

2025 G P T C

*GREAT PLAINS THEATRE COMMONS NEW PLAY FESTIVAL
MAY 25 - 31, 2025*





TABLE OF CONTENTS

1-4	WELCOME & GPTC INFO
5-13	FESTIVAL INFO
14-18	SCHEDULE OF EVENTS
19-24	EVENING EVENTS
25-31	PLAYWRIGHTS
32-41	GUEST ARTISTS
42-44	PANELISTS
45-49	DESIGN WING
50-54	PLAYLAB DIRECTORS
55-56	COMMONS MEMBERSHIP
57-59	BOARD & STAFF
60-64	THANKS

WELCOME

Dear Great Plains Theatre Commons Artists and Friends,

Welcome to the 20th Anniversary of the Great Plains Theatre Commons' New Play Festival! For two decades out here on the plains, we have gathered each spring, and worked together as a community, to help bring new stories into the world.

Over the years we have helped to develop over 700 new plays and support the playwrights who wrote them. We have also supported thousands of Omaha artists and deepened our local and national community in ways too numerous to count.

The entire endeavor, from the beginning, has been built with hard work, tears, laughter, and generosity. There are so many people to thank.

There is Metropolitan Community College, who has given us the gift of a home for so many years. There is the hard work and deep care of the amazing people who have served as the staff for the GPTC, both as part of MCC and the current staff of the GPTC in our new life as a nonprofit. There are our donors, who have made it possible for us to provide all our programming to the public for free while paying all of our artists for their work. And the artists who have given so deeply of their dreams, their talent, and their time.

Finally, we thank the community members who have engaged with us in this act of creation throughout the years. It's only with everyone's efforts that the New Play Festival can happen.

At a moment when the powers running our country wish to have many of our stories erased, it's wonderful to feel the true strength and goodwill that is represented by this community. There have been generations of people who have gathered here each spring to share stories that explore the deepest aspects of our humanity. That spirit of generosity has always made the New Play Festival a week of vibrant life and I hope that will be true for you this week.

Thank you for being a part of our community. *Thank you* for helping to bring diverse new stories into the world.

Warmly,



Kevin Lawler | GPTC Artistic Director



Quinn Metal Corbin | GPTC Manager

THE GPTC NEW PLAY FESTIVAL 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 Festival*
- *Connect local and national actors, directors, dramaturgs, designers and technical theatre personnel*



CULTURAL EQUITY

2

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 to a degree that leads to consistent inequity and injustice, 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 following goals...

- 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.
- We vow to pursue cultural consciousness throughout our organization through substantive learning and formal, transparent policies.
- We vow to 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.

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.

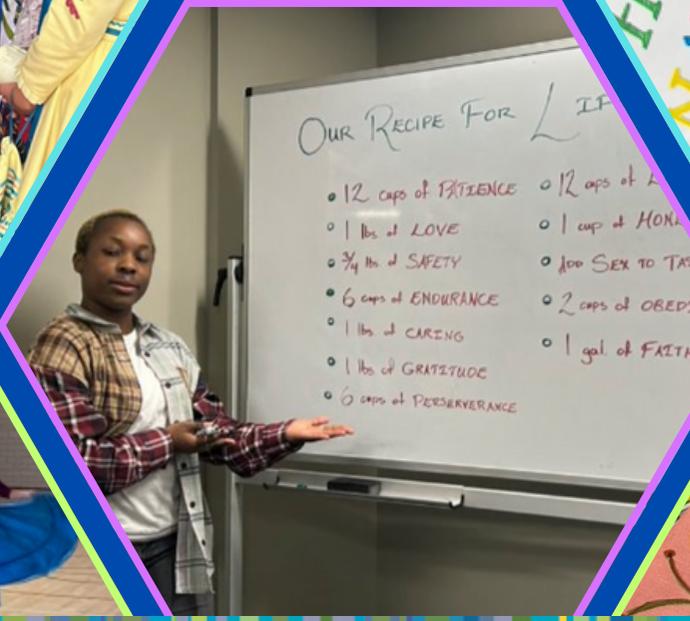
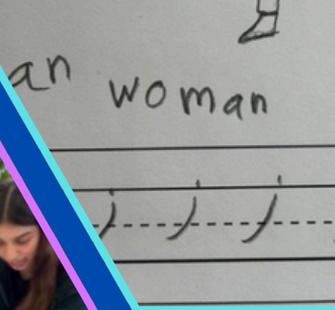
SILENT WRITE - Regular evenings with dedicated space and energy for writers to congregate and work.

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 Festival.

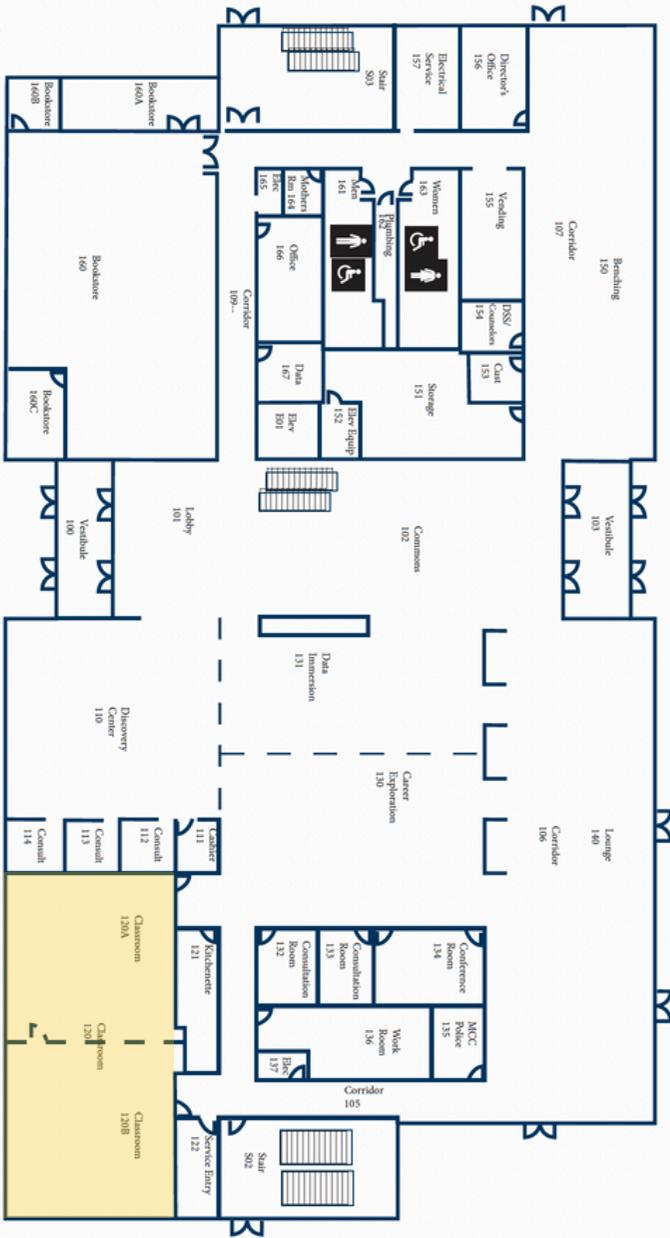
PLAY BY MAY- A weekly program designed to motivate playwrights to start writing and keep writing.



