The Journal of the Dramatists Guild of America, Inc.

The Dramatist

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The Dramatist
is the official journal of **Dramatists Guild of America,** the professional organization of playwrights, composers, lyricists and librettists.

It is the only national magazine devoted to the business and craft of writing for theatre.

EDITOR'S NOTES

WALTER KURTZ

I'm a late bloomer. My twelve-year molars didn't finish coming in until I was almost seventeen, I didn't lose my virginity until I was 29, and after many years of freelance graphic design and performing on stage, I found a new job I loved: this one. An unexpected second act at 45.

That was five years ago, which makes me 50 now—the young side of old or the old side of young, depending on how you look at it. I have an AARP card, receding gums, and dry eye syndrome but if the lights are low and I'm on my back, I can still pass for 38.

I've noticed that having a landmark birthday and work anniversary in the same year has made me reflective. I remember my first day of work in 2011, Gary Garrison told me that Council had given a directive of making the Guild a more national organization. As such, *The Dramatist* should strive to more accurately reflect its membership.

In the subscription year ending when I arrived (2011), *The Dramatist* featured **96** unique writers (this group does not include our staff or Regional Representatives), **20%** of whom were from outside New York. I'm proud to report that at the end of the 2016 subscription year, we've featured **168** unique writers, **48%** of whom were from outside New York. A **140%** increase!

In this issue, "Emerging After 50" (page 16), is our first—but not last—roundtable comprised *entirely of members residing outside New York*. It's a conversation of five other "late bloomers," all of whom began writing plays later in life.

The other thing I've noticed since turning 50 is that I'm increasingly more aware of the passing of time and how my time is spent. Most of my professional work life has been spent in the nonprofit sector, but only recently have I realized why. Yes, I need to be paid but, for me, an important part of the remuneration for my time is being of service to others and working for a cause I believe in.

How do you spend your time? How do you organize your time? Do you find yourself, like me, wasting precious time yelling at your television, browsing Amazon, or Tweeting when you could be finishing a song, a monologue, your editor's notes?

Here's what I know: today, if I could, I would take the time I've wasted just staring into my refrigerator and donate it to Edward Albee in the hopes that it would give him time to write one more play.

JOEY
jstocks@dramatistsguild.com

CONTRIBUTORS

MARC ACITO wrote the book of the Broadway musical *Allegiance*, as well as *Chasing Rainbows* (Goodspeed). His comedy *Birds of a Feather* won the Helen Hayes Award for Best New Play. He won the Ken Kesey Award for his novel *How I Paid for College*, then adapted it as a one-man musical. Read his interview, Kander & Pierce, on page 22.

AMY CRIDER got her BA in Theater from Goddard College, but didn't return to theater for twenty-five years. She's taken the writing program at Second City, classes at Chicago Dramatists, and the LaMaMa Umbria residency. She's had readings around the country, and hopes to have a full-length work fully produced someday soon. She leads the "Emerging" After 50 roundtable on page 15.

ADAM GWON is an award-winning composer and lyricist whose musicals include *Ordinary Days*, *Cake Off*, *Cloudlands*, *The Boy Detective Fails*, and *String*. His songs have been performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, and more, by such luminaries as Audra McDonald, Kelli O'Hara, and Brian d'Arcy James. He moderates the Writing for Young(er) Audiences roundtable on page 36.

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The Dramatists Guild from time to time provides opportunities for its members to publish letters or articles of interest to playwrights and the general theatrical community. However, the Guild does not necessarily endorse the positions taken or the views expressed in such contributions. All such contributions are subject to editing by the Guild.

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Dear Dramatist,

In "Old Musical, New Libretto," Jeremy Desmon, Jon Marans and Craig Lucas discuss the book of *Sweeney Todd*, with Mr. Lucas calling it a "masterpiece" that is "beautifully calibrated to move the story and the characters and the theme forward" and Mr. Marans chiming in, "What Hugh Wheeler did was remarkable. One of his great strengths is his deep understanding of structure."

I bow to no one in my admiration of Hugh, which is why I collaborated on two shows with him (and the truly underappreciated book of his is *A Little Night Music*) and everything the panel says about him is true, except that the structure of *Sweeney Todd* was invented and built by Christopher Bond (as the billing clearly indicates), whom none of the group bothers to mention.

Mr. Marans goes on to say, "My guess is that even his collaborators didn't truly appreciate his incredible knowledge of the subject." His guess is not only condescending, but wrong. He apparently thinks that songwriters merely supply tinkly tunes with cute rhymes at the places where the librettist instructs them to. My guess is that, with experience, he will come to understand what a collaboration is.

Yours truly,
STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Dear Dramatist,

It has been brought to my attention that I failed to credit the playwright Christopher Bond for creating the play upon which the musical *Sweeney Todd* was based. I apologize to Mr. Bond and the readers of *The Dramatist* for this oversight. It has also been suggested that I did not speak up appropriately to contradict a statement by another writer whose guess it was that Hugh Wheeler's collaborators "didn't truly appreciate his incredible knowledge of the subject" (structure). I apologize for not coming to the defense of Mr. Wheeler's songwriter colleagues, whom I did not mean to disrespect.

CRAIG LUCAS

ON THE COVER

A.E. Kieren is a freelance illustrator, writer, and performer. He holds a BFA in Illustration from College for Creative Studies in Detroit, MI and an MFA in Illustration as Visual Essay from School of Visual Arts in New York City. Mr. Kieren is the artist in residence for the Refinery Hotel in midtown Manhattan and has done on-location illustration for various music and theatre venues in New York City including Joe's Pub, Sleep No More/ The McKittrick Hotel, Dixon Place, and Rockwood Music Hall. Mr. Kieren has many ambitions, including editorial illustration for magazines, book covers, theatre posters, wine labels, and to continue to live-illustrate for music, drama, dance, and fashion.

Kennedy Named A Hutchins Family Fellow

Cambridge, MA – Guild member ADRIENNE KENNEDY has been named the second (non-resident) Hutchins Family Fellow at the Du Bois Research Institute for the 2016-17 academic year. Her project is titled *Discovering What A Writer is: Exploration of 1929 Atlanta University Scrapbook of my mother Etta Hawkins*.

The Hutchins Center for African & African American Research supports research on the history and culture of people of African descent all over the world and provides a forum for collaboration and the ongoing exchange of ideas. It seeks to stimulate scholarly engagement in African and African American studies both at Harvard and beyond, and to increase public awareness and understanding of this vital field of study. As the preeminent research center in the field, the Hutchins Center sponsors visiting fellows, art exhibitions, publications, research projects, archives, readings, conferences, and new media initiatives that respond to and excite interest in established and emerging channels of inquiry in African and African American research.

Winners of The Dresser DVD

New York, NY – We had two winners in our History Issue trivia contest. Bradley Beckman was the first correct answer to the following question in the September/October 2016 issue: "Who was the illustrator of The Dramatists Guild Quarterly?" The answer is Tom Funk. And Abigail Taylor-Sansom was the first correct answer to our Twitter trivia question: "Which two plays led to the formation of the Provincetown Players?" The answer is *Constancy* and *Suppressed Desires*.

Each winner received a DVD of the BBC production of the STARZ Original movie, *The Dresser*, by Ronald Harwood from Anchor Bay Entertainment and Digital HD from Starz Digital.

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Tina Fallon Is The Guild's New Executive Director of Creative Affairs

New York, NY – The Guild is pleased to announce Tina Fallon as its new Executive Director of Creative Affairs. She succeeds Gary Garrison, who recently retired from the position after a ten-year tenure.

Guild President Doug Wright says, "It's a bittersweet time at the Guild; we're saying a very fond and heartfelt "farewell" to Gary Garrison as our exemplary Executive Director of Creative Affairs. In the same breath, we are very pleased to welcome the dynamic, inventive Tina Fallon to his post. Tina promises to continue Gary's remarkable work, and make thrilling new contributions to better the lives and work of Dramatists Guild members."

Fallon is a New York-based producer, arts advocate, and the founding producer of The 24 Hour Plays.

Since 1995, Ms. Fallon and The 24 Hour Company have produced The 24 Hour Plays and The 24 Hour Musicals, often as charity benefits for The Old Vic, Atlantic Theater Company, Urban Arts Partnership, Dublin Youth Theatre, The Orchard Project, The William Inge Festival, and Finland's Teatterifestivaali Lainsuojattomat, among others. The 24 Hour Plays on Broadway is now in its sixteenth year.

As a young producer in Los Angeles, Ms. Fallon worked with Theatre 40, FreightTrain Shakespeare, and the L.A. Rep. She returned to New York and co-founded Crux Productions. As a director, Ms. Fallon led the first workshop production of Will Eno's *Tragedy: a tragedy* and the world premiere of Linell Ajello's *Lonely Comet* at the Ohio Theater's Ice Factory Festival. She produced independent film, television, and commercials. As a scenic carpenter, technical director and production manager, she spent years in the trenches—sometimes literally off and off-off-Broadway, working for the Atlantic,

Primary Stages, WPA, New Georges, the Kitchen, La MaMa, the Ontological-Hysteric Theater, the Theatorium, Galapagos Art Space and more.

In London, Ms. Fallon co-created The 24 Hour Plays: Old Vic/New Voices, an education and early career development program for emerging artists. Filmmaker Chris Terrill chronicled the process in a 2005 documentary, *Extreme Theatre*.

She teamed with The New School for Drama to bring the program to New York, through its outreach to high schools, conservatories, colleges and universities, The 24 Hour Plays: Nationals now reaches thousands of students each year. Ms. Fallon has led workshops for Q-teatteri, Teatteri Takomo and Helsinki Theatre Academy in Finland, Old Vic/New Voices in London, and Urban Arts Partnership in New York.

Fallon is on the advisory boards of The New School for Drama and Cora Dance. She has been a presenter at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival and The Association for Theatre in Higher Education, a judge for the KCACTF Irene Ryan Awards, and a panelist for The Kevin Spacey Foundation Artists of Choice.

She received a Lilly Award for Grace Under Pressure in 2011, and was named one of New York Moves Power Women of 2005. Her work has been profiled in *The New York Times*, *Paper*, and *American Theatre*. She is a graduate of Lang College and lives with her family in Brooklyn and Greenport.

Maazel Wins 2016 International MUT Competition

Munich, Germany – On July 23, 2016, Guild member **ILANN M. MAAZEL** was awarded the Jury Prize and €5,000 in the 2016 International MUT Competition for Musical Entertainment Theatre Author's Competition organized by the Staatstheater am Gärtnerplatz. Maazel won for his musical *Believe Me*, for which he wrote the book, music, and lyrics. Six finalists were selected from blind submissions by an international jury of specialists, made up of artistic directors, dramaturgy experts, publishers and famous authors from the German and international music theatre scene.

IN MEMORIAM

DALE ANDERSEN	*5/27/05*	*Ladera Ranch, CA*
ROGER CORNISH	*1/17/92*	*Philadelphia, PA*
ERVIN DRAKE	*11/2/59*	*Great Neck, NY*
JAMES DURST	*7/29/10*	*Princeton, NJ*
MARTHA A. FUENTES	*6/29/70*	*Tampa, FL*
SAMUEL GOLDSMAN	*3/19/81*	*Liverpool, NY*
MARILYN A. HATCH	*1/11/85*	*Ridgefield, CT*
VIRGINIA B. KELLY	*1/18/89*	*Manhattan Beach, CA*
CONNELL J. MAGUIRE	*11/30/77*	*Milwaukee, WI*
SUSAN B. REINHARD	*12/12/96*	*Montclair, NJ*
EDWARD ROBAK	*7/13/82*	*Los Angeles, CA*

Correction

The photos of Danai Gurira and Nikkole Salter on pages 26 and 27 of the 2016 Season In Review issue of *The Dramatist* are from the Primary Stages production of *In The Continuum* which toured to Yale. Our apologies for not acknowledging Primary Stages

The 2016 Edgerton Foundation New Play Awards Announced

New York, NY – Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, announced the recipients of the first round of the 2016 Edgerton Foundation New Play Awards. The awards, totaling $580,000, allow fifteen productions extra time in the development and rehearsal of new plays with the entire creative team, helping to extend the life of the play after its first run. Two more rounds of recipients will be announced later this year.

2016 Edgerton Foundation New Play Awards were presented to the following productions by Guild members: *The Prom*, book by CHAD BEGUELIN and BOB MARTIN, lyrics by CHAD BEGUELIN, music by MATTHEW SKLAR, Alliance Theatre; *Way of the World* by THERESA REBECK, Dorset Theatre Festival; *The Fundamentals* by ERIKA SHEFFER, Steppenwolf Theatre Company; *Queen* by MADHURI SHEKAR, Victory Gardens Theater; *Cost of Living* by MARTYNA MAJOK, Williamstown Theatre Festival; *Romance Novels for Dummies* by BOO KILLEBREW, Williamstown Theatre Festival; *Poster Boy* by CRAIG CARNELIA and Joe Tracz, Williamstown Theatre Festival; and *Scenes from Court Life (or The Whipping Boy and his Prince)* by SARAH RUHL, Yale Repertory Theatre.

TCG Member Theatres with a strong and consistent track record of producing new work are invited by the foundation to submit letters of inquiry to plays@edgertonfoundation.org. A panel of readers reviews the plays and one-time grants ranging from $5,000 to $75,000 are awarded.

The Edgerton Foundation New Plays Program, directed by Brad and Louise Edgerton, was piloted in 2006 with the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles by offering two musicals in development an extended rehearsal period for the entire creative team, including the playwrights. The Edgertons launched the program nationally in 2007 and have supported 297 plays to date at over 50 different Art Theatres across the country. The Edgerton Foundation received the 2011 TCG National Funder Award in June in Los Angeles.

DURANG NAMED INGRAM NEW WORKS FELLOW

Nashville, TN – Nashville Repertory Theatre announced that DG Council member CHRISTOPHER DURANG will join the Ingram New Works Project as the Ingram New Works Playwriting Fellow for the 2016-17 season.

This project culminates in the Ingram New Works Festival, a celebration of all five new plays fostered in the program that season. The plays are performed as staged readings with professional Nashville actors and are an opportunity for Nashville audiences to be a part of this exciting process. This season's festival is slated to run May 10-20, 2017.

Past Fellowship recipients include DAVID AUBURN, JOHN PATRICK SHANLEY, THERESA REBECK, DOUG WRIGHT, DONALD MARGULIES, and REBECCA GILMAN.

The Ingram New Works Project is a locally valued and nationally recognized new play development program that cultivates and amplifies new voices for the stage and expands the creative capacity of Nashville by connecting artists and audiences across extraordinary new works.

Distant Thoughts, 2002, Oil on Canvas, 36" x48" © Jonathan Green – Private Collection

BY KIRSTEN CHILDS

The Art of Jonathan Green

When I was an undergrad student, I worked at the offices of the Board of Education in West Los Angeles. A jovial black woman at my job—the kind that you could love or hate depending on how much you minded a person with a heart of gold and an incapability of understanding the meaning of the word "boundaries," once squinted at me and said, "You got Geechee in you, doncha?" I had no idea what the word meant, and when I asked my mother (my light-skinned mother whose maternal line was from South Carolina), her lips tightened and she replied, "People want you to be everything but what you are, which is black." To this day, I don't quite understand what the subtext was that my mother heard in that woman's question, but when I look at Jonathan Green's paintings of the Gullah (or Geechee) people of South Carolina, somehow I see the mystery and strength and resolve and fragility and pain and quiet beauty that was my mother's.

"Funkin' For Jamaica" by Tom Browne

The only way I can explain exactly how funky this is, is to say: Jamaica funk. That's what it is. Listen to it here: https://youtu.be/QB5jk2ZbkoM

"Orpheus" by Jean Delville

I saw this painting at the Louvre, in an exhibit of Belgian Symbolists and Surrealists when I was a student at the Sorbonne. It was gigantic, and the light on Orpheus's face was so bright and hypnotic, it felt as if it were pulling me into the painting, to go swirling down the river with him. Never before or since has a piece of visual art had such a physical effect on me.

KIRSTEN CHILDS' work has been produced in New York at Playwrights Horizons (*The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin*, Obie, Kleban, Richard Rodgers, Larson awards) and The Vineyard Theatre (*Miracle Brothers*). She has written shows for Disney Theatricals, songs for PBS's *New Electric Company* and is currently working with director Robert O'Hara on her new musical *Bella: An American Tall Tale* premiering this fall at Dallas Theater Center with a New York premiere at Playwrights Horizons in Spring 2017.

Karen Hartman

Q Once you have an idea, how do you proceed? Do you take notes? Do you outline? Do you plunge right in?

A I make a Word file called "[working title] thoughts" and I freewrite into this file for as long as I'm working on the project—this might be daily or it might be whenever I get a chance to work on this particular idea. Those thoughts raise questions that lead to research. I prefer actual physical books because I can mark pages with post-its and go back and forth between the reading and the writing, and also I like the space they take up on the shelf. Books work in a more associative inspirational way for me than online research, though of course I do that too.

During the freewriting in the "thoughts" file, dialogue usually comes, sometimes a few lines, sometimes a few pages. It might show up very early, in the first fifteen minutes on the first day, or it might take months. Once dialogue comes, I go back and forth between the thoughts file, and dialogue. If I'm lucky, those first bits of dialogue will be some opening scenes in order, or they may just be fragments that open the world.

Q Do you have a routine? A regular time when you write?

A I prefer to write in the mornings, but I take what I can get. Since my son was born nine years ago I've gotten less picky about writing time. I write regularly, I just don't have the same superstitions I used to (although truth be told, when I have an opportunity to write in the morning before speaking to another human, it's golden). I choose to believe my process isn't too fragile.

I do begin most work sessions with fifteen minutes of quick writing about whatever is on my mind, a modification of Julia Cameron's "morning pages" in *The Artist's Way*. It helps shuck off some of the daily crap. In a retreat situation, these fifteen minutes jump right into dialogue, like the world is already far away. I love that.

Q When you begin a first draft, do you write straight through? Do you write in order? What's your process?

A I write in order. Once in a while there is a snippet of something that I save for later in the play, but I'm a believer in spending it now (story, plot, emotion), because if you spend it now you will have to dig deeper later. Sometimes by scene two I've reached what I thought would be the climactic event, which is great because then there is more of a ride.

But in order doesn't mean "smoothly in flow." Often the initial impulse will not sustain a whole play, so I'm repeatedly getting stuck, digging and expanding.

I continue freewriting—in that "thoughts" file—ideas for how the story might go, or questions for or about the characters ("for" meaning I interview the characters). I make inventories of what I know and don't know. Sometimes I write plot points on index cards and put them on the wall in a horizontal line. Then above and below that storyline I place other cards with moral questions, or images, or character secrets, or other non-linear pieces of knowledge I'm gathering. I was happy when I figured out this "vertical" and "horizontal" axis business, as a way to mark progress without reducing to a summary. I don't always do it, but I teach it.

In the last five years I've opened a documentary vein, which means I do things like read 1000 pages of newlywed letters from 1945, or sit in on a monthly court for a year, or ride around with firefighters in New Haven. I like beginner's mind, I like not knowing how the process will work, I like a challenge.

Q Once you're at work, are there other art forms you go to for continued inspiration?

A I read, including fiction that seems emotionally tied to the story. I gather portraits (photographs) of people who could be the characters in the play. I learned this from Ming Cho Lee's set design course. It's strangely useful.

I usually choose an album and listen to it again and again the whole time I am writing a particular play. I'm less consistent about that now that I'm in musical limbo – like, album?

I understand this question. I love the idea of walking to a museum and gathering inspiration and I have done it and it works! But a more direct approach, for me, works better.

Q *What aspect of the craft is most difficult for you?*

A 1) Story. Story is hard. I used to say I was bad at story but now I will just say story takes me a long time to get right.

2) Emotion. I am at home with heavy subjects (currently: pediatric AIDS, the Holocaust, street prostitution, and Gaza—I am the WORST PERSON to answer "so what do you write about") but I do get sad. I cry when I write, not like a tear in the eye but huge blubbery sobs which can easily slip from raw connection to a more bystander-like despair. I've discovered that whatever will help me surface is probably what the audience needs too. The cloudbreak might be comedy or sex, anything to lure me back to work and lure you back into the story. So calibrating emotion is part of the craft.

Q *What do you do when you get stuck?*

A I'm jealous of writers who clean when they get stuck. That would be so great. My house would be so clean.

Usually stuck means procrastinating, which means fear. I do what everyone does which is to spend too much time on the internet. Once shame overrides the fear I turn off the internet and set a timer. I write without stopping, into a new file so I don't feel like I'm polluting the play.

If it's a more profound stuck, like the work was going well but now there's a dead end, or my story plan feels fake, or I need to deepen the play but I don't know how, I call that state "awaiting further wisdom." I am awaiting further wisdom on a play right now. That is a time to pivot to other activities or other work, take a break. Most of us can write 1000 words in a morning, and yet an 18,000-word play takes a year or more. Stuck is just math.

Q *Do you have any thoughts or advice about dialogue?*

A Cut. Two brilliant tricks about cutting I learned early:
From Marlane Meyer: When you write a line that is more than one sentence long, but not a monologue (meaning it doesn't take a journey) you are writing multiple sentences because you seek one perfect sentence. Cut it to one imperfect sentence, to train yourself to find the perfect sentence.

From Eric Overmyer: Cut everything in which a character questions the circumstances or misunderstands another character, i.e.: "What are we doing here?" "Why are you asking me that?" "What do you mean, purple?" This is difficult because that cloggy way of speaking is so natural, and such lines can seem to be crucial to a rhythm but #1 these lines are just you stalling or questioning yourself, and #2 they train the audience not to pay attention.

Combined, these are magic.

Q *Do you have any particular principles or practices about character or character development?*

A Character is intuitive for me. I'm drawn to idealistic, messy people doing the wrong things for the right reasons; I don't have much use for villains or schemers.

I'm in an evolving process around character and race. I've always worked with actors from all backgrounds, but that's not the same as writing across race in a contemporary realm. Intuition has its limits, in that case. There is more research. And although I don't like being rewritten by actors, I have a little more humility when the actor shares the race of a character and I don't.

Some of the work I'm doing now has a hybrid documentary component, so there is a sense of channeling another person who is *actually* another person, not a scaled-up aspect of myself. For *Project Dawn,* in which seven actresses portray fourteen staff members and participants in a Philadelphia prostitution court, I spent weeks piecing together interviews and thoughts and questions to "make" each person. There is more assembly required.

Q *How extensively do you rewrite, and is that mostly before or during rehearsal?*

A I tinker and hone extensively but the shape usually holds. I rarely make a huge change like throwing out a character or scene.

I log a lot of time processing exposition. It feels like half the hours I have spent on *Roz and Ray*, a medical drama, have been reworking a couple pages in which two people in 1979 casually discuss a new blood product. They must maintain a precise level of ignorance while conveying a precise amount of information, and it's a pain.

My intention is to do everything before rehearsal but, inevitably, there is more work to do. I don't have a perfect ear. Maybe one day.

Q *What's the most important craft advice you can give?*

A Plays are dense. You can and should get more in there than you think. The goal of cutting is not brevity, but a coiled compression. What seems to be your idea for a play is probably either an idea for a short play, or the beginning of an idea for a full-length play.

Or: Turn off the internet and set a timer for 45 minutes.

KAREN HARTMAN has four productions of three world premieres this season: Roz and Ray *at Seattle Rep and Victory Gardens,* The Book of Joseph *at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and* Project Dawn *at People's Light. She is Senior Artist in Residence at University of Washington, Seattle.*

As this issue was going to press, Edward Albee died at the age of 88 at his home in Montauk, NY. A staunch advocate for the Guild and authorial rights, he joined in 1960 and became a Council Member in 1965 where he remained active until his death. Here, we reprint Edward's comments in "Playwrights on Playwriting" from the Summer 1972 issue of *The Dramatists Guild Quarterly*. It was an excerpt edited for print from his comments during a discussion on "The Plight of the Playwright" sponsored by the Eugene O'Neill Memorial Foundation, moderated by David E. LeVine.

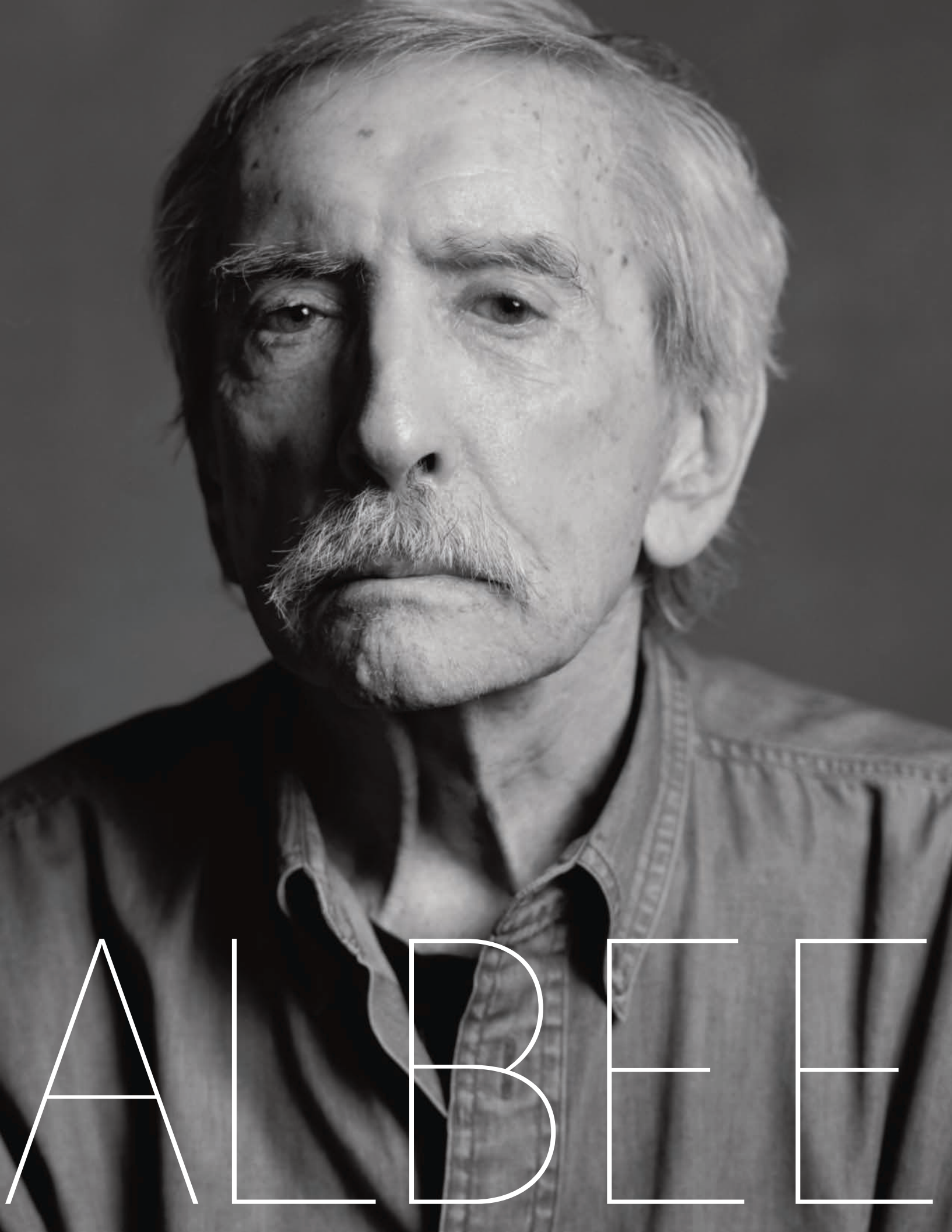
His words to us seem as timely today as they did 44 years ago.

The Plight of the Playwright by Edward Albee

The only thing that need concern us, I think, is to remember that the playwright is a creative artist and that playwriting is an art form. What should a playwright expect from his art form? Playwriting is an attempt to communicate a sense of one's time, a sense of one's self to other people who are interested in being communicated with. But let me be a devil's advocate against myself: we all enjoy commercial success in the theatre, but that's quite a different matter from being able to make a living by one's craft. The fact that the mean average income in the United States has gone up to about $4K or $5K a year does suggest to me that playwrights can indeed make at least a mean income, living even in a capitalist society.

