

U C S A N D I E G O

# THEATRE & DANCE

**SPRING QUARTER: WEEK 9**

**DEPARTMENT NEWS**

## COMING SOON: THE 2017 DR. FLOYD GAFFNEY PLAYWRITING AWARD STAGED READING

There will be a staged reading of this year's 2017 Gaffney Playwriting Competition winner, **a.k. payne's *ain't no dead thing*** this Saturday in the Shank Theatre at 2:00pm. The reading is free and open to the public.

Under the leadership of **Playwriting Faculty Professor Allan Havis**, The Dr. Floyd Gaffney National Playwriting Competition on the African American Experience is open to enrolled full time undergraduate students throughout the country. The Gaffney Prize, now in its eleventh year, awards \$1000 to the winning author along with travel and lodging to participate in the play's staged reading at UC San Diego. Jurors for this year's award are La Jolla Playhouse Dramaturg Shirley Fishman, incoming MFA playwright Dave Harris, and Allan Havis, professor of theatre at UC San Diego.

The Marshall Institute conducted an interview with a.k. payne to discuss her work and her award-winning play; to read the full interview, [click here \(http://marshallblog.ucsd.edu/2017-gaffney-playwriting-award-recipient-a-k-payne/\)](http://marshallblog.ucsd.edu/2017-gaffney-playwriting-award-recipient-a-k-payne/).

## 2017 DR. FLOYD GAFFNEY PLAYWRITING AWARD WINNER

### *ain't no dead thing*

by a.k. payne

On the morning of May 31, 1921, Edwina kills the chicken that led Noa on her amazing 300 mile journey from Chicago to Tulsa after son was found at the bottom of Lake Michigan in 1905. Later that night, a gun goes off leading to the massacre that destroyed the economic beacons of Black America. Two pairs of forbidden lovers try to imagine a world where they can breathe.

#### **Staged Reading on June 3rd at 2:00pm**

in the Shank Theatre

free and open to the public

directed by Dylan Key

staged managed by Plato Seto

with

Janet Fiki, Monique Gaffney, Yonatan Gebeyehu, Danielle Hall, Kyle Hester, Sidney Hill, Antonio T.J. Johnson, Jeffery Sims, Tylar Pendgraft



To learn more, [click here](#)

(<http://theatre.ucsd.edu/affiliates/gaffney/index.htm>).

## **MFA PLAYWRIGHTS LEAD COLLABORATION WITH VETERANS & THEATRE INSTITUTE AND LA JOLLA PLAYHOUSE**

### **MFA Playwriting students Anna Moench and Lily Padilla**

have spent the past several months facilitating a series of playwriting classes in collaboration with TCG's Veterans & Theatre Institute and the La Jolla Playhouse. The series concluded this weekend with an afternoon of four staged readings of excerpts of plays written by the veterans at the Veterans Museum at Balboa Park. The readings were directed by **MFA Directing student Dylan Key** and featured **MFA Acting students Nicole Javier, Brandon O'Sullivan, and Claire Roberson.**



## ESCAPE TO MARGARITAVILLE OPENS

La Jolla Playhouse opened their newest production, *Escape to Margaritaville* this Sunday. Several current UCSD MFA students are completing their residency on the project, including **Lighting Design Brandon Rosen**, **Costume Design student Junior Bergman**, **Scenic Design student Matthew Herman** (all shown at left), **Stage Management student Jackie Mullen**, and **Acting students, Andrew Gallop, Volen Iliev, and Mo Rodvanich**. The production also involves **MFA Stage Management alumna Jessie Medofer**.

The show has extended through July 9th, for tickets and more information, [click here](http://www.lajollaplayhouse.org/escape-to-margaritaville) (<http://www.lajollaplayhouse.org/escape-to-margaritaville>).

## NAOMI IIZUKA'S *SLEEP* TO PREMIERE AT BAM

**Playwriting Faculty Professor and MFA Playwriting alumna Naomi Iizuka's** adaptation of Haruki Murakami's short story *Sleep* will premiere at BAM this November as part of BAM's 2017 Next Wave Festival. The production will also feature **MFA acting alumna Jiehae Park.**

"This is my 17th straight day without sleep." A Japanese housewife's mundane existence of chores and grocery shopping explodes when a haunting dream leads her to cast sleep aside, releasing her into a world of danger and the thrill of the unknown. Based on the 1994 short story by the beloved Japanese author Haruki Murakami (*The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*), this hypnotic physical theater piece by Brooklyn-based, Obie Award-winning company Ripe Time follows one woman beyond the bounds of society. Led by a powerhouse female creative team—including director Rachel Dickstein and playwright Naomi Iizuka—and featuring an original score performed live by NewBorn Trio, this playful and eerie journey takes audiences through a wakeful realm where bodies float, ghosts lurk, and daylight rules no longer apply.