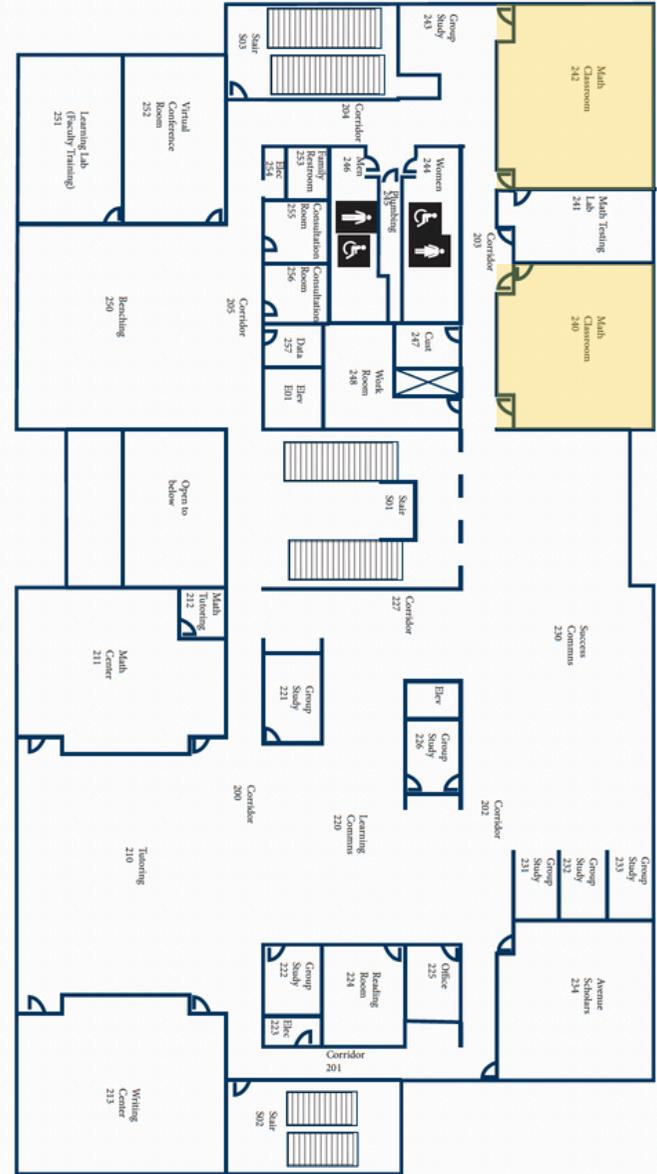
CONFERENCE CENTER MAPS

CASC
Building 23

Exit to
Building 22



First Floor

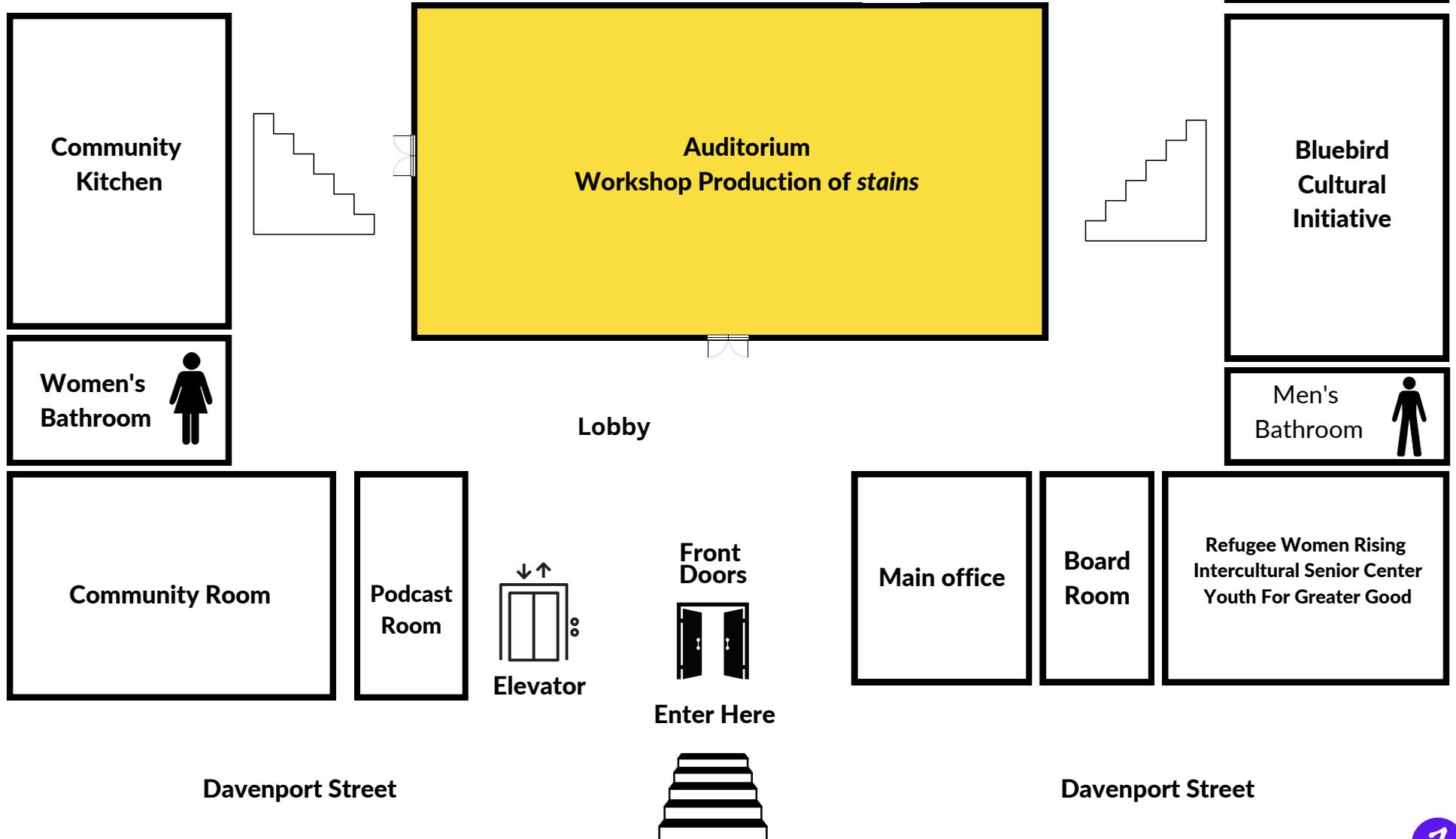


Second Floor



YATES ILLUMINATES

3260 Davenport St



FESTIVAL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION/INFORMATION

Staff is ready to answer your questions each day of the festival 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
- Pep-o-mint Lifesaver mints

Registration and Info Center Hours

5/25 8:00am - 1:30pm

5/26 8:00am - 5:00pm

5/27 8:00am - 4:00pm

5/28 9:15am - 4:00pm

5/29 9:00am - 5:00pm

5/30 8:15am - 3:00pm

5/31 9:00am - 1:00pm

TRANSPORTATION/PARKING

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

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.

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.

The GPTC is grateful and honored to work with the Four Directions Playwright Residency to develop new Native stories from across the country.

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 Festival 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), 917-570-2624 (Kevin), or commons@gptcplays.com immediately.

IF YOU NEED HELP

We ask that everyone attending the Festival 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.

FESTIVAL INFORMATION

FESTIVAL 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) and Building 23
More details on pages 5 & 6
- The Commons Season performance of *stains* will be held at **Yates Illuminates** (3260 Davenport St.)
- Stories of O will be held at **Yates Illuminates** (3260 Davenport St.)
- GPTC's Variety Show will be held at **Benson Theatre** (6054 Maple St.).

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)

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.

COMMONS SEASON PERFORMANCE

The workshop performance of *stains* for national Festival artists is Friday, May 30, and seats have been set aside. For guests staying in Festival 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 Festival. This year, 10 plays were selected from over 700 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 Festival 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 relationships well beyond the Festival. Please make use of the Whova message boards and take advantage of GPTC social media.

Instagram: @gptcplays
Facebook: @GreatPlainsTheatreConference
Use our hashtag: #GPTC2025



SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

SUNDAY, MAY 25

9:30AM - 10:30AM	Participant Orientation (Bistro)
10:30AM - 10:45AM	Break
10:45AM - 11:45AM	Responders and Dramaturgs Orientation (SCC 201A)
10:45AM - 11:45AM	PlayLab Playwright Cohort (Building 23, Room 120A)
12:00PM - 1:15PM	Lunch/Panel 1 at 12:30pm (SCC 201B)
	Young Dramatists Orientation (SCC 201A)
1:15PM - 8:00PM	PlayLab Rehearsals (various locations)
6:00PM - 8:30PM	Stories of O, includes dinner (Yates Illuminates)

MONDAY, MAY 26

9:00AM - 10:30AM	Workshop Session 1 (Blg 23)
10:30AM - 10:40AM	Break
10:40AM - 12:50PM	<i>Seven Days in the Garden</i> by Lori Goodman PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
12:50PM - 1:00PM	Break
1:00PM - 2:00PM	Lunch (SCC 201B)
2:00PM - 2:10PM	Break
2:10PM - 5:00PM	<i>Nobody Dies in This Play</i> by Skyler Tarnas PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
5:00PM - 6:30PM	Welcome BBQ (Bistro)

TUESDAY, MAY 27

9:00AM - 10:00AM	Yoga (Building 23, Room 120A)
10:00AM - 10:15AM	Break
10:15AM - 12:35PM	<i>come straight home</i> by DJ Hills PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
12:35PM - 1:35PM	Lunch (SCC 201B)
1:35PM - 1:45PM	Break
1:45PM - 3:45PM	<i>Wave After Wave</i> by Benjamin Benne PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
3:45PM - 4:00PM	Break
4:00PM - 5:00PM	PlayLab Playwright Cohort (Building 23, Room 240)
5:00PM - 5:30PM	Break
5:30PM - 7:00PM	Young Dramatists Evening Dinner (Bistro)
7:00PM - 8:30PM	Young Dramatists Reading (SCC 201A)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28

10:15AM - 11:45AM	Workshop Session 2 (Blg 23)
11:45AM - 12:00PM	Break
12:00PM - 1:15PM	Lunch/Panel 2 at 12:30pm (SCC 201B)
1:15PM - 1:30PM	Break
1:30PM - 3:45PM	<i>You'll Be Made of Ashes Too</i> by Baylee Shlichtman PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
7:00PM - 8:30PM	Third Annual GPTC Variety Show (Benson Theatre)

THURSDAY, MAY 29

10:00AM - 12:10PM	#'s by Chad Kaydo PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201B)
12:10PM - 12:20PM	Break
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
3:15PM - 5:15PM	<i>where pathways meet</i> by a.k. payne PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)

FRIDAY, MAY 30

8:45AM - 9:45AM	Yoga (Building 23, Room 120A)
9:45AM - 10:00AM	Break
10:00AM - 12:15PM	<i>Every Living Thing</i> by Leroy Hood PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
12:15PM - 12:30PM	Break
12:30PM - 1:45PM	Lunch/Panel 3 at 1:00pm (SCC 201B)
1:45PM - 2:00PM	Break
2:00PM - 4:50PM	<i>The Nativity Starring Keisha Taylor</i> by Olivia Matthews PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
7:30PM - 9:30PM	Workshop Production of <i>stairs</i> by Sarah Cho (Yates Illuminates)

SATURDAY, MAY 31

10:00AM - 11:55AM	<i>The Words of Ants</i> by Xiaoyan Kang PlayLab and Response Session (SCC 201A)
11:55AM - 12:10PM	Break
12:10PM - 1:10PM	Lunch (Bistro)
6:00PM - 9:30PM	20th Anniversary Closing Celebration with Design Wing Presentation (SCC 201)

ALL FESTIVAL TIMES ARE CENTRAL TIME ZONE.

STREAMING LINKS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE ON THE WHOVA PORTAL FOR SECURITY REASONS.



DAY BY DAY SCHEDULE

13

SUNDAY, MAY 25

9:30AM - 10:30AM

GENERAL ORIENTATION (BISTRO)

10:30AM - 10:45AM

BREAK

10:45AM - 11:45AM

PLAYLAB ORIENTATION FOR RESPONDERS AND DRAMATURGS (SCC 201A)

PLAYLAB PLAYWRIGHT COHORT 1 (BUILDING 23, ROOM 120A)

12:00PM - 1:15PM

LUNCH/PANEL 1 (SCC 201B)

UNUSUAL COLLABORATIONS (Panel begins at 12:30PM)

Eliza Bent, Theresa Buchheister, Kip Fagan, Avery Vonn Kenyatta, Jared Mezzocchi, Don Nguyen.

Moderated by Samuel Yates.

12:00PM - 1:00PM

YOUNG DRAMATISTS ORIENTATION (SCC 201A)

1:15PM - 8:00PM

PLAYLAB REHEARSALS (VARIOUS LOCATIONS)

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: Mysteries and Revelations. Additional details on page 20.

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)

ALL FESTIVAL TIMES ARE CENTRAL TIME ZONE.

MONDAY, MAY 26

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

WAI YIM AND STEPHANIE KYUNG SUN WALTERS (ROOM 240)

Tarot & Storytelling (Capacity 13)

Join us for a workshop of playwriting exercises utilizing the pictorial storytelling of Tarot! Whether you find your play in need of some reinvigoration or you've got the seeds of a new idea with room to grow, Tarot can guide your creative writing in new and exciting ways! A useful tool as a visual writing prompt, Tarot can inspire you to unleash archetypes, create larger conflict, and amp up the dramatic tension. Participants don't need to know Tarot to benefit from this workshop; all you need is your open mind and your endless imagination! (If you are an experienced reader, fabulous! Bring your favorite deck, and let's go to work!) No prior knowledge of tarot needed; BYO deck. Decks will be available for workshop use.

KIP FAGAN (ROOM 120A)

Locating the Tone: Directing and Acting "adventurous" Contemporary Plays (Capacity 20)

Many contemporary playwrights influenced by experimentalists like Mac Wellman and avant-garde companies like the Wooster Group have returned to "well-made play" narrative conventions while retaining the blown-out structures and inventive theatricality of their influences. Is there a common language for approaching these plays in rehearsal? This workshop examines the tools needed — and the tools that need to be invented — for rehearsing this kind of work.

10:30AM - 10:40AM

BREAK

10:40AM - 12:50PM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

SEVEN DAYS IN THE GARDEN BY LORI GOODMAN

Director: Addie Barnhart

Dramaturg: Samuel Yates

Design Wing Fellow: Ebony Burton

Room Host: Eva Quam

Respondents: Kia Corthron, Heidi Schreck

CAST

JOHANNA: Sydney Readman

TAD/PHILIP: Geoffrey Eggleston

DR. SWAN: D. Kevin Williams

NURSE COLE: Amy Lane

DOREEN: Anna Dragon

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Olivia Patinkin

MONDAY, MAY 26 (CONT)

Synopsis: It's been ten years since Roe v Wade was overturned and the US has split into two separate countries. Johanna, poor and living in New America, where all abortions and birth control are illegal, finds herself pregnant. Her partner sees a flyer for Floral Gardens, a luxurious retreat for disadvantaged women with unwanted pregnancies. However, all is not what she expected, and Johanna finds herself both trapped and seduced by the retreat. When a mysterious intruder offers to help Johanna escape to the Democratic Coastal Republic (DCR) she must decide between a life of luxury and a dangerous journey to freedom.

12:50PM - 1:00PM

BREAK

1:00PM - 2:00PM

LUNCH (SCC 201B)

2:00PM - 2:10PM

BREAK

2:10PM - 5:00PM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

NOBODY DIES IN THIS PLAY by Skyler Tarnas

Director: Christopher Scott

Dramaturg: Khalid Y. Long

Design Wing Fellow: David Forsee

Room Host: Eva Quam

Respondents: Kip Fagan, Don Nguyen

CAST

BENJI: Patrick White

IMOGEN: Rachel Williamson

NOEL: Brendan Brown

BETH: Jessica Johnson

FAYE: Ashley Kobza

TIM: Randall Johanningsmeier

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Christopher Scott

Synopsis:

Benji is barely holding it together. His girlfriend is recovering from a suicide attempt with medication they can't afford. His job search is going nowhere. His best friend hates his girlfriend. The rent is due. When a phone call reconnects Benji with his wealthy sister after more than a decade apart, it's a second chance to pay the bills, but only if he's willing to confront some unpleasant truths.