1928-2016

Edward


ALBEE

Most of us, of course, are interested in the $5K or even $10K a week which is far above the mean income. The plight of the playwright is double then, is it not? What does he want? Will he be satisfied with being able to communicate the sense of himself, the sense of his environment, to those who are willing to expose themselves to essential truths, or is it more important for him to get the brass ring on the merry-go-round, to make it big?

The most important thing for the playwright is to know whether or not he's got somewhere in the world a group of people who care enough about themselves—care enough about their awareness of themselves—to pay serious attention. Without this, no art form can survive. Possibly the greatest dilemma for the serious playwright is that the United States is swinging to a point where it doesn't want to be told any truths about itself, doesn't want to be taken into a further awareness of itself, it merely wants to escape from the reality of itself. If there is a playwright's plight as an artist in the United States, it is a simple matter of whether or not he's given the opportunity to communicate with anybody. Beyond that, it seems to me, the brass ring or the dross of critical acceptance—given the general standard of criticism in the United States—are not particularly important.

The serious artist must be able to communicate, for his own self-respect. That doesn't mean that he has to be able to communicate with half the people in the country, but if a society becomes so corrupt that it is totally unwilling to listen, then none of the arts can possibly survive.

One thing we tend to forget is that we don't have a living-theatre tradition in this country as they do in Europe. Whatever tradition exists here is a kind of vaudeville tradition dating back to 1900; otherwise, ours is a movie tradition, which became a television tradition. It's not something we've lost, it's something we never had, and if we are going to have one we must develop one-but I don't think we can do it with our commercial concepts and standards of excellence and success. Today's high cost levels in the commercial theatre create a totally false standard of what is excellence, and also of what is necessary to create a theatre culture-totally false primarily, it seems to me, because we don't have a theatre tradition to measure by and never had it.

When I go to universities to lecture, I'm always fascinated to see how comfortingly involved with serious theatre the young people are. They care a great deal about what's happening, and they are not only willing but eager to listen. They are much more interested in Beckett, in Ionesco, in Pinter than in the commercial theatre. But I am even more interested in what happens to the majority of these people when they are ten years out of college. They don't particularly care about the serious theatre any more, they are starting to use the theatre primarily as a servant, they want the theatre to tell them what they want to hear rather than what they should know about themselves. I have asked the people at the colleges why this happens, and I have never received a useful answer. I'm not sure that there is an answer. Conceivably, something could be done to keep people who are young enough to have not yet decided that they control the theatre, to keep them going in the direction they started. But I don't know what it is, and I'm not sure that it is the playwright's responsibility.

The September/October 2017 issue of The Dramatist *will be a tribute to Edward Albee.*

Emerging AFTER 50

On August 23, 2016, five Guild members—all over 50—gathered in a teleconference to discuss becoming playwrights later in life. The conversation was led by Amy Crider (Chicago, IL), who wrote her first play at 47. The panel included Nancy Gall-Clayton (Jeffersonville, IN) who wrote her first play at 50, Josh Gershick (Los Angeles, CA) whose first play was written at 41, Bruce Olav Solheim (Glendora, CA) who began his first play at 50, and Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert (Chicago, IL) whose MFA came after AARP.

with
Nancy Gall-Clayton
Josh Gershick
Bruce Olav Solheim &
Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert
moderated by
Amy Crider

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A.E. KIEREN

Amy Crider: I belong to Chicago Dramatists where I'm a network playwright. And I've noticed that many of the network playwrights there are of retirement age. So often we think of a starting-out-playwright as someone who's just gotten their MFA. So I wanted to talk to some others who, like me, are older starting out, and possibly don't have an MFA.

Do you feel it's harder to compete with these young writers who might be fresh out of getting an MFA?

Nancy Gall-Clayton: I don't really feel like I'm competing with anybody except myself. I have my own goals. Yes, a lot of people have MFAs and certain competitions may not be worth entering. But there are many other opportunities that are open to anybody.

Bruce Olav Solheim: I feel the same way. I don't really feel a competition. I feel a camaraderie. And I like that. The first thing I learned about theatre was how communal it was. And I think that's among writers too. And I don't have an MFA. I have a PhD in history, which I think is pretty good preparation. But, to me, I think it is just such a communal thing that I don't really feel that competition. I've been lucky that I've been able to

I don't really feel like I'm competing with anybody except myself.

– NANCY GALL-CLAYTON

have something that was so important to me performed on the stage. That took a community to accomplish. I agree with you.

Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert: I think there's camaraderie and there's "healthy" competition. I'm not sure if [confidence comes] with the sturdiness of age. *[Laughs.]* But I think our legs are a little sturdier. We've been around the block a few times and that allows the stories we tell to come from a different foundation. Was it intimidating being in the classroom with twenty-year olds, after I got my AARP card? Yes. I also ran into students that I taught in high school.

But I think it was wonderful to show them that you can always come back into the classroom. It *can* be a little intimidating. You have to rethink the classroom dynamics. Issues around age, race, all of that comes up. How we maneuver through that I think is critical.

Josh Gershick: I don't feel competitive with other writers, per se, because I think we all have the same

Anthony E. Gallo

Age helps. I am now 77 years old. Eighty is around the corner.

When I approached age 60, I decided that I wanted to do something different for the last third (well maybe) of my life after being a well-published Federal economist and historic preservation builder for a third of a century.

After much introspection, I decided to go into religion, but realized that pulpit duty would not be my forte. I would become a Judeo-Christian playwright on the caveat that there are a million roads to God and hope that I am on a right one. My plays would not be Sunday School dramas and, in fact, often appear negative on religion. All my plays and musicals are written for general audiences. Agnostics and atheists more than welcome. Also, my plays are more about sinners than saints. The former make for more interesting characters and plots than the latter.

I had to begin from scratch, earning the equivalent of 120 hours of playwriting, theater, drama and related courses. I am now a full time playwright, not a retiree writing plays as a hobby. As an economist I worked eight hours a day, and another eight hours in historic renovations. As a playwright, I work twenty-four hours a day-in my thoughts, in my dreams, in my relationships, and in my conversations. And then to the computer. And I love it, and will write until I drop.

Age plays an important part in my writing today. I tried this craft in my thirties, and my efforts failed. Now, because of the perspective I have gained, my approach is fresh. I didn't feel I had anything to say then. My reason for writing plays was that I wanted to be a playwright. This approach did not work. At thirty-five, a year of hard work produced a wretched half of a scene. I abruptly resigned from the profession one day, with promises never to return again. Therefore, there should always be hope for younger playwrights who feel the need for a break and returning to playwriting someday when the inspiration may return.

The years have taught me some humility. Age also gives you a greater understanding of human behavior and human interaction, and thus can facilitate the understanding of conflict within your characters. I feel that I have more to say than ever because I have met so many more people, suffered so many other setbacks, and seen so much more.

Do I feel discrimination and imbalance because of my age? No, I do not. The adage "The theater is an evil mother" applies to all regardless of sociodemographics. There are so few theatre companies relative to the number of plays written each year. Therefore, I immediately turned to self-production as advocated by Gary Garrison. The Seventh Street Playhouse has produced my plays, either as production or staged reading nearly 150 times in over forty venues. I have gone from being a playwright to also being a producer and director. My web site now averages about fifty thousand visits a year.

ANTHONY E. GALLO is a playwright, screenwriter, librettist, and lyricist whose twenty-one full-length dramas include Margherita, Eugenio, Vandergrift!, Lincoln and God, *and* The Eaton Woman. *Excerpts from his four musicals were performed at the Kennedy Center Page-to-Stage Festival this year. His plays have been performed nearly 150 times in nearly forty venues. Web page: http://Aegallo.com*

challenges facing the blank page. But I will say that I feel *challenged*. I think the marketplace is geared toward younger writers. Even the language we use: "Emerging writers." At what point are you emerging? When have you emerged? It seems time-sensitive, *to emerge*. Is there an expiration date to that? *[Laughter.]*

And a lot of the internships, externships, scholarship opportunities, mentoring opportunities are geared toward younger writers. The truth of it is, I'm 57 and I need just as much mentoring today as I did in the day.

Now, I don't need so much coaching in terms of the tools of the work. But I do still need an "Attaboy," and I still need a group of others to share my experience, strength and hope with, and hear your perspective. I don't know what would happen if I went to Jane Anderson and said, "Would you mentor me? I do have an AARP card, but would you mentor me?" *[Laughter.]*

I'm not the young, rising star. I'm actually not certain I'm a *star* or *rising*. I definitely know I'm not young. But I do still need a community. I started playwriting at 41. I went back to school for another MFA after a career as a newspaper reporter and editor, and a media relations person after that. And so the people in my graduate class were younger; I didn't feel at a disadvantage scholastically because I felt the experience that I brought to the classroom was so much greater than the twenty-somethings. It was just after, in the marketplace, that I found making my way more challenging.

Amy Crider: I think to continue a point you brought up then, how do we continue to educate ourselves at this point? Are you in a writer's group? I take classes at Chicago Dramatists and I do have someone that I think of as a mentor. She's somewhat younger than I am, but she is certainly experienced enough. So how are you continuing to educate yourselves in playwriting?

Nancy Gall-Clayton: I look for opportunities for conferences: the Guild Conference in La Jolla in 2015, Sewanee Writers' Conference, Southeastern Theatre Conference. When I started writing around age 50—I'm 70 now—I attended the Iowa Summer Writing Workshop and studied with Jeff Sweet and Kate Aspengren. And I read voraciously, both plays and books on craft. I'm in a multi-genre writers' group and was a member of Derby City Playwrights, a local playwriting collective. In short, I look for every possible opportunity to work with other people and learn from them and share with them.

Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert: I agree. Trying to figure my way around some of these issues, I decided to do an internship during my final semester. I called up Lookingglass Theatre: "Hi, can I be an intern?" And then I show up. *[laughing]* (They knew my age.)

It was one of the best experiences that I had, because I got a chance—in advance of winning the [2015 Alliance/Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Competition]—to be in a different kind of a professional theater space and get my wings a little bit before I went on. It took a lot of self-talk to call the theater company up and say, "Hey, I would like to finish my final semester with you guys." I was very pleased at the outcome.

Like you, Nancy, I go to conferences. I also work with a writers' group, Black Box/White Page, which is also multi-genre, multigenerational. I learned quite a bit by working *within* and also *without* the discipline. I have a history as an interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary artist, so I look at my education as ongoing.

I don't think I can sit back and say, "Oh, I know how to write a play." I'm learning how to do that every day.

Bruce Olav Solheim: I think these are really wonderful responses and very inspirational. I've been teaching history for a long time, and I guess maybe there was a playwright inside of me and I didn't know it. I mean, when I think back, it makes sense now. My mother took me to see *Aida* at the Seattle Opera in 1968. That left an impression on me. I'd done a lot of writing, published books, but they were all history. Then a friend of mine committed suicide in 2002. He was a Vietnam War veteran. I didn't know what to do. I wanted to tell his story. It was such

> I don't really feel a competition. I feel a camaraderie.
>
> – **BRUCE OLAV SOLHEIM**

a compelling story. He was a combat veteran, a Bronze Star winner, and he was gay. I thought, "How am I going to tell this story? Can I write an article? Can I write a book?" Then, this image came into my head. He once told me that he figured out that he was gay while he was in combat. I pictured a bare-chested soldier waving a flag while Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Fortunate Son" played loudly in the background.

I did not give myself permission to experiment when I was younger.

– **TSEHAYE GERALYN HÉBERT**

And I thought, "Man, there's the opening of a play. That's a play right there. But how do you write a play?" I had to go find people to help me. The chair of Theatre Arts at Citrus College, Cherie Brown, introduced me to Neil H. Weiss. He teaches screenwriting and playwriting. A wonderful, talented man. He works at Discovery and teaches at night. He, along with Cherie, helped me put that project together and it became my

Patricia Wilmot Christgau

Age has never been an obstacle to my life as a playwright. But the title question begs more questions. It's not possible for me to separate age as a factor from its coefficients; circumstance, experience, knowledge, motivation, intention and talent. Of all these, circumstance and knowledge are of the greatest influence.

In the 1960s there is a haunting reference in *The Last Plantagenets* that had a startling effect on me whenever I returned to it: a frightening reminder of a childhood accident, inexplicable fear of prisons and small spaces. An odor. It was as though I had been called in the night to rescue a brave woman—shut away and long forgotten. The passage was about a 14th century noble woman whose actions changed the history of Scotland and whose offense infuriated the English king so greatly that he condemned her to live in a cage for the rest of her life. My research began in fits and starts but took off in earnest after my retirement in 1997. When I boarded the plane for Heathrow I whispered: "I'm coming to get you out." I applied for copyright for *Isabel* in 1999 and completed the fifth draft in 2006.

There are other plays, some rather good, some of questionable worth. More recently, I sent off a biodrama of a nineteenth-century feminist writer, editor, and genius, disliked by men of letters and women of means. Primary source material and biographies of the nineteenth century are much easier to come by than those from the fourteenth century. *The Journalist* demanded about two years of research.

My point is that the present would not be possible had I not been a history buff, a rebel who walked behind Betty Friedan in the Fifth Avenue feminist parade, demonstrated against the Vietnam war, had spoken out against homophobia well before the Stonewall incident, deliberately used (as my nervous husband waited) "colored only" bathrooms and water fountains in Mississippi and Alabama in the fifties. Had my sister and I not had to work in summer fields, stand in line for horse meat during the Depression or had the family of my lovely girlfriend, Tomiko, not mysteriously disappeared in 1942; had I not smoked a stogie and vomited to celebrate the end of World War II or made love to a stranger in uniform…I might have become a Playboy bunny or a Republican. Not a playwright.

It took a while for me to realize that I write almost exclusively about women, strong women battling the odds against them throughout history. Personal experience, knowledge, study, research, bitter and sweet memories, universal ideas, critical thinking, existential fear, worshiping beauty and reason are the raw materials for my plays.

In that sense, age has been a factor because it put me in the right place at the right time to know what needed to be said.

PATRICIA WILMOT CHRISTGAU was born in 1930 and moved to New York in 1947 where she studied voice, assisted Elizabeth Montgomery (Motley) the renowned costume designer, Broadway, The Met 1950s, and 60s; freelance props 1970s. She was a director of nonprofit organizations in the 1980s and 90s. She is a mother and grandmother and writes plays for the stage about strong women throughout history. She joined the Guild in 2002.

first play: *The Bronze Star*.

Then I went to Cal State L.A. and audited classes in advanced playwriting and met Dr. Susan Mason and José Cruz González, who is a nationally-known playwright specializing in theater for young audiences. They both taught me and became mentors. For José's class I wrote a play for young audiences called *Ali's Bees*, a play that deals with the impact of war on children. It was a really cool experience. Additionally, I think even the people who aren't playwrights are helping me write plays. It's kind of an interesting thing. People I meet: they give me interesting ideas; they give me inspiration. I can't forget the support I get from my family and my girl Ginger!

I really am inspired now to join a writers' group. That's what I really would like to do. I've done a lot of the one-on-one stuff with mentors and they've taught me so much. But, I like this dynamic, what we're doing right here. I really like it. And I'm hoping that it can live beyond this. Maybe I'm speaking out of turn here, but I hope it could live beyond this teleconference.

Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert: Oh yes! Pollyanna in hell over here—that was the first thing I thought: "Oh my God. I wish I could meet with these people beyond this roundtable." *[Laughing.]* That was just the little bubble above my head as soon as I saw you all.

Josh Gershick: I loved [the Guild's] national conference in La Jolla last year. That was so inspiring, so uplifting. It's amazing to be with other writers. I read a lot. I talk to other writers. I go to Dramatists Guild events. I host Dramatists Guild events. I listen to podcasts. There's so much available online. I haven't joined a writers' group. I didn't like that experience in graduate school, personally. What I do have is selected readers whom I trust. And I value their perspective.

A writer's group, from my perspective, is like a horrible mosh pit of hypercriticism and envy and assassination. That's my experience. But other people do that and love it and find it very beneficial. However, having specific readers whose judgment I value has been essential.

Nancy Gall-Clayton: Are you familiar with Liz Lerman's process for responding to works of art?

Bruce Olav Solheim: Yes.

Nancy Gall-Clayton: It started with dance. Now it's used with other genres, including playwriting. I find it very helpful.

Josh Gershick: I'd love to hear about that.

Nancy Gall-Clayton: I don't think you'd have so many negative experiences if the moderator or the leader used Lerman's process.

Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert: Critical Response theory?

Nancy Gall-Clayton: Yes.

Bruce Olav Solheim: I agree with that. I've done that with José Cruz González. He's the one that introduced me to it. It's wonderful. But I can see where, if you get in the wrong group with the wrong people, it could be deflating and discouraging.

Josh Gershick: Again, that's just my own experience.

At what point are you emerging? When have you emerged?

– **JOSH GERSHICK**

Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert: Yours is not a unique experience though. My brother shares your experience. He's wary of writers' group. I'm always saying, "Oh, my writers' group…" He's like, "Not."

Josh Gershick: I want to say something about the value of mentorship too, because I still have the same mentors that I had in graduate school. I love Velina Hasu Houston, the author of *Tea*. She was one of my lead professors at USC. And Eugene Lee, formerly of the Negro Ensemble. And Noël Riley Fitch, an amazing biographer. These people were very supportive of me

and continue to support me on my journey.

Nancy Gall-Clayton: All of us probably have favorite mentors. And for me, although I have an MA and a JD,

> I didn't start having a voice or having a point of view or things to say until I was 45 years old.
>
> – **AMY CRIDER**

I don't have an MFA, so I welcomed the opportunity to participate in the New Voices Program at Horse Cave Theatre, which sounds like a weird place, but it wasn't at all. It was a LORT D theater close to Mammoth Cave, and Warren Hammack, the artistic director there, was a brilliant teacher. The theatre's associate director, Liz Bussey Fentress, is the person who introduced me to the Liz Lerman Critical Response technique. Horse Cave Theatre had classes—which was another way that I educated myself. Another longtime mentor is Dr. Alan Woods, now retired from Ohio State University, whom I met through the International Centre for Women Playwrights.

I also want to mention that, back in the days of tape recorders, I wrote nonfiction books in 1988 and 1990 that were based on interviews. Listen, type, rewind. Listen, correct errors, type, rewind. Then do it again and again until it's perfect. I learned a lot about dialogue in the process. And I think that transcribing was one of my teachers too.

Amy Crider: I find that, with the classes I took at Chicago Dramatists, I started hiring some of the teachers outside of class to critique my work. And one of them has become my mentor, Dana Lynn Formby. And I've just found her invaluable with critiquing my work. So, to get that one-on-one critique…

Nancy Gall-Clayton: …with the right person.

Amy Crider: Right.

Josh Gershick: It's important to find people who get you and understand what you're trying to say. And understand your voice. It's essential.

Amy Crider: Well, speaking of voice, then, I wanted to ask: how do you feel that being an older writer affects either the content or the style of your plays that might contrast a younger writer? I know, for example, I rarely think about using technology in my work, about having video projections and that sort of thing. And I think I'm a little maybe out of it from that perspective. And in terms of content, for example, I never write about the dating scene *[laughing]*. I've been married my whole adult life. And I don't write much about people working in offices as temps. I don't have that kind of experi-

Sheldon Friedman

Age has been a factor in my life as a dramatist in that my writing has been more structured and readable. I also think that my age, now over 70, has given me many years of experience to draw upon for subject matter. My first play, *The Libertines*, was produced locally when I was in my 30s, In the last ten years I have had four play readings, two plays produced for private viewing and one play, *The Long Goodbye*, produced in 2010 in a public theater. I will have two new plays produced next year, one in February and another at a time to be determined. All of my work is developed and produced in Denver, Colorado. On September 4, 2016 my novel, *The Velvet Prison*, will be published by Custom Books, Hong Kong. This historical fiction will be in wide distribution.

SHELDON FRIEDMAN is a retired lawyer, playwright and novelist living in Denver, Colorado.

ence. So I just wondered.

I think, for me, not having some of those experience I think has forced me to be more creative with my story ideas. Because I don't have so much of the typical experience that maybe a younger writer might have. But what do you think of those questions?

Josh Gershick: What do you write about, Amy?

Amy Crider: I write a wide variety of things. I have a play that's a murder mystery set in a psychiatric ward. I have a comedy set in ancient Greece along the lines of *Aristophanes*. My most successful play—successful play in the sense that it's had a few readings around the country now—is set in a cartoon animation studio in 1974. So I try to write a wide variety of things.

Josh Gershick: Do you find that you write about different things now than you did say twenty years ago?

Amy Crider: Well, you know, although I always intended to write, I really put it off and didn't start in a serious way until I was about 40. And I didn't really come to plays until I was more like 45. And I think it's good that I never wrote before because I don't feel like I had anything to say when I was younger. I didn't start having a voice or having a point of view or things to say until I was 45 years old. Maybe I'm an exception. Maybe I was a little slow. *[Laughs.]* But yeah, I wouldn't have had these ideas when I was young I don't think.

Tsehaye Geralyn Hébert: If you will permit me, I would like to dial it back to the previous question just a little bit and combine the two, if that's okay?

I've had some work done at Chicago Dramatists, when Russ Tutterow was around and was a part of that process. Also, rather than have my first reading at home around a table where friends came over, I started doing them publicly. I would get this range of responses from everyday people, thank God, who were able to inform the work in different ways. So I accept a range of responses.

I think that's given me a deeper understanding of some of the ideas that I bring to the table as an older woman, as a black woman, as a woman recovering from a disability, as a mother, as a teacher. I was not afraid of technology, I just didn't feel nimble with it. I really entered the MFA with this attitude of: "Here is my time to write." And I wanted to learn everything possible. I know I bugged the crap outta everybody. "How do you do this? How does this happen?" I was like Curious George or something. *[Laughing]* I'm sure every time they saw me coming they were like, "Oh my God."

But there was something really rich about that. And that's becoming something that I'm excited about as a writer: mixing genres and infusing a soundscape, and just playing. I did not give myself permission to experiment when I was younger. I always colored in between the lines, even as my crayon would veer outside the line. *[Laughs.]* But now it's like: "What the hay?"

Members: read the completion of this roundtable on our website: http://www.dramatistsguild.com/dramatistmagazine/currentissue.aspx

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NANCY GALL-CLAYTON is Kentucky's Dramatists Guild representative. She's given up teaching, counseling, lawyering, and food service, but continues to write plays, something she began around her 50th birthday. Warren Hammack and Liz Bussey Fentress of Horse Cave Theatre were important mentors in her salad days. She just received her sixth commission.

JOSH GERSHICK's works include the plays Dear ONE: Love & Longing in Mid-Century Queer America, Coming Attractions, *and* Bluebonnet Court, *winner of the GLAAD Award for Outstanding Los Angeles Theatre; the film* Door Prize, *winner of the Alfred C. Kinsey Award; and the books* Gay Old Girls *and* Secret Service: Untold Stories of Lesbians in the Military, *winners of the ForeWord Award for Best LGBT Non-Fiction.*

TSEHAYE GERALYN HÉBERT is a graduate of Northwestern University. She studied at National Black Theatre, and earned the MFA at School of the Art Institute Chicago (SAIC). She is the 2015 Alliance Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Award winner for The C.A. Lyons Project *(Alliance Theatre, Atlanta GA; National New Play Network).* pygMALI *(Prop Thtr), her disrupture of Shaw's* Pygmalion, *won SAICs RhinoFest competition.* Elegy for Miss Lucy *is included in the* In Other Words *project with NU Alum, playwright Gabrielle Fulton Ponder.*

DR. BRUCE OLAV SOLHEIM was born in Seattle in 1958, and served in the army. A history professor at Citrus College in Glendora, CA, Bruce has written five books and six plays. The Bronze Star *won two KCACTF awards in 2013 and* The Epiphany *opens in Norway in September 2016.*


a haunting new musical about
coming home and breaking out
KID
MISTORY
Liza Minnelli
"the Act"
Barry Nelson

Kander &

Pierce

PHOTO BY RON AMATO

by Marc Acito

The theatre is full of collaborators who met at college: Rodgers and Hart, Pasek and Paul, Miranda and Kail, as well as the founders of numerous theater companies. Composer John Kander and librettist Greg Pierce met at Oberlin, but they graduated 51 years apart.

To get some perspective on what that means, consider the following:

- When Pierce was born in 1978, Kander's seventh show with lyricist Fred Ebb, *The Act*, was playing on Broadway.
- One of Pierce's most significant childhood memories was the Challenger disaster in 1986; for Kander it was seeing the headlines of the Scottsboro Boys trials in the 1930s.
- The first show Pierce saw in New York was Peter Brook's production of *The Cherry Orchard* at BAM in 1988, featuring his uncle, David Hyde Pierce, as Yasha; for Kander, it was *Something for the Boys* in 1943, starring Ethel Merman as a nightclub singer who receives military radio signals in a tooth filling.

Together, the team has created two musicals: *The Landing*, a trio of connected one-acts that premiered at the Vineyard; and *Kid Victory*, a co-production of The Signature in Virginia and the Vineyard, where it will open in February, 2017.

DG member Marc Acito met the pair at Kander's Manhattan brownstone.

Marc Acito: First, a very important question: based on photos I've seen, you both seem to excel at growing beards. Is it something you discuss?

Greg Pierce: We seem to have beards at different times. It's like at any one time only one of us can have a beard.

John Kander: That's true. Also, my beards come and go because of a terrible, lazy horror of shaving.

John and I got to be friends and he was very supportive, coming to our stuff and reading whatever we were writing.

Marc Acito: It's not because you love having a beard?

John Kander: No, not really. And right now I'm working on something with Susan Stroman, who forbids me to have a beard. So I always shave before we go to work.

Greg Pierce: Your friends in general seem more critical of your beards. Mine are supportive of mine.

John Kander: Why is that?

Greg Pierce: I don't know.

John Kander: Does my beard look so terrible?

Marc Acito: I think your beard looks fantastic.

Greg Pierce: It does.

John Kander: Now I have to think about that…who in particular besides Stro?

Greg Pierce: I don't want to mention any names. We're doing an interview. That's gonna bite me in the ass.

Marc Acito: John, what year did you graduate from Oberlin?

John Kander: 1951.

Marc Acito: Did you have to leave school because of the war?

John Kander: Yeah, there this was this war…

Marc Acito: I heard about it. But apparently it turned out okay for us.

John Kander: It turned out great for me. I didn't kill anybody and it paid for my college.

Marc Acito: Did you see combat?

John Kander: No, I was on a Navy merchant ship just near the end of the war. Nobody bombed us and pretty soon the war ended. I consider that totally my responsibility.

Marc Acito: Greg, what year did you graduate from college?

Greg Pierce: 2000.

Marc Acito: I understand John came to lecture, or do a series of workshops…?

Greg Pierce: They did a Kander and Ebb revue, and there were a handful of us, a few actors and writers who were about to move to New York City and live together—

John Kander: I refer to it as the Oberlin Mafia.

Greg Pierce: —so John and I got to be friends and he was very supportive, coming to our stuff and reading whatever we were writing. We were all in a sketch comedy troupe at that point, The Bad Astronauts, so he'd come to see our shows.

Marc Acito: You were also writing short stories.

What prompted you to show him those?

Greg Pierce: The sketches we were doing felt more like weird short stories onstage. That was the kind of stuff John was responding to and I was also really responding to the work John was doing at the time—he and Fred had four shows in development, so I was going to workshops of those. [The shows were *Curtains*, *The Scottsboro Boys*, *The Visit* and an adaptation of *The Skin of Our Teeth*.]

Marc Acito: With *Curtains*, you had a double connection to the show. Were you more present at that in some ways?

Greg Pierce: I think I saw two workshops with other actors before my uncle got involved.

John Kander: It's funny that I knew Greg before I knew Dave.

Marc Acito: John, was *Curtains* the first piece you came back to of the four?

John Kander: I think the first thing I continued with was *The Skin of Our Teeth*. And, also, when Fred died, we were in the middle of writing *The Scottsboro Boys*. And it's funny, Scott Ellis and Tommy Thompson describe it as if we were not going to do *Curtains*. But in my head, I never thought we were abandoning anything.

Marc Acito: And Greg, during this time…?

