

UC SANDIEGO
THEATRE & DANCE

SPRING NEWSLETTER: WEEK 6



2018 WAGNER NEW PLAY FESTIVAL NEARS OPENING

The annual Wagner New Play Festival begins performances this week and runs May 9th - 19th. The festival features full-length and one-act plays written by the current MFA playwrights. Tickets are selling fast so reserve yours soon!

This year's festival lineup is:

How to Defend Yourself by Lily Padilla

directed by Kim Rubinstein

in the Potiker Theatre, Friday, May 11th @ 7:30pm, Saturday, May 12th @ 2pm, Monday, May 14th @ 7:30pm, Wednesday, May 16th @ 7:30pm, Thursday, May 17th @ 7:30pm .

Seven college students gather for a DIY self-defense workshop after a sorority sister is raped. They learn to use their bodies as weapons. They learn to fend off attackers. They learn "not to be a victim." Learning self-defense becomes a channel for their rage, anxiety, confusion, trauma and desire – lots of desire. *How to Defend Yourself* explores what you want, how to ask for it, and the insidious ways rape culture steals one's body and sense of belonging.

Mothers by Anna Moench

directed by Bea Basso

in the Potiker Theatre, Wednesday, May 9th @ 7:30pm, Saturday, May 12th @ 7:30pm, Tuesday, May 15th @ 7:30pm, Friday, May 18th @ 7:30pm, Saturday, May 19th @ 7pm

Three moms, a stay-at-home dad, and a nanny watch their kids play at Mommy-Baby Meetup. One mom is the queen bee and one is here to shake things up. The dad just wants to fit in, and the nanny doesn't say a word. When catastrophe comes, the five of them have to figure out how to survive a war and each other. *Mothers* examines the primal heartache of raising children in a disintegrating world.

53% Of by Steph Del Rosso

directed by Jennifer Chang

in the Shank Theatre, Tuesday, May 8th @ 7:30pm, Friday, May 11th @ 7:30pm, Tuesday, May 15th @ 7:30pm, Wednesday, May 16th @ 7:30pm, Friday, May 18th @ 7:30pm

The president is coming to town, and the ladies of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania are beside themselves planning for the big event. Later, their husbands drink beer and talk smack. Much later, a group of 20-somethings gather in Brooklyn to plan a fundraiser...or is it a march? Or is it a ritual to absolve their own guilt? A play about complicity and the violence of the status quo, *53% Of* asks what happens when we stop equating white womanhood with goodness, and ignorance with innocence.

SERE by Ava Geyer

directed by Dylan Key

in the Shank Theatre, Thursday, May 10th @ 7:30pm, Saturday, May 12th @ 2pm, Saturday, May 12th @ 7:30pm, Thursday, May 17th @ 7:30pm, Saturday, May 19th @ 2pm

When you're on SEAL Team 5 and a new guy joins your fire team, you invite him over for dinner. That's just what you do. But what if his wife shows up splattered in artichoke dip and doesn't seem to know when to shut up? It's T-minus 2 months to deployment, so you better hope this dude's chaos will clear itself up once real shit hits the fan. *SERE* (a.k.a. Survival, Evasion, Resistance, Escape) asks what it means to be a soldier in today's America and what it means to love one.

MFA One Acts

Tambo and Bones are two characters in a minstrel show. They soon come to realize that they are, in fact, just two characters in a minstrel show. This realization brings them great distress. All they want is some quarters and a nap. They decide that there is only one solution: they must find and kill the source of all their troubles. Tambo & Bones interrogates the intersection of race and capitalism, and the connection between pain, profit, and audience.

Ted and his wife hire a vagina tutor to teach their son Marty about the vagina after they discover Marty has confused a diagram of the vagina for a map of the Middle East. Marty isn't home yet when the vagina tutor arrives, but Ted is and it soon becomes clear that Ted is just as clueless as his son is about all things vagina-related. *The Clitorish* explores "truthiness," vaginas, and how certain people manage to dictate the rules of the world.

Anya's boyfriend was Caleb's best friend. To commemorate the one-year anniversary of his death, Anya and Caleb ditch school to go to the desert. And maybe fall in love. And maybe conjure a ghost. *Joshua* looks at that moment in time where life moves us from a place of youth and innocence into the place that will shape our adult selves. As we look back, how do we reconcile the missed opportunities, the things we didn't say, the paths we didn't take? And will they even matter to our older selves?



MARYBETH WARD RECEIVES OUTSTANDING STAFF AWARD

Graduate Coordinator Marybeth Ward received the GSA Outstanding Student Support Staff award for 2017-2018 at a ceremony last Thursday. She was presented the award by PhD Student Kristin Leadbetter.

This award honors a UC-San Diego staff member who has gone above and beyond their job requirements in assisting graduate students. The awardee shows strong empathy for and understanding of the challenges facing graduate students, and has exemplified compassionate and efficient professionalism in their interactions with graduate students both within and outside their home department. The actions of this awardee have significantly relaxed the daily stresses and concerns of graduate students, enhancing their overall experience.



LILY PADILLA AND CARIDAD SVICH NAMED CARNAVAL FINALISTS

MFA Playwriting student Lily Padilla and **MFA Playwriting alumna Caridad Svich** have both been named as Finalists for the 2018 LTC Carnival of New Latinx Work 19-21 July 2018 in Chicago, IL

Carnaval 2018: ConeXion! will focus on six new Latinx plays with each play serving as a nexus through which to connect with six Latinx writers, six Latinx directors, six Latinx dramaturgs, twelve Latinx designers, and one of the strongest Latinx acting pools in the nation! Additionally, participants will be welcomed into Chicago's rich Latinx theatre community through events created by our partners Urban Theater Company, Aguijón Theater, Teatro Vista, and the Chicago Latino Theater Alliance.