5:30PM - 6:30PM

WELCOME BBQ (BISTRO)

TUESDAY, MAY 27

9:00AM - 10:00AM

YOGA WITH ASHLYNN ANDERSEN (BUILDING 23, ROOM 120A)

10:00AM - 10:15AM

BREAK

10:15AM - 12:35PM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

COME STRAIGHT HOME by DJ Hills

Director: Mackenzie Zielke

Dramaturg: Samuel Yates

Design Wing Fellow: Gylanni Carrington

Room Host: Nessie Mass

Respondents: Kia Corthron, Kip Fagan

CAST

YOUNGER: David James Zenchuck

OLDER: Anthony Holmes

Synopsis:

Structured as a short story collection for the stage, COME STRAIGHT HOME follows two brothers on an epic river journey, as they age from 14 to 92, intercut with scenes from their lives that shape the people they become.

12:35PM - 1:45PM

LUNCH (SCC 201B)

1:35PM - 1:45PM

BREAK

1:45PM - 3:45AM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

WAVE AFTER WAVE by Benjamin Benne

Director: Alex Rodriguez

Dramaturg: Kat Zukaitis

Design Wing Fellow: Rodrigo Hernandez Martinez

Room Host: Nessie Mass

Respondents: Don Nguyen, Heidi Schreck

CAST

SEAN: Francisco Franco

NATHANIEL: Efen Gonzalez-Ortega

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Lea Ramos

TUESDAY, MAY 27 (CONT)

Synopsis: Every year, cousins Sean and Nathanael visit the same beach in Southern California (first as children, then as adults) to swim in the ocean, eat carne asada, and witness how their lives, their bodies, and the natural world around them have changed year after year.

3:45PM - 4:00PM

BREAK

4:00PM - 5:00PM

PLAYLAB PLAYWRIGHT COHORT 2 (BUILDING 23, ROOM 240)

5:00PM - 5:30PM

BREAK

5:30PM - 7:00PM

YOUNG DRAMATISTS EVENING DINNER (BISTRO)

7:00PM - 8:30PM

YOUNG DRAMATIST READING (SCC 201A)

MAJOR L'S by Sofia La Fata Hornillos

Director: Raydell Cordell III

Dramaturg: Kat Zukaitis

Design Wing Fellow: Rodrigo Hernandez Martinez

Mentor Actor: Thomas Gjere

Synopsis: Major Ls spins the tale of a group of three friends and their reluctant acquaintance Jackson as they all go to college together. Together they learn that perhaps not everything is as it seems and sometimes you have to go to drastic measures to get what you want.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 28

10:15AM - 11:45AM

WORKSHOP SESSION 2 (BUILDING 23)

KIA CORTHRON (ROOM 240)

Getting Unstuck (Capacity 15)

Do you feel stuck on the play you're currently working on? Or did you get stuck on a former piece and finally, in frustration, put it aside? This workshop will help get you out of creative gridlock, allowing you to open up your play via new, unexplored territory.

HEIDI SCHRECK (ROOM 120A)

Writing the Personal and the Political (Capacity 20)

Join award-winning playwright and performer Heidi Schreck (*What the Constitution Means to Me*) for an intimate 90 minute playwriting workshop that explores how personal stories can illuminate larger political and social questions. Through writing prompts, discussion, and collaborative exercises, participants will examine the power of memory, voice, and structure in shaping narrative. Whether you're starting a new piece or deepening an existing one, this session will offer tools for grounding your work in lived experience while opening it up to collective resonance.

11:45AM - 12:00PM

BREAK

12:00PM - 1:15PM

LUNCH/PANEL 2 (SCC 201B)

BUILDING STORIES FROM COMMUNITY (Panel begins at 12:30PM)

Haley Haas, Jim Hoggatt, Doriette Jordan, Kim Louise, Ellen Struve.

Moderated by Kat Zukaitis.

1:15PM - 1:30PM

BREAK

1:30PM - 3:45PM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

YOU'LL BE MADE OF ASHES TOO by Baylee Shlichtman

Director: Darlyn Gonzalez

Dramaturg: Khalid Y. Long

Design Wing Fellow: Evdoxia Ragko

Room Host: Eva Quam

Respondents: Kip Fagan, Heidi Schreck

DAY BY DAY SCHEDULE

16

WEDNESDAY, MAY 28 (CONT)

CAST

LIANA: Tatiana Sandoval

EVELYN: Carina DuMarce

SHADOW/STAGE DIRECTIONS: Marina Rosado

Synopsis:

After a mysterious camping accident, two sisters come together to bury their Mom and maybe repair their relationship. Here, memory is flammable. And there's a ghost in the house.

7:00PM - 8:30PM

GPTC's THIRD ANNUAL VARIETY SHOW (BENSON THEATRE)

Additional details found on page 22.

THURSDAY, MAY 29

10:00AM - 12:10PM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

#'s by Chad Kaydo

Director: Ron Zank

Dramaturg: Samuel Yates

Design Wing Fellow: Rodrigo Hernandez Martinez

Room Host: Nessie Mass

Respondents: Eliza Bent, Heidi Schreck

CAST

MERRIT: McKenna Cottone

JAMI: Kylah Calloway

LILAH: Faushia Raquel Weeden

LUCY: Rachel Smart

ADAM: Jarin Keyes

STACY: Hannah Graff

RACHEL: Amanda Overfield

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Angela Jenson Frey

Synopsis:

#'s is an existential office comedy (with math) about a group of coworkers who must rate their colleagues (and themselves) with numbers from 1 to 12 by EOD. As they struggle to define a scale that keeps changing—testing their friendships, their egos, and their patience—how will they hold on to the jobs they hate?

12:10PM - 12:20PM

BREAK

1:30PM - 3:00PM

WORKSHOP SESSION 3 (BUILDING 23)

DON NGUYEN (ROOM 240)

Expanding Your 10-Minute Play into a Full-Length (Capacity 10)

You've written a tight, compelling 10-minute play—now what? This hands-on workshop will help you uncover the larger story waiting to emerge. Bring a short play you've written (or are currently developing), and we'll work through five generative questions designed to help you. Whether you're looking to build a full-length play from scratch or just curious about how short work can evolve, this session invites experimentation, imagination, and bold new drafts.

ELIZA BENT (ROOM 120A)

The Art of Self Production (Capacity 15)

Don't know where to start when it comes to producing your own work? Let's get to work. In this workshop with Bent discover how producing can be as artful and satisfying as writing plays. The craft of the polite-yet-persistent follow up will be explored along with how to write a stellar press release and how to engage in brain tempests, a brain storm that is so big that it inspires you to reach a bigger goal than you could have imagined.

3:00PM - 3:15PM

BREAK

3:15PM - 5:15PM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

WHERE PATHWAYS MEET by a.k. payne

Director: Denise Chapman

Dramaturg: Khalid Y. Long

Design Wing Fellow: Ebony Burton

Room Host: Verla Collier

Respondents: Kia Corthron, Don Nguyen

CAST

DWIGHT: Alex Bridgman

SGT: Carina DuMarce

MINNIE: Allana Pommier

PVT: Alyssa Gonzalez

PVT. JACKSON: DJ Tyree

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Asia Nared

Synopsis:

a Black Space Play: Minnie and Dwight live in a world on fire. And so they take off from 'earth' with dreams of starting anew on a planet all their own. What happens to the tongues and rhythms of the once colonized and enslaved when they first taste true freedom? What happens when Minnie and Dwight's dreams and visions wither and diverge? Who remembers and who forgets?

FRIDAY, MAY 30

8:45AM - 9:45AM

YOGA WITH ASHLYNN ANDERSEN (BUILDING 23, ROOM 120A)

9:45AM - 10:00AM

BREAK

10:00AM - 12:15PM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

EVERY LIVING THING by Leroy Hood

Director: Breanna Carodine

Dramaturg: Kat Zukaitis

Design Wing Fellow: Evdoxia Ragkou

Room Host: Nessie Mass

Respondents: Eliza Bent, Kip Fagan

CAST

NITYA: Natalie Hanson

WHITNEY: Ashley Kobza

FLIP: Travis Manley

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Zoella Sneed

Synopsis:

Nitya, a young Jain nun, has taken the vow of Sallekhana, renouncing all food and drink until her final breath. She is found dying on the streets of Chicago by Whitney, a nursing resident and enthusiastic astrologer. Whitney becomes convinced she is meant to save Nitya, but Nitya does not want to be saved. This conflict forces both of them to extremes they never thought possible, challenging the beliefs they hold most dear.

12:15PM - 12:30PM

BREAK

12:30PM - 1:45PM

LUNCH/PANEL 3 (SCC 201B)

WRITING & RISK (Panel begins at 1:00PM)

Kia Corthron, Heidi Schreck, Doug Wright.

Moderated by Khalid Y. Long.

1:45PM - 2:00PM

BREAK

2:00PM - 4:50PM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

THE NATIVITY STARRING KEISHA TAYLOR by Olivia Matthews

Director: TammyRa'

Dramaturg: Khalid Y. Long

Design Wing Fellow: Gylanni Carrington

Room Host: Verla Collier

Respondents: Eliza Bent, Kia Corthron

CAST

KEISHA TAYLOR: Noni Williams

TRINITY JONES: AJ Adhiambo

ELIZABETH FISCHER-JONES: Aniyah Skanes

ELLE DEVEREUX/THE GIRL/REPORTER JANICE JESUP: Brannon Evans

MINISTER CHAD BRYANT/BOY 2/THE ANGEL: Malik Kelly

REVEREND TRAVIS JACKSON: Everett Judd

ANON666/GATOR JESUS: Artie Shaw

Synopsis:

Keisha Taylor is a #GoodGirl. Or so she's told when she's cast as the Virgin Mary over her "fast" friend Trinity in their church's Christmas play. But when Trinity announces she is pregnant by divine intervention, everything Keisha knows about faith and friendship is turned upside down. As Trinity ignites a religious movement at school and online, a doubtful Keisha finds solace in a mysterious boy from the darkest tangles of the World Wide Web. With the Christmas play quickly approaching, can Keisha mend her friendship with Trinity while reconciling the limits of her own faith? The Nativity Starring Keisha Taylor is a satirical look at religion, purity culture, and Black girlhood in the age of social media.

7:30PM - 9:30PM

WORKSHOP PRODUCTION (YATES ILLUMINATES)

STAINS by Sarah Cho

See page 21 for additional details.



SATURDAY, MAY 31

10:00AM - 11:55AM

PLAYLAB AND RESPONSE SESSION (SCC 201A)

THE WORDS OF ANTS by Xiaoyan Kang

Director: Wai Yim

Dramaturg: Kat Zukaitis

Design Wing Fellow: David Forsee

Room Host: Nessie Mass

Respondents: Eliza Bent, Don Nguyen

CAST

LING LING: Roni Shelley Perez

MEIYE: Cecilia Poon

OUYANG: Stephanie Kyung Sun Walters

YAN: Audrey Billings

HAN: Wai Yim

STAGE DIRECTIONS: Adam Bassing

Synopsis:

The visit of an uninvited woman changes Yan's life forever. As the last natural inheritor, Yan embarks upon a journey to preserve an almost extinct language, but at what cost?