Greg Pierce: I was just loving spending time with John, getting to know him. I felt like we were really like-minded in terms of our storytelling aesthetic.

Marc Acito: How so? What do you have in common?

Greg Pierce: I think we both like art that's entertaining but has a darkness or sadness underneath, experimenting with different forms.

Marc Acito: John, you said in another interview that you "read with your ears."

John Kander: That's true.

Marc Acito: Can you describe that and how the poetry of Greg's language resonated with you?

John Kander: Reading with your ears isn't altogether a blessing, because it slows you to hear the sounds of the words that you're reading. But it's also something that I love. I can't tell you when I first got to read Greg's stories, but I really—I don't want to sound gooey about this—but I just thought they were wonderful. Really wonderful, wonderful stuff.

(to Greg)

I don't know if you mind my telling this, but at one point when he was really down in the dumps about the way things were not going in terms of business, he asked me something like, "Why am I doing this?" and my immediate rejoinder was "So I'll have something to read."

Marc Acito: Wow. That's beautiful.

John Kander: I hope those stories are out there someday.

Marc Acito: So how'd you end up working together?

John Kander: One day [in 2008], I was sitting in this room and I said to myself, softly, "What do you feel like doing?" And I said to myself, "I feel like doing something so tiny, that you could do it in the living room downstairs. And I thought, maybe four actors, four instruments. Then I thought, "Who's the best storyteller I know?" And it was Greg.

Marc Acito: That became *The Landing*.

John Kander: Yes.

Marc Acito: The work style and method you two came up with when you were working on that show, has that remained consistent or has it evolved?

Greg Pierce: Pretty consistent, I guess…

John Kander: …in that we sit down and talk about story—for a long time. We talk about finding subjects, stories and characters that we respond to. We spend a lot of time developing that together before anything gets written.

Marc Acito: When I looked at your collaborators

over the years I saw there was no "repeat offender" as a book writer until Terrence McNally. So over the course of those years, did you and Fred have to reinvent the process every time with a book writer?

John Kander: Just to backtrack, after Fred and I did *Flora*, Hal said, "Whatever happens with *Flora*, the next day we'll come to my house and talk about the next piece." And that turned out to be *Cabaret*. That meeting—and Mister Abbott taught me this too—but that meeting with Hal was the beginning, I think, of our understanding of what collaboration is. And *Cabaret* happened, and so did the other pieces that we did with Hal, by sitting in a room for a long, long time, day after day after day, and talking and talking and talking and talking and talking and talking until we were all doing the same piece. It seems to me—I have a theory about this—that's the key. For several people to do good work on one piece you really have to see what you're doing in the same way. And that takes a long time, a long, long time.

Greg Pierce: I'd never worked so collaboratively before—this idea of building every element of story together and having such faith that this thing that we're doing is going to be stronger because both of our voices are in it but there's also a voice that's both of us.

Marc Acito: So, without a third person in the room, how do you resolve debates?

Greg Pierce: If there's a difference of opinion, it's helpful if we ask, "To what degree do you care?"

John Kander: Along with that, you have to come to the understanding that there's not one single answer to every question, or one single possibility. So you say, "Okay, let's try this" or "Let's try that." It's not a win-lose experience.

Marc Acito: And once you get past—well, you never get past the talking stage—there does come a time when you put pen to paper and hands to keys. How often are you in the room with one another then?

John Kander: Not as often as we'd like. It'd be a lot easier if we were, but I'm in the country.

Marc Acito: Where in the country?

John Kander: It's two hours north, near Kingston. Do you know where that is?

Marc Acito: No.

John Kander: Well, it's…two hours straight north. On the un-chic side. We [Kander and spouse Albert Stephenson] really live up there. Greg comes up sometimes and sometimes we're here and we work together. But we really work a lot over the phone. And now with iPhones, it's as if he's in the room. And I'm playing something or he's sending me stuff, improvising on the phone and then we have it. It's a shame to admit that's how we work, but that's what we do.

Marc Acito: Do you use Facetime?

John Kander: We just send text voice memos.

Marc Acito: So it's live in the sense that you're sending back and forth?

Greg Pierce: Yeah, and we talk on the phone all the time and then he'll say, "Okay, I'm gonna send you something, listen and call me back." I think because we're getting to know each other so much better in terms of how we work, it seems like things move much faster. But the pieces have all been very different. *The Landing* was three one-acts, three completely separate things.

Marc Acito: I saw it. I loved it.

Greg Pierce: Thanks. And the next piece, *Kid Victory*, was a full-length original piece. The third piece, that we're still working on, is *The Enchanted*, an adaptation of the Giradoux, that we're working on with Mark Brokaw. That's a completely different process because it's an adaptation of a play.

John Kander: We're working a piece now that is growing in exactly the same way as the others did—

Marc Acito: An original piece?

Greg Pierce: Yeah.

Marc Acito: Can you say what it's about?

Greg Pierce: It's too early.

Marc Acito: One of the things I noticed about *The Landing* was a new voice coming from you, John. Much in the way that Richard Rodgers of Rodgers and Hart is very different from Richard Rodgers of Rodgers and Hammerstein; he accessed a different part of himself.

John Kander: You don't do that consciously.

Marc Acito: If I were to describe the iconic sound of Kander and Ebb I would say that it feels very masculine and assertive. And it feels to me like Kander and Pierce, based on what I heard in *The Landing*, feels more feminine and flexible. There was something about the way things flowed in through that show, untraditionally and unconventionally, that was fascinating to me. Is that particular approach becoming characteristic?

John Kander: I don't know how to answer that in terms of the difference of style. The pieces we've been working on Fred wouldn't touch with a ten foot pole. Those pieces would not have happened. His voice and his interests were much different, more formalized and "New Yorky." I don't know if I think of it as masculine or feminine so much as less lyrical. I don't know how to explain that, except that I've been wanting to do *The Enchanted* for…I guess, for 50 years. Jim Goldman and I scribbled some of it when were just starting out in New York, none of which is being used in this. But I brought it up to Fred, because it's a play I've always loved, and he said, "Not on your life."

Marc Acito: Did he give a rationale or did you not have to ask?

John Kander: Fred likes…Fred liked…feet planted firmly on the ground. And that was his strength, or that was what he liked and did best. He always said *Chicago* was his favorite show of ours because it didn't have one ballad in it. He was very proud of that.

Marc Acito: So, with all due respect to Fred, over the course of your working with him, did it ever feel like there was a part of you that wasn't being expressed?

John Kander: I don't think I ever thought in those terms, but I think something happens to you when you get to be as old as I am—where you just figure, "What the fuck? I just wanna do what I wanna do." And what we are doing is what I wanna do. I think it would be dangerous to overanalyze it. I loved writing with Fred and I love writing with Greg.

I thought, 'Who's the best storyteller I know?' And it was Greg.

Marc Acito: So perhaps it's the other way around: that the two of you working together has brought out something new, or hitherto unexpressed, which has got to be enormously gratifying for you.

John Kander: It's terrific.

Marc Acito: This interview is for the inter-generational issue, so—

John Kander: We fulfill that.

Marc Acito: So there's a lot of interest in the dynamics because of the differences in your age. You've said in other interviews that it wasn't actually something you noticed and that as soon as you started working on a piece, it became irrelevant.

John Kander: It is irrelevant, in terms of our process.

Greg Pierce: It is. There's never a sense of, y'know, he's done a million Broadway shows and I haven't.

There's just this sense of the story is there and we're working on it and that's what happens. It's very equal, very collaborative. What's funny, though, is that somebody mentioned that when you see pictures of us in rehearsal that John seems like the youthful, joyful one and I seem like the concerned older man. That's completely true. I don't feel that, but maybe there's an element of truth in there.

John Kander: There is another element which is there which, hopefully, helps us to create something which is uniquely our own, which is my growing up is a long time ago and Greg's growing up is not a long time ago. The worlds that we grew up in were different. And it's not that I think about that very much and I don't think Greg does, either. What formed us is years apart and somehow…I'm making this up as I go along—

Marc Acito: You're doing great.

Greg Pierce: You sound very smart.

I've discovered that I love to work…I work every day, not because I have to, because it's what I like to do.

John Kander: I think the combination of those two experiences has some effect on what we do and how we shape things.

Marc Acito: Does that difference in reference points ever come up where you have to say, "I'm sorry, I don't understand."

Greg Pierce: (to John) You know opera so well, so sometimes your reference points tend to go to opera than to…y'know, it's interesting, we almost never use musical theater as reference points. We either talk about classic plays or opera, which I'm getting to know. I just wrote my first libretto—

Marc Acito: I know. Congratulations.

Greg Pierce: Thanks.

Marc Acito: It's such a great idea. [The opera, *Fellow Travelers*, concerns the persecution of gays during the McCarthy era.] I'm so excited for you.

John Kander: Every time we start something, I think we start with the idea that there is no label to what we're doing.

Marc Acito: It doesn't feel like this relationship is pupil and mentor.

John Kander: Oh, Jesus. Which one's the mentor?

Greg Pierce: It doesn't feel that way to me.

Marc Acito: John, when did you notice that people refer to you as a legend? Was there a certain point where you were like, "Really? I am?"

John Kander: Yeah. I mean, it's silly. I don't relate to it in any way, except with him. *(He smiles at Greg.)* I do have to remind him periodically. It's such unbelievable bullshit it doesn't mean anything to me. You wanna say, "Send a check."

Greg Pierce: Make it out to "Legend."

John Kander: Right. I really don't relate to the supposedly public part of whoever the hell I am. I just don't. It makes me uncomfortable.

Marc Acito: Greg, are people still calling you a "young writer"?

Greg Pierce: No! After last year, I'm no longer young. I must be getting old now. "Young" and "rising" and "promising" – all those adjectives have disappeared. Now I'm just "playwright," which I'm fine with. I never felt sad that I was getting older.

Marc Acito: John, you've said in a couple of

interviews elsewhere that you're aware of your mortality, of wanting to work as much as you can and enjoy this period of your life.

John Kander: I don't know how to say this exactly; this sounds very pompous. I think the longer you live, the things that make you happy become clearer. And, so in a funny way, when you find out those things make you happy and you're more and more aware that you're gonna die, you try to spend more time doing those things. And that means, not in a callous way, eliminating those things that don't make you happy or don't matter to you. Or at least I've noticed that's happened to me. I have in some ways a much more limited life, if you look at it from the outside. But those are limitations that are all about how I like to spend my day. I've discovered that I love to work, which would've shocked Fred. I work every day, not because I have to, because it's what I like to do.

Marc Acito: Likewise for you, Greg. How much does mortality play into your consciousness when you're working, either for yourself personally or—and this is an indelicate question—when working with someone older? Is it something you think about?

Greg Pierce: I don't think about it a whole lot, but I have noticed how mortality works its way into our pieces. And, for some reason, maybe we address some of it through the work.

Marc Acito: John, did you feel like those four last shows with Fred had to get to a certain level of completion before you could be open to working with somebody else?

John Kander: I don't think I thought that far. There was just so much to do. But the so-much-to-do-ness part of it might have led to that conversation with myself about wanting to do something really, really, really small.

Marc Acito: In a 2006 interview with the *New York Times*, you said, "When these four are over—and if I don't get ten more years after that, I'm going to be very angry when I get to heaven."

John Kander: Did I say that?

Marc Acito: You did.

John Kander: It doesn't sound like me. Certainly not the heaven part.

Marc Acito: (reading) "One of the things I'm curious about, if I'm not dribbling in an old folks' home, is what I'll feel like writing." Mr. Kander smiled and seemed to cock his ear. "Who will I want to be on my own?"

John Kander: That's very romantic. I've certainly felt those things. But I can't believe I said them out loud.

Marc Acito: And when those four shows were over, you did come up with something completely new. I find that so inspiring, so lovely.

John Kander: I guess the one thing that's true, and I remember saying, was that I never thought that anything was over. I don't think I ever thought of not working. It's hard for me to imagine what it feels like, what it would feel like to not. Sometimes when you get to this age, people say, "How *wonderful* that you're doing this" and you want to sock them. The fact is, you're not doing anything brave or remarkable. You're just living in the same self-indulgent way you have all your life.

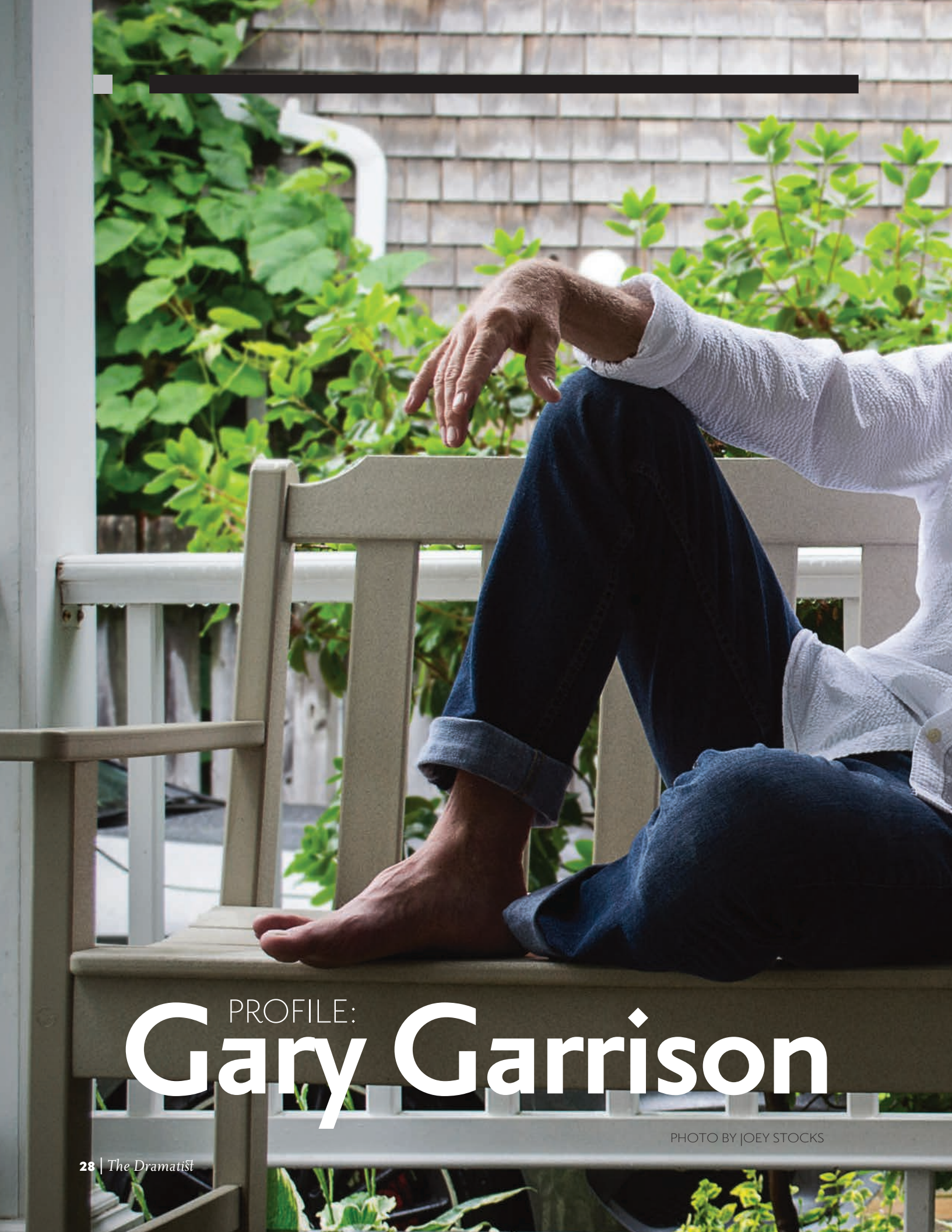
Greg Pierce: I think that sometimes when people say, "Oh, you're so disciplined—"

John Kander: I'd say that about you.

Greg Pierce: But I *like* to write. I mean, it's not always easy. But if you hate doing it, then you don't have to, y'know? I never totally believe it when people are like, "Oh, there's nothing else I could possibly do with my life. I hate it, but I have to do it."

John Kander: We said something after *The Landing*, or maybe the end of *Kid Victory*: one of us said to the other, "Let's never not be working. Let's never not be working on something." That's the motto.

Marc Acito: And that's a beautiful place to end this interview. Thank you both. This has been fantastic.



PROFILE: Gary Garrison

PHOTO BY JOEY STOCKS

At the end of September, Gary Garrison, the Guild's first Executive Director of Creative Affairs, retired after a ten-year tenure. He isn't going too far from us. He will continue serviing the Guild as the director of our new Dramatists Guild Institute. As he helps Tina Fallon, our new Executive Director, get settled in, we caught up with him to ask some questions.

Over the years, many of our members feel like they've gotten to know you, but there are some things they might not know. How did you find your way to playwriting? I'm sure there's a story there.

Chisa Hutchinson

I know Gary from NYU, where he taught my grad workshop class. And lovingly decimated us on a weekly basis. One of our first classes, he quizzed us on what we knew about the current state of theater—what was the top-grossing Broadway play that week, what shows were currently in previews, that kind of thing. What a sad, ignorant lot we proved to be, and he let us know as much in no uncertain terms. I was like, "Oh, this man is serious. I need to stay woke."

He got me wanting to study theatre the way a heart surgeon gotta study the human body. Your specialty may be playwriting, sure, but if you don't have a clue how everything else connects to it, what feeds into it, what it's affected by, you wind up doing a lot of head-scratching, standing over the corpse of your career. Gary got me caring about the whole body of theater. I love and respect him so hard for that.

I studied acting for many years (because I liked playing and hiding in someone else's world), then went to graduate school for directing (because I liked controlling someone else's world), and then found myself in a Ph.D. program at the University of Michigan studying acting and directing. To help pay for school, I was a graduate assistant for several classes—one class being playwriting, taught by Milan Stitt (who wrote *The Runner Stumbles*).

Week after week I sat watching writers struggling to create whole worlds that actors and directors could play in. And week after week, I said (arrogantly, I think) to myself: "I can do that," which later evolved into "I WANT to do that," but always peppered with, "Do I dare do that?"

At the end of the first year of working for the class, I walked into Milan's office and said, "I want to be a writer." He said, "Why?" I said—and I'm not sure why I said this—"I think it's what I'm supposed to be." He looked at me with these steely blue-grey eyes and said, "Then you better get to work. You have a lot to catch up on."

After I walked out of his office in every shade of panic, I remember thinking: "What the hell did I just do? Why did I do that?" I literally collided into a water cooler, tipped it over and the thing shattered into a thousand pieces. It had to be a sign (just what that sign was, I didn't know). In that moment when I made the decision to study dramatic writing, I'm not sure if someone was looking over my shoulder and guiding me forward, but I felt more liberated, free and in charge of the art I created than ever before.

When I wrote my first play, *Does Anybody Want a Miss Cow Bayou?*—all painfully autobiographical—and worried and fretted like nothing I had ever done in the theatre, I knew my choice must be right. Why else would I care so much? When I heard it read out loud for the first time and witnessed people laughing and tearing up, I thought, "Maybe I'll be alright at this writing thing." And when a young woman found me after the first production of the play and said, with tears streaming down her face, "Thank you for writing this. It really touched me in a way I didn't think theatre could," I knew I was in it (the profession) for life.

Who were your champions along the way?

Well, of course, Milan, who mentored this wild-child Cajun boy all the way through grad school and as importantly, taught me everything I know about dramatic structure (which so many of us swear by to this day and teach ourselves). And this jewel of a theatre called Old Town Playhouse in Traverse City, Michigan, who fearlessly mounted the first production of a full-length play I'd written and was produced by this remarkable, passionate woman, June Neal (who's still producing there, 36 years later). And Lanford Wilson, who taught me everything I needed to know about writing characters through his plays and let me invade his life to write a book about his remarkable, creative work (I learned so much about the life of a writer from him).

When I moved to New York in 1986, I was lucky to be in the Writers Lab at Circle Rep (again with Milan and Lanford) which supported me and taught me what collaboration was all about. I was really fortunate coming into New York because I had been hired to work at NYU by Janet Neipris—at the time a DG Council member, fantastic playwright and Chair of the playwriting program at the Tisch school. I learned more about writing from teaching writing and mentoring

Christine Toy Johnson

Gary Garrison changed my life.

I joined the Guild in 2006, bursting with pride to be welcomed into a group of esteemed artists who share the honored intention of theatrical storytelling through dramatic writing. Never did I dream that I would have the privilege, ten years later, of being elected to the Council and sitting beside nearly every living writer I've ever admired, sharing the honored intention of advocating for these beloved storytellers' rights. And this expansion of my involvement at the Guild, which has already enriched my life beyond measure, all happened because I met Gary Garrison.

We met in January of 2013 at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (held that year in Cape Cod), where we had been placed on the same panel to respond to nominated students' ten-minute and one act plays. We hit it off immediately and I remember thinking how totally cool it was that I could have a heart to heart with the Executive Director of this organization that I so revered! But I have a feeling that most people who have ever met Gary feel the same way. His passion for artists and justice and his utter zest for life and creativity are infectious, aren't they? Spend five minutes with him and you're convinced that you've made every right choice in your life to have a life in the theatre.

It was at the festival that we first began to engage in deep conversations about our shared passion for expanding diversity and inclusion and gender parity, and revel in our sheer joy of writing and the seaside and fried oysters. He invited me to participate more fully at the Guild, and as I followed up, so did he. And he has never stopped. Gary personally took the time and initiative to open up the possibilities for me to initiate panels and meet other wonderful staff members and Council members at the Guild, leading to my writing pieces for *The Dramatist*, being a part of the publications committee and the Equity committee, and now the Council. I will forever be grateful to him for all that. I will forever be grateful to him for the way his belief in me never seems to waver and how his special brand of encouragement, that twinkle in his eye that says: "you can do it," has translated into so much abundance. But I have a feeling that most people who have ever met Gary feel that way.

Though, like all of us, I will miss him greatly as the Executive Director of Creative Affairs at the Guild, I also know that the impact of people who touch your life like he has, endures way beyond physical proximity. Aren't we the lucky ones?

young playwrights than I could ever articulate here, and that was all thanks to Janet believing in me as a writer, teacher, and administrator.

Of course, you never forget your first New York production, and that was in a small off-off Broadway theatre called Pulse Ensemble Theatre, then and now helmed by this exceptional theatre artist, Alexa Kelly. Pulse is one of those theatres that produces everything on a dime and pure sweat-equity. Those kind of theatres are the heartbeat for young writers, and I'll never forget the love that theatre gave me.

Ultimately, all of that means nothing unless you have a family or family of friends to keep your head in the right place. And honestly, I've been blessed with an extraordinary family and friends (that all happen to be artists in and of themselves) that shored me up

Larry Dean Harris

I did the math.

Let's estimate twice a day, five days a week, 50 weeks a year for nearly ten years. That's roughly 5,000 times – and I'm being more conservative than Rand Paul here – that Gary Garrison has picked up the phone and empathetically listened to a playwright from Anywhere USA unload a tale of woe.

Each time, he settles in for the duration, interrupting only to interject an understanding "uh-huh" or his signature "ri-i-ight?" And only after the caller is exhausted of air and spirit does the listener take a deep breath, draw from a bottomless well of wisdom and warmly dispense sage advice.

I know this to be true, because I was Caller #2047.

I was in a pickle, having fallen into a bad situation and an even worse contract. Greedy collaborators hungry for Broadway riches abandoned me, and a producer/director had offered me 25 cents on the dollar for my contribution if I walked away. And did I mention these were friends?

So there I was: out on the ledge when a true friend suggested, "You should talk to Gary Garrison." I wasn't a Guild member then, but I would be soon after. Because when that long, tall Texan with the sexy twang told me I had rights and that I wasn't alone in this battle, I was ready to drink the Kool-Aid. And when he later asked me to help him spread the gospel throughout Southern California as its regional representative, how could I ever refuse?

Gary Garrison could have been a preacher man. He understands his congregation, fires us up and lifts us all to glory. Even when the sermon is a re-run, I am mesmerized. We all are.

His workshop on crafting the perfect ten-minute play is really a master class in story structure. And every lecture is like really great church. He inspires me, reminds me to value and enjoy my work. And he compels me do the thing I dread most: he makes me want to write.

And he makes me want to be a better listener.

Last year, a few days before the national conference in La Jolla, CA, I met with Gary in Los Angeles. I had just lost my best friend, when his cancer took an unexpected turn. Gary's head had to be swirling with a million conference details. But he made the time that day, just sat there for an hour and listened. Because he knew that's what I needed.

That's another gift of the Garrison. He intuitively knows what people need. And he's wise enough to recognize that he needs something at this point in his life. He needs to be a playwright first and foremost. I think he's earned that right.

Pick up his book *Verticals & Horizontals*. You'll find the most theatrical and lyrical ten-minute play called *Storm on Storm*, which has resonated in my heart for the past two weeks. It's clear: Gary Garrison still has extraordinary contributions to make to the American theatre.

And this time it's our turn—and privilege—to listen.

when I needed it the most. There are too many to mention but my life as a writer and then here at the Guild wouldn't have been the same without Michel Wallerstein (a fantastic playwright), Marcy McGuigan, Tim Maculan and Douglas Sills (crazy-talented actors), Maggie Lally, Gregg Henry and Judith Stevens-Ly (wildly talented directors), Leslie Giammanco (an opera entrepreneur), playwright and filmmaker Roland Tec, Tari Stratton here at the Guild and the always wise, always brilliant Marsha Norman, John Weidman, Theresa Rebeck, Doug Wright, and Stephen Schwartz.

When did you join the Guild?

I became a member in graduate school in the early 80s (again, through the encouragement of Milan), and came to the Guild as the Executive Director of Creative Affairs in January of 2007. Milan, from the first day, suggested that if we were going to be serious writers taken seriously by the profession, then being a member of the Guild wasn't a choice – it was a necessity. He was right, and I've said the same thing to countless playwrights over the years.

What are some of your proudest accomplishments here at the Guild?

I was hired, in large part, to make the Guild more of a true national organization (alongside the incredibly efficient business and legal affairs arm of the Guild), and I think we've done just that with a truly amazing staff. We now have 30 regional reps who produce and create hundreds of unique programs for our members each year. They volunteer countless hours of their time to meet with Guild members and assess the needs within their community. And they come to New York once a year for our annual meeting to sit with Council and act as a congress – if you will – of like-minded artists strategizing ways to ensure theatre maintains a vibrant place in the cultural landscape. So I would say that's one of the things I'm most proud of: the creation of the regional rep program, and stitching the country together state by state to form a vibrant, national alliance of dramatists.

Secondly, I'm particularly proud of establishing a strong media presence by reworking our extraordinary magazine, *The Dramatist*, which has been expertly re-crafted in the hands of Joey Stocks, Tari Stratton, Bekka Lindstrom, and the Publications Committee. I think the magazine is one of the best in the country in the field of entertainment and particularly theatre. Add to that a strong online media presence through the skilled work of Seth Cotterman and Zack Turner, and we're able to share the good work of the Guild with thousands of Facebook and Twitter followers. These avenues allow us to embrace members from all over the country (if not the world), and again, draw them closer to us to shape this organization.

I know the three national conferences in Fairfax, Chicago and La Jolla, were not something that a lot of our members could participate in on site, but a significant portion of the programming was broadcast online across the internet. To witness members of the Guild coming together as a group of artists bound together by a common dream is something I'll never forget. And to be with your "tribe," (as I often describe it) for a short stint of time and share your common concerns for our profession, strategize next steps, plan for the future, inspire each other to work well and stay the course was a strong moment for the Guild.

Finally, and I mean this sincerely, some of my proudest moments over the last ten years were those times when I could shake the hand of a proud Guild member, write an essay for the magazine or e-newsletter that resonated with a member, watch a member of our staff (like Rebecca Stump or Amy VonVett) grow in their jobs in ways that were remarkable and surprising, watched as Council supported game-changing initiatives (like The Count), or watched the Business Affairs team tackle an issue head-on with such incredible intelligence. I may or may not have had a part in any one thing, but everything we do here makes me proud to be a Guild member and allowed me to love my job day in and day out.

What do you want to do next?

I'm leaving my job at the Guild to write—to put into practice what I've been teaching and advocating for years. There's no end-game in sight—just the joy of writing and sharing with whomever wants to listen to what I've written. Add to that: cooking, gardening, working with animals, volunteering for some worthy causes and dreaming of what's next.

