

GREAT PLAINS THEATRE COMMONS

2024 NEW PLAY CONFERENCE





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WELCOME

Dear Great Plains Theatre Commons artists and friends,

Welcome to the 19th GPTC New Play Conference! We are excited and grateful to have you join us for an extraordinary week of stories and community.

In an era when the digital aspects of our lives can seem to be slowly swallowing our energy like a python, it's a great privilege to spend a whole week working together, face to face, heart to heart, to explore and create as we build new narratives for ourselves and our communities. The conversations, the shared meals, the performances, the laughs - all of it seems like an enormous gift in this era.

When we read through the hundreds of plays that are sent to us each year, we have a guiding star that we sum up in the idea that we are looking for plays that are "courageous". That courage can most often be felt in the depth and the details of the worlds that the playwrights are creating. This year's plays and playwrights are traveling deeply, and passionately, into their worlds. The array of stories and the diversity of perspectives is breathtaking. These playwrights are taking risks and making sacrifices to bring stories of sustenance to us and the wider world.

Each year there seems to be less support for writers to develop new work, and each year we have to fight for the support to make the New Play Conference happen. Without a visionary and dedicated group of local and national supporters we would not be able to offer the New Play Conference, or any of our year-round programming, to the public for free. We would not be able to pay every artist that works with us throughout the year. So, if you are a supporter of the GPTC, please take a moment this week and feel the vibrant experience you are creating and the enormous gratitude we feel for your part in it.

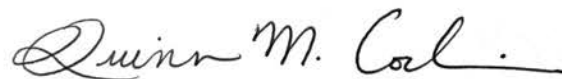
A special thanks to Metropolitan Community College and the staff of the beloved Fort Omaha Campus. Your hospitality and partnership have helped to foster this "national treasure". Your partnership means the world to us.

We hope that your week here brings you renewal, new friendships, new perspectives, and strength for the challenges of the coming year.

With warmth and gratitude,



Kevin Lawler | GPTC Director



Quinn Metal Corbin | GPTC Manager

THE GPTC NEW PLAY CONFERENCE SERVES AS AN AVENUE TO:

- Introduce new theatrical work into the American theatre scene
- Premiere the works of new and emerging playwrights
- Explore and strengthen the connection between the community and the arts
- Provide avenues for works produced beyond the Conference
- Connect local and national actors, directors, dramaturgs, designers and technical theatre personnel

CULTURAL EQUITY

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Although GPTC was founded on the principal of sharing new and diverse stories, GPTC began its work as an arts nonprofit with four white staff members (one nonbinary member). It was critically important to our mission to address this lack of diversity. Since 2020, we have achieved over 50% Global Majority representation on our board of directors and increased diversity on our staff. We intend to increase our diversity until a standard of equity is achieved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & AFFIRMATIONS

- In the United States, there are systems of power that grant privilege and access unequally such that inequity and injustice result, and that must be continuously addressed and changed.
- Cultural equity is critical to the long-term viability of the arts sector
- We must all hold ourselves accountable, because acknowledging and challenging our inequities and working in partnership is how we will make change happen.
- Everyone deserves equal access to a full, vibrant creative life, which is essential to a healthy and democratic society.
- The prominent presence of diverse artists helps to challenge inequities and encourages alternative models.

ACTION To provide informed, authentic leadership for cultural equity, we vow to work towards...

- The GPTC has over 50% Global Majority representation on the board and vows to maintain our board diversity.
- We vow to increase our staff diversity until a standard of equity is achieved.
- We vow to continue to work with Global Majority and marginalized artists and community members with a focus that reflects our foundational commitment to diversity and equity.
- Pursue cultural consciousness throughout our organization through substantive learning and formal, transparent policies.
- Acknowledge and dismantle any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and assess organizational progress on an annual basis.

FIELD PROGRESS To pursue needed systemic change related to equity, we vow to...

- Encourage substantive learning to build cultural consciousness and to advocate for pro-equity policies and practices by all of our constituencies and audiences.
- Improve the cultural leadership pipeline by creating and supporting programs and policies that foster leadership that reflects the full breadth of American society.
- Generate and aggregate quantitative and qualitative research related to equity to make incremental, measurable progress towards cultural equity.
- Advocate for public and private-sector policy that promotes cultural equity.

GREAT PLAINS THEATRE COMMONS

THE MISSION OF THE GREAT PLAINS THEATRE COMMONS IS TO STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY BY SUPPORTING THE CREATION AND SHARING OF DIVERSE NEW STORIES.

COMMUNITY - At GPTC, we believe everyone has a story to share and role to play in creating a world that is more loving, diverse, and equitable. That's why we work to develop a range of quality theatre programs with, and for, the communities we serve. Our programming strives to be community responsive and to sustain and deepen relationships across the city and country. We aim to serve as the creative home base for artists and storytellers at any stage in their lives —meeting them at their level of interest in theatre and taking them wherever they wish to go.

GPTC's strength is in our many long-standing and ever-growing partnerships with community service organizations that help us reach artistically underserved communities. In the fall of 2022, GPTC opened its first space at Yates Illuminates, providing creative workshops, readings, and performances for the community, with a special emphasis on serving New American/ Immigrant populations.

STORY CIRCLES AND WORKSHOPS - In collaboration with community partners, GPTC encourages everyone (especially individuals who may not identify as artists) to tell their stories

COMMONERS - This is a two-year residency for Omaha and Omaha-adjacent playwrights to grow the support, community, and connection they need to launch their stories into the world.

SILENT WRITE - Regular evenings with dedicated space and energy for writers to congregate and work.

STORIES OF O - This monthly event mixes food and live storytelling from community members.

FIRST FIRST DRAFT - This program supports individuals who are committing to writing a full-length play for the first time. Writers commit to bi-weekly meetings over a three-month period.

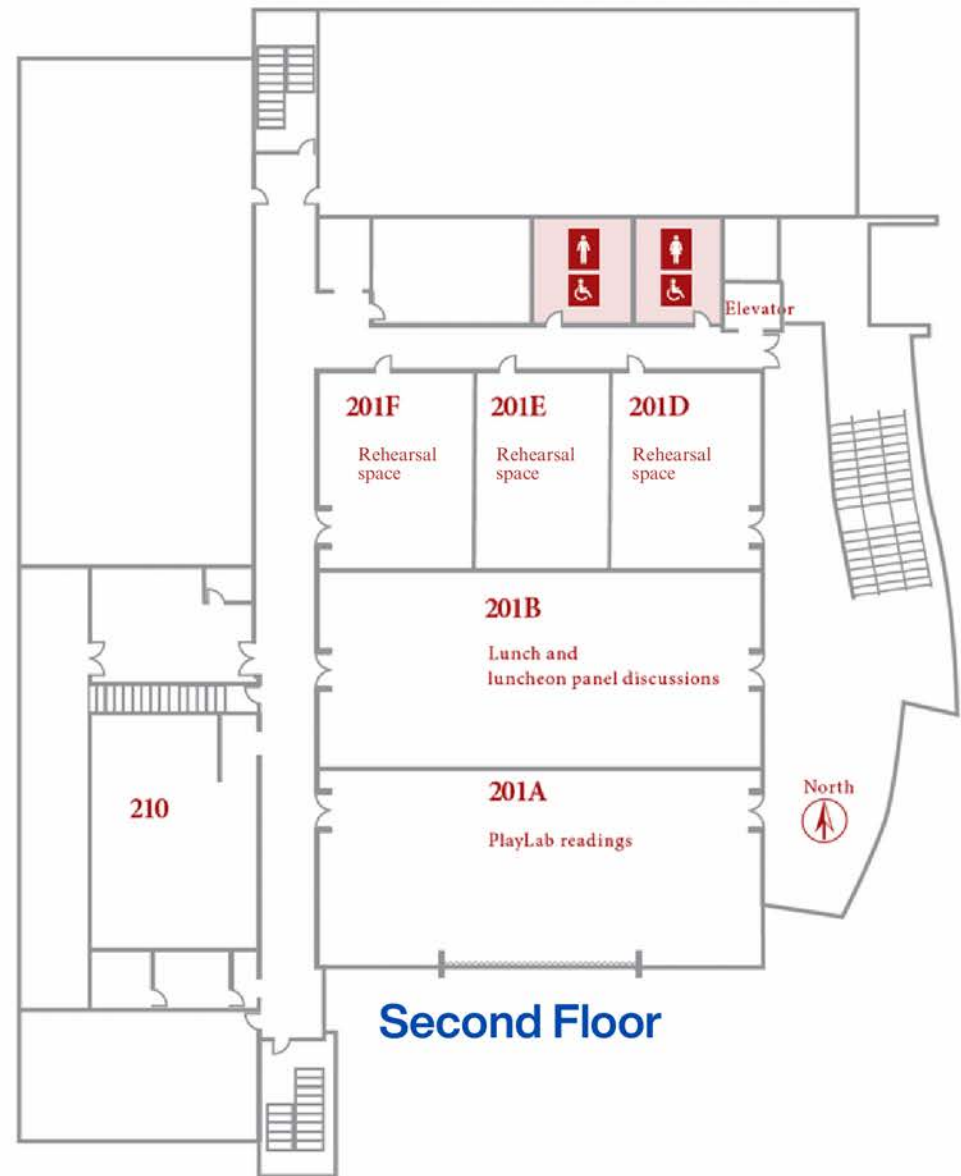
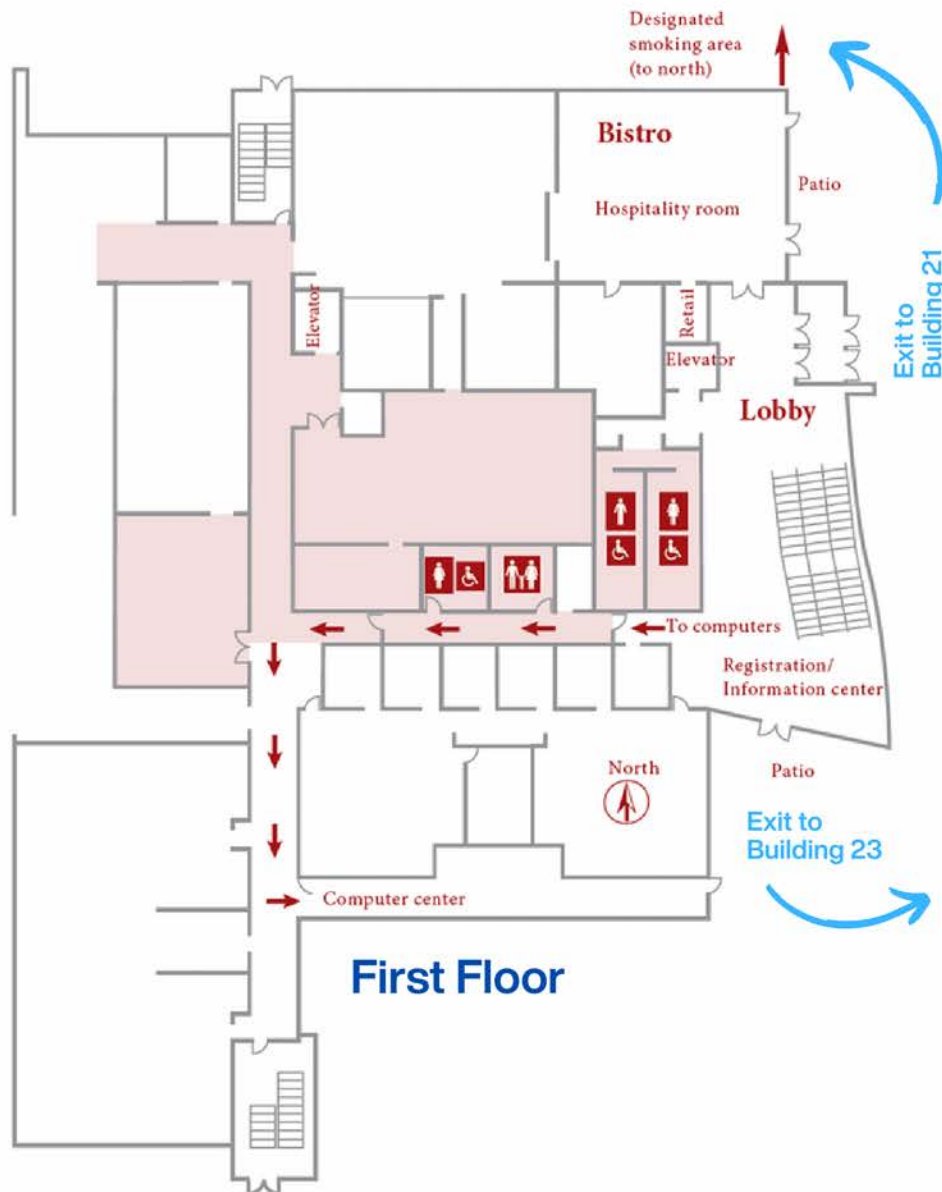
YOUNG DRAMATISTS - Working to support and develop high school playwrights with mentoring, workshops, meetings with professionals, and guided access to the New Play Conference.