11:55AM - 12:10PM

BREAK

12:10PM - 1:10PM

LUNCH (BISTRO)

6:00PM - 9:30PM

20TH ANNIVERSARY CLOSING CELEBRATION

Design Wing Presentation and Awards Ceremony
with National McDowell Award Recipient, Doug Wright





EVENING EVENTS



The Stories of O



SUNDAY, MAY 25

THIS MONTH'S THEME IS: MYSTERIES AND REVELATIONS

You're invited to an evening of (increasingly more rare) in-person community, shared food, great stories and live music. 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 A WORKSHOP PRODUCTION OF

Stains

by Sarah Cho
directed by
Rebecca Wear



SARAH CHO
Playwright



REBECCA WEAR
Director



JIHYE KIM
Dramaturg



JESSICA KO*
Soo-Hyun Park



LAUREN KRUPSKI
Melissa Joan Hart from
Sabrina the Teenage Witch



BIANNAH PEJI-PALM
Christine Park



JANET SONG*
Halmoni Cho

The 2024/2025 Commons Season

A free season of new works performed in various locations across Omaha. The Commons Season 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 New Play Festival, to Neighborhood Tapestries, a celebration of local stories, music, art and community. The goal of the Commons Season is to paint a diverse and vibrant portrait of the city, create opportunities for friends and neighbors to interact, and be a catalyst for a dialogue within the community about the stories that affect our lives.

stains

by Sarah Cho

FESTIVAL NIGHT WEDNESDAY, 5/30, 7:30PM - 9:30PM

stains is a coming-of-age comedy about a 14-year-old girl whose impoverished, struggling family experiences her first period as a burden due to their limited resources. It is a powerful, autobiographical play about growing up poor, female, and Korean-American in Los Angeles in the late 1990s. The play moves from grounded reality to flights of adolescent fantasy as its young heroine finds unexpected support from a pop-cultural icon who serves as her "period guide" through a painfully awkward rite of passage.

stains was developed as a part of the 2022 GPTC New Play Festival and was originally developed as part of 2021 MADlab Playwriting Development Program, produced by Moving Arts Theatre Company in Los Angeles, CA.

All public performances are at Yates Illuminates. 3260 Davenport Street.

Directed by **Rebecca Wear**

Dramaturg: **Jihye Kim**

Stage Manager: **Melissa Carnahan**

Cast: **Jessica Ko***, **Lauren Krupski**, **Biannah Peji-Palm**, **Janet Song***

Scenic/Co-Lighting: **Bill Van Deest**

Technical Director/Props: **Hannah Clark**

Co-Lighting/Board Op: **Chelsea Greenway**

Costumes: **Lora Kaup**

Sound Design & Engineer: **Craig Marsh**

Scenic Artist: **Craig Lee**

Electrician: **Bella Loftus**

Carpenters: **Mark Krejci, Hallie Olsen, Tommy Render**

ASM: **Verla Collier**

Front of House: **Alyssa Gonzalez/Steve Knox**

Livestream information can be found on the Whova Festival Agenda.

GREAT PLAINS THEATRE COMMONS PRESENTS A WORKSHOP PRODUCTION OF



MAY 28, 29, 30, 2025 AT 7:30PM
YATES ILLUMINATES | 3260 DAVENPORT ST

DEVELOPED AS A PART OF THE 2022 GPTC NEW PLAY FESTIVAL

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States, appearing under a Special Appearance Contract.



FREE TICKETS



Elizabeth Martinez

INCLUDING ACTS BY:

Olivia Johnson

Will Meinen

Juanna V Mii

Ellygton

GPTC's

VARIETY SHOW

Benson Theatre (6058 Maple)



5/28/25 @ 7:00pm

Variety show of local and national artists during the Great Plains Theatre Commons New Play Festival. Drag! Comedy! Dance! Music! and more!

Eliza Bent

HOSTED BY TAMMYRA'

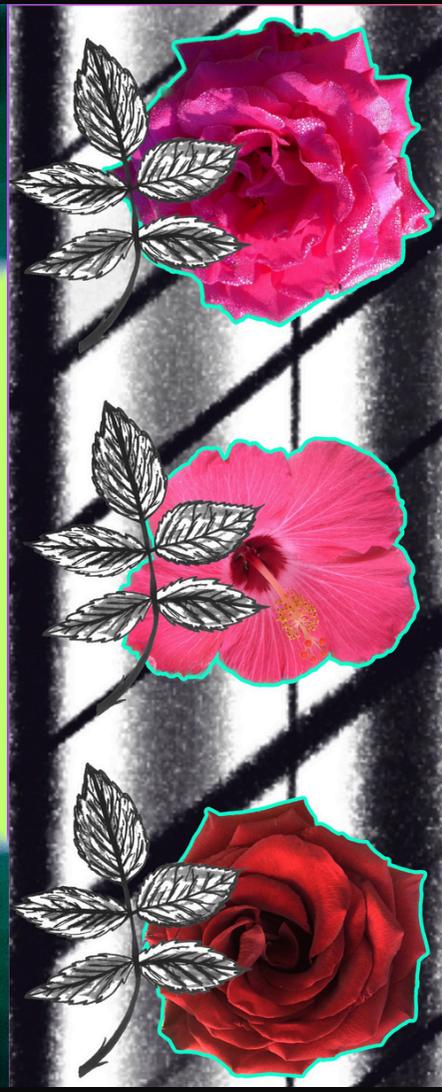
Jenny Yang

E Rawq

Natasha Kessler

Alina Nguyen

Mimosa Savage





Great Plains Theatre Commons New Play Festival

CLOSING CELEBRATION

Join us for the culmination of the Festival where we will share a meal, raise a toast to the plays and artists that made the week possible, experience an installation from the Design Wing, and get our groove on in honor of 20 years.

National McDowell Award Recipient: Doug Wright

Local McDowell Award Recipient: Denise Chapman

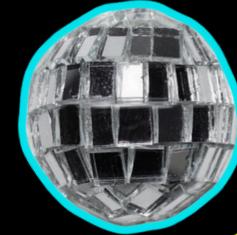
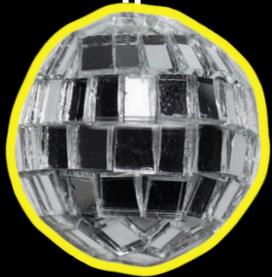
*Featuring Music By: SN*P*

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

Saturday, May 31, 6:00pm - 9:30pm

MCC's Fort Omaha Campus

Swanson Conference Center (Building 22)







PLAYWRIGHTS

26



Benjamin Benne
Wave After Wave

Benjamin Benne (he/him) is Chance Theater's 2025 Resident Playwright, a Playwrights' Center '23-26 Core Writer, and was named part of "LA Vanguardia: The Latino innovators, instigators, and power players breaking through barriers" by the Los Angeles Times. His produced plays include *Alma* (Center Theatre Group's Kirk Douglas Theatre, American Blues Theater, ArtsWest Playhouse, Curious Theatre Company, Central Square Theater, The Spot, Chance Theater, Passage Theatre Company), *In His Hands* (Mosaic Theater Company, First Floor Theater), *Manning* (Portland Stage), and *What / Washed Ashore / Astray* (Pillsbury House Theatre). Additionally, his work has been developed at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Colorado New Play Festival, The Public, Roundabout, Playwrights Realm, Denver Center, The Old Globe, Two River, New Harmony Project, and SPACE on Ryder Farm, among many others. He has been awarded Ojai Playwrights Conference's Dr. Kerry English Award, Portland Stage's Clauder Competition Grand Prize, American Blues Theater's Blue Ink Playwriting Award, Arizona Theatre Company's National Latinx Playwriting Award, and KCACTF Latinx Playwriting Award, among others. He has been commissioned by South Coast Repertory and Seattle Repertory Theatre. MFA: David Geffen/Yale School of Drama. www.benjaminbenne.com



Lori Goodman
Seven Days in the Garden

Lori Goodman is a native New Yorker who has been writing plays on and off for over 30 years. Her work has been performed in New York City, Upstate New York, Washington D.C. and California. Her full-length play *Touch* has just finished a successful run at The Tank in NYC. It will be published by Concord Theatricals in the coming years. *Touch* was a second rounder judges' selection at the Austin Film Festival 2021. Her play *Reservations for Two* was a winner of the Samuel French Short Play Festival and has been performed throughout the U.S. and internationally. Lori is a member of the Dramatists Guild and New Circle Theatre Company. Lori's plays can be read at: <https://newplayexchange.org/users/8464/lori-goodman>

PLAYWRIGHTS

27



DJ Hills
come straight home

DJ Hills (they/them) is a cross-genre writer for the page, stage, and screen. DJ's plays include *Horsegirl & Cowdaddy*, *come straight home*, *TRUNK BRIEF JOCK THONG*, *Adult Things* (Carnegie Mellon University), and *I SWEAR TO GOD* (University of California Los Angeles). Their short plays *...in daylight* and *big and small* were part of Theater Masters TAKE TEN 2022 and 2023, respectively, and subsequently published by Concord Theatricals. *Horsegirl & Cowdaddy* has been developed with The Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Boston Court Pasadena, and Seven Devils Playwrights Conference. *TRUNK BRIEF JOCK THONG* was shortlisted for the 2023 Yale Drama Series. DJ has been twice nominated for the Pushcart Prize, for both poetry and prose, and their poetry chapbook *Leaving Earth* was published by Split Rock Press. Fellowships and residencies include the Substratum writing residency and the Horticulture Playwriting Fellowship. Find them online at www.dj-hills.com.



Leroy Hood
Every Living Thing

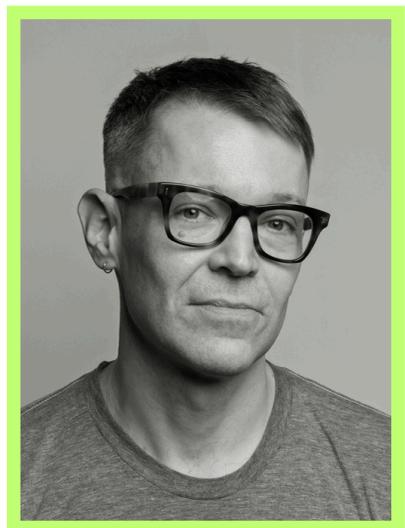
Leroy Hood is a playwright, screenwriter, actor, voiceover artist, and stand up comedian from Corpus Christi, Texas. He graduated from Texas Christian University in 2016 with a BFA in Theatre with an emphasis in acting. As a playwright, his plays and short plays have been produced at theaters and universities across the country. Most recently, his play *The Shuddering Goat* was produced off-off Broadway as a part of T. Schreiber's Wake Up! Festival and was also awarded Best Production at ASU's Theatre Fringe Festival. His works have also received numerous staged readings, university productions, and workshops. Leroy currently resides in Tempe, Arizona, where he's pursuing an MFA in Dramatic Writing at Arizona State University.

PLAYWRIGHTS



Xiaoyan Kang
The Words of Ants

Born and raised in China, **Xiaoyan Kang** started writing plays in English while studying under Philip Gotanda at Berkeley. Her plays include *The Words of Ants* (Playwrights Realm Scratchpad Series, Alliance Theatre's Keneda National Graduate Playwriting Award finalist, Jane Chambers Award runner-up), *The Obituary* (Sewanee Writers' Conference Horton Foote Scholarship, KCACTF V Julie Jensen Playwriting Award honorable mention), and *Bound* (BBC International Radio Playwriting Competition Regional Winner, O'Neill Semifinalist, KCACTF V Paul Stephen Lim Playwriting Award). Some of her short plays were developed at 24 Hour Plays: Nationals and KCACTF V. Xiaoyan is finishing her MFA at the Iowa Playwrights Workshop.



Chad Kaydo
#'s

Chad Kaydo is a queer playwright from Ashtabula, Ohio, who writes intimately observed plays obsessed with friendship, mortality, and the existential questions hidden in the quotidian. Recently: *I'm Repeating Myself* at the Brick. Currently: Member of the Clubbed Thumb 2024-2025 Early Career Writers' Group. Upcoming: Developing *#'s* at the 2025 Great Plains Theatre Commons and *Where Is Miss Stone?* with Clubbed Thumb. Chad's work has also been supported by Fresh Ground Pepper, Playhouse on Park, the Quickening Room, the Sewanee Writers' Conference, and Theater Masters. As Playwright in Residence at the Brick, Chad produces and hosts Quick + Dirty, a development series for short works by new collaborators. One-fifth of the theater collective The Omnivores. M.F.A., Hunter College.

