velinahasuhouston.com](http://www.velinahasuhouston.com).

### About El Camino College Compton Center

El Camino College Compton Center is the community's education solution offering a full complement of transfer and degree courses, as well as career and technical education. Students may earn an associate degree or certificate, transfer to a four-year university or train for a career. Many classes are available and offered at an affordable price—fees are only \$26 per unit. The catalog and class schedule for day, evening, weekend and online courses is available on the website at [www.compton.edu](http://www.compton.edu) or may be picked up at ECC Compton Center located at 1111 E. Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA. For more information, call 310-900-1600.

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