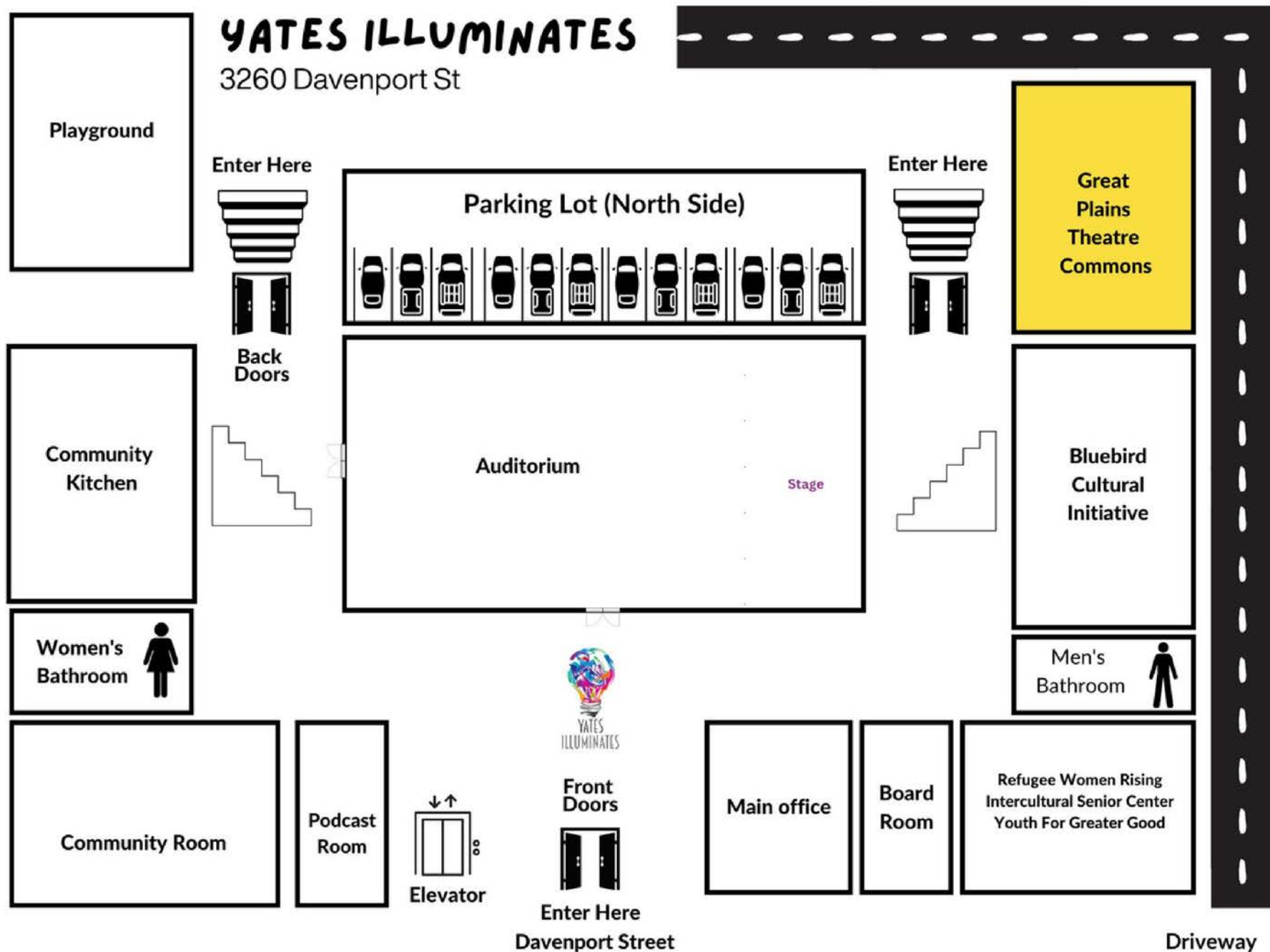
CONFERENCE CENTER MAP

Swanson Conference Center Building 22



Additional campus events held in Building 22 & 23. Full event location listing on page 8.

YATES ILLUMINATES MAP



CONFERENCE INFORMATION

REGISTRATION/INFORMATION CENTER

Staff is ready to answer your questions each day of the conference at the registration/information center located in the SCC Lobby. The following are also available to you:

- WiFi guest login info
- Rehearsal location information
- Printing/Copying
- Variety show wild card sign up
- Schedules/Transportation info

Registration and Info Center Hours

5/26	8:30 am - 1:30 pm
5/27	8:00 am - 5:00 pm
5/28	8:30 am - 2:30 pm
5/29	8:00 am - 3:00 pm
5/30	9:00 am - 4:00 pm
5/31	8:30 am - 2:00 pm
6/1	9:00 am - 12:30 pm

TRANSPORTATION/PARKING

MCC has free parking throughout the campus. For registered conference guests only, a round trip shuttle is available to and from the Fort Omaha campus, Element Hotel and PlayFest evening performances. Consult your participant transportation schedule for more information.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Great Plains Theatre Commons acknowledges that our organization, located on the banks of the Missouri River, is situated on land that is the homeland of the Ponca, Omaha, Pawnee and Otoe. We pay respect to the Ponca, Omaha, Pawnee and Otoe peoples, elders, and their ancestors, past, present and future.

The Great Plains Theatre Commons pays respect to all Indigenous peoples who have stewarded this land throughout the generations, and to their ongoing contributions, culturally, intellectually, artistically and spiritually.

DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT

The GPTC is committed to creating a safe, barrier-free environment for participants. Discrimination or harassment based on or because of race/ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, socioeconomic status, geography, citizenship status, religion, veteran status, or any other protected status is a violation of state and federal law and GPTC policy. Awareness is the only way the GPTC can respond. Your concern will be kept confidential and addressed appropriately as warranted. If at any time during the conference you have an experience, interaction or situation that makes you feel uncomfortable, reach out directly to a GPTC staff member, or contact the GPTC staff at 402-714-7522 (Quinn) and 917-570-2624 (Kevin) or commons@gptcplays.com immediately.

SEVERE WEATHER

Nebraska weather can be unpredictable. Designated severe weather shelter areas are located throughout the buildings on campus. In the event that severe weather occurs, GPTC staff and MCC police officers will direct you to safe areas. For reference, Omaha is located in Douglas County.

IF YOU NEED HELP

We ask that everyone attending the conference keep the highest level of respectful, creative dialogue. If you experience any barriers to that, please let a staff member know so that we can quickly assist you.

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

CONFERENCE LOCATIONS

- All daytime events occur at the **Fort Omaha Campus** of Metropolitan Community College (MCC) in the Institute for the Culinary Arts (ICA), Swanson Conference Center (SCC/Building 22), Building 23 and the Mule Barn (Building 21). More details on pages 5 & 6.
- PlayFest's *Sweet* will be held at **Creighton's Lied Education Center** for the Arts, Black Box Theatre (2500 California Plaza)
- GPTC's Variety Show will be held at **Benson Theatre** (6054 Maple Street).
- Stories of O will be held at **Yates Illuminates** (3260 Davenport Street)

HELPFUL NUMBERS & ADDRESSES

- GPTC Staff: Quinn (402-714-7522) & Kevin (917-570-2624)
- GPTC Hotel Liaison: Ron (573-289-7100)
- Fort Omaha Campus: 5300 N. 30th Street, Omaha, NE 68111
- Element Hotel: 3253 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE 68131 (402-614-8080)
- MCC Public Safety/Police: Available 24 Hours (531-622-2222)
- Great Plains Theatre Commons Voicemail (402-205-4882)

THEATRE WORKSHOPS

Theatre Workshops are a series of hands-on playwriting and performance-related classes designed and led by featured and guest artists. All Theatre Workshops are free and open to the public. Sign up at the registration/information center if slots remain.