PLAYWRIGHTS



Olivia Matthews
*The Nativity Starring
Keisha Taylor*

Olivia Matthews is a writer from Central Florida living in Atlanta, Georgia. Her plays have been seen in Atlanta, Houston, Orlando, Miami, Vancouver, and New York City. In addition to GPTC, her play *The Nativity Starring Keisha Taylor* was presented as a reading at Onward Theatre in Atlanta and was selected as a top-15 finalist for the 2025 Trustus Playwrights' Festival. Olivia has a B.A. in Theatre Arts from Rollins College and an M.F.A. in Playwriting from Ohio University. Her work often explores family dynamics, the complexities of young women and teens, and the oddities and magic of The South. When she isn't writing, Olivia can be found bingeing the podcast *You're Wrong About*, raving about Dua Lipa's latest album, or scouring the internet for yet another pair of hoop earrings. If you ever catch her smiling to herself, she's probably thinking about vegan Cuban picadillo.



a.k. payne
where pathways meet

a.k. payne (they & she) is a playwright, artist-theorist, and theatermaker with roots in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Their plays love on and engage the interdependencies of Black pasts, presents and futures and seek to find/remember language that might move us towards our collective liberation(s). They hold a B.A. in English and African-American Studies from Yale College and an MFA in Playwriting under Tarell Alvin McCraney from fka Yale School of Drama. A 2023-2024 Van Lier New Voices Fellow, their work has been a finalist for the L. Arnold Weissberger New Play Award. Her work has been a 3x finalist and 2025 winner of the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, the oldest and largest international prize honoring women+ playwrights. Their work has been developed with the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, The New Harmony Project, Great Plains Theater Festival, and Manhattan Theater Club's "Groundworks Lab." She is currently a resident artist/fellow with National Black Theatre's I AM SOUL Playwrights Residency and Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh Foundation). They are a proud graduate of Pittsburgh Public Schools; grandchild of the Great Migration; descendant of a music teacher and a carpenter, who both march every year with their unions in Pittsburgh's Labor Day parade; a non-binary & genderqueer abolitionist affected in community by the 'New Jim Crow;' and of a great lineage of Black women storytellers and living-room archivists; all of which deeply informs, uplifts and amplifies their work as a playwright, community organizer and spacemaker.

PLAYWRIGHTS

38



Baylee Shlichtman
You'll be Made of Ashes Too

Baylee Shlichtman writes weird and magical plays about navigating relationships and autonomy. Most recently, her work was developed or recognized by GPTC New Play Festival 2025, Best of Playground-LA 2025, Otherworld Theatre Paragon Play Festival, and Trinity Theatre New Works Festival. Her work has been additionally produced or developed with AlterTheatre Ensemble, Breath of Fire Latina Theatre Ensemble, Curtis Theatre, Ensemble Studio Theatre/ LA, Flamboyán Theatre, The Larking House, Long Beach Shakespeare Company, New Relic Theatre, Playground-LA, Secondary Location Productions, South Texas College Latinx New Play Festival, UC Irvine, Urbanite Theatre, The Vagrancy Theatre, The Wayward Artist, and The Workshop Theatre among others. She graduated from USC with a B.A. in Journalism.



Skyler Tarnas
Nobody Dies In This Play

Skyler Tarnas is a Michigan-born, Chicago-based writer with a growing fancy hat collection and strong opinions on Shakespeare's villainesses. He obtained his MFA in Writing for the Screen and Stage from Northwestern University. His work has been showcased through Theatre Nova, Bramble Theatre, Murmuration Theatre, and Avalanche Theatre, where he is an ensemble member. He is also a board member for the Chicago-based artistic organization The Local Lab Co. Skyler's plays seek to explore queerness, worlds ending, and our capacities for both love and cruelty - but, you know, like in a fun way.



GUEST ARTISTS



Ashlynn Andersen
Yoga Instructor

As a nonbinary mama ever learning / unlearning + sadhaka of the Himalayan Hatha Yoga lineage, Ashlynn walks a spiritual path over 5,000 years old. With sacred teachings passed on by Susi Amendola, student of Swami Rama, they were initiated in 2013 + certified in 2017. Raised beneath the big sky of the Jumanos + Kiikaapoi + Wichita + Tawakoni nations, respect with Earth + all who call her home grew deep in Ashlynn's heart. This too is Yoga. Connection with nature. All nature. Building capacity is their calling! Residing among intersections of vision + empathy, Ashlynn holds space for self inquiry + creates thresholds of reconnection on our path toward clarity + freedom.



Eliza Bent
Guest Artist

Eliza Bent is the love-grandchild of Lily Tomlin, Pee Wee Herman and Mr. Peanut whose Bentertainments include plays, solo works, adaptations, Zoom theatricals, and harder-to-define hybrid affairs. Also short films. Bent's shows have been developed, workshoped, and produced at Abrons Arts Center, JACK, the New Ohio, the Atlantic Theatre, the Bushwick Starr New York Theatre Workshop's Next Door Series, and the Goodman Theatre's Playwrights Unit. Residencies: MacDowell, SPACE on Ryder Farm, New Georges, Target Margin Institute Fellow, Casa Zia Lina, and Pilot Balloon. Bent's stand-up special *Penguin in Your Ear* most recently bowed in Austin, TX. MFA Brooklyn College. Currently teaching on faculty at Northwestern University's Radio TV Film dept.

GUEST ARTISTS



Audrey Billings
Guest Actor

Audrey Billings was most recently seen reprising her role as Mary Bailey in American Blues Theater's annual production of *It's a Wonderful Life: Live in Chicago!* Previous credits include: Emilie in A Red Orchid Theatre's production of *The Moors*, Christmas Eve in the long-running production of *Avenue Q* at the Mercury Theater, Mary Magdalene in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Antonia in *Man of La Mancha*, and Hodel in *Fiddler on the Roof*. She has graced the stages at the Paramount Theatre, Marriott Theatre Lincolnshire, Drury Lane Oakbrook, Theatre at the Center, and Lookingglass Theatre Company, Audrey is the Managing Director of A Red Orchid Theatre, an ensemble member at American Blues Theatre and a proud member of Actor's Equity. She is thrilled to be back in Omaha and working with GPTC and Wai Yim as part of this amazing festival of theatre.



Raydell Cordell III
Young Dramatist Director

Raydell Cordell III is a sixth-grade teacher at Loveland Elementary, Westside Community Schools, where he established a theatre program eight years ago. In addition, Raydell is a freelance teaching artist and professional actor in the Omaha area. Some of his recent and favorite shows include Adam in *As You Like It* at Old School Shakespeare Omaha. *The Awesome '80s Prom* at Rave On Productions. *A Very Die Hard Christmas*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, *Red Summer*, and *The Christians* (TAG Award Best Supporting Actor) at Blue Barn Theatre, *The Diary of Anne Frank* at the Rose Theater, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Nebraska Shakespeare Fall Education Tour, *Stupid F'in Bird*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (OEA Award for Best Supporting Actor in both productions) at the Omaha Community Playhouse. Raydell had the privilege of traveling to the United Kingdom and participating in workshops with the Royal Shakespeare Company. Raydell has a bachelor's in Theatre from the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a master's in Elementary Education from the College of Saint Mary. He would like to thank everyone who has supported him: family, friends, and the theatre community here in Omaha!

GUEST ARTISTS



Kia Corthron
Guest Artist

Kia Corthron's *Tempestuous Elements* (Arena Stage) and *Fish* (Keen Company/Working Theater) had world premieres in 2024. Other plays, including *Breath, Boom* and *Force Continuum*, have been produced in New York by Playwrights Horizons, NY Theatre Workshop, Atlantic Theater Company, Manhattan Theatre Club; regionally by Eclipse Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Yale Rep, Mark Taper Forum, Louisville/Humana, Center Stage, Hartford Stage, Children's Theatre Company, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, NY Stage & Film; in London by the Royal Court Theatre and Donmar Warehouse; and elsewhere. Honors include GPTC's Simon Great Plains Playwright Award, Windham Campbell Prize, Horton Foote Award, USArtists Jane Addams Fellowship, McKnight National Residency. Her debut novel *The Castle Cross the Magnet Carter* won the 2016 Center for Fiction First Novel Prize and was a New York Times Book Review Editor's Choice. She serves on the Dramatists Guild Council, is a New Dramatists alumnus, and is a member of the Authors Guild.



Tomi Endter
Four Directions
Resident Playwright

Tomi Endter is a Nehithaw actor and playwright from the lands of the Suquamish on the Key Peninsula and Ho-Chunk land in Wisconsin, as well as a 2020 graduate of The New School of Drama. Her work has been seen at The Public Theater as a part of the Emerging Writer's Group Spotlight Reading of *Into Your Hands*, in May of 2025. Tomi has also been featured by the Yale Indigenous Performing Arts Program, as one of the winners of the 7th annual competition in 2022 for her play *Built on Bones*. Tomi's work is taught at NYU, The New School, Brown, Arizona State University, and discussed in classrooms across the country. Tomi was a dog before she was a boy, and a boy before she became a girl.

GUEST ARTISTS



Kip Fagan
Guest Artist

Kip Fagan is a New York-based director. He has directed world premiere productions of plays by Sheila Callaghan, Zayd Dohrn, Jesse Eisenberg, Halley Feiffer, Ike Holter, Jennifer Haley, Sam Hunter, Heidi Schreck, Susan Soon He Stanton, Ariel Stess, Reggie Watts/Tommy Smith, and Jenny Rachel Weiner at theatres including Playwrights Horizons, Roundabout, Primary Stages, P.S. 122, Rattlestick, Page 73, Clubbed Thumb, Alliance Theatre, the Humana Festival, and Long Wharf Theatre, among others. He is a Helen Hayes Award-winner for outstanding director, recipient of an NEA/TCG directing fellowship, and has received grants from Foundation of Contemporary Arts and Artist Trust. He was a frequent collaborator with Adam Driver's Arts in the Armed Forces, is a Clubbed Thumb Affiliated Artist, and was co-founder and co-artistic director of Printer's Devil in Seattle.



Thomas Gjere
Young Dramatist Mentor Actor

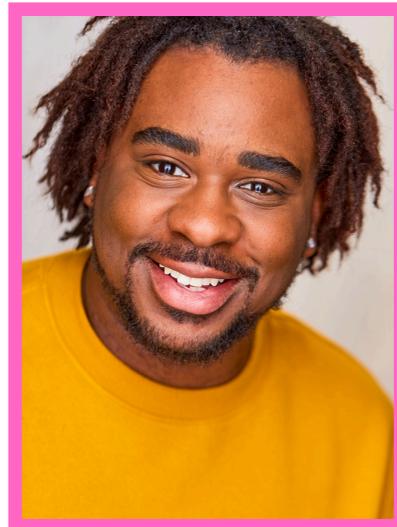
Thomas Gjere is an Omaha based actor, singer, and writer. Lately he's been conspiring with Old School Shakespeare Omaha and their productions of *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Macbeth*, among others. He's a frequent flyer at the Omaha Community Playhouse, most recently as Dewey Finn in *School of Rock: The Musical* (OEAA Outstanding Actor, Musical; Fonda/McGuire Award), Robert Kinkaid in *The Bridges of Madison County* (Mary Peckham Award), as well as prominent roles in *Once*, *Murder Ballad*, *Next to Normal*, *Les Misérables*, and *Evil Dead: The Musical*. Other Omaha credits include *Across Rhodes* at the Shelterbelt Theatre, *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* and *Heathers* at Blue Barn Theater, and *We Are Proud to Present...* with SNAP! Productions.

GUEST ARTISTS



Sofia La Fata Hornillos
Young Dramatist Playwright

Sofia La Fata Hornillos is the featured Young Dramatist at this year's GPTC but this isn't her first rodeo. She's attended the festival the past three years as well as being involved in her school's theatre program. She served as a state thespian officer for the past two years as well as participating in all the productions at her school and serving as the drama club president. Having just graduated, she's headed off to Barnard College of Columbia University in the fall and is so excited for this year's GPTC!