Writing for Young(er) AUDIENCES

with

Michael Bobbitt

Lydia Diamond

Zina Goldrich

Sarah Hammond &

moderated by

Adam Gwon

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A.E. KIEREN

Adam Gwon: I thought I'd start by asking if you, as a young person, went to TYA shows and if you remember your experience seeing those shows. I grew up in Baltimore going to the Pumpkin Theatre. *[Laughter.]*

Michael Bobbitt: Yay. It's still around.

Adam Gwon: Yeah. They do adaptations of fairy tales. What's most vivid in my mind as I think back on it is getting to meet the actors after the show. They would hang out and sign your program. There was such a strong sense of playing pretend that spilled over the stage and into my real life as a kid. And it speaks to the power that TYA has for younger audiences. I'm wondering if you guys had similar experiences growing up.

Lydia Diamond: No. I remember seeing *Annie* and *Cats* and things like that. But I don't remember seeing things specifically for kids.

Michael Bobbitt: My first memory of theatre was being Hansel in the third act of *Hansel and Gretel*, which

my mom still thinks is the best act. *[Laughter.]*

Lydia Diamond: Wait. They had three different Hansels?

Michael Bobbitt: Three different Hansels and three different Gretels. I was third-act Hansel. I got to kill the witch.

Lydia Diamond: Nice.

Michael Bobbitt: I think my first professional production was a play called *Freedom Train* that was touring the country.

Zina Goldrich: That's TheatreworksUSA.

Michael Bobbitt: Yeah. I think it may have been TheatreworksUSAs. It was at George Washington University. And then I remember coming to New York at some point in the '80s and seeing a professional production of *Porgy and Bess.* But not a children's theatre show.

Sarah Hammond: *Freedom Train* is TYA.

Michael Bobbitt: Yeah. I remember that.

Sarah Hammond: My young audiences show was a TheatreworksUSA job. Will Aronson and I got to write a musical based on the *Pete the Cat* books.

Zina Goldrich: To answer your first question, when I was a kid, I remember my folks taking me to The Paper Bag Players. I can't tell you if they actually made things out of paper bags or if the shows were built around the idea of things coming out of paper bags. But I do remember that it was creative and fun. They also took me to see, was it Bill Baird who had the puppets? As far as book musicals are concerned, I don't think at that time that the TYA world was as varied and as present as it is now. It's everywhere now, which is very exciting.

But back to the TheatreworksUSA: I think they set the bar for touring TYA shows. Pretty much everybody who's anybody has worked for them.

Michael Bobbitt: It's interesting the term: "theatre for young audiences," because that's a fairly new term. Well, *new* considering how long the genre has been around. I think that term was coined somewhere in the late '90s maybe. Maybe early '90s. But I sort of think of it as all-encompassing. Because there's family theatre; there's family-friendly theatre; there's theatre for the very young; there's baby theatre. And some people even distinguish children's theatre from the others. So I was hoping that we were talking about the whole genre. Because a lot of Broadway right now is what I would consider children's theatre or theatre for young audiences: *Matilda*, *Annie*, *Lion King* are all works based on materials intended for children.

If you do not captivate them in some way and continually find fresh and creative ways to do that, they have no problem letting you know that they are bored.

– **ZINA GOLDRICH**

Zina Goldrich: As far as Broadway's concerned, I'm not sure they had as much family entertainment back then. I could be wrong. I'm not a historian by any stretch of the imagination. But *Annie* was probably one of those first musicals where parents felt like: "I have to take my kid to see that because it's something we can enjoy together." I'm sure a significant factor for many families was the ticket price. Not a lot of people were going to be bringing their kids to a Broadway show, which was probably $40 for a ticket at that point, a price that seems so quaint today. *[Laughter.]*

Adam Gwon: The TYA world today is quite diverse and spans a whole lot of demographics. I know Sarah's working on a show for a very young target audience. Lydia, you've worked on shows that are for a slightly

older target audience.

Lydia Diamond: Yes.

Adam Gwon: Would each of you talk about writing with those different demographics in mind from the start of a piece?

I've seen other shows for family audiences that had more leeway to walk that line, balancing kid-friendly content with plots that grown-ups can dig into. It's a good question to ask your producer before you set out.

– **SARAH HAMMOND**

Sarah Hammond: Well, one thing that surprised me was the distinction between a show for a family audience and a show that's for children, depending on which job you get. 'Cause the job I got was—I was thinking of it as like a family audience show, and I wanted to write a *Muppets* sorta thing. Wink to the parents, you know? But *Pete the Cat* was for TheatreworksUSA, and they do these tours in vans across the country, which tend to perform the shows during the day to field trip groups. So the audience is mostly children, and that's a really different dynamic than when you have an audience that's half parents and half children. When it's all kids, and they're all buddies, you lose their attention quicker.

Lydia Diamond: That's interesting.

Sarah Hammond: This mass hysteria can ripple through all of the children pretty easily. So that affected the kind of show I wrote. I have all these jokes in the show for the parents that were for me, and eight-year-olds like, but the show was for four to seven-year olds, and I had to cut a lot of those jokes. *[Laughs.]*

But I've seen other shows for family audiences that had more leeway to walk that line, balancing kid-friendly content with plots that grown-ups can dig into. It's a good question to ask your producer before you set out.

Lydia Diamond: The two plays I've written for young audiences were with Steppenwolf's Theatre for Young Adults. And the thing that I noticed the most—well, there were two things. They were the first time I wrote 90-minute plays. It had to be a tight 90 minutes because of the buses. They had to leave the theatre at a certain time. And for both of those [plays], they were also my first adaptations.

Because it had to be a tight 90 minutes, it made my writing better. It forced me to have a certain sort of economy. And then of course there were thematic things. I don't even know if this is your question anymore. Is this your question? What was your question?

Adam Gwon: *[Laughs.]* This is all great. You mention thematic ideas being part of the process—for me, that brings up the phrase "age-appropriate," which gets thrown around a lot. Does part of your process include addressing this idea of what people think is appropriate for a certain age group?

Lydia Diamond: Well, it's interesting. For *The Bluest Eye*, they had to bring the school district in to okay it. They were concerned with the language. In the play there is racist violence and incest, but they were very concerned about the N-word. I don't remember if I negotiated my N-words. I think I just had to cut them. Which is interesting with a play that's about the horrors of the Jim Crow South. But they didn't care about the meta content.

Michael Bobbitt: The term "age-appropriate" is very interesting, because I think kids are smarter nowadays. They have access to so much more information than I did. To get information when I was a kid, I had to walk to the library and go to the card catalogue and look up a book using the Dewey Decimal System—it just

took forever to get information. Now kids have greater access and their brains can handle more stimulus and more information as well.

This is what I do every day: I produce children's theatre. I run a children's theatre. And so the term "age-appropriate" comes up all the time. And I always tell playwrights: when adults think about plays, we think about big things and big themes and big, world-changing ideas. But for a kid, drama comes in small forms. Learning how to tie your shoe is a major dramatic event for a child. They practice for hours. And when they learn, they want to show everyone that they've learned to tie their shoe. And if you don't want to pay attention to this, it wrecks them. It kills them. It's high conflict for them. So it really depends on how you dramatize the story that can make a play more or less age-appropriate.

But I also think that whatever you're writing about has to be something that the audience will deal with and will engage with because it speaks to who they are at that age.

Lydia Diamond: That's interesting.

Michael Bobbitt: You certainly don't want to have curse words and things that we want to protect our kids from. But the drama is small. It's for them. It's their drama that they go through in their lives every day.

Zina Goldrich: A common theme through many of the pieces Marcy Heisler and I have written is self-discovery—learning how to navigate the social world and how to be yourself—and that's age appropriate for most TYA shows.

As far as language goes, Marcy doesn't differentiate between ages. If there's a word that's really way past the traditional vocabulary level, we try to work it into the song so we can explain what it is. For example, in *Dear Edwina*, we have a song called "Frankenguest." The lyric was, "What gives him that *je ne sais quoi*?" And clearly most young kids are not going to know what "je ne sais quoi" means. But there was time in the music for somebody else to say, "That means *'I don't know.*'" *[Laughter.]*

Adam Gwon: Yeah. If it's in context, they'll get it.

Zina Goldrich: And you can use it as an opportunity to bring them that step higher. To actually educate at the same time and not feel like you're—you never want to—I mean, this is such a cliché about writing for children's theatre, but you don't want to write down to kids.

The term "age-appropriate" is very interesting, because I think kids are smarter nowadays. – **MICHAEL BOBBITT**

Lydia Diamond: My experience with theatre for young audiences is very different from yours in that it's for young *adult* audiences. And I have found that it just asks that the writing be *better*, that you can't forget that you're writing for people who're smarter than adults.

Zina Goldrich: Right. That makes a lot of sense. I think our audience is definitely the Theatreworks audience: probably top age is going to be eleven, maybe, if that? And so most of the shows that the producers are picking are going to be very popular books, titles that they can sell. I think they go for the entertainment value, and material that's within the curriculum of the schools. School districts are so strapped for cash. They're not buying tickets to theatre much anymore. But if it's part of the curriculum, they'll do it; even with those producorial challenges, it's still our responsibility as artists to make the stories sing and resonate for the children who see them. Budgets can fluctuate; creative quality shouldn't. But if you look at it as puzzle-solving instead of limiting, it can result in really creative thinking.

Michael Bobbitt: I really love what Lydia said. And I think that it does force you to write better because you have a shorter time frame to reveal something that normally reveals in about two and half hours. We have 45 to 90 minutes. We have a half a page to reveal character versus three pages. It's interesting because we do a lot of commissions and sometimes the playwright's first draft has text that they think the kids are going to read. But, the reading level of the kid is different than the listening, hearing, experiencing level of the kid. And so sometimes when it's written down it's because they're just writing text that's just not elevated or doesn't assume that the kids are smarter and able to understand more than they can read.

Because it had to be a tight 90 minutes, it made my writing better. It forced me to have a certain sort of economy.

– **LYDIA DIAMOND**

Lydia Diamond: Right. Kids love poetry.

Sarah Hammond: They do. In our show we had a funny experience with that though where we realized that there're a lot of idioms that we just take for granted and understand, but the kids have no clue. But I had some characters in our show who were Dust Bunnies. We had the backup singers in a song underneath a couch. The backup singers were dust bunnies. Which I thought was enormously imaginative. *[Laughter.]*

But it turns out that for a four-year-old, they might not know that dust collects under a couch, or that it's called a "dust bunny" by adults. *[Laughs.]* And so when these rabbits showed up on the stage, it looked like Dada to them. And they just checked out. They hated the song.

Michael Bobbitt: Oh, how funny.

Sarah Hammond: We rewrote that song like crazy. We had to turn those backup singers into Mom and Dad. You know, Mom and Dad are under the couch. *[Laughter.]*

I've only done one of these. But it was like everything was guesswork. We were never sure what the kids were going to connect to, what was going to be imaginative in a good way or in a way that's just ordinary for them because they're already so imaginative.

Lydia Diamond: So do you need more of a preview process when you're doing work for young audiences? Is it like a comedy where you have to play it for them to know what your play's doing?

Sarah Hammond: In our case we had that. The producer set up a mini-tour, with five performances across the New York Metro area where we watched the show play in front of 1,000 four-year olds, got that visceral, in-the-bones sensation of what happens when 600 of those 1,000 four-year olds start shifting in their chairs. *[Laughs.]*

Lydia Diamond: Oh my God.

Michael Bobbitt: That usually happens when the slow song is late in the play. Slow songs can't be late in the play. Don't put the slow song late.

Lydia Diamond: That's a lot of pressure. That's crazy.

Michael Bobbitt: The audiences behave so differently. Sometimes you'll have school groups where the teacher has said, "Behave. Don't misbehave," and the kids won't respond at all.

Lydia Diamond: Right. They beat it out of them. You can tell.

Zina Goldrich: Our shows have been performed for a lot of school groups—and our audience skews just slightly older. So it makes it just a bit easier when it comes to attention span. That being said however, if you do not captivate them in some way and continually find fresh and creative ways to do that, they have

no problem letting you know that they are bored. And they'll be polite in many cases, but you can just look across the audience and see butts moving in seats, or they're starting to tug at their clothes, or they lean over to their friends.

So there are technical requirements in addition to the art of it. I'm the composer half of our team. And so it's always about just finding that really fun groove that they hopefully can't resist *[laughing]* and really limiting the length of songs. Many of the song forms are just ABA instead of AABA.

Michael Bobbitt: Oh wow.

Zina Goldrich: Because basically in the B section, you're getting to the point or the chorus. And they don't want to hear a lot of windup. They don't want to sit through too many A sections. So most of those songs end up ABA. And if you're lucky, you get a ballad. On the last show we just did, *Junie B's Essential Survival Guide*, we actually had *two* ballads, which is extremely unusual. The only reason we were allowed this second ballad (which we had to cut, cut, cut, cut down) is because it was comedic. The lead character is writing an apology letter, but she's writing horrible things. *[Laughs.]* Because the kids were interested in the actual process of what she was doing, they didn't notice it was a ballad.

Michael Bobbitt: That's so interesting.

Zina Goldrich: And then by the end, she gets a short ballad of discovery. So it's actually fairly specific in craft when you come down to it. The audience will absolutely tell you when they've checked out. That being said, it's more important to try to reach past those limitations and make your show as creative and exciting as you can.

Lydia Diamond: Interesting. That is so technical.

Members: Read the completion of this roundtable on our website: http://www.dramatistsguild.com/dramatistmagazine/currentissue.aspx

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MICHAEL J. BOBBITT is the Artistic Director of Adventure Theatre MTC, the longest running children's theatre in the DC region. During his tenure, he has commissioned and/or premiered over 40 new works. His plays and musicals include Garfield, the musical with Cattitude, The Bingo Long Traveling All-Stars and Motor Kings, The Yellow Rose of Texas, Jumanji, *and* Caps for Sale. *His new musicals,* Bob Marley's Three Little Birds *and* Caps for Sale *appeared at the New Victory Theatre in NYC and toured nationally and* Three Little Birds *received a Charles MacArthur Award Nomination for Outstanding New Play or Musical. Michael has also directed, choreographed and performed at many theatres in the DC region.*

LYDIA DIAMOND's plays include: Smart People, Voyeurs de Venus, Stick Fly, The Bluest Eye, The Gift Horse, *and* Harriet Jacobs. *Theatres include: Arden, Arena Stage, Chicago Dramatists, Company One, Congo Square, Cort Theatre (Broadway), Goodman, Hartford Stage, Huntington, McCarter, MPAACT, Steppenwolf, and Underground Railway. Lydia has had some fellowships and has won some awards.*

ZINA GOLDRICH (Composer), won the Fred Ebb Award for outstanding songwriting with Marcy Heisler. Their shows include Ever After *(Paper Mill Playhouse) and* The Great American Mousical, *directed by Julie Andrews (Goodspeed). New Projects: An unnamed musical with Universal Pictures' theatrical division and* Hollywood Romance. *Family entertainment shows include* Dear Edwina, Junie B. Jones *and* Junie B.'s Essential Survival Guide. *She has composed for numerous television shows including* Wonderpets *and* Peg + Cat.

SARAH HAMMOND is a New Dramatists Alum and a current resident artist at Ars Nova's Uncharted. Her plays include Green Girl *(SPF '08);* House on Stilts *(South Coast Rep Commission);* Kudzu *(Trustus). Her musicals are* String *(Rodgers Award, NAMT '14), and* Pete the Cat *(Theatreworks USA '16).*

A Primer on Literary Executors

PART ONE

By Ellen F. Brown

When doctors die, they can no longer treat patients. When plumbers die, they no longer fix leaky toilets. Writers though often go on to have active and lucrative careers for years—and, in some cases, generations—after they've left this world. One of the many virtues of the literary arts is that plays, novels, and poems live and endure apart from their creators. Even writers who did not enjoy enormous commercial or critical success while they were alive have a chance of making it big after they die. A compelling recent example is Jonathan Larson, who died unexpectedly on the day of *Rent*'s first preview performance. The show went on to earn numerous honors and awards, including the Tony for Best Musical and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Successful posthumous careers do not happen on their own though. When a creative person dies, if the work is to remain (or become) fruitful, someone must step in and actively oversee the intellectual property in the creator's stead. Copyrights and trademarks require tending. Sales of publishing and theatrical rights have to be carefully planned: When to sell, what to sell, and how to structure the transactions require thoughtful

decision making. There are also noncommercial issues to address, including how best to nurture the dead writer's legacy. If the work is to endure, somebody needs to be shaping perceptions of the work and what it stands for. As one court noted, posthumous oversight of literary rights "requires a delicate balance between economic enhancement and cultural nurture."

So whose job is it to handle this important balancing act?

If a writer leaves a will, there likely will be a family member, friend, or associate designated in that document to oversee transfer of her assets to the specified beneficiaries. If no estate planning has been done, the rules of intestate succession will come into play and a third party, typically one of the decedent's heirs, will be appointed by the local court to represent the estate. Terminology varies from state to state as to what these designees are called, but for ease of reference the term "personal representative" will be used to refer to the point person who is responsible for gathering all of the decedent's assets, collecting debts due to the decedent, resolving the decedent's liabilities, and then distributing the remaining assets. While the estate is pending, this person owes a fiduciary duty to the beneficiaries and is obligated to manage all of the assets, including the intellectual property, in a prudent manner.

Once the estate closes, responsibility for the intellectual property typically transfers to the beneficiaries. It is they who, in the long run, will be responsible for overseeing the creator's posthumous career. Beneficiaries are not fiduciaries and thus are not held to any specific standard of duty toward their benefactor's assets. But because they have the potential to earn income from the property, they have an incentive to manage the property efficiently.

Thus, after a playwright dies there is generally going to be somebody responsible for managing her posthumous affairs: first, a personal representative and, then, the beneficiaries. A recurrent problem, however, is that personal representatives and beneficiaries are not always well qualified to oversee intellectual property or may lack the time and resources to do so effectively. Difficulties can also arise where there are conflicts of opinion among interested parties over how the creative assets should be handled. Dissension may arise, for instance, where multiple beneficiaries inherit related rights or where a deceased playwright shared rights with a co-author who disagrees with the beneficiaries about how to manage the property. There may also be conflicts between the economic interests of the beneficiaries and the creator's legacy. For instance, if a writer's estate receives an attractive offer to license the decedent's work for a series of commemorative tchotchkes, cash-hungry beneficiaries may be inclined to accept even though doing so might negatively affect perception of the work.

When faced with these complex issues, literary estates often turn to third-party consultants to offer advice and oversight. As entertainment lawyer Joan Bellefield Davis describes it, some intellectual property estates have "an arsenal of experts" on hand, including lawyers, agents, appraisers, tax advisers, accountants, investigators, and even branding experts. But bringing in a crew of outsiders can create its own set of complications. What if the involved parties do not agree on who should be hired? What if the beneficiaries disagree on whether to accept the expert advice?

For many literary estates, these sorts of issues can be dealt with proactively by appointing what is often referred to as a "literary executor," a person whose specific task it is to manage the intellectual property rights and to bring in and oversee outside assistance as needed. The position can take a wide variety of forms, but in general the goal is for the designee to step into the dead writer's shoes for purposes of overseeing his posthumous career. Ideally, the literary executor will be handpicked by the decedent and identified in the estate plan. As Davis notes, "if the idea is to make sure the artist's career is managed consistently with his wishes, it makes sense to have the artist personally select the

literary executor and have the person ready to step into action immediately upon the death." If a decedent did not make such an election, however, the estate and beneficiaries may be able to agree on a designee to advise them.

Though there is a centuries-old tradition of writers appointing literary executors, there is relatively legal authority on the subject. The concept of literary executorship is not included in any estate administration statutes and is mentioned in only a handful of published judicial decisions. Nor is there much published guidance on the subject. As a result, many writers and estate planning professionals are not as familiar with the concept as they should be and may be missing out on an important aspect of estate planning. To fill that gap, the following discussion offers an overview of how literary executorship works and presents an array of options for how you may want to incorporate such an advisor into your estate planning.

The Scope of a Literary Executor's Responsibilities

Because the position of literary executor is not established or defined by statute, there is no specific list of responsibilities that go along with the job. The role will vary from situation to situation depending upon the writer's intent, the size and nature of the estate's portfolio of intellectual property, the skillsets of the other people involved in the estate, and the skillset of the person selected as literary executor. At a minimum, the literary executor's role will be to assist in decision making and to facilitate communication among the involved parties. For small estates, the job may be hands-on, with the designee handling issues directly. In more complex cases, the executor may need to hire and manage outside experts.

Depending on the type of estate involved, it may be important for the literary executor to be ready to step into action immediately upon the death so as to maintain continuity for pending business transactions or to protect assets. In the case of high-profile estates, literary executors may also be of value in planning the decedent's funeral. They can be useful in resolving such questions as whether the service should be a family event or open to the public, where the decedent should be buried, and who should give the eulogy. While some estates may prefer to keep the grieving process private, others will want to take advantage of the opportunity these types of gatherings present for promoting a positive view of the decedent's life and work through favorable speeches and remembrances.

As the estate moves into the administration phase, literary executors can be of service in valuing the intellectual property for purposes of probate and calculating estate taxes or overseeing others who perform such services. Depending on the size of the estate, the "to do" list here may be extensive and complex. Because intellectual property assets are divisible, the rights may be spread out among multiple licensees and subject to a wide variety of terms. Were there deals or productions in progress at the time of death? With a famous playwright, how much is the person's name worth posthumously? Are there any unpublished or unsold works that are marketable? If literary assets will have to be liquidated to pay the taxes or other debts, which assets should be sold and how should the transactions be structured?

Relatedly, literary executors often play an integral role in handling the decedent's "papers"—a term that traditionally referred to the letters, manuscripts, drafts, research files, notebooks, diaries, sketches, and books that accrue over the course of a creative career. In recent years, the scope of the term has been expanded to include digital assets such as e-mail, social media, cloud storage, and domain names. For all of these types of materials, decisions will have to be made about what should be retained, sold, donated, or destroyed. This process can be complex and time-consuming, especially when dealing with the digital assets for which there are not yet standardized rules regarding postmortem disposition.

Some writers will want their literary executors

to be involved with the day-to-day job of handling the intellectual property and extracting value from that property. They can help with transferring copyright registrations, monitoring licensing agreements and royalty streams, and policing copyright infringements. There may be issues relating to renewals and recaptures, as well as requests for permissions to quote from or reprint the decedent's work. If there are any unpublished or unfinished manuscripts, the literary executor may be called upon to evaluate which ones should be finished posthumously and perhaps even take the lead in editing or finishing them. Estates holding trademarks must be sure to keep the mark in continual use, file maintenance documents, and monitor potential violations.

Literary executorships can even be structured to give that person a hands-on role in overseeing future productions of a playwright's work. Many writers understandably worry about how their plays will be interpreted after their deaths, when they are no longer around to protect their personal vision of those works. Tennessee Williams sought to address this problem by including a provision in his will stating: "It is my wish that no play which I shall have written shall, for the purpose of presenting it as a first-class attraction on the English-speaking stage, be changed in any manner, whether such change shall be by way of completing it, or adding to it, or deleting from it, or in any other way revising it, except for the customary type of stage directions." His trustee Maria St. Just ruffled more than a few feathers trying to comply with his wishes in the face of requests for permission to stage new interpretations of his plays. More recently, Samuel Becket's estate has courted controversy by trying to preserve the integrity of his work in a manner that some critics say is too limiting. Play production is an inherently collaborative and interpretative process, the argument goes, and estates need to be flexible and allow for give and take after the writer dies. One way to do this is to appoint a literary executor charged with balancing the playwright's vision with interpretations that keep the work fresh, relevant, and interesting to audiences. As John Irving has said, novelists have the luxury of living on their own planets but plays aren't really plays until they're produced.

A literary executor also can be useful in nurturing a writer's posthumous legacy. Indeed, to some writers, financial success is secondary to the creative vision. To that end, what should be done to keep the creator's name in the public eye? How does the estate foster continuing demand for the work? Should a biography be authorized? In jurisdictions where the decedent's right of publicity survives death and is descendible, consideration should also be given to opportunities for licensing the decedent's name, image, or likeness.

For each of these issues, the literary executor will have to weigh the competing interests inherent in creative endeavors. Just as living artists struggle with where to draw the line between earning a living and being true to the art, the literary executor will have to balance economic considerations of maximizing value from the playwright's portfolio against protecting her long-term reputation and the public perception of the work. As the court handling author Lillian Hellman's estate described the process, literary executors have to navigate between "keeping the books" and "keeping the flame."

Read part two of this article in the January/February 2017 issue of **The Dramatist**.

ELLEN F. BROWN is a lawyer and an award-winning freelance writer. She is co-author of Margaret Mitchell's Gone With the Wind: A Bestseller's Odyssey from Atlanta to Hollywood *and is working on a book about the impact literary estates have on the legacies of the writers they represent. You can read more about her work at www.ellenfbrown.com and follow her on Twitter @ellenfbrown.*

James Houghton: A TRIBUTE

GREGORY COSTANZO

NEW YORK, NY – On August 2, 2016, Founding Artistic Director of the Signature Theatre James Houghton passed away after a two-year battle with stomach cancer. He was 57 years old. He was a true friend and steadfast supporter of playwrights including Edward Albee. Several Guild members wrote tributes to Jim and, with their permission and the permission of the Signature Theatre, we share some of them here.

John Guare

Jim Houghton believed by saving the past you create the future.

Jim kept the reputations of playwrights alive.

Jim was supposed to be here for decades more.

I think the first words I ever heard from Jim when he called me in the spring of 1997 were: Could we meet?

We did hours later at a coffee shop on the corner of West 42nd Street and Eleventh Avenue, not exactly a theatrical hub.

Jim was shining. My first image of him was that of a man in love with the world, a world he was creating.

Signature seasons had redeemed the reputation of Edward Albee who'd been out of favor for two decades. Thanks to Signature, Horton Foote was rediscovered, finally appreciated. Signature believed not in a playwright's hits but in a playwright's career, in making an audience aware of the range of a playwright's life work.

We talked about Tennessee Williams, floundering around the last twenty years of his life without an artistic home.

He wanted to name me Signature's 1998/99 playwright. My god – follow Edward, Horton, Sam Shepard, Romulus Linney, Lee Blessing, Adrienne Kennedy. The upcoming 1997/98 season would be Arthur Miller's.

"Yes!"

But shouldn't a theater that gives playwrights a home have one of its own? Signature had just lost their space at the Public Theater. Before that, trundling between various downtown spaces.

"Those days are over. We have a home."

We left the coffee shop and went next door to a bodega. "This is it." Shakespeare didn't look at the Globe with more pleasure.

I said "Jim, shoppers are in the aisles pushing carts, taking food off the shelves, waiting in line at the cashier. In what aisle will Signature be performing?"

"No worry! The bodega lost its lease. Signature will take it over and open Arthur Miller's season in

September."

"But, Jim, this is May."

"Yes?"

And then it was September. Arthur's *The American Clock* opened beautifully in the sparkling new Signature Theater which would be its penultimate home.

We got to work.

Jim wanted the last slot of my season to be my three *Lydie Breeze* plays that had never been performed together. As we got closer to production, Jim realized that project was too big for Signature to pull off. 'Did I have another play no one had seen?'

"No."

"Then write one."

Six weeks later we went into rehearsal with *Lake Hollywood*.

Sam Shepard had given me one piece of advice before my season began. "Hang on. Seat of the pants. It's the ride of your life."

I did hang on.

I did have the ride of my life.

A few years later he wanted a new play from me. He produced *A Few Stout Individuals*. In 2006, he produced a perfect revival of my 1977 play *Landscape of the Body*.

The best thing had happened to me. I was a Signature playwright.

Last May's opening night was the last time I saw Jim, standing in the light waving to the audience who cheered him and the dazzling production.

I can't believe that Edward Albee, Maria Irene Fornes, and Adrienne Kennedy would outlive him.

He was supposed to be here for decades more.

My heart goes out to Joyce, to Lily, to Henry.

The happiest I ever saw Jim was when Henry won the lottery that got him an apartment on the West Side or prouder than when Lily got into Bennington.