PANELS/MEALS

Luncheon panels are theatre-related discussions with GPTC guest artists. All luncheon panels are free and open to the general public. Community members who would like to join for lunch prepared by the wonderful Culinary team at MCC have the option to pay \$15/day in cash or Venmo at the registration.

PLAYFEST

The conference performance of *Sweet* is 5/29 and seats have been set aside for our national attendees. For guests staying in conference housing, transportation is provided, please consult your participant transportation schedule for more information.

PLAYLABS

These readings are free and open to the public. The daily PlayLab readings are the foundation of the Conference. This year, 10 plays were selected from over 600 submissions. They are rehearsed by directors and actors and then presented as staged readings. Playwrights receive constructive critiques of their work from theatre professionals, scholars, and the general public in a guided-response setting. Each year the PlayLab readings act as a catalyst for many premieres of new American plays both locally and nationally.

PERFORMANCE ETIQUETTE

Be mindful of those who are performing and attending performances. During readings and performances we ask you to please:

- Arrive on time
- Turn off your cell phone
- Whisper in hallways and lobbies
- Keep feedback concise, thoughtful and constructive

NETWORKING AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The most shared piece of advice from past GPTC participants: Connect! We encourage all Conference attendees to get to know fellow attendees. Introduce yourself and make introductions for others. Many past GPTC attendees have found friendships here that have grown into deep personal and professional friendships well beyond the Conference. Please make use of the Whova message boards and take advantage of GPTC social media.

Instagram: @gptcplays
Facebook: @GreatPlainsTheatreConference
Use our hashtag: #GPTC2024





ALL CONFERENCE TIMES ARE CENTRAL TIME ZONE, STREAMING LINKS CAN BE FOUND ON WHOVA PORTAL FOR SECURITY REASONS

SUNDAY, MAY 26

9:30AM - 10:30AM	General Orientation (Bistro)
10:30AM - 10:45AM	Break
10:45AM - 11:45AM	Play Orientation for Responders and Dramaturgs (SCC 201A)
10:45AM - 11:45AM	PlayLab Playwright Cohort (meet at front desk)
12:00PM - 1:15PM	Lunch/Panel 1: <i>What Has Energized and Expanded Your Theatre Practice Over the Past Five Years?</i> with Guest Artists at 12:30pm (SCC 201B)
1:15PM - 2:00PM	Young Dramatists Orientation (SCC 201A)
1:15PM - 9:00PM	PlayLab Rehearsals (various locations)
6:00PM - 8:30PM	Stories of O (Yates Illuminates) includes dinner

MONDAY, MAY 27

9:00AM - 10:30AM	Workshop Session 1 (Blg 23)
10:30AM - 10:40AM	Break
10:40AM - 1:00PM	<i>Vampire Panic!</i> by Katie Mickere PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
1:00PM - 2:00PM	Lunch (SCC 201B)
2:00PM - 2:10PM	Break
2:10PM - 4:55PM	<i>burn for You</i> by Regan Moro PlayLab and Response Session (SCC201A)
5:00PM - 6:30PM	Welcome BBQ (Bistro)

TUESDAY, MAY 28

9:00AM - 10:00AM	Yoga (SCC Upstairs Atrium)
10:00AM - 10:15AM	Break
10:15AM - 12:35PM	<i>Pivot</i> by Alex Lubischer PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
12:35PM - 1:35PM	Lunch (SCC 201B)
1:35PM - 1:45PM	Break
1:45PM - 4:35PM	<i>Dupe</i> by Adrienne Dawes PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
4:35PM - 4:45PM	Break
4:45PM - 5:45PM	PlayLab Playwright Cohort (meet at front desk)
5:45PM - 7:00PM	Pizza Buffet Dinner for Young Dramatists Evening (Bistro)
7:00PM - 8:15PM	Young Dramatist Evening featuring <i>Dreamers Like Me</i> by Sonia Alonzo Ocaña

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

9:00AM - 10:30AM	Workshop Session 2 (Blg 23)
10:30AM - 10:45AM	Break
10:45AM - 11:45AM	PlayLab Playwright Cohort (meet at front desk)
11:45AM - 12:00PM	Break
12:00PM - 1:15PM	Lunch/Panel 2: <i>Liberation of Creation</i> with Home X Noir at 12:30pm (SCC 201B)
1:15PM - 1:30PM	Break
1:30PM - 3:50PM	<i>Oddsville</i> by Melissa Maney PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
7:30PM - 9:30PM	<i>Sweet</i> by Harrison David Rivers PlayFest production (Creighton)

THURSDAY, MAY 30

10:00AM - 12:20PM	<i>All the Emilies in All the Universes</i> by Ian August PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201B)
12:20PM - 1:20PM	Lunch (SCC 201B)
1:20PM - 1:30PM	Break
1:30PM - 3:00PM	Workshop Session 3 (Blg 23)
3:00PM - 3:15PM	Break
3:15 PM - 5:35PM	<i>Bambiland</i> by Kendra Ann Flournoy PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)

FRIDAY, MAY 31

8:45AM - 9:45AM	Yoga (SCC Upstairs Atrium)
9:45AM - 10:00AM	Break
10:00AM - 12:00PM	<i>Being Black Outside</i> by Vinecia Coleman PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
12:00PM - 1:15PM	Lunch/Panel 3: <i>Dramaturg Collaborationship</i> moderated by Harrison David Rivers at 12:30pm (SCC 201B)
1:15PM - 1:30PM	Break
1:30PM - 4:10PM	<i>Stand Your Ground</i> by Patrick Vermillion PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
7:30PM - 9:00PM	GPTC Variety Show (Benson Theatre)

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

10:00AM - 12:20PM	<i>Alien of Extraordinary Ability</i> by Chloé Hung PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
12:20PM - 12:30PM	Break
12:30PM - 1:30PM	Lunch/Convo with Design Wing at 1:15pm (Mule Barn)
1:30PM - 2:15PM	Design Wing Installation (Mule Barn)
6:00PM - 9:00PM	Closing Celebration (SCC 201)

DAY BY DAY SCHEDULE

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ALL CONFERENCE TIMES ARE CENTRAL TIME ZONE

SUNDAY, MAY 26

9:30AM - 10:30AM **GENERAL ORIENTATION (BISTRO)**

10:30AM - 10:45AM **BREAK**

10:45AM - 11:45AM **PLAYLAB ORIENTATION (SCC 201A)**
For Responders and Dramaturgs

10:45AM - 11:45AM **PLAYLAB PLAYWRIGHT COHORT (FRONT DESK)**

12:00PM - 1:15PM **LUNCH/GUEST ARTIST PANEL (SCC 201B)**
What Has Energized and Expanded Your Theatre Practice Over the Past Five Years? Moderated by Ellen Struve. Panel begins at 1:00PM.

1:15PM - 2:00PM **YOUNG DRAMATISTS ORIENTATION (SCC 201A)**

1:15PM - 9:00PM **PLAYLAB REHEARSALS**

6:00PM - 8:30PM **STORIES OF O (YATES ILLUMINATES)**
You're invited to an evening of (increasingly more rare) in-person community, shared food, and great stories. The night is a laid back evening with food, drink and stories. An important point – there is no obligation to share a story. Feel free to come and enjoy the night, the food, and the community without telling a story. This month's theme is: stories of dearly remembered kindness. Additional details on page 18.

If you do bring a story, here are some guiding thoughts:

- The stories should be true, rather than fiction
- Have some strong connection to your life
- They should be around five minutes long
- And told from memory (without notes)

MONDAY, MAY 27

9:00AM - 10:30AM **WORKSHOP SESSION 1 (BUILDING 23)**

Eugenie Chan

The Play is in the Poetry (Capacity: 20)

Use fun with poetry to help shape your plays from the inside to the out; from the outside to the in. You will work with mystery and metaphor in this workshop on scene and structure. Writers can use handwritten notebooks, laptops, whatever device is accessible to them. They can sit on the floor or at the desk.

Mfoniso Udofia

Writing The Autobiographical (Capacity: 14)

Some artists choose to mine from their own lives - their art deeply personal to themselves and to the communities around them. Sometimes these personal plays hold refractions - shards- of a story already lived. Sometimes these personal plays can be wholesale reproductions of said life. How does one tell a true/true-ish story safely? What are the frameworks that need to be in place so one can explore healthily? We will ask ourselves these questions, and hopefully acquire some new tools for our tool-kit so we can tell the story of ourselves without fear.

10:30AM - 10:40AM **BREAK**

10:40AM - 1:00PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)**

Vampire Panic! by Kate Mickere

Director: Addie Barnhart

Dramaturg: Samuel Yates

Design Wing: Samantha Tutas

Room Host: Eva Quam

Respondents: Christina Ham, Michael John Garcés

Synopsis: In 1890's New England, a wave of consumption is wreaking havoc in a small town. The local doctor is using the epidemic to sell his fraudulent elixirs and tonics, young women are actively trying to catch the disease to achieve their dream figures and a preacher woman has everyone convinced that consumption is caused by vampires. (That's right, blood sucking undead VAMPIRES.) When the logical Lucy Greene returns home to care for her orphaned niece, she takes it upon herself to teach her neighbors about germ theory...but will her recent encounter in Europe dilute her message? Inspired by true historical events, *Vampire Panic!* is a gothic pandemic comedy that reminds us that medical misinformation, conspiracy theories and general hysteria aren't just byproducts of the Covid era.

CAST

LUCY GREENE: Roz Parr

FAITH JONES: Mackenzie Cory

MRS. SERENDIPITY: TammyRa'

DR. ADDAMS: Giovanni Rivera

CHARLOTTE: Hannah Graff

ANNE: Nina Washington

EMILY: Mia Faillace

STAGE DIRECTIONS: AJ Adhiambo

1:00PM - 2:00PM **LUNCH (SCC 201B)**

2:00PM - 2:10PM **BREAK**

DAY BY DAY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, MAY 27 (CONT)

2:10PM - 4:55PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

burn for You by Regan Moro

Director: Mackenzie Zielke

Dramaturg: Khalid Y. Long

Design Wing: Kaia Merrell

Room Host: Eva Quam

Respondents: Mfoniso Udofia, Eugenie Chan

Synopsis: The toddler daughter of Lila, a worship leader at a charismatic church in upstate NY, has just died. When Lila's sister Franny, a gay woman who fled the church 7 years prior, returns home for the first time for what she thinks is a funeral, she discovers that the parishioners are determined to pray for the child's resurrection. Over the course of a four day resurrection service old ghosts rise, and the sisters and their spouses grapple with the existence of miracles, the impossibility of expansive faith, and just how much they might be willing to burn for the beliefs they hold to be irrevocably, incontrovertibly true.