Avery Vonn Kenyatta
Intimacy Consultant

Avery Vonn Kenyatta is thrilled to be joining the GPTC team! He is a Houston based actor, Intimacy and Fight Director. He is a current instructor with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, and a certified Actor Combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors. Select fight/intimacy credits include *Hamlet*, *Toros*, *Spring Awakening*, *Is God Is*, *Vanya and Sonia* and *Masha and Spike*, *Black Super Hero Magic Mama*, *Othello: The Remix*, and *Clyde's*. Avery holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Western Michigan University and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Houston's Professional Actor Training Program.

GUEST ARTISTS



Khalid Y. Long
Dramaturg

Khalid Y. Long, PhD is the Associate Dean of Research and Creative Endeavors and an Associate Professor of Theatre Art in the Chadwick A. Boseman College of Fine Art at Howard University. A Freelance dramaturg, Khalid's specializes in new play development, production dramaturgy, and audience engagement. His books include: *Contemporary Black Theatre and Performance: Acts of Rebellion, Activism, and Solidarity* and *August Wilson in Context*.



Don Nguyen
Guest Artist

Don Nguyen Full-length plays include *The World is not Silent* (Alley Theatre, Northern Stage), *The Supreme Leader* (Dallas Theater Center), *HELLO, FROM THE CHILDREN OF PLANET EARTH* (The Playwrights Realm), *RED FLAMBOYANT* (Firebone Theatre), *SOUND* (Azeotrope/ACT), *THE COMMENCEMENT OF WILLIAM TAN* (Yale Cabaret), and *THE MAN FROM SAIGON* (A.C.T New Strands Festival). Recipient of the 2024 Laurents/Hatcher Award, 2015 GAP Prize (Aurora Theatre) and a NYSAF Founder's award. Finalist for The O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Jonathan Larson Grant, The Princess Grace Award, and The Woodward International Playwriting Prize. Publications include *MAN.KIND* (The Best American Short Plays 2015-2016), *HELLO, FROM THE CHILDREN OF PLANET EARTH* (Broadway Play Publishing) and *SOUND* (Manifesto v5, Seattle) Don was a member of the Ma-Yi Writers Lab, the Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group, and The Civilians R&D Group. Visit thenuge.com for more writing info or theinterstellarfeller.com for my space photos!

GUEST ARTISTS



Roni Shelley Perez
Guest Actor

Roni Shelley Perez is an Asian American actress originally from Omaha, Nebraska. Favorite credits include: Soonja Ma (u/s Goeun Kim) in New York City's Off-Broadway production of *Comfort Women: A New Musical* at Playwrights Horizons, Veronica Sawyer in the regional premiere of *Heathers: the Musical* at the Blue Barn, and co-producing *A Very Merry Midwestern Christmas* at NYC's 54 Below.



Heidi Schreck
Guest Artist

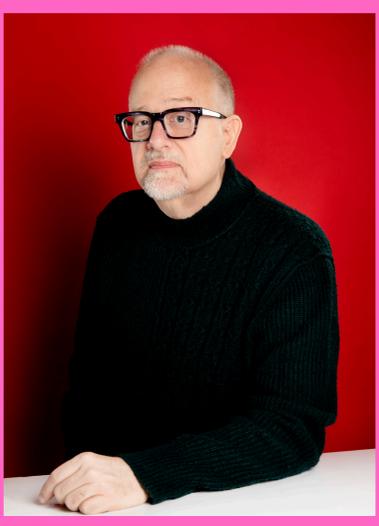
Heidi Schreck is a writer and performer living in Brooklyn. Her critically-acclaimed play *What the Constitution Means to Me* played a sold-out run on Broadway in 2019, and was nominated for two Tony Awards. It was named Best of the Year by the New York Times, Time Magazine, The Hollywood Reporter, and more. Schreck's other plays *Grand Concourse*, *Creature*, and *There Are No More Big Secrets* have been produced all over the country. Most recently, she created a new translation of Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* for the Broadway production at Lincoln Center. Screenwriting credits include *I Love Dick*, *Billions*, *Nurse Jackie*, and *Dispatches from Elsewhere*. She is the recipient of three Obie Awards, a Drama Desk Award, and Theatre World Award; as well as the Horton Foote Playwriting Award and the Hull-Warriner Award from the Dramatists Guild. Schreck was awarded Smithsonian Magazine's American Ingenuity Award, for her work in the Performing Arts.

GUEST ARTISTS



Stephanie Kyung Sun Walters
Guest Artist

Stephanie Kyung Sun Walters (she/her) is a Barrymore winning actor, playwright, and educator in Philadelphia. She's an alumni of InterAct Theatre Core Playwright, the Lead Artist of the Philly Asian Performing Artists' Playwrights Project, and a PlayLab Artist with American Theatre Group. She is the 2022 winner of the Terrence McNally Award from Philadelphia Theatre Company. Her play, *Esther Choi and the Fish that Drowned*, was slated to premiere with Simpatico Theatre Company (postponed due to COVID-19) and earned her a spot on the 2020 Kilroys List and Table Work Press Recommended list. Her play *Acetone Wishes and Plexiglass Dreams* was workshopped at the UC Santa Barbara Launch Pad BIPOC Reading Series, GPTC, and was a semifinalist for the O'Neill Conference. Her play *Half of Chopsticks* was a finalist for both the 2021 Bay Area Playwrights Festival and Seven Devils New Plays Conference, and received a staged reading and workshop at the inaugural Boise Contemporary Theatre BIPOC Playwrights Festival. *Whispers of My Sister* was workshopped at PlayPenn's Conference in 2022. Stephanie received a 3Views Theatre The Bret Adams and Paul Reisch Foundation Grant Recipient. She has taught with Bucknell University, University of the Arts, Swarthmore College, Northwestern University's National High School Institute, PlayPenn, Arden Theatre Company, and Theatre Exile. Stephanie is a proud graduate of Bucknell University, London Dramatic Academy, and CAP21 and received her MFA with Point Park University in Writing for Screen and Stage. Stephanie is currently the Chair of the Drama Department at Friends Select School in Philadelphia, PA. She lives in Camden County, NJ with her husband and 10-month old daughter.



Doug Wright
Keynote Speaker

Doug Wright Broadway: GOOD NIGHT OSCAR, WAR PAINT, HANDS ON HARDBODY, THE LITTLE MERMAID, GREY GARDENS (Tony Nomination) and I AM MY OWN WIFE (Pulitzer Prize, Tony Award.) Off Broadway: POSTERITY, UNWRAP YOUR CANDY and QUILLS (Obie Award). Films include THE BURIAL (NAACP Image Award Nomination) and QUILLS (Paul Selwin Award from the WGA). Upcoming projects include GOOD NIGHT OSCAR in London's West End, and a major revisal of DAMN YANKEES opening at Arena Stage in the Fall of 2025. Boards: New York Theater Workshop and the Hermitage Artists Retreat. Doug is a former president of the Dramatists Guild of America. Doug lives in Manhattan with his husband David Clement and their cats, Glynis and Murray.

GUEST ARTISTS

48



Samuel Yates
Dramaturg

Samuel Yates is excited to return to Great Plains, where they have served as a dramaturg and access consultant during the past two years, including workshops for *All the Emilies in All the Universes*, *Pivot*, and *Vampire Panic!*. Selected artistic/access dramaturgy: *In Pieces* (MSU New Musicals Workshop/The Public), *La Casa de la Laguna* (Gala Hispanic Theatre, world premiere), *Care: The Musical* (3Arts/Art Institute of Chicago), *Teenage Dick* (Woolly Mammoth), *Historias* (Rainbow Theatre Project), *Titus Andronicus* (The Public), and *It's a Motherf**cking Pleasure* (Woolly Mammoth). They've worked in the literary offices of The Abbey Theatre (Ireland) and the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, and are currently Resident Dramaturg and Assistant Professor of Theatre at Pennsylvania State University. Their work investigates disability aesthetics and accessibility practices in the performing arts. You can discover more about Samuel's publications and creative practice at <https://samuelryates.com>.



Kat Zukaitis
Dramaturg

Kat Zukaitis (she/her) is the Director of New Works at Chicago's Goodman Theatre, where she produces the annual New Stages Festival and the New Stages Playwright Residency. Previously, she was the New Play Development Manager and co-curator of the Ignite Chicago series at Victory Gardens Theater and the Literary Associate at South Coast Repertory. She trained at Steppenwolf Theatre and Actors Theatre of Louisville and she holds a B.A. from Haverford College and an M.A. from Yale Divinity School. Originally from Omaha, Kat grew up performing with the Omaha Community Playhouse, Chanticleer Theatre, the Rose, the Omaha Academy of Ballet, Creighton's A Company of Dancers, and UNO's Moving Company. She also played a zombie stewardess in a Brady Bunch spoof somewhere in Ralston one time.



PANELISTS



Theresa Buccheister
Panelist

Theresa Buchheister is a theater artist from Manhattan, Kansas, known for their work as a director, writer, producer, performer, and curator. They founded Title:Point (2006-present), an experimental theater company, and The Exponential Festival (2016-present), a January performance festival showcasing avant-garde artists. Buchheister also co-founded Vital Joint (2016-2020), a venue celebrated for hosting alternative comedy, experimental dance, and unconventional film screenings. They served as the Artistic Director of The Brick Theater in Brooklyn, New York, leading the venue to receive an Obie Award during their tenure (January 2020-September 2024). They were also part of Silent Barn, a DIY venue in Bushwick (2013-2016), where they started the ongoing series ?!:New Works, SaOn! and Gestating Baby, and The Ontological Theater, as a performer for Richard Foreman and a writer/director/performer in 6 shows (2004-2014). After two decades in New York, Buchheister returned to Kansas in 2024 and currently lectures at the University of Kansas. Their many day jobs have included Graveyard shifts at a gas station, cleaning homes, carpentry, liquor store, sandwich shop, movie theater, painting dorms, painting the outside of apartment complexes, Drama Book Shop, Cuatrecasas Law Office office assistant, The Strand, The Unoppressive Non-Imperialist Bargain Book Shop, Housing Works (Hell's Kitchen Thrift and Bookstore Cafe), wedding decor and day-of coordination, audiobook/cartoon/podcast director and engineer (including directing the American dub of Pokemon and the BBC cartoon BoyGirlDogCatMouseCheese), voiceover teacher and more. They are currently the editor of Staff Picks. They have also been published in various capacities at Theater der Zeit, The Brooklyn Rail, 53rd State Press, Pandemic Performance (Routledge) and a forthcoming book about Richard Foreman (Methuen). www.theresabuchheister.com www.theexponentialfestival.org | www.bricktheater.com | www.staffpicks.fun



Jim Hoggatt
Panelist

Jim Hoggatt has been Artistic Director of The Art of Imagination program since 2010. Before his work with Ollie Webb Center, Jim spent four and a half years at The Rose Theater in Omaha, where he worked with young performers as an educator, actor, playwright, and Director of Youth Productions. His professional journey also includes work with theaters in Kansas City and the San Francisco Bay Area. Jim holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas and a Master's degree from San Francisco State University.

PANELISTS



Haley Haas
Panelist

Haley Haas is the Executive Artistic Director and Co-Founder of Anastasis Theatre Co. She recently directed the tour of the Anastasis play *By a Thread*. Haley has also directed the Anastasis plays *More Than a Number*, *Stories: On the Brink* and *Voices Unbound*. She has worked as a teaching artist and facilitator with The Union for Contemporary Art, Omaha Community Playhouse, WhyArts, and Creighton Medical School's Clinical Education and Simulation Center. Haley worked for 15 years as an actor and the Training and Education Director for R.E.S.P.E.C.T., a touring educational theatre company. As an actor, favorite regional shows include: *Silent Sky* (Henrietta, TAG Award for Outstanding Lead Actress), *The Dresser* (Irene), and *Red Summer* (Virginia) at the Blue Barn Theatre; and *The Blues of Knowing Why* (ensemble) at the Union for Contemporary Art. Haley holds a BFA in Theater Performance from Creighton University and trained with the groundbreaking community-engaged theater company Cornerstone, based in Los Angeles, CA.