To read more, [click here](http://www.bam.org/theater/2017/sleep?alttemplate=MobileEventFestival17&m=1) (<http://www.bam.org/theater/2017/sleep?alttemplate=MobileEventFestival17&m=1>).



## RACHEL AXLER TO HOLD Q&A ON CAMPUS

**MFA Playwriting alumna Rachel Axler** will be holding a conversation on campus on Friday, June 9th at 1:00pm. Rachel is an Emmy award-winning writer for her work on *Veep* and *The Daily Show* and is in town as a 2017 UC San Diego Alumni Award Honoree. The conversation will be held in the Wagner Theatre.

To RSVP, please [click here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf73VFUViHyWc=0&w=1) (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf73VFUViHyWc=0&w=1>).

## HOLLYWOOD REPORTER NAMES UCSD MFA ACTING PROGRAM TOP FIVE IN THE WORLD

The Hollywood Reporter ranked UCSD's MFA Acting program as the fifth best of its kind in the world. The newspaper lauded UCSD's program accordingly:

"Its association with the La Jolla Playhouse — a pro theater on campus where countless Tony-winning productions have been conceived, including *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and *Jersey Boys* — makes this program in San Diego one of the best. And the Tonys keep coming: Alumnus Michael Greif (from the directing program) is nominated this year for his work on *Dear Evan Hansen*, while white-hot Broadway star Jefferson Mays is up for his third acting award for *Oslo* (he already took one home for *I Am My Own Wife*, which began, funnily enough, at the La Jolla Playhouse)."

To read the full list of the top 25 programs, [click here](http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/lists/25-best-drama-schools-an-acting-degree-1007229/item/yale-school-drama-top-drama-schools-2017-1007222) (<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/lists/25-best-drama-schools-an-acting-degree-1007229/item/yale-school-drama-top-drama-schools-2017-1007222>).

## CHANCELLOR'S BLOG SPOTLIGHTS WAGNER NEW PLAYS

Chancellor Pradeep Khosla's blog profiled this year's Wagner New Play Festival which the Chancellor himself attended and introduced last weekend.

To read the full blog, [click here](http://chancellor.ucsd.edu/chancellor-khosla/blog/showing-support-for-the-performing-arts) (<http://chancellor.ucsd.edu/chancellor-khosla/blog/showing-support-for-the-performing-arts>).



## FAREWELL CELEBRATION FOR KYLE DONNELLY AND CHARLIE OATES THIS SUNDAY

As previously announced, two longtime faculty and leading lights of the school, Kyle Donnelly and Charlie Oates, have decided, after years of dedicated teaching, mentorship and support, to leave UC San Diego Theatre & Dance at the end of this quarter. Please join us to celebrate their work and continued success on Sunday, June 4th, 2017, at 2 PM in the UC San Diego Theatre District.

To RSVP for the event, [click here](#)

([https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScSO94ImgKOSvHta3SOhdZtl5vpcw2\\_bMx\\_ynlc=0&w=1&usp=send\\_form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScSO94ImgKOSvHta3SOhdZtl5vpcw2_bMx_ynlc=0&w=1&usp=send_form)).

## SARAH PRENTISS RECEIVES UNDERGRADUATE LIBRARY RESEARCH PRIZE

**BA Theatre student Sarah Prentiss** has been selected to receive First Prize in the Social Sciences/Arts/Humanities category of the 2017 UC San Diego Undergraduate Library Research Prize competition for her project: "Female Identity in Restoration Comedy from the Perspective of Both Male and Female Playwrights."

As First Prize winner, Ms. Prentiss will receive a prize certificate and an award of \$1,000. Additionally, a new book in the subject of her choosing will be book plated with her name and added to the UC San Diego Libraries collection.