CAST

LILA: Jessica Johnson

FRANNY: Analisa Swerczek

BETH: Marie Schuett

MARK LUCAS: Adam Bassing

EVAN: Vernon Wheeler

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Kate Madsen

5:00PM - 6:30PM **WELCOME BBQ** (Bistro)

TUESDAY, MAY 28

9:00AM - 10:00AM **YOGA** (SCC UPSTAIRS ATRIUM)

10:00AM - 10:15AM **BREAK**

10:15AM - 12:35PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

Pivot by Alex Lubischer

Director: Ron Zank

Dramaturg: Samuel Yates

Design Wing: Dalia Sevilla

Room Host: Edward Pike

SM: Max Monahan

Respondents: Christina Ham, Eugenie Chan

Synopsis: Kara knows what she wants: a giant wedding reception, a father-daughter dance to the Dixie Chicks, and a solid three-year crop rotation plan for the farm. But when her wedding plans blow up in her face, Kara is prepared to upend the entire town of Milton, Nebraska, to fight for the future that should have been hers. A play about tradition, change, and things you should never, ever say to your in-laws.

CAST

KARA PFEIFER: Lauren Krupski

LEVI VAN ACREN/FATHER MATT/RYAN: Timothy Mantil

GEORGE VAN ACREN: Michael Lyon

ANNE VAN ACREN: Diane Watson

DOUG WESSEL: Jackson Newman

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Katie Cameron

12:35PM - 1:35PM **LUNCH** (SCC 201B)

1:35PM - 1:45PM **BREAK**

1:45PM - 4:35PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

Dupe by Adrienne Dawes

Director: Breanna Carodine

Dramaturg: Jihye Kim

Design Wing: Emily Tucker

Room Host: Edward Pike

Respondents: James Anthony Tyler, Mfoniso Udofia

Synopsis: When Parker Davis, an emerging Black writer, discovers her image has been stolen and appropriated as the author photo for the infamous urban book series "Pastor Prey," she tries to enlist the help of her estranged identical twin sister/entertainment lawyer Poesía Whetstone to sue the publishing company. The threat of a potential lawsuit prompts Feeling Grasso, white author of the "Pastor Prey" series and CEO of Ghetto Publishing, to reach out to her estranged identical twin sister/famous YA novelist Great Domanico for an introduction to her lawyer...Poesía Whetstone. *Dupe* is a very loose, accidental adaptation of *The Comedy of Errors* (with a dash of Rachel Dolezal & Quan Millz) that explores identity, authorship, and sisterhood.

CAST

POESÍA: Nina Washington

PARKER: Olivia Howard

GREAT: Sydney Readman

FEELING: Melissa Aquilles

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Brittany Thompson

4:35PM - 4:45PM **BREAK**

4:45PM - 5:45PM **PLAYLAB PLAYWRIGHT COHORT** (FRONT DESK)

DAY BY DAY SCHEDULE

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TUESDAY, MAY 28 (CONT)

5:45PM - 7:00PM **PIZZA BUFFET FOR YOUNG DRAMATISTS** (Bistro)

7:00PM - 8:15PM **YOUNG DRAMATIST EVENING**

Dreamers Like Me by Sonia Alonzo Ocaña

Directed by Francisco Franco

Dramaturg: Samuel Yates

Design Wing: Luis Garcia

Synopsis: Four women come in contact with magic that changes the trajectory of their lives. They must learn to overcome challenges with the help of each other. From leaving an abusive household to finding their purpose, this play is all about dreamers.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29

9:00AM - 10:30AM **WORKSHOP SESSION 2** (BUILDING 23)

Christina Ham

Finding the Musicality in Your Play (Capacity: 12)

Being a playwright also means being an orchestrator: of characters, dialogue, plot, and the story. It also means having an “ear” for the inherent “music” found in your story. This workshop is about how to realize that in the writing of your first draft and for your rewrites.

Michael John Garcés

Breaking the Ice (Capacity: 12)

Some prompts, exercises and strategies for beginning a collaborative, community-engaged creative process. How do you build mutuality and start the conversation?

10:30AM - 10:45AM **BREAK**

10:45AM - 11:45AM **PLAYLAB PLAYWRIGHT COHORT** (FRONT DESK)

11:45AM - 12:00PM **BREAK**

12:00PM - 1:15PM **LUNCH/HOME X NOIR PANEL** (SCC 201B)

Liberation creation; to sustain spaces in which Black, Brown, and Indigenous humans may thrive safely in their artistic expression.

This panel will explore our current transition through theatrical practices, honing in on the collective work we need to do to create sustainable and well-deserved spaces for us to fill. Moderated by Khalid Y. Long. Panel begins at 12:30PM.

1:15PM - 1:30PM **BREAK**

1:30PM - 3:50PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

Oddsville by Melissa Maney

Director: Carina DuMarce

Dramaturg: Jihye Kim

Design Wing: Luis Garcia

Room Host: Allana G. Pommier

Respondents: Mfoniso Udofia, Michael John Garcés

Synopsis: A sleepy town is suddenly bombarded by a series of strange incidents when the sun comes out for the first time in years. What the townsfolk don't know is that their fate has always been in someone else's hands.

CAST

ACTOR 1 (TOWN DRUNK/GREG): Abz Cameron

ACTOR 2 (FLORIST/KATE/PRIEST): Zoella Sneed

ACTOR 3 (TEACHER/EMMA/ADVISOR): Katy Kepler

ACTOR 4 (MAYOR/KEVIN/NURSE): Zhomontee Watson

ACTOR 5 (EXTERMINATOR/CARL/CHILD #1): Alicia Amadee

ACTOR 6 (STORE CLERK/CHILD #2): Asia Nared

ACTOR 7 (POLICE OFFICER/DOCTOR): Verla Collier

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Alex Beil

7:30PM - 9:30PM **SWEET BY HARRISON DAVID RIVERS** (CREIGHTON)

Additional details on page 19.

THURSDAY, MAY 30

10:00AM - 12:20PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

All the Emilies in All the Universes by Ian August

Director: Laura Lippman

Dramaturg: Samuel Yates

Design Wing: Emily Tucker

Room Host: Verla Collier

Respondents: James Anthony Tyler, Michael John Garcés

Synopsis: A sleepy town is suddenly bombarded by a series of strange incidents when the sun comes out for the first time in years. What the townsfolk don't know is that their fate has always been in someone else's hands.

CAST

THE PRESENTER: Moira Mangiameli

JEFF: Timothy Mantil

EMILIE RED/PINK: Jenna Janssen

EMILIE BLUE/GREEN: Alice Wilkinson

EMILIE YELLOW/ORANGE: Chelsea Turner

EMILIE BLACK: Melissa Aquiles

STAGE DIRECTIONS: BevVan Phillips

THURSDAY, MAY 30 (CONT)

12:20PM - 1:20PM **LUNCH** (SCC 201B)

1:20PM - 1:30PM **BREAK**

1:30PM - 3:00PM **WORKSHOP SESSION 3** (BUILDING 23)

James Anthony Tyler

Articulate What the World is Like for You! (Capacity: 10)

This is a workshop where the intention is to explicitly trust and dig into the world as you know it. Your hometown, your neighbors, your friends, your family, your schools, religious practices, etc. deserve to be highlighted through your Playwriting Art. Let's explore the unique and specific stories that **ONLY** you can tell!

Ellen Struve/Hugo Zamorano

Terrible Songs, Masterpieces and Murals (Capacity: 15)

Use other artists' work to inspire you, solve problems and get out of your comfort zone. This workshop will culminate in contributing to the creation of a new mural with muralist Hugo Zamorano.

3:00PM - 3:15PM **BREAK**

3:15PM - 5:35PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

Bambiland by Kendra Ann Flournoy

Director: Kathy Tyree

Dramaturg: Khalid Y. Long

Design Wing Fellow: Samantha Tutas

Room Host: Verla Collier

Respondents: Mfoniso Udofia, Christina Ham

Synopsis: 2019. Nic, a 28-year-old NYC based journalist, has built her career writing gritty investigative stories. Her editor assigns her a story that could take her career to the next level. Overtaxed Detroit homeowners. To pen the story, she must return home to Detroit after being away for ten years and finds herself facing what she's been running from...

CAST

NIC RUSSELL: Candace Gould

EVERETTE TOWNS: Jus B.

CHARLEY RUSSELL: Nyarok (Rayn) Tot

GRANDMA CELESTE: Camille Metoyer Moten

PHIL LIBERMAN: Thomas Gjere

FORMER OFFICIAL/RANDOM DUDE: Eric Jordan

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Doriette Jordan

FRIDAY, MAY 31

8:45AM - 9:45AM **YOGA** (SCC UPSTAIRS ATRIUM)

9:45AM - 10:00AM **BREAK**

10:00AM - 12:00PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

Being Black Outside by Vinecia Coleman

Director: TammyRa'

Dramaturg: Khalid Y. Long

Room Host: Nessie Mass

Design Wing Fellow: Luis Garcia

Respondents: James Anthony Tyler, Christina Ham

Synopsis: Vee and Niecy return to their childhood home after their mother dies, just in time for the end of the world--the Apocalypse--to begin. While remembering the past and debating the future, the sisters meet their mother's neighbor and are forced to contend with what it means to be Black...outside. This comedic play takes a look at the absurdities and realities of living in a world that centers whiteness.

CAST

NIECY: Asia Nared

NEIGHBOR: Katie Kresha

VEE: Olivia Johnson

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Ashley Adams

12:00PM - 1:15PM **LUNCH/DRAMATURG PANEL** (SCC 201B)

Dramaturg Collaborationship: How to collaborate with dramaturgs: what to expect, where to begin, how to flourish.