Doriette Jordan
Panelist

Doriette L. Jordan is a proud native of Omaha, NE. Her passion for theatre has afforded many roles such as: Fellow at The Union for Contemporary Art Inside Outside program, Director for *The Golden Loc* by Prentiss Matthews III, Assistant Director for *Ain't Mis Behavin'*, *Tell Martha Not to Moan*, Director Fellow at Omaha Community Playhouse and Acting Mentor at The Union for Contemporary Art. Recently completed her Residency at the Coleman Art Center in York Alabama where she exhibited *The Bergamot Crown*. She has held additional roles such as: Assistant Teacher for the Youth Ensemble; Stage Manager for *Divine Order of Becoming* by Carla Stillwell; *The Story Aaron Douglas* written by Peggy Jones; Production assistant for *More Than Neighbors* by Denise Chapman & *Kumbaya a Juneteenth Story* by Rose McGhee. Doriette has held roles in "Plays Out Loud Summer Reading Series"; Deliah in *Spunk* by Zora Thurston and the Reverend in *Lawd the CVS is on Fire* by Carla Stillwell. Doriette has had the opportunity to grace stages apart from the Union, playing the the role of Mom in *Milo Imagines the World* at the Rose Theater and the leading role of Chelle in *Detroit 67 @ Shelterbelt Theatre*; *Abuse is Not Love* in WithLove Felicia Productions; attendance at the Great Plains Theater Conference; reader for *Money Changers* and *Bystanders* by Kim Louise; *Even Flowers Bloom in Hell* by Franky Gonzalez and *Cave Canem* by A. Emmunel Leadon and many others. Most recently casts in *Belle Terre* by Justin Payne and *Heaven Come Home* by Justin Payne and Dani Cleveland. Her passion for people and theater is what led her to Anastasis Theatre Company Board and Internship with Great Plains Theatre Commons.

PANELISTS



Kim Louise
Panelist

Kim Louise is a Nebraskan who grew up hearing her father's Big Fish-esque tales and attributes her love of storytelling to him. Kim holds an MFA in Stage and Screen from The University of Nebraska-Omaha and is an adjunct professor at Metropolitan Community College where she teaches creative writing. Productions and readings include *The Bystanders* (Metropolitan Community College), *Umarage* (Union for Contemporary Art), *Alexa, Cortana, and Siri Walk into a Juke Joint* (Radio Theatre Omaha), *Money Changers* (Great Plains Theatre Commons), *Miss Bessie's Blues Factory* (The Rose), and *Frozen Charlottes* (Angels Theatre). Kim is a former playwriting resident in Great Plains Theatre Commons, a recipient of the University of Nebraska Humanities Award, and nominated for an Omaha Arts and Entertainment Award--as part of a playwriting ensemble for the performance *Centering the Margins*. Her most recent production, *By a Thread*, was created as part of a community-devised theatre project through Anastasis Theatre Co. and justice-impacted individuals from the Nebraska community.



Ellen Struve
Panelist

Ellen Struve is a playwright, community artist, and educator. She is a Nebraska Arts Council Individual Artist Fellow, GPTC and PlayPenn alum, and multiple Omaha Entertainment Award-winner. Her play *Recommended Reading for Girls* is published with Playscripts, Inc. She has degrees from University of Iowa and School of the Art Institute of Chicago. www.ellenstruve.com

DESIGN WING



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 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 festival. 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.

DESIGN WING



Ebony Burton
Design Wing

Ebony M. Burton (she/her) is an Oakland-born, Brooklyn-based lighting designer. Projects include *Flex* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Candide* (SFSO); *The Seven* (Juilliard); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Williams); *Fences* (NBPAC); *Hurricane Diane* (People's Light); *Loving and Loving* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *P is for Pop, D is for Dip* (PAC NYC); *the end/the beginning* (NYLA); *Marie It's Time* (HERE); *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* (Brown/Trinity); various collaborations with Blaze Ferrer; Ultramarine, an art installation presented as part of Lincoln Center's Social Sculpture Project. MFA, Design for Stage & Film, NYU Tisch. BA, Psychology, Oberlin College. ebonyburton.com



Gylanni Carrington
Design Wing

Gylanni Carrington is a queer non-binary artist from pre-gentrified Brooklyn. An interdisciplinary artist Gylanni is skilled in theatrical design, installations, and creative direction. They love new work, and projects that are weird, experimental, and concept-heavy with challenging design elements. An authority on aesthetics, they value performance art pieces that are a feast for the eyes. Gylanni has a B.A. in Theatre/Gender, Literature, and the Arts from Hunter College. They believe the future of art lies in diverse storytelling and prioritizes works that are inclusive and accessible. *Unsettling* (Park Avenue Armory), *A Landfill/Sacred Ground* (A.R.T. New York Theatres). <https://www.gylannidesigns.com>



David Forsee
Design Wing

David Forsee (he/they) is a video designer for stage, screen, and streets. Off-Broadway designs at ARS NOVA, Theatre Row, the Actor's Studio at Pace, and the New York Theatre Festival. Select Associate Design: *Good Night, and Good Luck, Maybe Happy Ending, Peter Pan* (National Tour). david4c.com



Rodrigo Hernandez Martinez
Design Wing

Rodrigo Hernandez Martinez (they/them) is a Scenic and Costume designer from Cancun and Mexico City currently based in NYC. Previous works include: SOMETHING BORROWED, SOMETHING GREEN commissioned performance piece at Park Ave. Armory, NYC. Scenic and Costume designer for I'M GONNA MARRY YOU TOBEY MAGUIRE at The Cell, NYC and Southwark Playhouse, London. Scenic Designer for LA LIBERAZIONE DI RUGGIERO DALL'ISOLA D'ALCINA at Manhattan School of Music, NYC. Proud member of "Wingspace Theatrical Design", "La Gente: The Latine Theatre Design Network" and "Colegio Mexicano de Diseño Escénico" Graduate Applicant for NYU Tisch- MFA Design for Stage and Film



Evdoxia Ragkou
Design Wing

Evdoxia Ragkou (she/her/hers) holds an MFA in sound design from the School of Drama at Yale and is an East Coast-based composer and sound designer. She has worked in venues such as Rattlestick Theater, The Flea, Yale Repertory Theater, TheaterWorks Hartford, Weston Theater Company, A.R.T. / New York, Audible (Asst.), Playwrights Horizons (Asst.), and 59E59 (Asst.). She has also written music for dance and film. <https://evdoxiaragkou.com/>



Jared Mezzocchi
Design Wing Mentor

Jared Mezzocchi is a two-time Obie Award-winning theater artist, working as a director, designer, playwright, and actor. Based out of New York, Mezzocchi's work has appeared nationwide: Playwrights Horizons, Vineyard Theater, The Kennedy Center, Geffen Playhouse, Arena Stage, TheatreWorks Hartford, Woolly Mammoth, and beyond. In 2016, he received the Lucille Lortel and Henry Hewes Award for his work in Qui Nguyen's *Vietgone* at the Manhattan Theatre Club. In 2020, the New York Times spotlighted Mezzocchi, alongside four other theater artists including Andrew Lloyd Webber and Paula Vogel, as an artistic hero of the pandemic. His work on Sarah Gancher's digital production of *Russian Troll Farm* awarded him his second Obie for Directing. Most recently, Mezzocchi directed *The Wind and The Rain: a Story about Sunny's Bar* at En Garde Arts and Vineyard Theater which was performed on a barge in NYC and called "Highbrow Brilliant" by NY Magazine. Mezzocchi is a two-time MacDowell Fellow, a 2012 Princess Grace recipient, and recently retired from The University of Maryland, where he built the multimedia curriculum within the MFA Design program for 13 years. This year, he will finish his book, *A Multimedia Designer's Method to Theatrical Storytelling*, published through Routledge. Mezzocchi has a BA in theater and film from Fairfield University, and an MFA in performance and interactive media arts from Brooklyn College.



DIRECTORS



Addy Barnhart
Seven Days in the Garden

Addie Barnhart (she/her) is a multi-disciplinary generalist originally from Wichita, KS who shares her creative impulses as an actor, director, educator, dialect coach, and intimacy choreographer. Recent acting credits include Jill, *Stuck with Lemons* (Shelterbelt), 3rd Witch/Lady Macduff, *Macbeth* (OSSO); Amanda, *The Glass Menagerie* (CU); Mark's mom/ensemble, *RENT* (OCP); Mitzy, *Frozen Charlottes* (GPTC reading). Addie has worked across the United States with companies such as Virginia Repertory/Cadence Theatre, Richmond Shakes, Playmaker's Theatre, TheatreLAB, Swine Palace, TENT Theatre, 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. Addie is Assistant Professor of Theatre at Creighton University. www.addiebarnhart.com



Breanna Carodine
Every Living Thing

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) and associate directed *Waitress* (OCP.) Other directing credits include *Pretty Fire* (OCP), *What A Time to Be Alive* (Great Plains Theatre Commons), and *Black Women Rebel* (Radio Theatre Omaha) at the Benson Theatre. In her spare time, she enjoys making commentary on Bravo TV shows and raving about local restaurants on her Instagram @eatlocalomaha.

DIRECTORS



Denise Chapman
where pathways meet

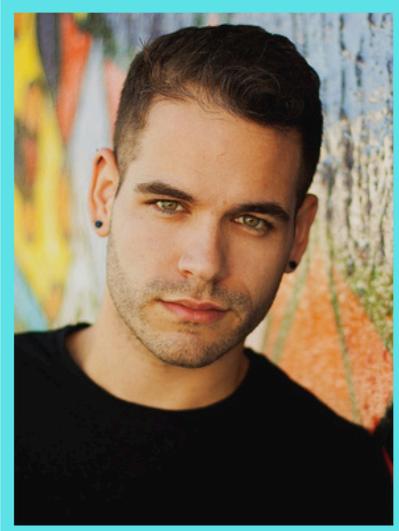
Denise Chapman is a theatre artist based in Omaha Ne. She graduated from Creighton University with a BA in theatre, and received her MFA from the Theatre Conservatory at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. Past Directing Credits include *Chicken and Biscuits* (TheatreSquared), *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 Commons* (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's Witching Hour), *Just...--Hot House*, *Spook--Shoes* (Victory Gardens Theatre Chicago, IL). She is currently the Producing Artistic Director for the Shirley Tyree Theatre at The Union for Contemporary Art.



Darlyn Gonzalez
You'll be Made of Ashes Too

Darlyn Gonzalez is an Actor and Director based in Omaha. She studied at the University of Omaha at Nebraska and received a degree in Theatre with a concentration in Acting/Directing. Darlyn has been involved with numerous productions, some which include *American Mariachi* (Assistant Director), *Hairy Girls Face the End of the World* (Director), and *Did You Hear That?* (Assistant Director). Darlyn is thrilled to be returning to the Great Plains Theatre Festival and can't wait to share the powerful story that is *You'll be Made of Ashes Too*.

DIRECTORS



Alex Rodriguez
Wave After Wave

Alex Rodriguez is a Cuban-born, Miami-raised stage director, actor, and educator, currently serving as Co-Artistic Director of the Omaha Community Playhouse. OCP directing and choreography credits include *American Mariachi*, *Waitress*, *Jersey Boys*, *Cabaret*, and *Clyde's*. A multi-hyphenate collaborator whose work ranges from new work to large-scale productions, Alex is most passionate about culture and belonging in his practice. Select directing and choreography credits include *Rock of Ages* and *RENT* at San Antonio Broadway Theatre, *RENT* (PBTS, Folio Weekly's Best Theatre Production), *Little Women - The Broadway Musical*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, *The Last Five Years*, *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*, *Passing Strange*, *Havana Music Hall - A New Musical* (Workshop/ Associate), *Common Ground - A New Musical* (NYC Workshop), *A Night With Janis Joplin* (ZACH/ Assistant to Randy Johnson), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Associate to Kaitlin Hopkins), and Theresa Rebeck's *The Two Orphans* (Workshop/ Assistant). Select performance credits include Juan Julian in *Anna in The Tropics* (Barrington Stage), Emilio Estefan in *On Your Feet!* (Prather Productions), Aldolpho in *The Drowsy Chaperone* (The Alhambra), Carnival Cruise Line and the Flat Rock Playhouse. As a teaching artist, Alex has taught acting and directing at Marymount Manhattan College and Texas State University and previously served as an entertainment project manager and vocal supervisor for Carnival Cruise Line. Alex holds an M.F.A. in Directing from Texas State University and a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from Jacksonville University. He's a member of the Actor's Equity Association and an associate member of The Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.