## NEXT UP: GRUESOME PLAYGROUND INJURIES

The Spring Undergraduate Mainstage production, *Gruesome Playground Injuries* by David Adjmi, opens next week with performances in the Wagner Theatre from June 7 - 10. The production, directed by Carla Harting, features several actors playing two people whose relationship twists and turns through the seasons of life.

Get your tickets now by [clicking here \(http://theatre.ucsd.edu/season/Gruesome/index.htm\)](http://theatre.ucsd.edu/season/Gruesome/index.htm).



## NEXT UP: NEW DIRECTIONS

The Spring Undergraduate Dance show, *New Directions*, opens next week with performances in the Potiker Theatre from June 8 - 10. The evening of work, directed by Eric Geiger, offers a diverse evening of performance that highlights the collaborative and interdisciplinary work of our undergraduate dance makers.

Get your tickets now by [clicking here \(http://theatre.ucsd.edu/season/NewDirections/index.htm\)](http://theatre.ucsd.edu/season/NewDirections/index.htm).

## SAVE THE DATE: UNDERGRADUATE GRADUATION FRIDAY JUNE 9TH

The Undergraduate Graduation ceremony for the Class of 2017 will be held on Friday June 9th at 4:00pm in the Potiker Theatre in the UC San Diego Theatre District. Mark your calendars now!

# ALUMNI NEWS

## KAMRA JACOBS TO STAGE MANAGE CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD

**MFA Stage Management alumna Kamra Jacobs** is currently serving as the Production Stage manager for Berkshire Theatre Group's production of Mark Medoff's *Children of a Lesser God*, directed by Kenny Leon. After joining the staff at a school for the deaf, speech therapist with an unorthodox approach to education, James, played by Joshua Jackson, becomes infatuated by Sarah, a vivacious, yet delicate, deaf woman, played by Lauren Ridloff. James tries to help Sarah, a school dropout, navigate her way through the hearing world, however Sarah finds solace in her sphere of silence. Yearning to understand each other, yet set in their ways, a romance unfolds as the two attempt to communicate their heart's desires not only to one another, but with the world around them.



The production opens June 22nd, for tickets and more information, [click her \(https://www.berkshiretheatregroup.org/on-our-stages/theatre/681-children-of-a-lesser-god?spektrix\\_bounce=true\)](https://www.berkshiretheatregroup.org/on-our-stages/theatre/681-children-of-a-lesser-god?spektrix_bounce=true)  
[e \(https://www.berkshiretheatregroup.org/on-our-stages/theatre/681-children-of-a-lesser-god?spektrix\\_bounce=true\)](https://www.berkshiretheatregroup.org/on-our-stages/theatre/681-children-of-a-lesser-god?spektrix_bounce=true).



## CARMELITA BECNEL PROFILED ON STAGE MANAGEMENT AND MOTHERHOOD

**MFA Stage Management alumna Carmelita Becnel** was interviewed by the website Auditioning Mom to discuss her work as the Production Stage Manager for the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University and raising two three-year-old twins. She spoke about the challenges of childcare in the theatrical field and ways to better integrate her family into her creative practice.

To read the full interview, [click here \(https://auditioningmom.com/2017/05/29/what-she-looks-like-carmelita-becnel-stage-manager/\)](https://auditioningmom.com/2017/05/29/what-she-looks-like-carmelita-becnel-stage-manager/).

## CLASS OF 2017 MFA DESIGNERS PRESENT WORK AT NATIONAL DESIGN PORTFOLIO REVIEW

This year's class of MFA Designers presented their work at the National Design Portfolio Review (NDPR) at the Bohemian Theatre in New York City. NDPR attracts producers, directors, and designers from across the profession to talk with students and review their work and is an introduction for emerging designers to the industry and a celebration of their profession. Shown clockwise starting at right, Jaymee Ngerwichit, Chao-Yu Tsai, Justin Humphries, Alex Miller-Long, and Charlie Jicha (Steven Leffue not shown).





## MICHAEL GREIF FEATURED FOR WORK ON DEAR EVAN HANSEN

**MFA Directing alumnus Michael Greif** received a lovely video profile for his Tony award-winning work on *Dear Evan Hansen*. The video features may kind tributes from his collaborators and admirers throughout the theatre world.

To watch the full video, [click here](#)

(<https://www.facebook.com/DearEvanHansen/videos/1873355426236721/?fref=mentions>).

# UC San Diego

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### Theatre and Dance

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Sincerely,

UC San Diego Theatre & Dance

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