Moderated by Harrison David Rivers. Panel begins at 12:30PM.

1:15PM - 1:30PM **BREAK**

1:30PM - 4:10PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

Stand Your Ground by Patrick Vermillion

Director: Scott Working

Dramaturg: Khalid Y. Long

Design Wing: Dalia Sevilla

Room Host: Nessie Mass

Respondents: Eugenie Chan, Michael John Garcés

DAY BY DAY SCHEDULE

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FRIDAY, MAY 31 (CONT)

Synopsis: In the extreme heat of a South Florida summer, Carson pulls a gun on cyclist Starlee during a road rage incident. But to his surprise, Starlee, carrying a gun herself, shoots Carson first in self-defense, putting him in a coma. Wracked with guilt over the incident, Starlee vows to help Carson get back on his feet no matter what. But when Carson wakes up, she's surprised to learn he only wants one thing: a rematch.

CAST

STARLEE: Sydney Readman

CARSON: Nick LeMay

JULIA: Leanne Carlson

ZARA: Jessica Johnson

HORNE: Patrick Wolfe

ROGER: Chris Berger

MAYHEW: Ryan Federico

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Abz Cameron/Scott Working

7:30PM - 9:00PM **GPTC VARIETY SHOW** (BENSON THEATRE)

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

10:00AM - 12:20PM **PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION** (SCC 201A)

Alien of Extraordinary Ability by Chloé Hung

Director: Michael John Garcés

Dramaturg: Jihye Kim

Design Wing: Kaia Merrell

Room Host: Eva Quam

Respondents: Eugenie Chan, James Anthony Tyler

Synopsis: As O-1 (the titular Alien of Extraordinary Ability) awaits her work visa, she finds herself in limbo with other visa hopefuls, some of whom have been trapped in this No Exit-esque room for decades. O-1 must navigate the hierarchical world of immigration quickly as the world outside the room crumbles into anarchy. In the wake of a new world order, the visa hopefuls are now the gatekeepers of a sanctuary city, flipping the power dynamic around. Finally, O-1 finds herself in the real world, in an airport secondary screening room as she navigates the realities of immigration.

CAST

O1: Anna Dragon

AS-P2/EB-1/AM-1: Alexis Semevolos-Velazquez

SIV: Nigeena Rahmanzai

F3: Fran de Leon

H1-B: Malek Zenbaara

H-2A/AM-1A/IMMIGRATION OFFICER: Francisco Franco

STAGE DIRECTIONS/F3-A: Darlyn Gonzalez

12:20PM - 12:30PM **BREAK**

12:30PM - 1:30PM **LUNCH/DESIGN WING PRESENTATION PANEL** (MULE BARN)

Moderated by Brenda Davis. Panel begins at 1:15pm.

1:30PM - 2:15PM **DESIGN WING INSTALLATION** (MULE BARN)

6:00PM - 9:00PM **CLOSING CELEBRATION** (SCC 201)





EVENING EVENTS

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The Stories of O

SUNDAY, MAY 26

THIS MONTH'S THEME IS: STORIES OF DEARLY REMEMBERED KINDNESS.

You're invited to an evening of (increasingly more rare) in-person community, shared food, and great stories. The night is a laid back evening with food, drink and stories. Held on the last Sunday evening of each month at Yates Illuminates (3260 Davenport). An important point – there is no obligation to share a story. Feel free to come and enjoy the night, the food, and the community without telling a story.

If you do bring a story, here are some guiding thoughts:

- The stories should be true, rather than fiction
- Have some strong connection to your life
- They should be around five minutes long
- And told from memory (without notes)

GREAT PLAINS THEATRE COMMONS PRESENTS
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY'S DEPARTMENT OF FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS

SWEET

BY HARRISON DAVID RIVERS | DIRECTED BY DENISE CHAPMAN

CAST: ELIZA BARR, SHAE'KELL BUTLER & SHAILOH EGGERSON

SCENIC: BILL VAN DEEST | COSTUMES: LORA KAUP | SOUND: SHANNON SMAY | PROPS: MICHAEL CLARK
AD/SM: ALLANA POMMIER | ASM: MEGAN RADER

Creighton's Lied Education Center for the Arts, **Black Box Theatre** | 2500 California Plaza
Wednesday, May 29 @ 7:30pm | Thursday, May 30 @ 7:30pm | Friday, May 31 @ 7:30pm
Free Admission | visit gptcplays.com to RSVP

PLAYFEST PRODUCTION

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Sweet

by Harrison David Rivers

CONFERENCE NIGHT WEDNESDAY, 5/29, 7:30PM - 9:30PM

Great Plains Theatre Commons presents a PlayFest production of *Sweet* in partnership with Creighton's Lied Education Center for the Arts. *Sweet* was developed as a PlayLab at the 2015 GPTC New Play Conference.

The Baker sisters have always been the best of friends, but when the neighbor boy returns home from college, desire threatens to tear them apart.

Held at Creighton's Lied Education Center for the Arts in the Black Box Theatre. 2500 California Plaza, Omaha, Nebraska 68178.

Directed by **Denise Chapman**

Stage Manager/Assistant Director: **Allana G. Pommier**

Cast: **Eliza Barr, Shae'Kell Butler & Shailoh Eggersson**

Scenic/Lighting: **Bill Van Deest**

Costumes: **Lora Kaup**

Sound: **Shannon Smay**

Props: **Michael Clark**

Hair: **TammyRa'**

ASM: **Megan Rader**

Poster Design: **Nyarok Tot**

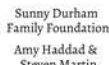
Front of House: **Alyssa Gonzalez/Nic Jansen**

Livestream information can be found on the Whova Conference Agenda.

A warm thanks to our current 2023/2024 PlayFest Sponsors: the National Endowment for the Arts, Sunny Durham Foundation, Holland Foundation, The Sherwood Foundation, Fred and Eve Simon Charitable Foundation, Todd & Betiana Simon, Paul & Annette Smith, Weitz Family Foundation, Dundee Bank, Emspace + Lovgren. To find out more about how NEA grants impact individuals and communities, visit arts.gov.

A Free Festival of Contemporary Performance

PlayFest is a season of new works performed in various locations across Omaha. PlayFest examines how theatre is produced, its connection to society and what new designs are possible. Performances take in a variety of forms from devised theatre and movement work created by local and national artists, to full-length plays highlighting the work of artists from the GPTC Conference, to Neighborhood Tapestries, a celebration of local stories, music, art and community. The goal of PlayFest is to paint a diverse and vibrant portrait of the city, create a chance for friends and neighbors to interact, and be a catalyst for a dialogue within the community about the stories that affect our lives.





E RAWQ

Will Meinen

Venus Thightrapp

Artie Shaw

Elizabeth Martinez

Juanna V Mii

Olivia Johnson

Marcel Daly

Keiria Marsha

Aaron Quinton-Thomas

GPTC's

VARIETY SHOW




Benson Theatre (6058 Maple)



5/31/24 @ 7:30pm

Hosted by TammyRa'

National Wild Card slots entered via raffle!



Great Plains Theatre Commons New Play Conference

CLOSING CELEBRATION

Join us for the culmination of the conference where we will share a meal, raise a toast to the plays and artists that made the week possible, and get our groove on.

McDowell Award Recipient: Roxanne Wach

Featuring Music By: Esencia Latina

Food By: The Institute for the Culinary Arts (MCC)

Award Design Artist: Paula Wallace

Saturday, June 1, 6:00pm - 9:00pm

MCC's Fort Omaha Campus

Swanson Conference Center (Building 22)

Please RSVP to Kathy Tyree at ktproductions@cox.net



PLAYWRIGHTS



Ian August's full-length plays include: *All the Emilies in All the Universes* (2022 PlayPenn), *Everything You Can Do (To Make the World a Better Place)* (Semi-Finalist 2021 Blue Ink Award), *Zero* (2020 Ashland New Plays Festival, Semi-Finalist 2020 BAPF), *Brisé* (2019 Great Plains Theatre Conference, Finalist 2019 Seven Devils Playwrights Conference), *The Excavation of Mary Anning* (2019 Powerhouse Theatre / NY Stage and Film, 2018 Ashland New Plays Festival), *Donna Orbits the Moon* (Scripps Ranch Theatre, Tiny Dynamite Productions), and *Cobbler* (Finalist 2019 New Comedy Fest B Street Theatre). He lives at a NJ boarding school with one husband and four cats: Lentils, Kimchi, Clementine, and Thomas'.

Ian August

All the Emilies in All the Universes



Vinecia Coleman is a playwright and actor based in Minneapolis/St. Paul, whose artistic aim as a writer is to tell stories that focus on the Black female experience. Her plays have been developed at Boise Contemporary Theatre's BIPOC Playwright Festival, Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Black Swan Lab, and Theater's Seven Devils Playwrights' Conference, Mad Cow Theater, and others. Her play *Christiana Lysistrata* recently had its premiere at Main Street Players in Miami, FL. She holds an MFA with an emphasis in Dramatic Writing and Directing from the University of Idaho and a BS in Microbiology from Iowa State University.

Vinecia Coleman

Being Black Outside



Adrienne Dawes
Dupe

Adrienne Dawes (she/her/hers) is an award-winning playwright, screenwriter, and teaching artist originally from Austin, TX. Her plays, including *Am I White*, *Teen Dad*, and *This Bitch: Esta Sangre Quiero*, have been developed/ produced by Salvage Vanguard Theater, Theatre Bedlam, New Harmony Project, The Fire This Time Festival, Theatre Lab at FAU, Queen City New Play Initiative, Stages Repertory Theatre, Teatro Milagro, National Black Theatre, and English Theatre Berlin, among others. Adrienne received her BA from Sarah Lawrence College and studied sketch & improv at the Second City Training Center in Chicago. Just before the strike, Adrienne staffed on her first TV show, working on a limited series for Hulu/ABC Signature (EP: Ellen Pompeo).



Kendra Ann Flournoy
Bambiland

Kendra Ann Flournoy is a Detroit-bred writer and administrator. She has developed work at The Lark and in DrAw and Más Paginas, writers' collectives led by Nikki Brake-Silla and Christina Pumariega. Kendra's plays have been staged in Kalamazoo, Detroit, Chicago, and New York. Recently, she's stepped into film. She co-founded Face Off Theatre Company in Kalamazoo, MI. She was Director of Alumni Programs and Operations Manager during her time at The Lark in NYC and briefly served as Managing Artistic Director at the Detroit Repertory Theatre. Kendra received her BA in English and MFA in Playwriting from Western Michigan University.