Christopher Scott
Nobody Dies in This Play

Christopher Scott is happy to be part of this year's GPTC New Play Festival. Chris holds a B.A. in Theatre from Hastings College and an M.A. in Directing and Theatre Criticism from Kansas State University. He also spent time at The Ohio State University, where he directed the premiere of the hip-hop play, *Inspiration of Love*, and studied mime with Gregg Goldston. You may have seen Mr. Scott acting at various theatres in Omaha. Past directing credits include *Barefoot in the Park* and *Agatha Christie's Spider's Web* (Bellevue Little Theatre), *Appropriate* (reading - Omaha Community Playhouse), *She Kills Monsters* (Asst - OCP), *This B***h is Going Down: An Evening on the Titanic* (The Apollon), *Arsenic and Old Lace* (Hastings Community Theatre).

DIRECTORS



TammyRa'
*The Nativity Starring
Keisha Taylor*

TammyRa' is an Award winning Storyteller, Actress, Director, Master Hair Stylist, Vocalist, and Entrepreneur with a wide array of experiences, based here in Omaha, Nebraska. 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, Nebraska Shakespeare, The Union for Contemporary Art, and The Rose Theater. 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 Commons (GPTC) since 2008 as both an actress and director. In 2022, she joined GPTC as a Community Connector. 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. TammyRa' has performed in several shows at Omaha Community Playhouse and won an award for each performance. She won the Clarence Teal Award for her first appearance in *Sophisticated Ladies*. She also been the recipient of the Fonda/McGuire Award two years in a row for *The Color Purple* as Celie (2021-2022, Season 97) and *Pretty Fire* as Charlayne (2022-2023, Season 98). She was the Assistant Director for *Constellations*, Associate Director for August Wilson's *Fences*, and Director for *Dot*.



Wai Yim
The Words of Ants

Wai Yim is an actor, director, choreographer, playwright, and the Managing Director of Chicago's Token Theatre. Theatre credits: *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* by Mary Zimmerman (Goodman Theatre, Old Globe, Shakespeare Theatre Company), *A Christmas Carol*, *The King of Hell's Palace*, *Postnation*, *King of the Yees* (Goodman Theatre), *Chimerica* (TimeLine Theatre), *The White Snake* by Mary Zimmerman (Goodman Theatre, Old Globe, McCarter Theatre, Wuzhen Theatre Festival in China), *The Oldest Boy* (Unicorn Theatre), *Nomad Motel* (Horizon Theatre Company), *ZAC EFRON* (Token Theatre). Film: *North of the 10* and *Fatal Influence: Like, Follow, Survive*. TV: *Work in Progress*, *The Chi*, *Power Book IV: Force*, *neXt*, *Chicago PD*, and *Patriot*. Wai's semi-autobiographical play, *The Emperor and The Fool (Chronicles of the House of Yim)* was workshopped at BLUEBARN Theatre and won OEAA's Outstanding New Script. He also won OEAA's Outstanding Director for *The Chinese Lady* and *The Great Leap* (both at BLUEBARN). Wai has participated in GPTC as an actor and director since the very beginning. www.whyim.com

DIRECTORS



Ron Zank
#’s

Ron Zank has been involved with the Great Plains Theatre Festival since it began. He has been an actor, read script submissions, responded to plays, moderated lunchtime panels, and now serves on the board of directors. Ron has directed multiple readings for GPTC including *Christmas Cookies*, *Breeders*, *Pivot*, *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!* Later in the year he will be staging *Christmas Cookies* for the Shelterbelt Theatre, a script he directed in the first year of GPTC!



Mackenzie Zielke
come straight home

Mackenzie Zielke received her MA in Theatre from Regent University and a BA in Music Theatre from the Conservatory at UMKC. While living in Kansas City she worked with the Lyric Opera, Barn Players, Bar Natasha, Chestnut Theatre, Musical Theatre Heritage and Padgett Productions in various capacities. For 9 years she was the director of the musical theatre program at Grace University where she taught classes and voice lessons, directed productions, and created and directed cabaret showcases. Since moving back to Omaha full time, 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 most recently directed *The Girl on the Train* at BLT and *Jimmy Buffet's Escape to Margaritaville* at OCP. Mackenzie has also appeared onstage in local productions of *Murder Ballad*, *Shrek The Musical*, *Bridges of Madison County*, *Hello Dolly* and *Heathers* among others. Mackenzie is endlessly supported by her beautiful wife, Ana, and her two boys, Lincoln and Remy.



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Twenty years

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GPTC COMMONS MEMBERSHIP

When you become a Commons Member by committing to a recurring donation, you help us to plan for each season with confidence because we know that we can count on you.

A recurring donation helps sustain our free-to-the-public programming and ensures that each year will be filled with rich new stories from all corners of our community as well as valuable professional development opportunities for working playwrights. Thanks to the support of our Commons Members, Omaha has developed a reputation as a creative hub for theatre artists throughout the country.

When you make a recurring donation totaling \$10/month or higher, we will give you a choice between a stylish GPTC hat or one of our shockingly sturdy, ever-popular GPTC tote bags.

We rely on our Commons Members to help us continue to nurture and sustain a dynamic network of partnerships – local, regional, and national. These connections strengthen our hearts, feed our imaginations, and enrich the world in which we live.

My thanks to you for joining us!



Kevin Lawler, GPTC Artistic Director



SCAN TO LEARN MORE AND
JOIN TODAY

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*INDICATES MEMBER OF OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AS OF 5/12/25

GPTC BOARD

Diane Watson, President

Diane is the Director of Advisor Engagement and Sales Support for Transamerica. She is an actor, improv artist, and serves on the Board of Trustees of Saybrook University. She is also the host of KVNO's food program, Dish Omaha, and of the YouTube food sustainability show, Leftover Chef.

Nina Washington, Vice President

Nina is the Events Coordinator at The Joslyn. She has a diverse background in compliance, mediation, project management, and event coordination. Nina is also a performer and has acted for many Omaha theatre companies.

Cecilia Poon, Secretary

Cecilia is a Psychologist and Adjunct Assistant Professor in Psychiatry at 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

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.

Raydell Cordell III

Raydell is a 6th Grade Teacher at Loveland Elementary and an Actor/ Teaching Artist. 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.

Emiliano Lerda, Community Advisor

Co-Founder and CEO of Elevator, a co-warehousing company
Formerly Vice President, Paul G. Smith LLC

Juan Padilla

Juan is Director of Lending with Lending Link. Born in Guatemala City, he 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 the opportunity to thrive.

Marina Rosado

Marina has been a professional bilingual journalist for the last 20 years, working as an editor, writer, photographer, air talent, outreach & promotions manager and news anchor. She also performs 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

Kathy is the Director of Strategy & Community Impact for The Rose Theater and serves on the Omaha Performing Arts Voices Amplified Committee. She works locally and regionally as an actor, singer, and director and has received numerous awards and recognition. She is the owner of Kathy Tyree Productions, producing live music entertainment throughout the Omaha area.

Hugo Zamorano

Hugo is an artist who works in painting and designing murals, theatre, mentoring, and boxing.

Ronald J. Zank, PhD

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

Maggie Rossiter, Legal Counsel

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THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SUPPORTERS FOR THE 2024-2025 20TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR!

Below we recognize contributions from July 1, 2024, through May 9, 2025.

If you see any errors or omissions, please contact Rachel Hauben Combs at rhaubencombs@gptcplays.com.

We appreciate your generosity!

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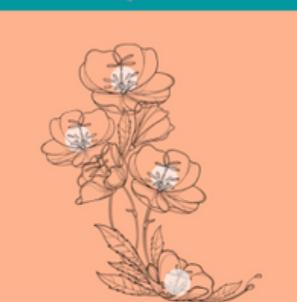
The Nebraska Arts Council, a state agency, provides funding to GPTC through its matching grants program funded by the Nebraska Legislature, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Visit www.artsCouncil.nebraska.gov for information on how the Nebraska Arts Council can assist your organization, or how you can support the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.



Betiana & Todd Simon



Annette & Paul Smith



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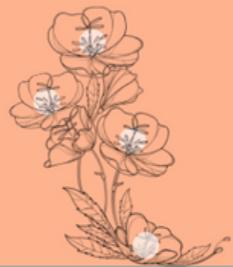
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MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR OUR
21ST ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL

MAY 24 - 30, 2026





All efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy and inclusion of GPTC New Play Festival participant names and festival information. We regret any errors or omissions. Activities at the GPTC New Play Festival are public events. Festival activities may be photographed, videotaped or audio taped for the purpose of publicity, marketing, advertising or other official Great Plains Theatre Commons purposes.

YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED NOW MORE THAN EVER

This is a triumphant moment in a difficult time.

As we celebrate 20 years of bringing diverse new stories to life, we are facing an existential challenge. Public funding for the arts is at risk. And that affects us all.

We have been guided for decades by the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. When GPTC amplifies stories from every corner of our community, we all reap the benefits of knowing each other better. But now GPTC and arts organizations all over the country are facing reductions and restrictions in support.

In the wake of the unprecedented cancellation of National Endowment for the Arts funding as part of a campaign to discourage work that prioritizes our core values of diversity, equity, and inclusion, GPTC has a choice.

We choose to stand by our values. And we are asking you to stand with us.

We remain committed to programming that is free and accessible to the public. We remain committed to fair compensation for all artists. Most importantly, we remain committed to sharing diverse stories from every corner of our community with authenticity. With pride. With joy.

And we cannot do it without your help. In the weeks and months to come, your support will truly mean more than it ever has.

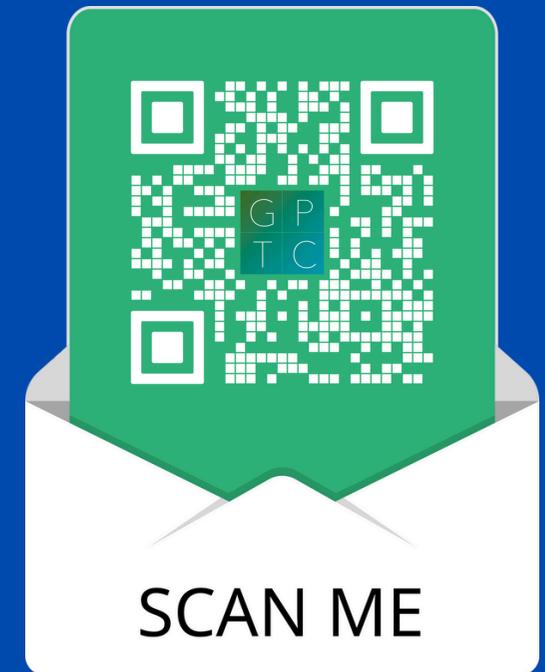
Please make a one-time gift (with this QR code) or – even better! – become a Commons Member with a recurring monthly donation (Commons Membership information on page 56).

Join us. Make sure the work continues.

With appreciation and gratitude,



Rachel Hauben Combs
GPTC Development Director



Great Plains Theatre Commons
c/o Yates Illuminates, 3260 Davenport Street
Omaha, NE 68131
commons@gptcplays.com | www.gptcplays.com