I can't imagine New York without him.

Adrienne Kennedy

During my Signature Season, when Jim talked to me it wasn't that show biz impersonal chatter. He actually talked to me and looked at me. He always made me feel he wanted to do my plays totally to my liking. His production of *June and Jean* that he directed is one of my favorite four productions. He was totally a person not a producer. He had no show biz persona. I liked him.

He was also very kind to Adam when we did *Sleep Deprivation*. I never doubted for a moment that it was important to him that my plays were done right. Often when you work with people there comes a moment when you realize they have a different agenda. That moment with Jim NEVER came. He wanted what I wanted. Years later when Estelle and I did *Madame Bovary* he was exactly the same. He was in tune with what was right for you…what you were hoping for. He understood how having my picture on the wall made me feel. I could say to him it makes me feel like a movie star like in the movie lobbies of my childhood… and he understood.

I found him to be quiet, but he was a great man. And I have lost a very, very great friend.

Will Eno

Jim was the best person I've ever known. He was a true visionary genius, a very practical philosopher, and a leader in every sense of the word. He was also someone you could call up and say, "Hey, Jim, guess what? I got stung by a bee today." Or, "I made my daughter a desk." He always took time with you, he made you feel like your heart was important, like your thoughts were important. Kindness, respect, and clarity were a part of him like eye color and height are a part of the rest of us. I can't remember if he actually put his feet up on his desk, but it always felt that way—that he wasn't in a rush, that you didn't have to put on any act, that things were good—and then Jim would look out the window and say something you'll remember for the rest of your life. He's going to be missed in the plainest most real way that someone or anything can be missed. The only upside, and it's hard to see the upside, is that there are hundreds of people, it's really probably thousands of people, who got to know him and work with him and love him and be loved by him and were inspired by him and learned good, true, noble things from him, and we will all be trying and trying to be a little bit more like him for the rest of our lives and a world that is even a tiny bit more like Jim Houghton is a much better

world. That sounds like advertising but it's true—Jim is a great and lasting example of how to be a person. And I hope and like to think that all our sincere but bumbling efforts to continue his work will make Jim, wherever he is and in whatever form, smile a humble but very real smile.

Naomi Wallace

When I first met Jim two years ago, he said something to me in our initial meeting that no artistic director has ever said to me: "To hell with the critics." For a playwright like myself, who has written on the periphery of American Theater for twenty-five years and almost always alongside an antagonistic press, his words were a gift I didn't realise I'd been longing for all my life: unwavering support and encouragement for the work I was doing. Jim gave me a true home within his theater and this home will always, always reside in my heart.

David Henry Hwang

Jim was both a great person and a good person. I have not known a kinder soul, a more supportive collaborator, a more generous friend. We sometimes fear that those with hearts of gold lack the toughness to make impossible things happen in today's world. Jim disproved the cynics, and constantly dispelled my own doubts. As an Artistic Director, he was something of a throwback to the early days of not-for-profit theatre: giving playwrights complete authority over their productions, founding a theatre rooted in values of community and family, with ticket prices affordable enough for the middle-class, and little interest in commercial subsidies or transfers. Jim managed to prove that the highest standards of our field can still yield enormous success. We are so lucky for every moment he was with us. Now he remains in our hearts and memories, in the theatre he founded, and in the many lives he made better. Jim will always be my inspiration, and I will always cherish his friendship.

Regina Taylor

Deeply loved
A great and kind man
A brilliant visionary
Amazing friend
Caring mentor
I cannot find the sufficient words
To describe
the meaning of Jim
And cannot give enough thanks
For having him in my life

Tony Kushner

Jim created the Signature Theatre out of a beautiful, original idea, born of his unswerving certainties that dramatic writing is serious writing which merits and rewards sustained, in-depth exploration; and that theaters should be homes for artists, not factories for manufacturing marketable product. What never ceased to amaze me was Jim's cheerfully unstoppable determination to give his best ideas and strongest convictions immediate, palpable, actual existence. He made wonderful things happen, enlisting in his schemes the eager participation of artists, audiences, patrons, all of us drawn in by the clarity of Jim's visions, by his assumption that worthwhile effort will be rewarded, and of course by his astonishing gift for friendship. Jim shared his entire being with his colleagues; he was joined in this joyfulness, openness, generosity and presence by his magnificent wife, Joyce, and by his beautiful kids Lily and Henry. The time I spent with Jim, as a colleague and a friend, are among my life's brightest, happiest moments, and I'm going to miss him terribly. Everyone who knew him and who worked with him will miss him—and that's a staggeringly large number of people. Everyone who loves theater is in his debt. Jim made American theater smarter, kinder, more human, more representative and more worthy of the world in which we hope to live.

2015-2016
FELLOWS

Rachel Griffin

The inspiration in the room is contagious. You see someone writing something daring and exciting and want to be that brave, too. I learned so much from the playwrights in the group. Hearing their dialog made me realize that sometimes saying less can convey more. An example in this scene is the line, "Zoloft pen. Classic." used to be "I hate pens from drug companies."

When I first brought in the character Depression, she was very one-sided and didn't have an arc. Our discussions helped me think about what her motivation is, what is beautiful about her, and how she might change through the show.

RACHEL GRIFFIN is a composer/librettist/lyricist and a passionate mental health advocate. Her musical, We Have Apples, *has been featured in* The Washington Post, The Huffington Post *and on* CBS National News. *She started the viral mental-health campaign #imnotashamed. www.wehaveapples.com*

JOEY STOCKS

We Have Apples

Book, music & lyrics by Rachel Griffin
Additional music by Aron Accurso

We Have Apples follows JANE, a quirky 20-year-old writer who is determined to overcome her depression and attend college. Paralyzed by the intensity of Depression, JANE's illness personified, JANE is forced to check into a psychiatric facility. In the hospital, she meets a band of fabulous fellow patients who join together to expose their inadequate healthcare and fight the stigma associated with mental illness. In this scene, JANE has just checked in to the facility and is meeting with the psychiatrist.

"The Ocean"

DR WILLIAMS
Hi Jane. I'm Dr. Williams. It's nice to meet you.

DEPRESSION
You can't trust him.

JANE
(polite but sad)
Nice to meet you, too.

DR WILLIAMS
I'm sorry to hear about what's been going on. We're going to get you well again, ok?

DEPRESSION
You'll never be well.

DR WILLIAMS
Jane?

JANE
(skeptical)
Oh… ya… thanks.

DR WILLIAMS
You don't seem too sure about this whole thing.

JANE
I'm sorry- I've done this before… a few times. I know you have just 20 minutes…

DEPRESSION
(notices his timer)
I hate timers.

JANE
…to decide what's wrong with me…

DEPRESSION
(notices his pen)
Zoloft pen… classic.

JANE
…and I just don't think that's enough *time*. This isn't a sprained ankle, this is my *brain*, my *mind*… and I love my mind… well, when it's not so…

DEPRESSION
(racing, shouting)
He can't help you. Maybe he can. He can't! He can! He-man! She-ra! Comic books!

JANE
…chaotic.

DR WILLIAMS
We can take more time, Jane, and I want you to know I really care about my patients and take my job very seriously.

DEPRESSION
He does *not* care. Octopus-tie-man just wants to have sex with you!

JANE
I like your tie.

DEPRESSION
Picture yourself having sex with him.

DR WILLIAMS
Thanks. My son picked it out. He likes jelly-fish.

JANE
That's an octopus.

DEPRESSION
Ha! He can't correctly classify ocean life! Like he can help you with your fucked up brain!

DR WILLIAMS
I'm pretty sure it's a jellyfish.

DEPRESSION
Picture yourself having sex with him and an octopus!
(JANE looks agitated and uncomfortable)

DR WILLIAMS
So… Your aunt told me you're a published writer?

DEPRESSION
Your writing sucks.

JANE
Uh-huh.

DR WILLIAMS
That's impressive!

JANE
Thanks. That's why I need to get out as soon as possible. *(anxiously)* I want to go to school for creative writing and I have to get the submission essay finished…

DR WILLIAMS
Well, first, we're going to get you back on track, Jane.

JANE
Ok… well, I'll work on it here.

DR WILLIAMS
(looking at chart)
I see you're not taking any medication?

JANE
I- don't-

DR WILLIAMS
I think you'd really benefit from an SSRI.

DEPRESSION
I bet *he's* on meds!

JANE
I don't want to take medicine.

DEPRESSION
That's why he's in this field! He's on Prozac and Xanax….

DR WILLIAMS
Why not?

DEPRESSION
Seroquel…

JANE
A lot of reasons.

DR WILLIAMS
I have time. Tell me.

JANE
Well… It's complicated.

"I Have An Ocean"

JANE
SOME HAVE A FOUNTAIN
INSIDE OF THEIR HEAD
OR MAYBE, A POND
THAT LIES THERE INSTEAD
PONDS ARE BEAUTIFUL
AND EASY TO KEEP
BUT I NEED TO DIVE
TO LEAP
I HAVE AN OCEAN ROLLING
IN ME
SOMETIMES I'M SWIMMING
SPLASHING, I'M FREE
I HAVE AN OCEAN WITH NO
END IN SIGHT
BUT WHEN THERE'S A STORM
I GET LOST- IT'S A FIGHT
AND I DON'T WANT TO
DROWN
BUT I DON'T WANT TO LOSE
THE OCEAN
SOME FEEL THE WATER
ADMIRE THE SCENE
THE LANDSCAPE IS NICE
AND EVERYTHING'S CLEAN
THEY'RE SO HAPPY THERE
THIS SAFE PLACE TO BE
BUT I WANT TO RIDE
THE SEA
I HAVE AN OCEAN ROLLING
IN ME
SOMETIMES I'M SWIMMING
SPLASHING, I'M FREE
I HAVE AN OCEAN WITH NO
END IN SIGHT
(getting an idea, more hopeful, strong)

I'LL SEARCH FOR A BOAT,
AND A MAP-AND A LIGHT
I WON'T LET MYSELF DROWN
BUT I *HAVE* TO HOLD ON TO
THE OCEAN

END OF SONG

Sylvia Khoury

The Fellows Program gave me the time and space to write a different kind of play—to experiment with one room, continuous time, and no reprieve from a harrowing situation.

SYLVIA KHOURY's work has been featured at the Eugene O'Neill Playwrights' Conference, the Roundabout Underground Reading Series, NNPN's National Showcase of New Plays and MFA Playwrights' Workshop and on the Kilroys List. She is a member of EST's Youngblood and the 2016-2018 Women's Project Lab.

Selling Kabul

by Sylvia Khoury

Evening. A small but well-decorated living room in Kabul in April 2013. A large oriental carpet covers most of the room. A floor couch wraps around the room, with pillows propped up against the wall. Downstage center, a nice television sits on the floor with a cable box and tangled wires beside it. Upstage left, the living room opens onto the kitchen. A sink is visible. Downstage right, a door to the master bedroom.

As the play begins, TAROON, 30s, is trying to fix the cable box. He tries this for a long time, then gives up, lying face down the carpet. The sound of movement outside the door. TAROON jumps up and rushes into the closet, trying not to make any noise.

His sister, AFIYA, 30s, walks in, holding a handbag and removing her burqa.

AFIYA

It's just me.
Taroon emerges from the closet, eager.

TAROON

So?

AFIYA

A boy!

TAROON

Healthy?

AFIYA

Yes.

TAROON

And Bibi?

AFIYA

Healthy.

TAROON

Ten fingers? Ten toes?

AFIYA

Yes.

TAROON

Bibi's brother, he's missing a pinky.

AFIYA

I counted them.

TAROON

A boy.

AFIYA

Yes.

TAROON

You held him?

AFIYA

No, but I touched him. He's too small to hold.

TAROON

Too small?

AFIYA

He's normal, Taroon. I asked. Everything is normal.
He paces.

TAROON

And when you left?

AFIYA

Sleeping, together.

TAROON

Wow.

AFIYA

Bibi, she looks like she was meant to look. Like a picture.

TAROON

And she's well?

AFIYA

Tired, but she can't stop smiling.

TAROON

Was it difficult, for her?

AFIYA

Yes. She didn't want me holding her hand. She wanted you.

TAROON

Did she ask where I was?

AFIYA

She knows better.

TAROON

Was she looking around, hoping I might come?

AFIYA

No, Taroon. She was accomplishing the considerable task of pushing a child into the world.
He stops pacing.

TAROON

This isn't right.

AFIYA
No.

TAROON
My son, he—

AFIYA
Would like to see you alive one day.

TAROON
The hospital is what? Two kilometers away?

AFIYA
He would prefer you be at his wedding than for you to risk everything for a moment he won't remember.

TAROON
I'd be careful.
Afiya shakes her head.
A moment.

TAROON
Was anyone else there?
Afiya looks away.

AFIYA
Her sister. The doctor. The nurses.

TAROON
(Eyes narrowing.) Afiya.

AFIYA
No one bothered us.

TAROON
Was anyone else there?

AFIYA
I told you everything was fine, will you rest?

TAROON
Who was there?

AFIYA
There was a man.

TAROON
You recognized him?

AFIYA
No.

TAROON
You'd never seen him before?

AFIYA
No.

TAROON
Not even in a picture?

AFIYA
Taroon.

TAROON
Taliban?
Afiya nods.

TAROON
What did he do?

AFIYA
Nothing. He circled the floor a few times.

TAROON
Did he speak to you?

AFIYA
To me?

TAROON
To anyone?

AFIYA
No.

TAROON
Was he with anyone?

AFIYA
No.
Seeing her look away.

TAROON
But?

AFIYA
The doctors looked wary of him.

TAROON
How do you mean?

AFIYA
They jumped out of his way.

TAROON
The doctors?

AFIYA
Yes.

TAROON
Was he armed?
Afiya looks down.

TAROON
Unbelievable.

AFIYA
Jawid is there now. He brought people with him. They came with presents, so it didn't seem obvious.

TAROON
Bringing a gun into a hospital.

AFIYA
And the doctors said she can leave soon. They said it was uncomplicated. Your son is healthy.

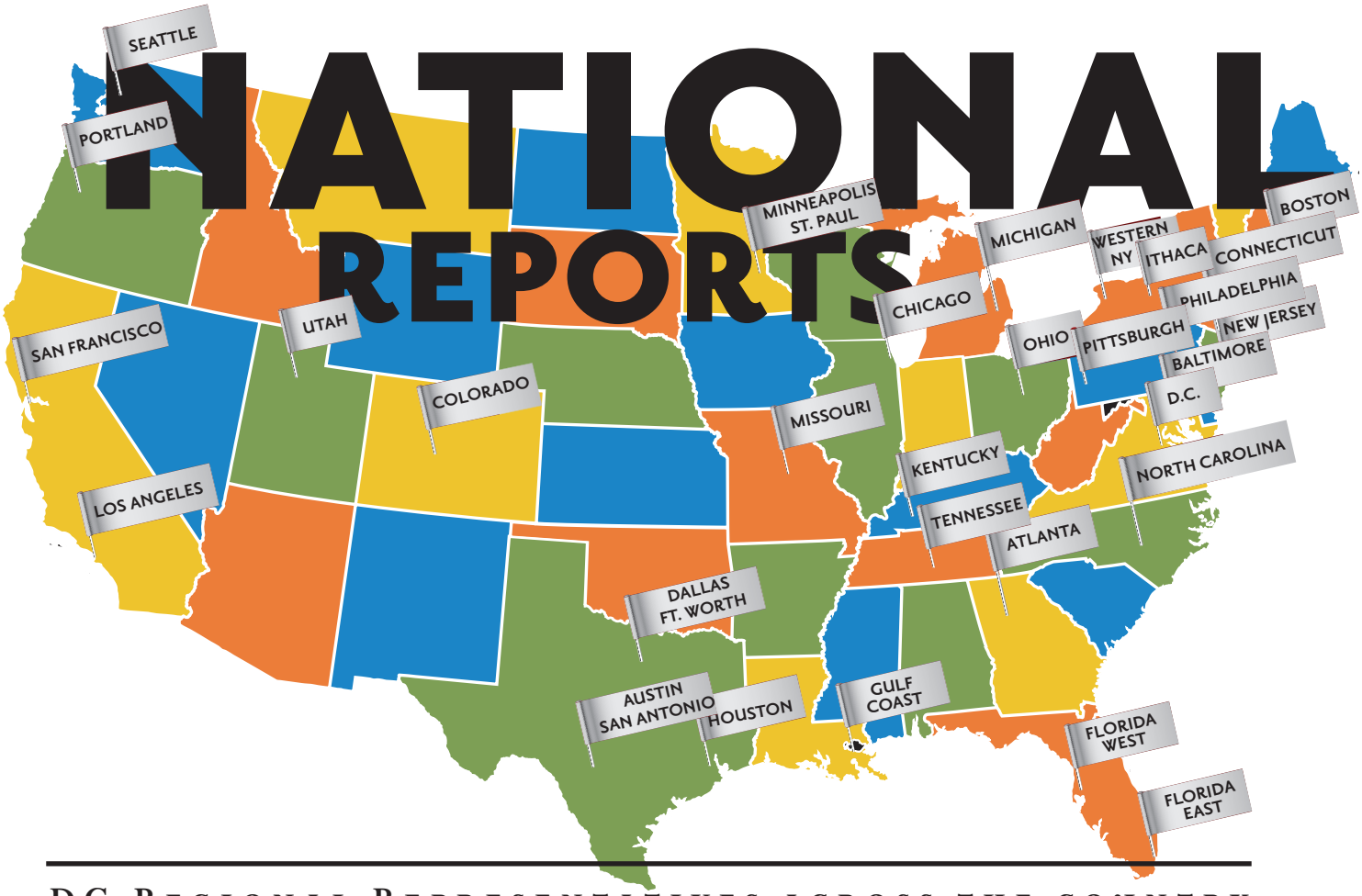
TAROON
Circling the floor.

AFIYA
This is why I didn't want to tell you.

TAROON
I want him away from my son and my wife.

END OF EXCERPT

NATIONAL REPORTS



DG Regional Representatives across the country

Atlanta

by Pamela Turner

Talking to young(er), launch-pad playwrights can be a butt-kicking experience. Their bright-eyed enthusiasm brings back the moment we each realized our own calling, and then reminds us not to spend so much time looking back that we get stuck there. Then there's the late starter who doesn't worry about looking back. One thing I share with Atlanta-based playwright-actor-lyricist and graphic designer Daryl Lisa Fazio is the realization that some starts aren't entirely planned (i.e., it may not be an MFA-kind of launch) and as she voiced it "there's something to be said for the fearlessness and risk-taking that comes with having no idea what the heck you're doing." Fazio calls this "dumb-luck" and it started in the early 2000s when she was teaching at Truman State University and impulsively wrote a (first) play because there weren't any two-woman shows to do with an actor friend. Her luck continued when that play *Greyhounds* was picked up by an off-off-Broadway theatre where, undeterred by performing above a police precinct with prostitutes in front, a metal-detector entrance, and no AC, Fazio came away with "some New York reviews and a serious jonesin' to make more plays, particularly with challenging roles for women."

That relates to the writing she loves. Fazio mentions "Sarah Ruhl's language and magic. Annie Baker's silences…Tina Fey's celebration of the brainy, quirky 40-something woman writing her own rules of life." The last may describe Fazio herself, as after studying acting as an undergrad, and realizing she "didn't have the *cajones* to be a working actor," she got a master's in graphic design "so I could snag that coveted tenure-track teaching job and retire a happy, old, distinguished professor." Fortunately, the track didn't stay straight and Fazio fell in with people including a composer collaborator who finally pulled her completely

THE GUILD HAS 30 REGIONAL REPS
in urban areas with the greatest concentrations of Dramatists Guild members. Your Regional Reps are there to answer any questions you may have about your membership, keep you informed on local programming sponsored by the Guild, and provide up to three regional reports for *The Dramatist* each subscription year. A complete list of Reps (and their email addresses) can be found on the Staff Directory page of the Guild's website.

Freed Spirits –table work

Daryl Lisa Fazio

off and into her new "fantasy" of being part of a real theatre community. "I chose Atlanta because it's accessible and has survivable winters." The impressive part is her strategy for also surviving the stranger/strange land stage of a new town. Fazio got graphic design gigs "at any theatre that would have me," joined Working Title Playwrights, went to "every playwriting workshop I could find," and "auditioned for stuff." In essence she used a four-prong strategy to meet people and show that she meant business. She also knew how to use her most prominent assets. "It can be difficult to get respect and recognition as a playwright when you're relatively unknown." But she could get past some barriers as a graphic designer, "proving myself to be creative and dependable and motivated, getting to know the theatre's mission and audience, then submitting a script…" Fazio also met and began to collaborate with director Justin Anderson even before any productions were on the table, leading not just to working together when a paid gig presented itself, but also to becoming champions for each other in whatever was going on for either of them. As for what she looks for in any director, Fazio mentioned having someone "who's got your back when you're not in the room" and "if it's on the page….will get the actors there."

Two recent projects that demonstrate Fazio's increasing presence in Atlanta were both at Emory University. The first was an invitation for her to participate in (Emory Playwright Fellow) Edith Frenli's 48-hour (Paula Vogel-style) Bakeoff workshop where Fazio learned that when "procrastination and self-doubt are obliterated due to time constraints, you can write a surprisingly good play…That knowledge has informed every bit of writing I've done since." She also took part in local directors David Cook and Patricia Henritze's "Inside Voices" collaboration—"and now I'm writing a full-length play and a TV pilot based on it." Asked how other people could get on "the list" for such opportunities, Fazio said if there is a list "it's about staying visible, meeting people and keeping those relationships active, and taking 95% (because you should be discerning) of the opportunities that come your way." In response to the question "Does age matter for writers," she responded that "Life experiences matter. Perspective matters. Observing people matters. Most of us require age to collect those…"

Currently this talented (and hard-working) playwright has three things going up with her name on them: a production of *Split in Three* at Aurora Theatre, a world premiere of (commissioned) *Freed Spirits* at Horizon Theatre Company, and a reading of (Bakeoff piece) *The Flower Room* as part of Actors Express Threshold New Play Series. Figures that Fazio describes her kid self as "quiet and introverted but creative and driven…nose-to-the-grind-

Split in Three at Florida Rep

NICK ADAMS PHOTOGRAPHY

stone with a goofy streak."

And here's a goodbye from our outgoing Young Ambassador:

'As a Young Ambassador for the Dramatists Guild, I honestly wasn't sure what to expect. I hoped to make acquaintance with more playwrights, to provide a diverse outlook on theatre, and bring voice to new companies without the clout and backing of larger companies. What I learned was that the playwriting world is so large, yet small (and that production space in this town is hard to come by). Each person and every production (in addition to DG events like workshops, our Coffee with an Actor, and readings) challenged me to rethink what I thought was possible on stage and how/where it could be performed. More importantly, I learned that networking after a show, before the show, and during intermission is equally significant as the art itself. Being a Young Ambassador has made me a more confident, more bold, more reflective, and more dedicated artist. For that I am grateful.

With my term ending, my current plans include writing more and submitting regularly. Since graduating from seminary in May, I've completed two new residencies (Taleamor Park and Blackacre Conservancy) and will attend Hambidge Residency in November. Additionally, I'm working with Little Five Arts Alive, a partnership with Horizon Theatre Company; continuing work with Karibu Performing Arts and remain active in ministry within my denomination. Thank you to Pamela Turner for choosing me to learn alongside her. She is a jewel to this community. Thank you also to the Atlanta theatre community for embracing an emerging artist.'

-Amina S. McIntyre

pturner@dramatistsguild.com

Austin/ San Antonio

by Sheila Rinear

San Antonio proudly boasts being the hometown of gifted Dramatists Guild member William Mohammad Razavi. His life, on-going achievements, and continued selfless outreach to build theatre and grow playwrights so impact from behind the scenes that they define him as a beacon who outshines any spotlight we could put on him.

William is the Artistic Director of The Overtime Theater (theovertimetheater.org), the only theatre in San Antonio doing all original work for the stage with approximately fifteen productions a year and several late-night series and an Improv Troupe…all with loyal followings. William teaches Playwriting and Screenwriting at both St. Mary's University and Our Lady of the Lake University. He works in the Classical Studies Department at Trinity University where he lectures on Numismatics. While William is charming, engaging, productive, and omniscient, the term most used in the city when his name comes up is, "genius."

William wrote his first play in the 1990s as a youngster at Trinity University. He went on to earn his MFA in playwriting from Brandeis and, although he can claim a huge canon of work in several genres, he's written over 60 plays and been widely produced. I asked William what the focus of his life is right now.

WR: I'm not sure I have a singular focus. Being AD at the Overtime Theater gives me opportunities to develop local writers as well as my own work and to keep an eye out for interesting and unusual works by writers from across the country and even overseas. (William read over 900 plays that came across his desk last year.)

I also work with the Southwest Association of Literary and Dramatic Artists (SWALDA). We're creating a web series based on a play we produced at OT. Also, teaching gives me a chance to hone ideas. Taken together with the many personal writing projects I'm currently engaged in, there is some narrative that can be expressed about where I'm going with all this.

SR: Talk to me about San Antonio theatre.

WR: Unless resources are redirected towards the production of new work, the theatrical community in San Antonio will revert to a cargo cult where even the most "bold" of the local theatres will present highlights from Chicago and New York seasons from five years ago and the rest of the city will continue to present the greatest hits of 1955 thinking there's nothing wrong. Part of the problem? Performers drift toward the well-known pieces and performers are driving lots of the enthusiasm in this community which in turn drives the decision making process. I don't blame them for wanting to play iconic roles, but in a world of limited resources? That creates a situation where most of the resources go toward productions of old work and almost no resources

William R Razavi

are left in the community to make new work.

The economic and political leadership of the community needs to understand that if they want to have a vibrant arts culture they need to take stock of whether or not they want to be a cultural center that actually produces art instead of being just a location of reproduction or simply a market and venue for travelling professional productions of works originating from other places.

The challenge is the disheartening degree of territoriality that goes with fighting over limited resources and attention. This leads to a serious enthusiasm gap when it comes to supporting new work, new writers or even new work by established writers. It's difficult to be in the position of referee balancing out the needs of the many while also trying to act as advocate for my own work.

SR: What play are you writing now?

WR: *The Bronson Pinchot Civil War Cupcake Experience*. It explores the problematic economics of the boutique cupcake shop craze along with the even more problematic politics of Civil War commemoration in the present. It's also a weird homage to *Perfect Strangers* and the dynamics of mid 1980s sitcoms.

SR: Genius!

srinear@dramatistsguild.com

Baltimore

by Brent Englar

Last year at this time I published the results of my first effort—inspired by the Guild's national count as well as local counts such as Gwydion Suilebhan's analysis of DC—to analyze the demographics of the Baltimore theatre scene. My plan is to update the study each fall by publishing data for the season just concluded, so that Baltimoreans can more systematically answer the question of who is being produced, and who is directing the productions, at our theatres. A reminder: I am counting only productions that meet these criteria:

- The production received at least five performances.
- The production opened in Baltimore city between September of one year and August of the next.

I am also counting the occasional productions by Baltimore-based theatres that, for idiosyncratic reasons, run in a neighboring county: for example, the Chesapeake Shakespeare Company's annual summer production in Ellicott City, and the two productions at Towson University by Center Stage during its recent renovation. These shows are part of the mainstage season for theatres that are otherwise based entirely in Baltimore, so they seem appropriate to include in the data. (Frankly, this approach also is easier!)

For the 2015–2016 season, I compiled lists of dramatists and directors—categorized by gender, race/ethnicity, and region—for 114 productions by 33 theatres and theatre companies. (I was unable to confirm data for several other companies on their websites or via email.) Of these 114 productions, five were generated by ensembles. Of the 109 productions that credited specific authors:

- Approximately 75.5% were written by men, up from 71% the previous season. Approximately 23% were written by women and 1.5% were written by dramatists whose gender is non-binary.
- Approximately 80.5% had white authors, down from 82% the previous season. Approximately 15% had African-American authors, 2% had Latin or Hispanic authors, and 2.5% had Asian-American authors.
- Approximately 24% were written by people in reside in Baltimore city or county, down from 25% the previous season.
- Approximately 35% were either world premieres or second or third productions, up from 33% the previous year.