Chloé Hung

Alien of Extraordinary Ability

Chloé Hung is a writer and director. Her plays include *Three Women of Swatow* (Tarragon Theatre; Dora Award nominee for Outstanding New Play), *Issei He Say* (New Jersey Rep), *All Our Yesterdays* (Toronto Fringe Fest, Next Stage Theatre Fest). She has workshopped plays with IAMA Theatre, Geffen Theatre's Writers room, Moving Arts' MADLab, Banff Playwrights Lab, and Tarragon Playwrights Unit. In TV and film, Chloé has written for *Queen Sugar*, *Cherish the Day*, *The Watchful Eye*, and developed for Netflix. She was a Film Independent and The Black List screenwriting fellow. Her short films include *Signal* and *Gem & Shaz*.



Alex Lubischer

Pivot

Alex Lubischer is a queer Midwestern writer, born and raised on a farm in Nebraska. His plays include *You Deserve to Be Here* (Goodman Playwrights Unit commission; Roundabout Theatre Laura Pels commission), *Pivot* (GPTC New Play Conference 2024), *Do Wasps Have Desires?* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater), *Bobbie Clearly* (Roundabout Theatre Company, Steep Theatre, Jeff Award Winner: Outstanding New Play), *Weird Kids* (Haven Chicago), *The Quonsets* (Yale Cabaret, co-written with Majkin Holmquist), and *Survey No. 5* (House of International Theatre, Copenhagen). He was the 2017/18 Tow Foundation Playwright-in-Residence at Roundabout Theatre Company. He teaches playwriting at DePaul University in Chicago. MFA: Yale

PLAYWRIGHTS

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Melissa Maney
Oddsville

Melissa Maney is an NYC-based playwright with a passion for horror, absurdism, satire, feminism, and queer representation. After achieving her BFA from the New School, she has written and produced her work across New York City at Theater Row, Theater for the New City, The Chain Theater, The Player's Theater, Gene Frankel Theater, and more.



Kate Mickere
Vampire Panic!

Kate Mickere is a playwright and screenwriter based in Los Angeles. Her play, *Nurse Cadden*, was the inaugural winner of the A is For Playwriting Contest and received a virtual reading that starred Ann Dowd. *Nurse Cadden* is published by Next Stage Press. Kate is currently developing a new play, *The Christman Coven*, with Moving Arts Theatre in Los Angeles. She is the recipient of the Alfred P. Sloan Student Screenwriting Award and The Steven Bochco Fellowship. MFA: Carnegie Mellon University



Regan Moro
burn for You

Regan Moro is a lesbian playwright and actor. She received her BFA from the University of Michigan, spent a year as an apprentice at Actors Theatre of Louisville, and has since worked with The Public Theater, Playwrights Horizons, La Jolla Playhouse, O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference, and Williamstown Theatre Festival, among many others. As a playwright, they were a member of the 2022-2023 Primary Stages Emerging Writers Group, and their work has been a semi finalist for Ars Nova's Playgroup and the New Roots Artist Residency. She also appeared on HBO's *Succession*! For more, check out: www.reganmoro.com



Patrick Vermillion
Stand Your Ground

Patrick Vermillion is a playwright with two cats. His plays include *The Good Boy Game* (2020 O'Neill Finalist, 2023 Venturous Nominee), *Bezos N' Me* (2021 O'Neill Semi-Finalist), *The Teddies* (2022 Steep Commission), and *Losing It* (Pegasus Playlab Finalist, Detroit New Works Semi-Finalist). His plays have been seen at Ensemble Studio Theatre, MirrorBox, Alchemical Lab, Soho Playhouse, and IRT. His plays have been developed at Butler University, Louisiana State University, and Sarah Lawrence College. MFA: Northwestern University.



GUEST ARTISTS



Kate Busselle
Intimacy Consultant

Dr. Kate Busselle (she/her/hers) is thrilled to be back at GPTC! Kate is the founder of Heartland Intimacy Design & Training, a theatrical intimacy training company which offers academic, accessible, and affordable intimacy training entirely online. She has taught several workshops on staging intimacy, as well as designing intimacy for several productions. Her specific area of expertise is staging sexual trauma and assault and how to assist actors in leaving these moments behind in the theatre. She is Assistant Professor of Movement, Intimacy, and Violence at the University of Oklahoma. Kate completed her Ph.D. in Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Missouri in 2019 and recently became a Level 1 Margolis Method Certified Instructor. Kate is also an Advanced Actor Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) with certifications in all weapon disciplines and theatrical firearms safety. She is also a member of the Association of Movement Theatre Educators (ATME), Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE). Kate is also a scholar of theatrical intimacy best practices and theorizing ethics of care. Her most recent articles can be found in *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* and *Theatre/Practice*.

GUEST ARTISTS

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Denise Chapman
PlayFest Director

Denise Chapman is a theatre artist based in Omaha, NE. She graduated from Creighton University with a BA in theatre, and received her MFA from the Theatre Conservatory at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. Past Directing Credits include *Chicken and Biscuits* (TheatreSquared) *Blood at the Root*, *Spunk*, *The Divine Order of Becoming*, *Bourbon at the Border*, *Center the Margins*, and *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin*. *More Than Neighbors* (The Union) *The Crowd You're in*, *Neighborhood Tapestries*, *Voices from the Center – Great Plains Theatre Conference (GPTC)*, *Withlove Felicia's Abuse is not LOVE! – (Malcolm X Center)*, *House of Blue Leaves*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Circle Theatre), *Electra*, *The Good Doctor* (Creighton University) *Sand Mountain* and *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (Midland Lutheran University) *Sweet, Tell Martha Not to Moan*, *Marvelous Country*, *Turpentine Jake*, *Without a Formal Declaration of War* (Readings for GPTC) *The Nightshade Tapes*, *Hello Madness*, *If*, and *Hysterical Blindness 3* (BLUEBARN's *Witching Hour*). Acting credits include: *Cassie– Tell Martha Not to Moan*, *Mildred D Brown--Northside Carnation*, *Sophie--Flying West*, *Ester--Intimate Apparel* (Omaha Community Playhouse), *Loretta--Breathe– (GPTC)*, *Ensemble--Down and out in Heaven and Hell* (BLUEBARN's *Witching Hour*), *Just...--Hot House*, *Spook--Shoes* (Victory Gardens Theatre Chicago, IL).



Eugenie Chan
Guest Artist

Eugenie Chan is artistic director of Eugenie Chan Theater Projects. Theatres that have produced or developed her prize-winning plays include *Crowded Fire*, *Houston Grand Opera*, *The Public*, *Playwrights Horizons*, *Cutting Ball*, *Magic Theatre*, *Centenary Stage*, *Perishable*, *Thick Description*, *Northwest Asian American Theatre*, *East West Players*. Her screenplays have been seen at: *Berlin*, *Big Apple*, *Cinestory*, *Dis-Orient*, *Mill Valley*, *San Diego Asian and Toronto film festivals*. She teaches at *San José State University*. Alumna Resident Playwright: *East West Players*, *Crowded Fire*, *New Dramatists*, *Playwrights Foundation*. Her film *The Truer History of the Chan Family* debuts Fall 2024 at ArtsEmerson. www.eugeniechantheater.org

GUEST ARTISTS



Brenda Davis
Design Wing Mentor

Brenda Davis is a regional freelance set designer with a BA from Loyola University Chicago, MFA from Yale School of Drama ('08). She is a guest lecturer at Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Brenda's designs include regional work at Baltimore Center Stage, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, About Face at Steppenwolf and Goodman, Yale Repertory Theater and others. Associate and assistant work reaches as far as La Scala in Italy, Melbourne Theatre in Australia, as well as The Metropolitan Opera, McCarter Theatre, Seattle Rep, Delacorte, Mark Taper Forum, Circle in the Square, 2nd Stage, Guthrie, and others. Brenda won the Kennedy Center ACTF national award for set design in 2001 for *The House of Blue Leaves*.



Francisco Franco
Young Dramatist Director

Francisco Franco (He/Him/His) is a theater artist based in Omaha, Nebraska and currently serves as the Rental Manager and Production Assistant for the BlueBarn Theatre. He has most recently appeared in *Meet Me in St. Louis* at the Bellevue Little Theatre. His other recent credits include *Perdido En Mi Cabeza* at Bluebarn's Big Damn Door Festival, *Stories On The Brink* with the Anastasis Theatre Company, and *Down the Rabbit Hole* for Radio Theatre Omaha. Francisco is excited to be a part of this amazing conference and cannot wait for people to hear and see these wonderful stories!

GUEST ARTISTS

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Michael John Garcés
Guest Artist

Michael John Garcés is a LA-based director and playwright and a professor of practice at Arizona State University. He most recently directed *For the People* by Ty Defoe and Larissa FastHorse at The Guthrie Theatre. Michael has written two plays for GPTC's Neighborhood Tapestries: *south*, directed by Scott Working, and a one-act, *A Parable*, directed by M. Michele Phillips; and directed *Epic* by Ellen Struve, produced in partnership with the Comunidad Maya Pixam Ixim. Michael is the recipient of the Doris Duke Artist Award and the Princess Grace Statue Award.



Christina Ham
Guest Artist

Christina Ham's plays have been produced both nationally and internationally at the Kennedy Center, Arena Stage, South Coast Repertory Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Tokyo International Arts Festival, and The Market Theatre in South Africa to name a few. She is a two-time recipient of a McKnight Fellowship in Playwriting and a Jerome Fellowship from the Playwrights' Center. She has received commissions from The Guthrie Theater, Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and the Kennedy Center among many others. Her plays are published by Dramatic Publishing, PlayScripts, Inc., and Oberon Books. A graduate of the University of Southern California and a MFA in Playwriting from The UCLA School of Theater, Film, and Television, she is currently a member of the Playwrights Union and The Kilroys.

GUEST ARTISTS



Jihye Kim
Dramaturg

Jihye Kim is a freelance dramaturg and a deviser based in Seoul. Her interest and specialty lie in new play development, ensemble-devising, site-specific immersive works, solo performance and literary translation (Korean to English). Jihye worked for Great Plains Theatre Common's New Play Conference in 2022 and 2023 and she is a current season researcher at Doosan Art Center in Seoul. In 2021-2023, *Dogs or Cats; Augmented Body*, the experimental puppet show she co-developed with Chicago-based puppet artist Jaerin Son has performed at Steppenwolf and Links Hall Chicago. In addition to her dramaturgy work, she enjoys teaching devising and solo performance workshops for non-professional performers. (<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/becketts-babies/id1456311563?i=1000619112763>)



Khalid Y. Long
Dramaturg

Khalid Y. Long, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Theatre Arts at Howard University. A scholar and dramaturg, he specializes in African American/Black diasporic theatre, performance, and literature through the lenses of Black feminist thought, queer studies, and performance studies. Accordingly, his work addresses the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality within marginalized and oppressed communities. Khalid is the Vice President of the August Wilson Society and serves on the American Society for Theatre Research (ASTR) board. Khalid is the co-editor of *Contemporary Black Theatre and Performance: Acts of Rebellion, Activism, and Solidarity* and is the co-editor of *August Wilson in Context*.

GUEST ARTISTS

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Sonia Alonzo Ocaña is currently attending Omaha Burke Theatre. She has been a part of the program since her freshman year of High School. She is looking forward to work with the Young Dramatists! Sonia is very grateful for this amazing opportunity and hopes everyone enjoys!

Sonia Alonzo Ocaña
Young Dramatist Playwright



Harrison David Rivers is an award-winning playwright, librettist and television writer based in St. Paul, Minnesota. His work has been produced at Roundabout, Yale Rep, Transport Group/Public Theater and the Williamstown Theatre Festival, among others. He sits on the Board of Directors of The Movement Theatre Company and Playwrights' Center. harrisondavidrivers.com

Harrison David Rivers
PlayFest Playwright

GUEST ARTISTS



James Anthony Tyler
Guest Artist

James Anthony Tyler is the recipient of the 3rd Annual Horton Foote Playwriting Award, and recently had a McKnight National Residency and Commission via The Playwrights Center and was a member of TFFT's Cycle 5 New Works Lab. His plays include *Into the Side of a Hill* (Flint Repertory Theatre), *hop thA A* (Audible), *Artney Jackson* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Some Old Black Man* (Berkshire Playwrights Lab), and *Dolphins and Sharks* (LAByrinth Theater Company). He has written for TV: *Cherish the Day* (OWN Network) & an upcoming Apple+ Drama Series. MFA's Howard University and NYU. Juilliard School's Playwriting Program graduate.



Mfoniso Udofia
Guest Artist

Mfoniso Udofia, a first-generation Nigerian-American storyteller and educator. Her plays *Sojourners* and *The Grove* will be produced by the Huntington Theatre, and productions of her plays *Sojourners*, *runboyrun*, *Her Portmanteau* and *In Old Age* have been seen at NYTW, A.C.T., Playwrights Realm, Magic Theater, National Black Theatre, and Boston Court. She's the recipient of the 2017 Helen Merrill Award, the 2017-18 McKnight National Residency and Commission and is a member of New Dramatists. More at www.mfonisoudofia.com.

GUEST ARTISTS

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Drew Woodson is a Western Shoshone playwright based in New York City. He has had his work read in multiple theaters across New York, including Rattlestick Theater where he was asked to open the first annual Northeastern Native Arts Festival with his play *Your Friend, Jay Silverheels*. For this same work, Drew was named Yales Young Indigenous Playwright of 2021 and was workshopped at Yale under the direction of Tara Moses. More recently, Drew completed a two month artists residency on Governors Island for AICH, and had two new works *From Above* and *As We Were, So We Are* read at HERE Arts and The Duke Ellington Room with the Eagle Arts Project. As a writer, Drew seeks to tell stories where Native people are allowed to take up space, be complicated, be the center of attention, and ultimately be more than a storytelling device. Drew is currently completing his MFA in Dramatic Writing at NYU.

Drew Woodson
Four Directions Playwright



Samuel Yates, Ph.D., is a deaf artist and researcher, currently working as an Assistant Professor of Theatre at Pennsylvania State University. Their writing is published or forthcoming in *The Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, *Music Theatre Today*, *Studies in Musical Theatre*, and *Medicine and Literature*, as well as many edited volumes such as *The Matter of Disability* (U Michigan), *A Cultural History of Disability in the Modern Age* (Bloomsbury), *Monsters in Commission: Essays on the Aesthetics of Social Disqualification* (Routledge) and *Radical Contemporary Theatre Practices by Women in Ireland* (Carysfort Press). Selected dramaturgy work: *La Casa de la Laguna at Gala Hispanic Theatre* (world premiere), *Care: The Musical* (3Arts/Art Institute of Chicago), *Teenage Dick* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Pasadena Playhouse, The Huntington Theatre). Academic dramaturgy includes *Fairview and Violet* (Millikin U); *Historias* (Rainbow Theatre); and for Penn State, *Natasha ...*, *Urinetown*, and *Falsettos*. They've previously worked in the literary offices of The Abbey Theatre (Ireland) and the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, and as a guest artist for Great Plains Theatre Commons. Samuel's current book project, *Crippling Broadway: Producing Disability in the American Musical*, concerns disability aesthetics and accessibility practices in Broadway musicals, asking how our notions of disability and the able body inform and transform theatrical performance.

Samuel Yates
Dramaturg



DESIGN WING

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The Great Plains Theatre Commons Design Wing expands the conceptual boundaries and experiential reference for a new generation of designers in the performing arts. Five emerging designers embark on an exploration of process and are deeply immersed with the artists and activities at the GPTC. The designers will move between the GPTC events, workshops and a design lab, with emphasis on the latest developments in the design process for the performing arts and integration with the national playwrights at the conference. The designers will have a chance to expand their purview with these top national artists with the goal of strengthening the cultural fabric of the performing arts both locally and nationally. The work of the Design Wing will correspond with a larger collaborative effort by the GPTC to explore new possibilities for how creativity becomes manifest in our communities.



Luis Garcia
Design Wing

Luis Garcia is a Peruvian-American lighting and media designer based in the DMV area. His goal as an artist is to be a mentor for the next generation of BIPOC artists. He recently received his MFA from the University of Maryland, College Park and is now focused on being a part of artistic projects that highlight the voices of marginalized communities. Design credits: *Las Misticas De Mexico* at INSeries Opera, *NORA* and *the Lighthouse* at Dance Place, *It Happened in Key West* at Fulton Theatre, *Espejos: Clean* at Studio Theatre. Web: Luisgtech.com



DESIGN WING



Samantha Tutasi
Design Wing

Samantha Tutasi (Scenic Designer) she/her/hers

Ecuadorian-American theater artist, most recent collaborations include: Scenic Design - *La Musica Deuxième* (A/Park Productions). *Authorial Intent*, *Exit, Pursued By A Bear*, *The Laramie Project* (ASDS Rep Theater). *Captain Courageous*; *The Secret Garden* (Powerhouse Theater Collaborative). *Virgin, Mother, Whore* (Boundless Theater Co.). Properties Design - *Munich Medea: Happy Family* (WP Theater), *Coping Mechanism* (Wild Project); Film - *Egg Timer* (dir. Annie Tippe). She frequently works with the American Theater Wing on their educational program, Springboard To Design. BFA: State University of New York at Purchase, 2022. samanthatutasidesign.myportfolio.com



Emily Tucker
Design Wing

Emily Tucker is a scenographer with a background in live performance and visual arts. Her decade-long career as a touring trapeze artist informs her practice and unique approach to collaboratively devised work. With a BFA in Design for Theatre from Concordia University in Montréal, Emily is currently an MFA candidate at NYU Tisch School of the Arts in Design for Stage and Film. Her most recent world building work includes scenic design for theatre, dance, and contemporary circus as well as production design for short films. This year she has also written her first original short screenplay. Emily's work provides fresh perspectives born from her passion for travel, creative transmutation, and seeing the world upside down.



Kaia Merrell
Design Wing

Kaia L. Merrell (she/her/they/them) is a New York based Lighting Designer for theatre, opera, and dance. They are interested in telling stories that push the envelope, and lead audiences to a catharsis through rich, compelling text or music, and striking visual composition. They tend to seek out highly collaborative projects. Currently, they are getting their MFA in Design for Stage and Screen from NYU Tisch.



Dalia Sevilla
Design Wing

Dalia Sevilla is a queer director, lighting designer and creative producer. Dalia is the founder of the opera company La Senta through which she directed their first production, *Ice-ing on the Cake*. She is passionate about blurring the lines of genres, creating work that is unconventional and making opera more approachable. She was awarded the 2024 Latin Alternative Theater Award for Best Lighting Design for *Our Home on Ludlow*. and was the 2022 Lighting Design fellow for Boundless Exposed. Her lighting design credits include *Truckers* with INTAR, *Once on this Island* for STNC, and various NY Pops concerts at Carnegie Hall. Daliasevilla.com @daliasevilla



DIRECTORS

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Addy Barnhart
Vampire Panic!

Addie Barnhart (she/her) is a theatre artist originally from Wichita, Kansas. She is a multi-disciplinary generalist who shares her creative impulses as an actor, director, and educator. Addie has worked across the United States with companies such as Virginia Repertory/Cadence Theatre, Richmond Shakes, Playmaker's Theatre, TheatreLAB, Swine Palace, and many others along the way. Her passion for education and teaching life skills through theatre was the gateway to a master's degree at Louisiana State University where she earned an M.F.A. in Acting. Moving here by way of Richmond, VA, Addie relocated to Omaha where she works as Assistant Professor of Theatre at Creighton University. www.addiebarnhart.com



Breanna Carodine
Dupe

Breanna Carodine made her directorial debut in 2018 with a staged reading of *Lasso of Truth* before serving as assistant director for *Shrek The Musical*. Most recently she directed *Pipeline* (Omaha Community Playhouse) *Pretty Fire* (OCP) *What A Time to Be Alive* (Great Plains Theatre Commons) and *Black Women Rebel* (Radio Theatre Omaha) at the Benson Theatre. Other directing credits include serving as the director for the staged reading of *Women Laughing Alone with Salad* and directing *Down the Rabbit Hole* (RTO.) Carodine last appeared on stage as Bradley in *Men on Boats* (OCP). In her spare time, she enjoys making commentary on Bravo TV shows, raving about local restaurants on her Instagram @eatlocalomaha and hosting her own podcast @queensized.