Once again, the data for directors, in terms of gender and race/ethnicity, resembled the data for dramatists. (The unsurprising exception is that three-quarters of last season's directors resided in Baltimore city or county.) A complete breakdown is available at www.brentenglar.com/demographics.

It is too soon in my study to draw conclusions about trends; furthermore, by the time I published the data most Baltimore theatres had already planned their upcoming seasons, so the numbers had no bearing on those decisions. Based on this past season's data, however, we might reasonably infer that the relatively high percentage of non-male dramatists in 2014–2015 was an aberration. Meanwhile, this past season's uptick in shows by African-American authors was due mainly to the expanding presence of On The Road Theater Company; remove OTR from my count, along with the Arena Players (whose mission includes "illuminating the African-American experience through the performing arts"), and the percentage of shows by white authors jumps to 88%.

I haven't yet begun to analyze the 2016–2017 season. However, a quick glance at the slates planned for many Baltimore theatres—including some of the longest established and best known—suggests that our stages will continue overwhelmingly to feature the perspectives of white men. Being a white man myself, I am privileged to belong to a community that goes out of its way to make me feel welcome. It is long past time to extend that courtesy to everyone else.

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Colorado

by Josh Hartwell

One of the reasons I decided to write this particular article is to celebrate the success of my dear friend and gifted Denver writer, John Moore. Also, this being the "Age" issue of *The Dramatist*, I figured it would be relevant since Moore started writing plays relatively late in his career/life. Moore was the theatre critic at *The Denver Post* for twelve years and is now expanding his writing horizons. I asked him a few questions about his

play *Waiting For Obama* and the journey to the New York Fringe. Maybe, as an added bonus, his recent accomplishments will inspire other writers from all the DG regions.

"I consider myself a lifelong journalist who has dabbled in many creative-writing forms throughout my adult life," he said. "I have a very thick stack of never-seen short plays, poems, songs, short stories and film treatments I pray remain unknown to the world, even though they have served a very important, clandestine purpose in my interior life . . . I do consider myself a new playwright because I have never before attempted to have one of my plays professionally produced. But this was not my first completed play."

Waiting for Obama tells the twisted story of a Colorado Springs family, anticipating the arrival of the president—who will certainly come to take away all of their firearms any minute now. The play reports on recent shootings in America, and actually does a wonderful job of presenting both sides of the gun control argument.

Moore finished his working draft just in time for the January 30 Fringe deadline, then didn't do any editing until he found out the play had been accepted at the end of April. Denver audiences were then lucky enough to sit in and watch two weekends of rehearsals before the cast and play traveled to New York.

"When I heard *Waiting for Obama* had been accepted, I went from being tickled to terrified in about 60 seconds flat because I quickly started to realize what staging that the play from scratch was going to entail. But after having written thousands of articles and reviews (mostly) championing the local and national theatre communities, I admit it swelled my soul to have the opportunity to be considered, for a brief time, a full-fledged member of the creative community, as opposed to a sniper."

Waiting for Obama was well received by audiences and six out of the seven reviewers. But more important to Moore was the chance to present seven of Denver's most talented actors to the New York crowds. Based on this new success, what advice would Moore give to other writers who are starting some of their first plays later in life, or who have written their first couple plays and haven't yet shared them with anyone?

"I am a cauldron of contradiction here. I think it's true that in many fields, true geniuses often do their best work before the age of 30. But the literary world is filled with examples of writers who didn't get serious about it until later in life . . . Many journalists (critics and reporters) have been successful transitioning to playwriting later in life, once they stopped working 60-hour newspaper weeks. Issue-oriented plays that are based largely on interviews and journalistic research also have their own niche in the theatre. My advice is, yes, absolutely, share your work with someone you trust. But trust your own instincts to know when your time to share arrives. Be reasonably sure your script is in decent, working shape. It doesn't have to be finished, but the promise of your idea has to be there, because you only get one chance to give someone a first impression of your writing . . .Take the leap. The only sure way to guarantee that you will never become a produced playwright is if you never give anyone a chance to see it."

Wise guidance for any writer. To read up on Moore or see some samples of his writing, visit www.moorejohn.com.

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Connecticut

by Charlene Donaghy

"I never fear age…if you have creative work, you don't have time to age."
Louise Nevelson (1980), in *Alexandra Robbin, Aging a New Look* (1982)

On a warm summer evening, with the sun setting over the shore of eastern Connecticut, a group of fun and funny, dedicated and supremely talented dramatists gathered for our 2016 Summer Social. We came from Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and even Missouri.

We talked of being creative, of being a community. We talked of new work, revision, fellow dramatists and fellow theatre artists. The laughter flowed as easily as the wine. The ideas of collaborations bubbled as effervescently as the local craft hops.

In a time when I have been questioning the relevance placed on artists simply because of age, what struck me was the diversity of our group and how we represented gender, heritage, and age across a vast spectrum. It was a lovely reminder of how theatre can bridge gaps to weave together what we all love of our craft: the magic of storytelling for the stage.

When I took this photograph of Dramatists Guild members David W. Christner of Rhode Island and Natalie Osborne of Connecticut, I was fascinated by the fact that Natalie, a member of the Guild for less than a year, and David, a member of the Guild for decades and decades, were sharing stories of their lives as dramatists.

David is a prolific writer born in Tennessee, raised in a small farming community in southwestern Oklahoma. He received a BA and an MA from the University of Oklahoma. Two plays of his Vietnam Trilogy—*The Wall* and *Bui-Doi: The Dust of Live*—have been recognized in national playwriting competitions, and *The Walk*, *Red Hot Mamas*, *The Babe, The Bard, and the Baron*, *The Bitch of Baily's Beach*, *Ezra and Evil*, and *This Blood's For You* have also been finalists or winners in national/international playwriting competitions. His plays have been produced throughout the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia, and Russia.

Natalie is a playwright, anthropologist, activist, and visual artist. She graduated from Bennington College in 2015, majoring in drama and anthropology. Her play *The Seven Ravens* was read at Classic Theatre of Harlem Playwright's Playground Program. She is part of 365 Women a Year and her play *Making Frankenstein* is published in Indie Theatre Now. Natalie has worked with La Mama Theatre in NYC, the Kattaikkuttu Sangam in India, and The Athena Project in Denver. Recently, she was part of *Reasons for Leaving*, a devised piece based off of the life and writings of Barbara Newhall Follett. Natalie created NOplays, a New England based theatre group supporting and producing works from under-represented voices in the American theatre, with a special

David W. Christner and Natalie Osborne

interest in emerging female writers.

David is wise with his years, aging with bold complexity like a fine whiskey, writing plays that seep into our consciousness as we consider who we are in this world we live in. He is, at any age, relevant.

Natalie is wise in her years, boldly pushing forth to create not only her own art but to support and give voice to the art of others. She is a true collaborator. She is, at any age, relevant.

And at our 2016 Summer Social, we all felt the creative energy that both David and Natalie radiate. These amazing artists, decades apart, have no fear of age, on either end of the spectrum, because they have creative work.

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Kentucky

by Nancy Gall-Clayton

Sixteen years ago, Larry Muhammad took up playwriting and joined the Dramatists Guild.

The motivation behind his first play was an assignment from his then-employer, the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, to write a Black History Month story about Frank L. Stanley Sr., (1906-1974), a crusading civil rights activist and long-time senior editor and publisher of the *Louisville Defender*.

Delving into Stanley's papers, which had just been donated to the University of Louisville Archives, Muhammad realized Stanley's life could be portrayed well on stage.

Double V was the result. The title references the World War II campaign for victory overseas and against discrimination at home, apropos since Stanley had been part of a group that convinced President Harry S. Truman to desegregate the military.

Muhammad uses the pen name of Cisco Montgomery for his "edgier urban plays," including *Murder the Devil* about an Al Qaeda reject who slips through Homeland Security on a bloodthirsty mission that goes awry.

The playwright's real name appears on his history plays, and Muhammad has established Kentucky Black Repertory, a nonprofit organization, to produce his scripts about African American Bluegrass history and heroic figures. The company produced *Jockey Jim* in 2016 and *Buster!* in 2015.

Jockey Jim, which a reviewer found "finely crafted" and a "compelling piece of theater," is about Kentucky native Jimmy Winkfield (1882-1974), the last African American jockey to win the Kentucky Derby. Winkfield won in both 1901 and 1902. After placing second in the 1903 Derby, he moved to Russia and later, France, winning every important race in Europe. He returned to this country after Nazis requisitioned his stables during World War II.

When he retired as a jockey, Winkfield had won more than 2,600 races, but in 1961, success on the track wasn't enough for someone of his skin color to enter through the front door of Louisville's fashionable Brown Hotel for a banquet being held in his honor.

Buster! was praised as "entertainment of the highest level carrying its message with force and clarity." *Buster!* takes its title from the nickname of Louisville's gadfly activist Reverend Louis Coleman (1943-2008).

Coleman and his trademark bullhorn were seen daily at the courthouse, city hall, a building site where minority contractors were underrepresented, and anywhere else he believed raising his voice would make a difference.

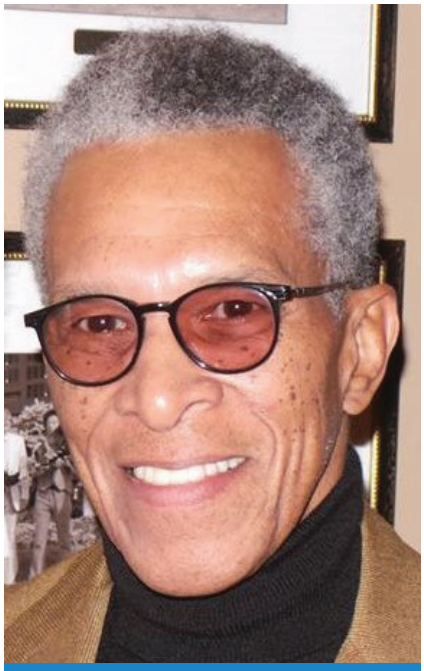
At one time, Muhammad thought Coleman's style was less than effective, but he changed his mind after poring over 1,200 stories in the *Courier-Journal*'s files and interviewing several dozen people when doing research for *Buster!*

Muhammad came to admire his subject deeply, realizing Coleman was like Don Quixote. In an interview shortly before the play's premiere Muhammad said, "He's like a bumbling idiot who turns out to be wiser and more courageous and more hopeful and open hearted than the people around him."

How does one go from journalist to playwright with nine plays being produced and having staged readings in four states? Muhammad credits attending and reading plays to study structure and stagecraft. In addition, he found several books valuable including *The Dramatist's Toolkit* by Jeffrey Sweet, a lifetime member of the Dramatists Guild Council.

Mentors also have been integral to Muhammad's success. About his friend William McNulty, an actor with more than 150 credits at Actors Theatre of Louisville, he says, "Bill

Gregory Rahming as Louis Coleman in the musical *Buster!*



Larry Muhammad

has read and critiqued all my plays and jokes that he's my personal dramaturg."

Another mentor is William P. Bradford II, a nominee for a Tony Award in Excellence in Theatre Education, who directed both *Jockey Jim* and *Buster!*

Muhammad is currently at work on a musical about James Herndon, better known as "Sweet Evening Breeze," a pioneering and openly gay transvestite in Lexington, Kentucky, in the mid-twentieth century.

For more information about the playwright and his work, please contact Larry Muhammad on Facebook or kyblackrep@gmail.com.

Keep up with Kentucky members and submit your own news by joining our Facebook page Dramatists Guild-Kentucky Region.

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Los Angeles

by Josh Gershick

A Meditation on Emergence

Emergence [ə'mərjəns] *noun*.
1. The process of coming into view or notice. The process of coming into being.

Have you emerged as a playwright? How do you know that you have? What are the hallmarks of emergence?

Is the yardstick the number of plays we've written? The number we've published or had produced? What if we've produced them ourselves? Does that count? Is the type of theatre relevant? The size of the house or audience? How many successes on the intimate stage equal one solid LORT production?

Have you emerged when Variety covers your show, or when you get a mention in the New York Times? Can we emerge at 90 as well as 30? Do playwrights have a "use by" date?

"I wrestle with this all the time," said Jonathan Josephson, 33, co-founder and executive director of L.A.'s Unbound Productions, an

Amy Simon

Jonathan Josephson

immersive, site-specific theatre company that has produced his adaptations of classic works by Mark Twain, Arthur Conan Doyle and Edgar Allen Poe, among others. "[Emergence] is complicated and subjective, and it's different for every writer."

Josephson's short play *Grandpa and the Gay Rabbi* was winner in 2016 of the Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Theater Festival. He had a 10-minute play at the Humana Festival. He is a five-time finalist for the Actors Theatre of Louisville's Heideman Award, and a finalist for the O'Neill National Playwright's Conference. Twelve of his plays have been published.

But even with some objectively impressive markers, he's still not sure he has "emerged."

"Yes, I feel like I've done a lot. I have a body of work. It's wonderful! This is the most I've ever had and done in a year. I feel really fantastic! Then I look at this other tier of playwrights, people who are getting multiple commissions from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and the Woolly Mammoth, companies whose work gets written up in American Theatre, playwrights [who can] make a living meaningfully, if not completely, on playwriting," said Josephson, who works by day as director of marketing for a firm in Burbank. "No matter who you are, or what you're doing, everybody is on a continuum. Everybody is looking up at somebody, and everybody has someone looking up at them."

"The central question, for me, is, do we define emergence for ourselves, or do we allow someone else—'The Business'—to define it for us?" said Mary Crescenzo, 67, who wrote her first play, *Janet's Halloween Dream*, in the

Lojo Simon

Mary Crescenzo

fourth grade, in the Bronx.

"They staged it, and I was like, 'Wow! This can be fun!" said Crescenzo, who worked as a journalist—writing for the New York Times, Cosmopolitan, Playboy and the Huffington Post, among others—and as a broadcaster, actor, singer, casting director and teacher before returning to playwriting at around 50.

"We emerge when we begin to get recognized, when we have stage works produced anywhere, when our words leave the page," said Crescenzo, whose play *Planet A* grew out of her work teaching the arts to adults afflicted with Alzheimer's.

"Is [emergence] also when we get a LORT production? Maybe. When we're published? That's a part of it. Is it how many grants or fellowships we get? When we get an agent? Maybe it's not about numbers or chronology at all," she said. "Maybe it's how you immerse yourself in the thing that you want to do."

Amy Simon wrote her first play—*Cheerios in My Underwear (and Other True Tales of Motherhood)* in her 40s. The play holds the record as L.A.'s longest-running solo show.

"Motherhood completely and utterly inspired my playwriting career," said Simon, 60, who was co-producing the all-female variety show Heroine Addicts at L.A.'s now-defunct Bang Studio when she conceived the idea for *Cheerios*.

"I needed to share what I learned with future mothers," she said. "How it's common to feel one laundry-load away from a nervous breakdown. No one was talking about the isolation and sheer volume of hard physical labor involved in taking care of miniature humans. Once I got the play on the stage, I emerged. The play resonated. And I found my voice as a playwright."

At 51, Simon started *She's History*, a play about "women who make and made history." "I wrote it because we know more about Kim Kardashian than Abigail Adams. And that is just not right," she said.

She's History, like *Cheerios*, began as a solo show but has evolved into a play for multiple actors. In her own second act, Simon feels as though she's just getting started.

"Margaret Edison wrote *Wit* when she was approaching 40. Gloria Steinem, not a playwright but a writer, is in her 80s and still kicking ass," said Simon. "There is no use-by date as a writer. On the contrary: We live and have stories to tell. I just turned 60, and I am still emerging."

After a career as a journalist, Lojo Simon (no relation to Amy), returned to school in her 50s, earning an MFA from the University of Idaho. After years of professional recognition as a writer, she said, it's hard to start over, "to be considered emerging – or worse, invisible."

"All my years of writing experience don't count…in the theatre, where I'm still a relative newcomer," said Simon, 55, author of *The Adoration of Dora*, which won the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival's David Mark Cohen National Playwriting Award in 2012. Her play *Love All* premiered to acclaim at the OC-Centric New Play Festival, in August.

"I still have to pay my dues, climb the ladder and compete for attention with much younger (and less experienced) writers. That said, I come to playwriting with more life experience, more patience, an ability to see a bigger picture [and] … a better sense of who I am."

Emergence – "coming into notice" – said Simon, suggests a certain "critical mass," in which a playwright's efforts are recognized by leading theatre companies, festivals and reviewers.

It's a process, added Mary Crescenzo, with highs and lows along the way.

"You've just got to hold on. There are blockades and barriers that fall down in front of you when you least expect it," said Crescenzo. "But you find your way over them. You keep holding on. You do the best you can. And you march on."

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Michigan

by Anita Gonzalez

Everyone knows that Michigan is shaped like a mitten, but did you know we have our own play incubation center? This month I focus on the MITTEN Lab, a new playwright's support organization founded by Rachel Sussman and Katherine Carter. Their goal is to nurture artists who are emerging in their practice, seeking a pipeline into Michigan theatres for their plays. The Lab offered its first residency program in September 2016, inviting three local playwrights, Monet Hurst-Mendoza, Emilio Rodriguez and Zoe Sarnak, to northern Michigan. The Lab intends to re-establish Michigan as a fertile, sustainable ground for new and exciting theatrical work. Sussman and Carter explain their passion for founding the lab: "We grew up doing community theatre in Michigan. At the professional level, there are not a lot of theatres. There is really not a connection between them and they are not producing a lot of new work, rather they are doing old standards. Why do you have to leave Michigan to have a career? We don't live in Michigan so we can't solve

its problems. Instead, we have conversations with existing professional theatres like Theatre Nova, Detroit Public Theatre or Parallel 45."

These three professional Michigan theatres have a track record of producing new plays and are committed to advancing the work of playwrights at all stages of their careers.

I interviewed playwrights Monet, Emilio and Zoe about their current projects and their residency plans. Monet's new play, *Blind Crest*, has been in development for two years. The play deals with the many fraught and biased issues surrounding class and race in our criminal justice system, and grapples with black identity in white America. A dark twist on a "boy-meets-girl" story, *Blind Crest* is inspired by the unfolding true story of Ronell Wilson, a current Death Row inmate, and the female prison guard he had a relationship with and impregnated. As an artist, Hurst-Mendoza is passionate about creating a platform for untold stories about people of color and the challenges they face in my work. She once interned at the Dramatists Guild in NYC and she fondly remembers culling research for the directory that would later feed her career.

Playwright Zoe Sarnac spends her time at the MITTEN Lab looking at song moments within a new work commissioned by Transport Group. She strongly supports the Dramatists Guild and believes it's crucial for writers have a way of organizing to provide support on the business side. While not all of the writers live in Michigan, they all appreciate the opportunity for work space without distractions. Monet sums it up when she writes: "The Michigan air is crisp and the landscape is lush with greenery - you could not provide me with a more inspirational place to incubate and test out my ideas as a playwright! Best of all, the retreat will allow me to fully dedicate myself to my craft - something that I can forget to do for myself in the city. That freedom and support, in turn, will make me a stronger, more focused artist that I hope will carry me forward to other opportunities and institutions where my work can be heard and experienced… did I mention they're going to have popcorn and peanut butter?" The MITTEN Lab (www.themittenlab.org)

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Minneapolis/ St. Paul

by Laurie Flanigan Hegge

When Dramatists Guild member Rhiana Yazzie first came to the Twin Cities ten years ago on a Jerome playwriting fellowship, she found it difficult to cast a reading of a new play with Native American actors, even though the Twin Cities is home to one of the largest urban Native American communities in the nation. Fast-forward ten years, and Rhiana has single-handedly changed the face of the Twin Cities theatre scene. Her New Native Theatre has forged an artistic home for Native performers who are exploring careers in theatre by walking through the welcoming doors of a theatre in their own community. As an enrolled member of the Navajo nation, she understands the complexities of inviting her community to walk through those doors, which have been traditionally shut to Native American artists. She recognizes that many of the artists she is working with never imagined the possibility that the theatre was a place they could call home. And she is inspired by the ways in which individuals and the community as a whole find healing and transformation through the experience of being on stage, telling authentic stories, and seeing themselves reflected on stage without that reflection being filtered through a white lens.

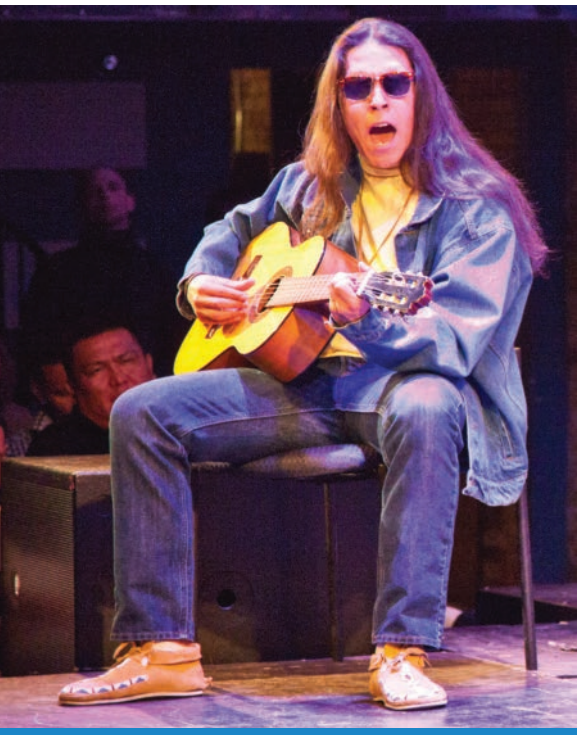
Rhiana's approach is holistic. In her words, NNT isn't just a non-profit "painted red," rather, her work intentionally takes into account the individual as a whole person, including their personal history, the impact of shared trauma her larger community has faced in the past and present, and the context of life for Native Americans in both urban and reservation settings. "I care about the well-being of each individual I work with," Rhiana explains. "There are a finite number of us. We experienced genocide—there's no getting around that truth. I truly feel that theatre is a healing art form and we can change the course of history by telling different stories." The invitation to the community includes training for actors, improvisation and on-camera classes, playwriting classes, and a supportive and welcoming setting for Native adults who may have hungered for these opportunities their whole lives, but never thought they belonged. Rhiana finds this particularly thrilling. "When someone comes to me and says they've long had a secret heart for theatre, I'm excited to work with them. Sometimes they come to us as part of a healing process. Seeing yourself on stage, telling your own stories, or watching a play whose narrative actually changes the future or the past for two hours—that's an incredibly healing experience. When an audience sees a play in which the Indians actually win, that changes the nervous system."

I asked Rhiana, as an outsider to her community, how best I could support her work, and she said first and foremost to come see it. She explains that she has no trouble finding audiences for her work—every major production New Native Theatre has produced has had sold-out attendance by both Native and non-Native audiences. She explained how the best work by Native American writers is not

Rhiana Yazzie

FARRINGTON LLEWELLYN

Delinda Oogie Pushetonqua in *Sell Fish* by Joseph A Dandurand; NNATPF



Aj Kapshesit in *Indians and Other Friends* by Rhiana Yazzie; National Native American Ten Minute Play Festival

diluted to be more digestible for a non-Native audience (in spite of the fact that Native writers are frequently asked to make their work more accessible to white audiences), and that audiences from outside the community might be surprised to see how much humor permeates Native writers' work. And not surprisingly, New Native Theatre could use financial support. Most of the work Rhiana is doing is on a shoestring budget, and she is a staff of one, functioning as producer, director, curator, and educator.

This past April, NNT produced The National Native American Ten Minute Play Festival, featuring work by ten Native American playwrights. This summer and fall NNT toured two productions, *Stolen Generation* by Ardie Medina, and *Sneaky* by William S. Yellow Robe Jr. The last Friday of every month NNT presents the Well Red Play Reading Series at the All My Relations Gallery on Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. Check out the New Native Theatre website for the monthly line up: www.newnativetheatre.org

On top of her work with New Native Theatre, Rhiana is a busy playwright. She was recently awarded the McKnight Fellowship in Playwrighting and is working on a co-commission from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and the Public Theater for *American Revolutions: the United States History Cycle*. This fall she heads to The MacDowell Colony for a writing residency.

And speaking of influential (and funny) Native American writers, Minnesota lost one of the greats with the passing of award-winning Anishinaabe playwright, poet, and author Jim Northrup this past August. The first time I met Jim, I sat at his kitchen table where he told me a story about a bear that had wandered into his yard. He went out to his deck and shooed it away, but it just looked at him, until he said, "get out of here" in Ojibwe, and then the bear got it. Giga waabamin miinawaa, Nimishoomis Makwa. And thank you.

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North Carolina

by Kim Stinson

The Women's Theatre Festival (WTF) has been feminizing the stages of North Carolina theatres over this past summer. A new venture started by a faculty member at Shaw University in Raleigh, Ashley Popio, with the help of 179 other women, this project included seven plays written and directed by women which were presented in August and September at various locations in Burlington, Carrboro, and Raleigh. According to their website, their mission is: "To create, produce, and promote extraordinary theatre by women."

In addition to the seven scheduled runs, the WTF also held a twenty-four hour event to raise awareness of the lack of gender equity in theatre. "Occupy the Theatre" took place from 8:30 a.m. on July 30 and held the stage until 8:30 a.m. on July 31. Over the twenty-four hours, the event included performances of eleven plays, two plays workshopped with teen actors, and the double presentation of ten ten-minute plays.

Dramatists Guild member June Guralnick was one of the playwrights involved in the "Occupy the Theatre" event. Guralnick feels that the, "WTF will be a game-changer in North Carolina, and I'm thrilled I could be a part of this fabulous festival."

Guralnick's play, *Finding Clara*, was presented during the "Occupy the Theatre" event in addition to one of her ten-minute plays, *On the Dreamhouse Sea*. *More Than Anything* by fellow Dramatists Guild member, Adrienne Pender, was also presented during the event.

"From the initial meeting with more than a hundred women in attendance," noted Guralnick, "I knew it [WTF] was going to be exciting as well as impactful for our region. Based on my experience as the former Executive Director of the City of Raleigh Arts Commission and past North Carolina Arts Council Theatre Director, I was well aware that nothing like this had happened in our state."

After participating in the WTF event, Pender and Guralnick joined a few other female playwrights on the August 9 to present their works during an evening at So & So Books in Raleigh in order to benefit Partners Against Trafficking in Humans in North Carolina (PATH-NC).

"PATH is thrilled that some of North Carolina's most exciting dramatists have come together to support us," stated Martha Keravuori, PATH Board member.

Guralnick said of the evening that, "the range of material and extraordinary diversity and strength of the voices made for a provocative, memorable night."

Putting works on the stage is not the only activity of the WTF. They are also offering classes and discussions in various theatrical subjects such as the "Cross Gender Casting Panel," "Fight Like a Girl: Basics of Stage Combat," and "Women's Forms: Experiential Writing." All classes are free with a suggested donation of five dollars at the door—for those who can afford it. Those who cannot are still encouraged to attend.

For more details about The Women's Theatre Festival, visit their website at http://www.womenstheatrefestival.com/ where you can find information on future productions and

classes, as well as, links to multiple sources of research on gender parity in the theatre.

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Northern Ohio

by David Todd

As a native Clevelander, I'm happy to be back in the city and representing its playwrights for the Dramatists Guild of America. There's always been a rich theater tradition here in Northeast Ohio—just one of the areas I'll be covering as Regional Rep for the state—but I'm excited by the heightened activity in playwriting circles. In addition to the Cleveland Play House's Playwrights' Unit and Dobama Theatre's Playwrights' GYM, there are independent ventures, including The Manhattan Project – Cleveland Lab, that provide outlets for development. There are also producing companies including Convergence-Continuum and Ensemble Theatre, that have local plays in their current seasons. As well, there is Talespinner Children's Theatre, whose annual series of plays adapted from myths and folklore are penned by area scribes.