DIRECTORS



Carina DuMarce
Oddsville

Carina DuMarce is a nonbinary, Dakota and Mexican theater maker originally from South Dakota, who brings a unique blend of talents as both a Theater Educator and Actor. Their journey lead them from SD to ND to eventually landing in NE in 2018 with a Fellowship at the Rose Theater in Omaha, eventually stepping into the role of Associate Director of CommUNITY Outreach. With a deep reverence for their cultural heritage, Carina is dedicated to providing a platform for Native youth to explore their identities and celebrate their rich heritage. Additionally, they champion the creation of theater for black and brown bodies, tirelessly working to cultivate safe spaces for all. Pidamaya. #MMIW #BLM



Michael John Garcés
Alien of Extraordinary Ability

Michael John Garcés is a LA-based director and playwright and a professor of practice at Arizona State University. He most recently directed *For the People* by Ty Defoe and Larissa FastHorse at The Guthrie Theatre. Michael has written two plays for GPTC's Neighborhood Tapestries: *south*, directed by Scott Working, and a one-act, *A Parable*, directed by M. Michele Phillips; and directed *Epic* by Ellen Struve, produced in partnership with the Comunidad Maya Pixam Ixim. Michael is the recipient of the Doris Duke Artist Award and the Princess Grace Statue Award.

DIRECTORS

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Laura Lippman (she/her) Laura is the Associate Professor of Theatre at Peru State College and serves as the Artistic Director of Peru Theatre Company. Recent PTC directing credits include *Orphans*, *Love Song*, *Proof*, *Everybody*, *Dead Man's Cell Phone* and *Topdog/Underdog*. She is especially proud of PTC's annual production *The Disco Citizens*—30 plays in 60 minutes, or your pizza is free! Inspired by the work of Chicago's Neo-Futurists, this fast-paced evening of original student plays is performed in random order determined by the audience each night. Laura has been developing and directing new work for over thirty years. She was recently appointed to serve as KCACTF's Co-Vice-Chair of the National Playwriting Program in Region 5. As a theatre artist, she is dedicated to nurturing the playwright's voice, and supporting their vision through every step of the process. In addition to fostering new work at Peru, she has worked with The National New Play Network and Orlando Playfest among others. In Lincoln, NE she acts and directs with OmniArts, Flatwater Shakespeare Company and Angels Theatre Company.

Laura Lippman

All the Emilies in All the Universes



TammyRa' is an award-winning Storyteller, Actress, Director, Master Hair Stylist and Vocalist based in Omaha, Nebraska, with a wide array of experiences. TammyRa' has performed in many theaters throughout the Omaha/Lincoln area, including The Center Stage, The John Beasley Theater, Omaha Community Playhouse, Lincoln Community Playhouse, University of Nebraska-Omaha and Nebraska Shakespeare. TammyRa's performance credits also include short film, commercials both local and regional, as well as radio and television voice overs. She has worked with the Great Plains Theatre Conference/Commons since 2008 as both an actress and director. During COVID, she started doing virtual shows with Playzoomers so that she was able to continue to share her talents with others and give back in her own way. Instagram: @tammyrajackson

TammyRa'

Being Black Outside

DIRECTORS



Ron Zank
Pivot

Ron Zank has been involved with the Great Plains Theatre Commons since the conference portion began. He has been an actor, read script submissions, responded to plays, moderated lunchtime panels, and now serves on the board. Ron has directed multiple readings for GPTC, including *Christmas Cookies*, *Breeders*, *Alice in Black and White*, *Go Ahead*, *The Victims*, and *June in the Parade*. An assistant professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, he teaches Theatre History, Script Analysis, and Playwriting. His research focuses on stage musical adaptations of films. His own playwriting includes *Saving Toyland*, *Oedipus Noir*, and *Heigh-Ho, Skelter!*



Mackenzie Zielke
burn for You

Mackenzie Zielke received her MA in Theatre from Regent University and a BA in Music Theatre from the Conservatory at the UMKC. Before moving back to Omaha she worked at Kansas City venues such as Union Station City Stage, The Chestnut Theatre, Shawnee Mission Theatre in the Park, bar Natasha, Musical Theatre Heritage, Barn Players Theatre and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. For 9 years she was the director of the musical theatre program at Grace University where she taught classes and voice lessons, directed 11 fully staged productions, and created and directed 10 cabaret showcases. Since moving back to Omaha, she has been a vocal coach at SNJ Studios, a stage director for the Omaha Symphonic Chorus, and was the education director at the Omaha Community Playhouse from 2017-2020. She was also the assistant director for *School of Rock* at OCP and recently directed the 2023 OEAA nominated production of *Into the Woods* at the Chanticleer and audience favorite *White Christmas* at the Bellevue Little Theatre.

DIRECTORS

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Kathy Tyree
Bambiland

Kathy Tyree is honored to return to GPTC as a director for *Bambiland* by Kendra Ann Flourney. Kathy's most recent directing credits include *Three Little Birds*, *Respect*, *Dreamgirls*, *American Son*, *The Color Purple*, *Ain't Misbehavin'* and *Tell Martha Not to Moan*. She has received numerous acting and directing awards and in recent years received best director for *Dreamgirls*, *American Son*, *The Color Purple*, *Ain't Misbehavin'* and best actor for *Sweat*. In 2023 Kathy expanded her artists career performing the role of Baneatta in *Chicken & Biscuits* at Theater Squared in Fayetteville Arkansas. She is the owner of Kathy Tyree Productions, producing live music entertainment events throughout the Omaha area. Kathy is honored to serve as a member of the GPTC Board of Directors and to share space with all of the amazing creatives in this year's conference.



Scott Working
Stand Your Ground

Scott Working has been performing, directing, producing, and writing plays in and around Omaha for decades. He teaches English and Theatre at Metropolitan Community College, where he's been Theatre Program Coordinator for fifteen years. Through MCC, Scott partners with the Castle/Cathedral Arts District in producing their annual Art & Literary Festival. At Joslyn Castle over the years, he has adapted, produced and directed dramatic interpretations of the works of Edgar Allan Poe, Willa Cather, Mark Twain, Mary Shelley, Arthur Conan Doyle, Earnest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf. While the GPTC was partnered with MCC, Scott served as its Associate Artistic Director for a time. In 1993 he co-founded The Shelterbelt Theatre with the production of his play *V of Geese* and served as its Artistic Director for its first five years. His most recent performance was as Frank Sweeney in *Molly Sweeney* by Brian Friel with The Brigit St. Brigit Theatre Company, where he's had the privilege of acting in works by Pinter, Chekov, Ibsen, Miller, McPherson, Keane, and Moliere.



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Kevin Lawler, GPTC Director

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AS OF 5/17/2024



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PlayFest is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. To find out more about how NEA grants impact individuals and communities, visit www.arts.gov. The Nebraska Arts Council, a state agency, has supported both PlayFest and the Conference through its matching grants program funded by the Nebraska Legislature, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Visit www.artsCouncil.nebraska.gov for information on how the Nebraska Arts Council can assist your organization, or how you can support the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. GPTC is also supported in part by an American Rescue Plan Act grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to support general operating expenses in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



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Diane Watson, President

Diane is the Growth Officer for Cetera Advisors. She is an actor, improv artist, and serves on the Board of Trustees of Saybrook University. She is also host of the YouTube food sustainability show, Leftover Chef.

Cecilia Poon, Vice President

Psychologist, Adjunct Assistant Professor in Psychiatry, Nebraska Medicine/UNMC. As a geropsychologist and theatre artist, Cecilia seeks to connect people of all ages, abilities, cultures, and experiences through creative arts.

Diane Coffin, Treasurer

Omaha Symphony. A lover of theatre, music and the arts, Diane Coffin serves as executive assistant to the Omaha Symphony's President & CEO, a position she has held for more than thirty years, assisting seven CEOs and the organization's board of directors.

Susan Baer Collins, Secretary

Theatre Director, Actor. Recipient of the GPTC McDowell Award for her service to the Omaha theatre community and the 2014 Governors Arts Award for Outstanding Artist, Susan served as Associate Artistic Director of the Omaha Playhouse for 27 years.

Raydell Cordell III

6th Grade Teacher at Loveland Elementary and Actor/ Teaching Artist in the Omaha Community. A product of Omaha Public Schools and The Rose Theater, Raydell is a passionate individual who believes in the human connection and the power of impact and growth in individuals.

Juan Padilla

Former Community Development Manager, Canopy South. Previously with Union Pacific Railroad for almost six years, Juan realized during his time there that his passion lied in nonprofits. Juan had the opportunity to work for the Omaha Community Foundation and completed the Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP®) certification. Born in Guatemala City, Juan moved to Omaha as a young child and has lived in Omaha since. Juan is a firm believer that having a thriving community is the result of a safe neighborhood, higher education, a healthy lifestyle, and providing community members with opportunity to thrive.

Marina Rosado

Marina Rosado has been a professional bilingual journalist for the last twenty years, working as an editor, writer, photographer, air talent, outreach & promotions manager and news anchor. In addition to her professional work, Marina has performed as an actress, in original plays, based on the experiences of migrants in the United States and in stories that promote Mexican cultural traditions.

Kathy Tyree

Performing Artist, Director, Producer. Kathy Tyree is a native of Omaha with a 42 year performing arts/theatre career which over the past 8 years evolved into directing and producing.

Hugo Zamorano

Multidisciplinary Artist who enjoys mentoring, spray painting, and boxing.

Ronald J. Zank, PhD

Assistant Professor of Theatre, School of the Arts University of Nebraska at Omaha. Ron Zank is a director, playwright, dramaturg, and theatre historian at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Emiliano Lerda

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Thomas Grady

PROGRAM DESIGN
Quinn Metal Corbin (@qmetalc)

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While nearly 30% of audiences nationwide have not returned to theatre since the pandemic, here in Omaha the **Great Plains Theatre Commons continues to nurture new talent from the ground up.**

We bring stories to life. Established and emerging **playwrights from across the the country** come to our New Play Conference every year. Local storytellers, young and old, are finding their voices through our Story Circles and Workshops **in every corner of Omaha.**

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You can make a one-time gift (with this QR code) or join our Commons Membership with a recurring monthly donation (info can be found on page 48).

Sincerely,

Kevin Lawler, GPTC Director



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