Another vehicle in Northeast Ohio is one I'm closely involved with, Playwrights Local. Now in our second season, Playwrights Local is the area's only theater organization devoted entirely to developing and producing local writers. We stage full productions, offer playwriting classes, host outreach events, and conduct workshop programs such as our Play Lab. We also make an effort to cultivate a greater esprit de corps among dramatists here in our already close-knit, supportive scene. Our current production, *Objectively/Reasonable: A Community Response to the Shooting of Tamir Rice, 11/22/14*, is a documentary play incorporating contributions from playwrights including Tom Hayes, Lisa Langford, Mike Geither, and Michael Oatman. Later this season, we'll stage our second annual Cleveland Playwrights Festival and the premiere of a one-person show by writer/actor Amy Schwabauer. In March 2017, we'll host The Mac Wellman Homecoming, a three-day festival with performances of Wellman classics and new locally written works by multiple theatre companies, all honoring a Cleveland product whose imprint on the playwriting world has been indelible.

In addition to working as the conceiver/dramaturg on *Objectively/Reasonable*, I'm finishing a new play entitled *Things as They Are*, which is a mediation on the life and work of American poet Wallace Stevens. Featuring an original score by Ben Chasny—known to music fans as Six Organs of Admittance—*Things* also includes original material by Stevens performed with the permission of Alfred A. Knopf. This play, which will premiere in Cleveland in May 2017, combines two of my main interests to this point, experimental theater and alternative music. My own playwriting experience tends toward the avant-garde and reflects my background in the less-heralded corners of the downtown NYC demimonde. I've also done some teaching of playwriting as an English professor, which was my main career for some time after earning a Ph.D. at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

As Regional Rep, I look forward to drawing attention to the often unrecognized playwrights in the state. I'm also excited about hosting events that deal with issues affecting dramatic writers here in our markets. Lastly, the prospect of interacting with the other Reps, who appear such a vital and impressive group, is enticing to me. I look forward to meeting and disappointing them all in due time.

Before closing, I'd like to offer a special thanks to our outgoing Rep, Faye Sholiton. Faye literally put our region on the map as its first-ever emissary to the Guild. On behalf of all members in Ohio, I want to acknowledge Faye for her seven years of service.

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Philadelphia

by Jacqueline Goldfinger

The 2016-17 theatre season announcements are out in Philadelphia, and a record number of 13 world premieres with professional companies by local playwrights and makers have been announced: *Marcus/Emma* by Mary Tuomanen at InterAct, *Shitheads* by Douglas Williams at Azuka, *Feed* by Applied Mechanics, *Adapt!* by Blanka Zizka at The Wilma, *VIII Days after…* by Kash Goins at GoKash, *Color Me Bearded* by The Bearded Ladies, *The Carols Show* by Jen Childs at 1812, *Destiny Estimate* by MJ Kaufman funded by the Pew, *White* by James Ijames at Theatre Horizon, *This Is The Week That Is* by the Ensemble at 1812, my play *The Arsonists* at Azuka, *Breathe Smoke* by Douglas Williams at Orbiter 3, as well as an additional Orbiter play, and this doesn't even include the Fringe in September or collectives that announce productions on a rolling basis.

It's a revolutionary change. We've gone from a community in which brand new work was valued but limited to a community in which you will be able to see world premieres by local playwrights and makers every month, all season long.

When I moved to Philadelphia in 2008, audiences could expect to see only one new work by one of four well-established local playwrights each year; a new play by Bruce Graham, Michael Hollinger, Seth Rozin or Thomas Gibbons. If we were lucky, we would get to see two new plays from these gentlemen. However, the perfect storm of increased interest in local artists, an increased generation of new work, and increased interest by funders in supporting new work has led to the founding and support of new work initiatives at both established theatres as well as the forming of a new work development group, The Foundry, which focuses solely on developing new plays by local writers. The Foundry makes it possible for theatres that could not afford to develop

new work to have polished new work by local writers given to them ready for production. The Foundry then also inspired an off-shoot, Orbiter 3, which is comprised of local playwrights committed to self-producing their own work in the model of 13P and the Welders.

I hope that you will join us in Philadelphia next season to see phenomenal new work by local playwrights!

Here is where you can find more information about each new work:

- *Marcus/Emma* by Mary Tuomanen, InterAct: www.interacttheatre.org
- *Shitheads* by Douglas Williams and The Arsonists by Jacqueline Goldfinger, Azuka: www.azukatheatre.org
- *Feed* by Applied Mechanics: www.appliedmechanics.us
- *Adapt!* by Blanka Zizka, Wilma: wilmatheater.org
- *VIII Days after…* by Kash Goins at GoKash: www.gokashproductions.com
- *Color Me Bearded* by The Bearded Ladies: www.beardedladiescabaret.com
- *The Carols Show* by Jen Childs and *This is the Week that Is* by the Ensemble at 1812: www.1812productions.org
- *Destiny Estimate* by MJ Kaufman funded by the Pew: http://www.pcah.us/grants/9875_destiny_estimate
- *White* by James Ijames at Theatre Horizon: www.theatrehorizon.org
- *Breathe Smoke* by Douglas Williams and One Additional Play at Orbiter 3: www.orbiter3.org

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Elaine Jarvik

Utah

by Julie Jensen

She plays drums in a band called The Distractions, she volunteers at a counseling center for young people who've experienced loss, she's the mother of two, grandmother of five. And she writes plays. But before all this, Elaine Jarvik was a professional journalist with degrees from Syracuse University and Northwestern, who worked for 27 years at the *Deseret News*, a daily newspaper in Salt Lake City.

She launched her playwriting career most impressively when her short play, *Dead Right*, was produced at the Humana Festival in Louisville. It's an off-center look at an aging couple, arguing about the content and style of obituaries in the newspaper. Several of her early short plays also focused on issues of aging. The subject compelled her, because of problems she saw with both her parents and her in-laws. "I was also propelled by stories I reported for the newspaper," she said. "And of course there was my own impending old age and the fact that I'm both a pessimist and a worrywart." And so her first full-length play, *The Coming Ice Age*, focused on a retired couple in conflict about keeping or leaving their home. It premiered at Pygmalion Theatre in Salt Lake City.

"I write a play to figure something out," said Elaine. "How we embrace our decline as we age is one."

The next phase of Elaine's career was marked by experimentation with both subject matter and technique. She and her daughter Kate wrote *(a man entered)* because, as she said, "they wanted to explore why a man would decide to stop having contact with his children." *Two Stories*, her next play, focuses on what happens when your neighbor builds a house that blocks your sunlight and your view. Salt Lake Acting Company premiered both plays.

Plan-B Theatre in Salt Lake City produced her next two plays. *Marry Christmas* is a documentary about gay couples in Salt Lake City who married immediately after the ban was lifted against same-sex marriage. Her most recent play, *Based on a True Story*, defies theatrical conventions. As Elaine put it, she had been trying to get away from people sitting around talking. Then one of her directors showed her a picture of a woman in aviator goggles and said, "Write a play." She immediately thought of time travel. "What would happen if a woman accidentally found herself 30 years in the future after arguing with her husband?" she said. And that was it. "No more people sitting in chairs talking!"

When asked about what she was working on now, she answered, "A play about someone considered the worst at what he did. I don't want to jinx it by saying anything else."

And so, our mother, drummer, journalist, playwright, compelled as ever by the story, the chance to tell a story, is hard at work. As she puts it, "I regard my desk as both a refuge and a tiny precipice exposed to the elements, where I am either relieved or despondent." One of the most disciplined and talented writers around, she is at it and getting better all the time.

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Western New York

by Donna Hoke

Perhaps it's the all the glowing national press Buffalo's been getting, but playwrights seem to be visiting here with astonishing regularity! This past spring, we hosted Terrence McNally; Tom Dudzick—in town to direct his fourth play at Kavinoky—was chair of Curtain Up! September 16; the next day, Jeffrey Sweet led an Improvising Your Play workshop in Rochester; and October 27, Amy Herzog met with playwrights prior to the opening of *4000 Miles*, the first of three Herzog plays comprising Jewish Repertory Theater's (JRT) 2016-167 season.

"There are many female playwrights, including Annie Baker and Wendy Wasserstein, whose plays we have already done," says JRT Artistic Director Saul Elkin. "After I read 4000 Miles, I was so touched, I went on to read *After the Revolution* and *The Great God Pan*, both of which made a powerful impression on me. When I realized that none of Amy Herzog's plays had been done in Buffalo, it seemed clear that we should do all three."

Herzog says an entire season of her plays is a first, and "When I learned that JRT would be doing a season of my work, I was completely delighted. I'm especially excited that JRT will stage *The Great God Pan*, a less frequently produced play that I like as much as the other two. It's about a completely different family, but all three plays touch on memory, identity, and what's passed down in generations of a family."

And as if this hasn't been enough, Rajiv Joseph will visit Buffalo not once, but twice, in the coming season, the first time in November, the second in May. As the recipient of Road Less Traveled Productions' first national residency, he'll be here workshopping his new, Goodman-commissioned play, *Santa Maria*, about a group of men aboard Columbus' largest ship.

The theatre department at Buffalo State College will be involved with the workshops that culminate with two staged readings at the Donald Savage Theater on campus, and Joseph will also participate in community events during this longer, spring visit. "We're going to try to provide resources throughout the process, and that may include conversations with other ensemble members, such as designers," says RLTP Artistic Director Scott Behrend. "We plan to dip into the ensemble actor pool for actors; we will definitely use all local actors."

"There' something immersive about coming to Buffalo and being put up and working out of my comfort zone," Joseph says. "I'm excited by the prospect of trying something new. It's all about hearing early drafts read aloud; that's how I determine what's working or not."

Finally, also in May, Road Less Traveled will host Donald Margulies when he attends its production of *The Country House*, the second Margulies play of the season; the first, *Dinner With Friends*, was RLTP's Curtain Up! offering. RLTP plans to have a public Q&A moderated by RLTP Literary Director Jon Elston on May 6, and Margulies will be in attendance at a special viewing of *The Country House* that evening.

Watch your regional e-blasts for more details on upcoming events involving these playwrights. Their visits are further testament to Western New York's status as an arts destination.

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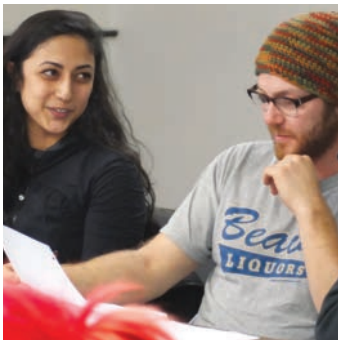


CURRENT RESIDENT PLAYWRIGHTS

Mary Ruth Clarke
Kristiana Rae Colón
Cheryl Coons
MT Cozzola
Will Dunne
Reginald Edmund
Stuart Flack
Dana Lynn Formby
Ricardo Gamboa
Anne García-Romero
Isaac Gomez
Georgette Kelly
Rohina Malik
Arlene Malinowski
Jayme McGhan
Susan H. Pak
Steven Peterson
Elaine Romero
Jon Steinhagen
Robert Tenges
Jay Torrence
Scott Woldman
Martín Zimmerman

Getting A Word In Agewise

BY TRAVELING MASTER CHISA HUTCHINSON

CHISA HUTCHINSON, a 2010-11 DG Fellow and one of twelve DGF Traveling Masters in 2016, lead workshops in Shepherdstown, WV where her play *The Wedding Gift* had its world premiere at the Contemporary American Theater Festival. Her plays include: *Somebody's Daughter, Dead and Breathing, Dirt Rich, She Like Girls, This Is Not the Play, Sex on Sunday*.

Dramatists Guild Fund Traveling Masters. Sounds formidable as fuck, don't it? Like some literary kung-fu type shit. That's what I was thinking when the Dramatists Guild Fund asked if I'd like to participate in the program during my time at the Contemporary American Theater Festival in Shepherdstown, WV.

Um. Yeah, I would.

Of course, as soon as I agreed, doubts cropped up. Like, "Wait, am I accomplished enough? Did they run out of more experienced people to ask?" I really had to take inventory, y'all. Like I had to check my bio for reassurance. And even then, I couldn't help panicking when I learned that I'd be running a workshop not just for the super-sweet, uber-enthusiastic teens from a theater bootcamp program called HostelYOUTH!—I figured I might be able to fool *them*—but also one for wily sexagenarians who love theater so much, they chose to spend a chunk of their retirement studying it with a program called Road Scholars. Oh yeah, and a third workshop for Point Park University MFA students. What the heck could I possibly offer these people in the way of wisdom?

Turns out I didn't have to offer much. Lectures were out of the question. I suck at talking. It's why I write. So I'd go the nothing-to-it-but-to-do-it route. I simply posed some writing prompts, offered some examples. And I'm not sure if anyone else learned anything, but here's what I learned: all writers—all people, arguably—no matter what age, just need a spark. They'll give you fire if you just give them a spark. This was the common denominator for three otherwise wide-ranging workshops.

I asked the Road Scholars to think of a time they should've said something but, for whatever reason, didn't, and then rewrite that moment in monologue form. I figure folks of that vintage are likely to have at least one moment like that. The MFA students who basically already know everything there is to know about dramatic writing? I had them put what they know to work and focus on theatricality, write something that had to happen on stage because it wouldn't work in any other medium. And those eager teens got ferocious with their prompt: write something that would embarrass your mom.

The results were kind of astonishing. One older gentleman revised his regret of not having asked a young lady about suspected abuse. A Point Park student exploited the shit out of some visual dissonance by depicting a mother forcibly putting make-up on her male-identified trans kid while small-talking him to death. One youngsta wrote a brave piece about a girl grappling with obesity and body image. Everyone hollered back with something not only artful, but distinctly theirs. Which is the whole point, right? And a relief for me. Like *phew*, I don't have to teach squat. I just have to give people a proper platform. I just have to share what I love about playwriting, that possibility of creating something new out of battered, old experiences.

Hell, that's something you can enjoy whether you're nine or ninety.

CHISA

http://dgfund.org

The Dramatists Guild Fund's Traveling Masters program is a national outreach program that sends prominent dramatists into communities across the country for writing workshops, master classes, talkbacks, and other public events. In partnership with leading regional theaters and universities, Traveling Masters creates local programs that give theater professionals and the public first-hand experience with renowned artists.

2016 Traveling Masters have included Lynn Ahrens & Stephen Flaherty, Madeleine George, Chisa Hutchinson, Laura Jacqmin, Josefina Lopez, Philip Kan Gotanda, Terrence McNally, Chris Miller & Nathan Tysen, Adam Szymkowicz, Paula Vogel, Lauren Yee, and Anna Ziegler.

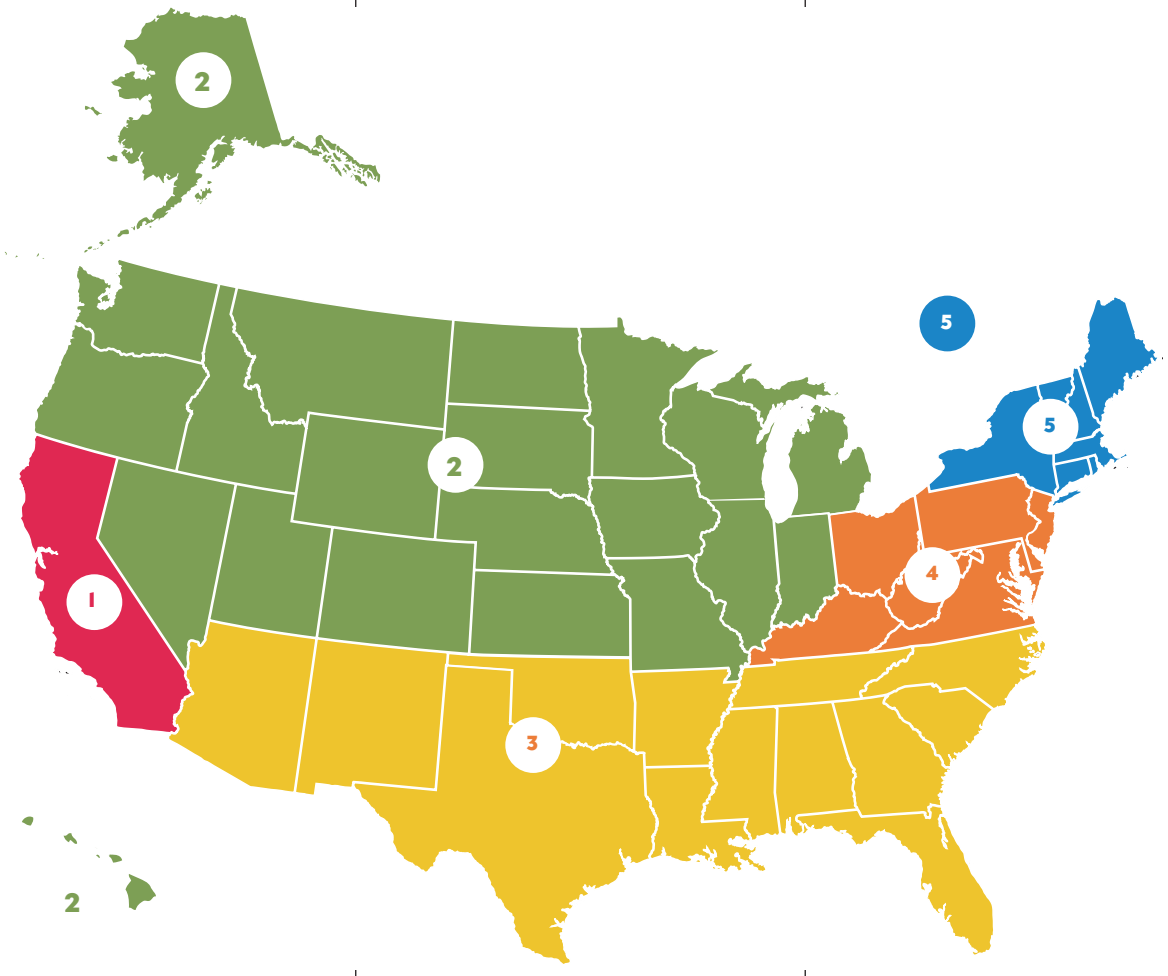
Delta is the official presenting sponsor of the Traveling Masters Program

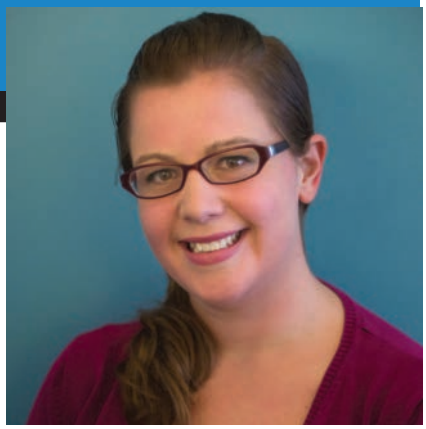
Speaking of Elections… 2017 Regional Council Seats

BY AMY VONVETT

We are pleased to announce the Council of the Dramatists Guild voted to add five Regional Council seats to serve among the ranks of our esteemed Council members. Those of you at the Member level of the Guild, will have the opportunity to elect a fellow dramatist to our Council that understands what it is like to live and work in your region. We could not be more thrilled at the potential impact these regional seats could have on the future of the Dramatists Guild. The election of regional Council members will serve to eliminate a perceived disconnect between you, the Member, and the New York office by offering you a voice from your own backyard.

The concept of members of Council serving outside the New York tristate area is not unknown to us.





Thanks to the advancement of streaming technology we've been able to welcome two members to Council that reside outside the New York tristate area: Charlayne Woodard (Los Angeles) and Rebecca Gilman (Chicago). The decision to add more regional Council members gives the Guild an opportunity to push further onto the national stage.

We will implement Regional Council members during our 2017 Council Election starting in January 2017. We have broken up the country into five separate regions: California, Northern, Southern, Mid-Atlantic, and New England / Abroad. Each region, as seen in the graphic on the opposite page, will have its own independent election of members into the Council. The regions were split evenly according to how many members reside in each region. Each Member will receive a ballot, either by mail or online, specific to their region. In other words, a member in Maine cannot vote for a Regional Council member running in the California region.

The new Council members will serve a three-year term where they will attend monthly meetings. Attendance at these meetings gets to the heart of why it will be so important to have our regions join Council. In the past, regions have only had one opportunity annually to speak on issues important to them: the February Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is so important to the function of the Guild and has produced some of the Guild's best work. The Count was born at an Annual Meeting because so many of our Regional Representatives had concerns about gender parity in the theater. It only made sense to add regional input on a more frequent basis. By adding a regional component, we expect more work of this caliber to come out of the new seating of Council.

Candidates that are being considered will need to show a high level of commitment to the Guild, and a deep understanding of our practices and our mission. The new Council members will have the same responsibilities to our members as the current Council members. Regional Council members will be voting members and, therefore, required to attend monthly meetings. Many of the candidates you'll see on the ballot will be your very own Regional Representatives as they possess the key balance of experience and commitment required to hold a position on Council.

Connecting New York with the rest of the country is a challenge the Guild has enthusiastically attacked. We will only continue to do so. We've come so far over the last decade and the Regional Council Member Election will only serve to advance our community.

Voting for the Dramatists Guild Council will be held both by paper ballot and online. The election will begin in January 2017. Watch your inbox and your mailbox for further information.

AMY
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REGION 1: CALIFORNIA
Regional Reps currently serve in Los Angeles & San Francisco.

REGION 2: NORTHERN
Includes: OR, WA, NV, UT, ID, MT, WY, CO, KS, NE, SD, ND, MN, IA, MO, IL, WI, IN, MI, AK, HI
Regional Reps currently serve in Portland, Seattle, Salt Lake City, Denver, Minneapolis, Kansas City/St. Louis, and Chicago.

REGION 3: SOUTHERN
Includes: AZ, NM, TX, OK, AR, LA, MI, TN, AL, FL, GA, SC, NC
Regional Reps currently serve in Austin/San Antonio, Dallas, Houston, New Orleans, Florida (West & East), Charlotte, NC and Atlanta.

REGION 4: MID-ATLANTIC
Includes: OH, KY, VA, WV, PA, MD, DE, Washington DC and NJ
Regional Reps currently serve in Louisville, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Washington DC, Philadelphia and New Jersey.

REGION 5: NEW ENGLAND & ABROAD
Includes; ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, all of NY outside a 79-mile radius of Manhattan, and all countries beyond the U.S.
Regional Reps currently serve in Boston, Ithaca/Syracuse, Greater Buffalo and CT.

Dramatists Diary

Submit your news items online. The Member News Form allows you to update us on productions, readings, workshops, publications and more. And all through one form that allows you to choose where you want the news item to appear: the online member bulletin boards, the e-Newsletter or the magazine. Or, all three! The choice is yours.

To contribute a news item visit: http://www.dramatistsguild.com/memberdirectory/magazine/getnews.aspx or find the **Member News** button at the bottom of our website's home page.

Items submitted for publication in *The Dramatist* will be printed in the earliest possible issue.

Please remember, the Dramatists Diary is a record of *past* events. These listings are not advertisements. You may not submit a news item that is older than one year.

Please do not send your news items via USPS mail.

Questions? Email *info@dramatistsguild.com*

BROADWAY

Holiday Inn, music by IRVING BERLIN. Written by GORDON GREENBERG and Chad Hodge. Roundabout Theatre Company, Studio 54.

Falsettos music and lyrics by WILLIAM FINN, book by WILLIAM FINN and JAMES LAPINE. Walter Kerr Theatre.

The Cherry Orchard by Anton Chekhov, adapted by STEPHEN KARAM. Roundabout Theatre Company, American Airlines Theatre.

Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet Of 1812 by DAVE MALLOY. Imperial Theatre.

OFF-BROADWAY

A Taste of Things to Come book, music, and lyrics by DEBRA BARSHA and Hollye Levin. York Theatre Company.

Marie and Rosetta by GEORGE BRANT. Atlantic Theater Company.

Conversations with an Average Joe by JOSEPH CARRARO. The Theater Center.

Swing by HOLLY M. EATON, Negro Ensemble Company Inc., First Floor Theatre, La MaMa ETC.

Suddenly, a Knock at the Door by ROBIN GOLDFIN. Theater for the New City.

Zora Neale Hurston by LAURENCE HOLDER. New Federal Theatre, Castillo Theatre.

The Real Actors of NYC book, music, and lyrics by KARLAN JUDD. Musicals, Duh!, Anne L. Bernstein Theater at The Theater Center.

Tick, Tick...BOOM! book, music, and lyrics by JONATHAN LARSON. Keen Company, Acorn Theater, Theater Row.

1001 Nights: A Love Story About Loving Stories music and lyrics by ROBERT LOPEZ, book by Adam Koplan and ROBERT LOPEZ. Atlantic for Kids, Atlantic Theater Company, The Linda Gross Theater.

90210! The Musical! by BOB and TOBLY MCSMITH. Theatre 80.

The Widow of Tom's Hill by ALEKS MERILO, 59E59.

The Sandman by LYNN NAVARRA, American Theatre of Actors.

What Did You Expect? The Gabriels: Election Year in the Life of One Family, Play Two by RICHARD NELSON. The Public Theater, LuEsther Theater.

Women of a Certain Age, The Gabriels: Election Year in the Life of One Family, Play Three by RICHARD NELSON. The Public Theater, LuEsther Theater.

Sweat by LYNN NOTTAGE. The Public Theater, Martinson Theater.

Alice In Black and White by ROBIN RICE, 59E59.

Storage Locker by JEFF STOLZER. IATI Theater.

Kingdom Come by JENNY RACHEL WEINER. Roundabout Theatre Company, Black Box Theatre in the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre.

OTHER NEW YORK

Miss by MICHAEL ROSS ALBERT. FringeNYC. New York, NY

Millennium Mom by LIZ AMADIO. Dream Up Festival, Theater for the New City, Cabaret Theater.

Lured by FRANK AVELLA. Dream Up Festival, Theater for the New City, Community Theater, New York, NY.

Election - Selection Or, You Bet music by JOSEPH-VERNON BANKS, book and lyrics by Crystal Field, Theater for the New City, New York, NY.

Lady Liberty's Worst Day Ever and **No Irish Need Apply** by MONICA BAUER. Lady Liberty Theater Festival, Urban Stages, New York, NY.

Dead Shot Mary by ROBERT KEITH BENSON, The Bridge Theatre, Shetler Studios, New York, NY.

Insomnia: A New Musical music and lyrics by CHARLES BLOOM, book by THEO WOLF. Midtown International Theater Festival, New York, NY.

Douds, Iowa by DEBBIE BOLSKY, Tehachapi Community Theatre, Tehachapi, NY.

The Jamb by J. STEPHEN BRANTLEY. Kraine Theater, New York, NY.

The Collector by ROBIN ELLEN BROOK. 2nd Annual Lift-Off New Play Series, The Navigators Theater Company, the Grand Theatre.

Mary V by REBEKAH CARROW. Dream Up Festival, Theater for the New City, Johnson Theater, New York, NY.

Through The Cracks by KAREN CECILIA, HERE, New York, NY.

The Servant of Two Masters by Carlo Goldoni, adapted by CONSTANCE CONGDON. Theatre for a New Audience, Polonsky Shakespeare Center, Brooklyn, NY.

The Convent of St Clare by JOANNE DE SIMONE. Thespis Theater Festival, Hudson Guild Theatre, New York, NY.

The Future Has an Ancient Heart by ERIC EBERWEIN. 2nd Annual Lift-Off New Play Series, The Navigators Theater Company, the Grand Theater, New York, NY.

Wounded by MARIO FRATTI. Lower East Side Festival of the Arts, Theater for the New City, Johnson Theater, New York, NY.

Null & Void by CHARLES GERSHMAN. Dream Up Festival, Theater for the New City, Cabaret Theater, New York, NY.

Understanding Lear by JOE GODFREY, Gallery Players, Brooklyn, Brooklyn, NY.

The Bronx Queen by JOSEPH GULLA. Joe's Pub. New York, NY

Murmurs and Incantations by DAHN HIUNI, FringeNYC, Soho Playhouse.

Zuccotti Park book and lyrics by CATHERINE KOENIG HURD, music by Vatrena King. FringeNYC, Flamboyan Theater, New York, NY.

CHANCE: A Musical Play About Love, Risk & Getting It Right book, music and lyrics by RICHARD ISEN. Fresh Fruit Festival. New York, NY.

Taming The Male Chauvinist by LANCE JOHNSON, The DeSotelle Theater, New York, NY.

Visiting Hours by JOSHUA KAPLAN, Theaterlab, New York, NY.

Movin' On Up by JEREMY KEHOE, Wow Cafe Theatre, New York, NY.

Uniforms by JEFFREY JAMES KEYES. The East 13th Street Theatre. Samuel French OOB Festival. New York, NY.

It's All About Lorrie by JOSEPH KRAWCZYK. Thespis Theater Festival, Hudson Guild Theatre.

The Gold book by ANDREA LEPCIO, music and lyrics by Phil Yosowitz. New York Musical Festival. New York, NY.

The Troubadour Struck By Lightning by ED MALIN, FringeNYC, New York, NY.

Children of Hooverville by HOLLIE MICHAELS. Arts Live Theater. Fayetteville, NY.

Crackskull Row by HONOR MOLLOY, The Workshop Theater, New York, NY.

Camera-Ready Art by EDWARD MUSTO, Thespis Theatre Festival, New York, NY.

The Chaplin Plays: A Double Feature by DON

NIGRO. Dream Up Festival, Theater for the New City.

The Underpants Godot by DUNCAN PFLASTER, The Secret Theatre, Long Island City, NY.

A Muslim in the Midst by ANAND RAO. Thespis Theater Festival, Hudson Guild Theatre, New York, NY.

Catatonic by NEDRA PEZOLD ROBERTS. Blue Pearl Theatrics. New York, NY.

Spinoza's Ethics by EMILY CLAIRE SCHMITT. Dream Up Festival, Theater for the New City, Johnson Theater.

Lou Bitterman, Attorney at Law by SUSAN SHAFER, Equity Library/Piney Fork Summer Playwriting Festival, New York, NY.

Superman's Defeat by SUSAN SHAFER, Manhattan Repertory Theatre, New York, NY.

Catch the Mah Jong Beat! by SUSAN SHAFER, Manhattan Repertory Theatre, New York, NY.

The Curse of Batvia book and lyrics by KATHERINE BURGER, music by ROLAND TEC. Maverick Concert Hall, Woodstock, NY.

The Pearl Diver by E. THOMALEN. Thespis Theater Festival, Hudson Guild Theatre, New York, NY.

Harpies Shooting Craps by ROSEMARY FRISINO TOOHEY, Marble Collegiate Church's The Puzzle, New York, NY.

FATFATFATFATFATFATFAT! By JAMES ANTHONY TYLER. The Tank, New York, NY.

Talkin' to This Chick Sippin' Magic Potion by JAMES ANTHONY TYLER. F*ck!ng Good Pl@ys Festival, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, New York, NY.

Love, Almost Forever by DAVID VAZDAUSKAS. 2nd Annual Lift-Off New Play Series, The Navigators Theater Company, the Grand Theater, New York, NY.

Roughly Speaking by SHARA ASHLEY ZEIGER, Tada Theater/The Platform Group, New York, NY.

REGIONAL

Dora's Dynamic Dates by MARJORIE ANN BICKNELL, The Group Rep at the Lonny Chapman Theater, North Hollywood, CA.

Another Conversation by MARJORIE ANN BICKNELL, Gamut Theatre, Harrisburg, PA.

Frankenstein adapted by MARJORIE ANN BICKNELL, Hershey Area Playhouse, Hershey, PA.

The Tangled Skirt by STEVE BRAUNSTEIN, Hicklin Studio Theatre, Whitewater, WI.

Bicycle Built For Two by DELVYN CASE, JR., Crowbait Club, Portland, ME.

Safety by DAVE CINTRON, Warner Theatre, Torrington, CT.

Chick Flick the Musical book, music, and lyrics by SUZY CONN. Tilted Windmills Theatricals, The Royal George Theatre Cabaret, Chicago, IL.

Hospice: A Love Story by ELIZABETH COPLAN. The Group Rep at Lonny Chapman Theatre. Los Angeles, CA.

Christmas Letters music by PAUL WOODS COZBY and Laura Berguist, book and lyrics by PAUL WOODS COZBY, The Forum Theatre Company, Wichita, KS.

The Lady and 'The Tyger' or William Blake's 'How I Met Your Mother' by TRACE CRAWFORD, The Stella Adler Theatre, Hollywood, CA.

The Sum of Your Experience by TRACE CRAWFORD. Lionheart Theatre Company. Norcross, GA and WildClaw Theatre - Deathscribe 2016 at Lincoln Hall, Chicago, IL.

My Three Sons by DENNIS JAY DANZIGER, Stella Adler Theatre, Hollywood, CA.

The Lilac Ticket by C. J. EHRLICH, Little Black Dress INK at the Prescott Center for the Arts, Prescott, AZ.

Wallaroo, the Goldfish by NANCY GALL-CLAYTON, The Changing Scene Theatre Northwest, Tacoma, WA.

The Estate Affair by NANCY GALL-CLAYTON, Kentucky Playwrights Workshop, Kentucky State Fair, Louisville, KY.

The Eaton Woman by ANTHONY ERNEST GALLO. Greenbelt Arts Center, The Seventh Street Playhouse, Greenbelt, MD.

Dinner Theater by ALEX GOLDBERG, Greenway Court Theatre, West Hollywood, CA.

Between Riverside and Crazy by STEPHEN ADLY GUIRGIS. Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago, IL.

Brittle by DANIEL GUYTON, New Origins Theatre Company, Chamblee, GA.

Roz and Ray by KAREN HARTMAN. Seattle Repertory Theatre, Seattle, WA.

All of What You Love and None of What You Hate by PHILLIP HOWZE. San Francisco Playhouse, San Francisco, CA.

Miss You Like Hell book and lyrics by QUIARA ALEGRIA HUDES, music and lyrics by Erin McKeown. La Jolla Playhouse, La Jolla, CA.

Lyman by ANNE JOHNSTONBROWN. The Grove Theatre. Upland, CA.

Einstein's Theory of Relativity by LIN KEMP, TCR New Play Festival, Cedar Rapids, IA.

The Last Schwartz by DEBORAH ZOE LAUFER. Theater J, Washington, DC.

Underfoot In Show Business adapted by CHARLES LEIPART. Deertrees Theatre. Harrison, ME.

In the Open by JOHN LEVINE, Stella Adler Theatre, Hollywood, CA.

Tiger Style! by MIKE LEW. La Jolla Playhouse, La Jolla, CA.

Byhalia, Mississippi by EVAN LINDER. Definition Theatre Company and The New Colony, Upstairs Theatre, Steppenwolf, Chicago, IL.

We Work Out by RHEA MACCALLUM, Beekay Theatre, Tehachapi, CA.

Asking For It by RHEA MACCALLUM, Acadiana Repertory Theatre, Lafayette, LA.

Mowing Down The Junipers by RHEA MACCALLUM, City Theatre of Independence, Independence, MO.

Children of Hooverville by HOLLIE MICHAELS, Arts Live Theater, Fayetteville, NY.

Compos Mentis by MARILYN MILLSTONE. Fells Point Corner Theatre 2016 10x10 Festival, Baltimore, MD.

Hearts of Palm by PATRICIA MILTON. Central Works. Berkeley, CA.

The Consul, The Tramp, and America's Sweetheart, by JOHN MOROGIELLO, Oldcastle Theatre Company, Bennington, VT.

Brechtian Alienation by SEAN O'DONNELL, Warner Theatre Company, Torrington, CT.

All The Details by CARY PEPPER, Rover Dramawerks, Plano, TX.

Mark My Worms by CARY PEPPER, St. Louis Actors' Studio, St. Louis, MO.

I Did That and **Finding Love @ .Com** by CARY PEPPER, The Theatre at Hollywood and Vine, Plymouth, MA.

Mark My Worms by CARY PEPPER, Starlite Players, Sarasota, FL.

Visiting Edna by DAVID RABE. Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago, IL.

Anatomy of a Hug by KAT RAMSBURG, Trustus Theatre Company, Columbia, SC.

Seared by THERESA REBECK. San Francisco Playhouse, San Francisco, CA.

The Way of the World by THERESA REBECK. Dorset Theatre Festival, Dorset, VT.

Homescreen and **Let's Pretend** by SHEILA L. RINEAR, One Minute Play Festival - Austin Playhouse, Austin, TX.

We Got This! by SHEILA L. RINEAR, Pittsburgh New Works Festival - Carnegie Stage, Carnegie, PA.

You Hear That? by BEN COREY SCHROTH, Bishop Arts Theatre Center, Dallas, TX.

The Fundamentals by ERIKA SHEFFER. Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago, IL.

Ramayana Past in Present libretto, music and lyrics by JOHN SHERWOOD. Kelly Theater. West Liberty, WV.

All My Distances Are Far by LEDA SISKIND, Theatre 40, Los Angeles, CA.

Candid Candidate by DONALD V. TONGUE, Hatbox Theatre, Concord, NH.

Cosmic Fruit Bowl by ROSEMARY FRISINO TOOHEY, Holmes Theatre, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Miss Holmes by CHRISTOPHER M. WALSH, Lifeline Theatre, Chicago, IL.

It's Your Funeral (A Loving Parody) by BARRY H. WEINBERG, Potomac Playmakers, Hagerstown, MD, Hagerstown, MD.

A Desert Serenade by JOHN FLETCHER YARBROUGH, Theatre Southwest, Houston, TX.

All Too Human by ROSEMARY ZIBART, Warehouse 21 Theater, Santa Fe, NM.

ABROAD

Cowbirds by DT ARCIERI, Leduc Drama Society at the Edmonton Fringe Festival, Edmonton, AB, CAN.

The Death Of Darcy Sheppard by MARY HUMPHREY BALDRIDGE, "The Studio" at trinity/St.

Paul United Church, Toronto, ON, CAN.

Red Hot Mamas by DAVID W CHRISTNER. Theater Company GAD of Trento, Italy. Bosentino, Trentino, ITA.

The Lady and 'The Tyger' or William Blake's 'How I Met Your Mother' by TRACE CRAWFORD. Short+Sweet Play Festival at Canberra Theatre Centre. Canberra, ACT, AUS and Short+Sweet Play Festival at TAPAC. Auckland, Auckland, NZL.

Hitchers by KATE DANLEY and Joe Purcell, New Theatre of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON, CAN.

A Package Deal by C. J. EHRLICH, Seoul Players, Seoul, KOR.

L'imboscata (The Ambush) by MARIO FRATTI. Festival della Drammaturgia Italiana. Rome, ITA.

Benched by TERENCE PATRICK HUGHES, Haddo House Theatre Festival, Methlick, Ellon, Scotland GBR.

Mad, Bad and Dangerous to Know by JAMES WAYNE JAMESON and Bronwyn Elizabeth Jameson, Lazy Bee Scripts, Scotland, GBR.

B4 U Know It by JOHN LEVINE, New Theatre of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON, CAN.

The Rooster Rebellion by ANTHONY LOUIS MARIANI, The Edinburgh Fringe Festival, Drayton Arms Theatre, Scotland, GBR.

Best Intentions by CATIE O'KEEFE. Shark Eat Muffin Theatre Co., Bread and Roses Theatre - London, England, GBR and Greenside Mint Studio, Edinburgh, Scotland, GBR.

Build A Wall and **The Answer** by CARY PEPPER, The Stage TLV, Tel Aviv, Tel Aviv, ISR.

Cosmic Fruit Bowl by ROSEMARY FRISINO TOOHEY, Elmwood Players, Buderim, Queensland, AUS and Christchurch, Christ-Church, NZL.

In The Tank by ROSEMARY FRISINO TOOHEY, 3B Creative, Buderim, Queensland, AUS.

READINGS AND WORKSHOPS

Going Down The Pigeon-Hole (a monologue) by CHINITA L. ANDERSON. Woolly Mammoth Theater, Washington, DC.

Forgotten Kingdoms by RANDY BAKER. Rorschach Theatre, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

The Time We've All Been Dreaming of... by MARY HUMPHREY BALDRIDGE. The Acting Studio, New York, NY.

Eat It Too by JENNIFER BARCLAY. 1st Stage, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Aglaonike's Tiger by CLAUDIA BARNETT. 5th Wall Productions, Charleston, SC.

The Swinging Nuns by MARINA BARRY. Emerging Artists at TADA!, New York, NY.

The Higher Education of Khalid Amir and **Anne Frank in the Gaza Strip** by MONICA BAUER. Lady Liberty Theater Festival, Urban Stages, New York, NY.

Exit Pluto by AMY BERNSTEIN. Strand Theater, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

No Word for Schadenfreude and **The Making of Medea's Medea** by CHAS BELOV. Shelton Theater/Playwrights' Center of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA.

The Best Apple Pie in the County by MARJORIE ANN BICKNELL. Cicada Festival and Hershey Area Playhouse, Mt. Gretna and Hershey, PA.

Character Building adapted by MARTIN BLANK from Booker T. Washington. American Ensemble Theater, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Strings by CAROL BUGGÉ. Tonic Theater Company, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Hooded, or Being Black for Dummies by TEARRANCE ARVELLE CHISHOLM. Mosaic Theater Company of DC, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

A Little Lower than the Angels by DAVID W CHRISTNER. Break A Leg Productions/ Bloomingdale Library. New York, NY.

Around the Snake Turn by PATRICIA CONNELLY. ABG Playwrights and Thelma Theatre, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Black Super Hero Magic Mama by INDA CRAIG-GALVAN, Skylight Theatre Company, Los Angeles, CA and Artemisia, Chicago, IL.

The King of the Cimbri by TONI DORFMAN, New Mexico Actors Lab, Tucson, AZ and Steep Theatre, Chicago, IL.

Shoah Business by JENNIE BERMAN ENG. GPC Productions, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

(verb) A play on words by SETH FREEMAN. Baltimore Playwrights Festival, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

A Musical Medley, book, libretto, and lyrics by ANTHONY E. GALLO, music by John Ward, Beatrix Whitehall, Margaret Bagley, and Grant Bagley. Seventh Street Playhouse, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Frank Talk by SHARON GOLDNER. Baltimore Playwrights Festival, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Fly Babies by RUSTY HARDING. WingSpan Theatre Company, Bath House Cultural Center, Dallas, TX

Ole White Sugah Daddy by OBEHI JANICE. SpeakEasy Stage Company, Boston, MA.

All Bark, No Bite by KARA EMILY KRANTZ. Becoming More Productions. Whitinsville, MA.

Summer Solstice by MATT HENDERSON. The Happy/Sad Artist Collective. Pittsburgh, PA.

The Writer and the Thief by LYNN STEVEN JOHANSON. End of the Road Play New Play Festival, South Baldwin Community Theatre, Gulf Shores, AL.

Paper Son by CHRISTINE TOY JOHNSON. Kitchak Lounge at the Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis, MN.

The Four Immigrants: An American Musical Manga book, music and lyrics by MIN KAHNG. TheatreWorks Silicon Valley. Palo Alto, CA.

Dee, All Alone in Her Cottage libretto, music and lyrics by THOMAS E KLUNZINGER. Riverwalk Theatre, Lansing, MI.

All Bark, No Bite by KARA EMILY KRANTZ. Becoming More Productions, Whitinsville, MA.

Mine & Yours by CAROLYN KRAS. The Road Theatre Company, North Hollywood, CA.

Rich and Unfamous by JOHN LEVINE. Core Artist Ensemble, New York, NY.

What They Heard by MONA MANSOUR. The Lady Liberty Theater Festival, Urban Stages, New York, NY.

What Difference Does It Make? by DEB MARGOLIN. Unexpected Stage Company, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Feeding the Furies by ANDREA MARKOWITZ. Baltimore Playwrights Festival, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Wendy by GRETCHEN MIDGLEY and John Henderson. Monumental Theatre Company, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Indian Summer by GREGORY S. MOSS. Arcturus Theater Company, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Never Again by J. MARCUS NEWMAN. Scripteasers, San Diego, CA.

I Got Lost by J. MARCUS NEWMAN. Diversionary Theatre, San Diego, CA.

Ahab, A Musical Odyssey book, music and lyrics by BUD NOBLE. Sardi's Restaurant (4th floor), New York, NY.

So When Are You Leaving? by SHEILA L. RINEAR, Cape May Stage, Cape May, NJ.

My Goddamn Bat Mitzvah by JENNIFER ANNE RUDIN. Electric Lodge, Venice, CA.

The Fundamentals by ERIKA SHEFFER. Works & Process at the Guggenheim, New York, NY.

Songs My Brother Sang by MYRA SLOTNICK. Torrent Theatre, West End Lounge, 955 W End Ave., New York, NY.

Girl in the Red Corner by STEPHEN SPOTSWOOD. The Welders, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

A Very Present Presence by ANN TIMMONS. All of the Above, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Crazy Mary Lincoln by JAN TRANEN and Jay Schwandt. Pallas Theatre Collective. 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Juliana by VANDA. Venus Theatre, 15th Annual *Page-to-Stage* New Play Festival, Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Traversing "Discursive Faultlines" of Sexual Identity Inquiry by CARTER A. WINKLE, TESOL Convention and Exhibition, Toronto, ON, CAN.

PUBLICATIONS

The Grass is Greenest at the Houston Astrodome by MICHAEL ROSS ALBERT. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Ditmas by GLENN ALTERMAN. *Best 10-Minute Plays of 2017*. Smith and Kraus.

"Jane" from **Closed Windows, Opened Doors** by GLENN ALTERMAN. *Best Women's Monologues of 2017*. Smith and Kraus.

With a Bullet (Or, Surprise Me) by JOHN PATRICK BRAY. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Crazy Eddy by BOB CANNING. *STARS: The Nantucket Short Plays Anthology Winners: 1992-2016*, Autopscot Press.

The Gulf by AUDREY CEFALY. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Love Is A Blue Tick Hound by AUDREY CEFALY. Samuel French.

Dolor by HAL CORLEY. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Living On Love by JOE DIPIETRO. Dramatists Play Service.

Sword Play by CHARLENE A. DONAGHY. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

The Lilac Ticket by C.J. EHRLICH. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Losing Sight by KEVIN D. FERGUSON. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Sunshine Quest by WILLIAM IVOR FOWKES. Infinity Stage.

Super Hot Raven and Raven II: The Ravening by MEGAN GOGERTY. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

The Hour by SUSAN GOODELL. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

The Boy Who Cried Werewolf by DANIEL GUYTON. Pioneer Drama Service.

Dead Giveaway by DANIEL GUYTON. Heuer Publishing.

Kim Arthur and the Nerds of the Round Table by DANIEL GUYTON. Infinity Stage.

Tea & Misery by TERENCE PATRICK HUGHES. *Clockhouse Review*, Literary Journal of Goddard College.

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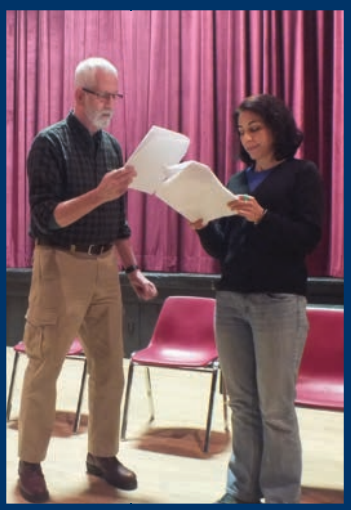

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Short Plays 2014-15. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Kill Floor by ABE KOOGLER. Dramatists Play Service.

Delirium's Daughters by NICHOLAS KORN. Dramatic Publishing.

The Subterraneans by ADAM KRAAR. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Gonna Need to See Some ID by DONNA LATHAM. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

The Unknown Freud: Five Plays and Five Essays by ROBERT L. LIPPMAN. International Psychoanalysis Books.

Name Me by RHEA MACCALLUM, *Audition Monologues for Young Men 2016*. Pioneer Drama Service.

The Unborn Children of America and Other Family Procedures by MICHELE MARKARIAN. *A collection of plays by Michele Markarian*. Fomite Press.

Call Me by MICHELE MARKARIAN. *The Best Ten-Minute Plays 2015*. Smith and Kraus.

Chaos Theory by COURTNEY MEAKER. Original Works Publishing.

Norma's Rest by JORDAN MORILLE. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

There's No Here Here by CRAIG POSPISIL. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Play Nice! by ROBIN RICE. Original Works Publishing.

Nice Girl by MELISSA ROSS. Dramatists Play Service.

Feathers by JUDD LEAR SILVERMAN. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

A Particle of Dread (Oedipus Variations) by SAM SHEPARD. Dramatists Play Service.

Vertical Constellation with Bomb by GWYDION SUILEBHAN. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

B'Hoys Do Macbeth by JONATHON WARD. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

Walking in the Words of LGBTQ English Language Teaching Professionals by CARTER A. WINKLE. *Social Justice in English Language Teaching*, TESOL Press, Alexandria, VA.

Petra by JOHN YARBROUGH. *The Best American Short Plays 2014-15*. Applause Theatre & Cinema Books.

RECORDINGS

Discovering Magenta music by MICHAEL BITTERMAN, book and lyrics by James Corey Kaufman. CD Baby and iTunes.

The Next Move by WILLIAM IVOR FOWKES, Petaluma Radio Players.

AWARDS

Palooka by CLAUDIA BARNETT. Andaluz Award Jury Prize, Fusion Theatre.

MARIO FRATTI. Career Award. Rome, ITA.

MARIO FRATTI. International Award Magna Grecia. Sicily, ITA.

All-American Boy by DONALD JAMES GECEWICZ. Great Gay Play and Musical Contest. Donald Gecewicz Finalist. Pride Films and Plays.

Our Lady of Palmyra by ALLSTON JAMES. Shortlisted finalist, 2016 British Theatre Challenge. London, GBR.

The Snowmaker by ALEKS MERILO. Best New Play. Aleks Merilo Playwrights First

Gram Scams by CARY PEPPER. Audience Favorite. Lakeshore Players

Murmurs and Incantations by DAHN HIUNI. Excellence in Playwriting, FringeNYC, New York, NY.

The Mark of Cain by GARY EARL ROSS. The Emanuel Fried Outstanding New Play Award, Artvoice.

Berry Season by ROSEMARY FRISINO TOOHEY. 2016 British Theatre Challenge. One of ten winners, Sky Blue Theatre, London, GBR.

OTHER

The Brazilian Dilemma film version of the play by WILLIAM IVOR FOWKES. The Collective NY, New York, NY

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Dear Dramatist:

Dramatists Guild of America

PLEASE HELP US HELP YOU!

Here's all you need to do:

1. Read the letter below,
2. Complete the Authors Coalition form, and
3. Mail it to: THE DRAMATISTS GUILD OF AMERICA
   1501 BROADWAY, SUITE 701
   NEW YORK, NY 10036

Your response then translates into money the Guild receives on behalf of all dramatists, which means more resources for better programming, expanded publications and a greater range of services.

As in years past, The Dramatists Guild continues to work with the Authors Coalition of America to compensate American dramatists for non-title specific royalties earned from the photocopying abroad of published works.

Your prompt and accurate answers will determine how much money we receive in the coming year. So, we need you to read the survey form carefully (including the instructions), and then complete and return it to us by January 31, 2017.

When filling out the form, please understand that, in addition to the definition of "published author" described at the top of form, a dramatist is also a "published author", for purposes of the survey, if (a) his or her work has been performed in the U.S. and thereafter disseminated for the purpose of promotion or production to producers, promoters, or presenters; OR (b) if his or her work, in the form of a performable script, has been deposited in a theatrical library or other theatrical institution which permits the photocopying or circulation of such work.

Please be aware that if you submitted a dramatic script to the Guild as part of your original membership application, that meets the definition of "published author" as set forth above. But rest assured that no photocopying of your deposited script is permitted unless you have specifically authorized such photocopying by written direction to the DG.

If you have any questions regarding this form, please contact us at

212-398-9366 or outside of NYC at 800-289-9366.

Sincerely,

DOUG WRIGHT, *President*

DRAMATISTS GUILD OF AMERICA

1501 Broadway Suite 701 New York New York 10036
Tel: 212.398.9366 Fax 212.944.0420 www.dramtistsguild.com

Authors Coalition Survey

FORMAT
ELECTRONIC PRINT

☐ 10 ☐ 11 **Nonfiction author**
If you checked this box, you must also check one or more of the sub-types below. Do not check more than one box for one piece of work, i.e., the same book cannot qualify you as both a Textbook and Nonfiction Other author; however, you may check two or more boxes for two or more different pieces of work.

ELECTRONIC PRINT

☐ 12 ☐ 13 Textbook author (instructional material)

☐ 14 ☐ 15 Academic author (scholarly book or journal article primarily for other academicians)

☐ 16 ☐ 17 Other nonfiction book author

☐ 20 ☐ 21 **Nonfiction book or journal translator**

☐ 30 ☐ 31 **Art, music, theatre, film, or literature critic**

☐ 40 ☐ 41 **Journalist, including freelancers** (nonfiction writing for a periodical such as a newspaper, magazine, or newsletter)

☐ 50 ☐ 51 **Newspaper Editor**

☐ 60 ☐ 61 **Technical and Professional Press Editor**

☐ 70 ☐ 71 **Author or translator of fiction, poetry and/or drama** (including plays and musicals)

☐ 80 ☐ 81 **Music author**

☐ 90 ☐ 91 **Designer and illustrator**

☐ 100 ☐ 101 **Visual artists** (one whose work is the reproduction of another's or one's own original artistic expression. Examples: the photograph of a museum piece, the illustration of a blueprint, the sketch of a scientific diagram.)

☐ 110 ☐ 111 **Arts and Crafts Designers**

☐ 120 ☐ 121 **Photographers, fine arts, editorial, or commercial**

I hereby affirm that I am a published author in the categories I have checked.

SIGNATURE_____DATE_____

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)_____

SURVEY FORMS MUST ARRIVE IN THE DRAMATISTS GUILD'S OFFICE BY **JANUARY 31, 2017**

For the past year, the Dramatists Guild of America has been working with many other author groups as part of the Authors Coalition to reclaim non-title specific royalties from photocopies made abroad. With your help, in the past year the Guild has collected a significant amount of funds, which has allowed us to represent the interests of dramatic authors in a good range of activities. Our share of the money collected is determined by the responses that we get from the genre survey to the left; your prompt and accurate answers will determine how much money we receive in the coming year.

Please check the categories to which you belong, i.e., in which you qualify as a published author. (Do not check more than one genre for each published work.) For purposes of this survey, a "published" work means that 1) the work is reasonably capable of being photocopied abroad and is not self-published, or 2) if the work is self-published, that there have been no fewer than 1,000 copies sold, that the work is commercially distributed outside the U.S. and is reasonably capable of being photocopied abroad. For purposes of this survey, author-subsidized publications shall be considered self-published. We know that the list is not inclusive, but all Coalition members must use this list because this is how foreign reprographic rights organizations conduct their surveys to determine what kinds of non-title specific works are being photocopied.

Why I Joined the Guild

Emily Mann

ILLUSTRATION BY DAN ROMER

I joined the Dramatists Guild because Edward Albee told me to. And if any of you know Edward, you can imagine that as a young writer, I hung on his every word. I remember he said: "Every American playwright should be a member of the DG if he or she has any self-respect." He looked me piercingly in the eye with a malicious grin, encouraging and testing me at the same time. I remember he told me the names of some of the playwrights who were members and simply imagining being listed in the company of these giants gave me more self-respect than I could ever imagine having at that time.

He also knew that the issue of owning my own work was paramount in my mind, having spent too much time paying the rent by writing for television and losing some of my best work after the executive who hired me for the job left the network. "Playwrights own their own work," said Edward, "but will only continue to do so if we band together." I have been a passionate Dramatists Guild member for 35 years.

EMILY MANN: Artistic Director/Resident Playwright, McCarter Theatre. Plays include: Having Our Say; Execution of Justice; Still Life; Mrs. Packard; Gloria (Steinem) Live at Lincoln Center. *Adaptations:* Scenes from a Marriage, Uncle Vanya, Cherry Orchard, A Seagull in the Hamptons, House of Bernarda Alba. *Favorite awards: Hull Warriner, NAACP, Margo Jones, Helen Merrill, Peabody Awards.*

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► **Lauren Gunderson,** playwright

"The NPX allows the O'Neill to deepen our advocacy for worthy writers and ensure that our support reaches a broad audience."

► **Anne Morgan**
Literary Manager and Dramaturg, O'Neill Theater Center

"The New Play Exchange offered us transformational access to playwrights that we would have otherwise never met and radically simplified our script submission process."

► **Tina Parker**
Co-Artistic Director and Administrative Director, Kitchen Dog Theater

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