(w)holeness by Lily Padilla

The support group for sex addicts meets every Monday in the little seaside town of Pescadero, California. But where is Dr. Jurgensen, the therapist who's supposed to lead the group? And is Dr. Jurgensen's earnest intern who's left to lead the group in over her head? When Matt shows up, any illusion of a "safe space" shatters and the group must confront difficult truths and unexpected points of connection in a comedy about addiction, identity, and sex. *(w)holeness* asks the question: "Am I too damaged to be loved?"

Fuel by Caridad Svich

You live in a place that reeks of gasoline. You run on fuel. You don't know anything else except living hard and surviving, but one day that fuel is gonna run out. How are you gonna know who you are, then? This is the story of Baby and their people living in a town left for dead. This is also the ballad of Baby and Girl in this here mad America.

To read more about the finalists, [click here](#).

EMILY ROXWORTHY HOSTS BIOMEDICAL ETHICS SEMINAR

PhD Faculty Professor Emily Roxworthy is leading a Biomedical Ethics seminar entitled: **Using Theatre to Foster Ethics and Science Conversations** this Wednesday, May 16, 4:30-6 pm (Medical Teaching Facility, Rm. 175) with Emily Roxworthy, Ph.D. and Michael Kalichman, Ph.D.

It is widely understood that one of the most important determinants of ethical behavior is an organization's culture, and that culture is not defined simply by an ethical code, online training, or even a single classroom course. One potentially valuable tool to induce the necessary reflection, conversation, and empathy is the staging of live theatre. Staged readings of academic dramas are an economical, engaging, and useful approach to foster a culture of ethics in science. Join us for this discussion of goals, recent staged readings, and possible implications for UC San Diego.



ELIANA PIPES RECEIVES 2018 DR. FLOYD GAFFNEY NATIONAL PLAYWRITING COMPETITION AWARD

The UC San Diego Department of Theatre and Dance has announced the winner of the 2018 Dr. Floyd Gaffney National Playwriting Competition, *Stand and Wait* by Eliana Pipes. Eliana will be awarded a \$1000 prize, and her play will receive a staged reading on Saturday, May 12 at 10 AM, at the Wagner Theater in the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Theatre District on UC San Diego's campus as part of the Wagner New Play Festival at UC San Diego.

Sparked by Paula Deen's perverse remarks of an Antebellum South themed wedding with "historically appropriate" staff, *Stand and Wait* follows a seasoned black actress Carla, and a naïve white actress Tracy, who make friends in an audition, only to be handed a script that caters to America's worst racial instincts. The event transcends to a plantation outside of space and time as Carla encounters ghosts of slaves and the legacy that's been haunting her.

The staged reading will be directed by **Directing Faculty Professor Robert Castro** and stage managed by **BA student Bryan P. Clements**. The cast will feature **MFA Acting students Janet Fiki (Carla), Mary Rose Branick (Tracy), Brandon O'Sullivan (Mel), Assata Hefner (Yvonne), Amara Granderson (Lisa), Xavier Clark (Damian)**.

Eliana Pipes is a playwright, filmmaker and actor graduating from Columbia University with a B.A. in English and entering Boston University's MFA Playwriting Program. Recent work includes: *Stiletto Envy* (Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Festival, The Fire this Time Festival) *Isadora del Sol* (KCACTF John Cauble Award). elianapipes.com.



NANCY CURTIS SPEAKS WITH MFA ACTORS

Richard Robichaux hosted New York talent agent Nancy Curtis in his MFA acting class this past week, they discussed branding, cover letters, and networking.

ALUMNI NEWS



REMEMBERING JOHN MCADAMS

We are very sorry to learn that MFA Acting alumnus John McAdams passed away last week. He was a longtime member of Tectonic Theater Project who announced the following:

"It is with deep sadness that we tell you of the passing of our beloved company member, John McAdams. He left us suddenly on Monday at far too young an age. John was an original cast member of *Gross Indecency*, *The Laramie Project*, and the HBO film of the play. While working on *The Laramie Project*, John met his future wife and our company member Barbara Pitts McAdams. From Moisés Kaufman- "Johnny was a brilliant actor. His performance as Dennis Shepard will remain a highlight of my theatergoing life. He was a brilliant collaborator, and above all, a dear, kind, gentleman. One could always count on Johnny to keep us grounded and focused on the big picture. He led by example, and his integrity and unerring moral compass always led the way. We miss him so dearly."

Please join us in sending Barbara and John's family all of our love.

ANNE KAUFFMAN WINS LUCILLE LORTEL AWARD

The Lucille Lortel Awards, honoring the best of the 2017–2018 Off-Broadway season were announced last week. **MFA Directing alumna Anne Kauffman** received the award for Outstanding Director for her production of Amy Herzog's *Mary Jane* at New York Theatre Workshop. Signature Theatre's production of *Jesus Hopped The 'A' Train*, was named Outstanding Revival, in a production which starred **MFA Acting alumnus R.a. Chavira**.

To read the full list of winners, [click here](#).



QUINCY TYLER BERNSTINE STARS IN GUIRGIS REVIVAL

MFA Acting alumna Quincy Tyler Bernstine is currently appearing in Signature Theatre's production of *Our Lady of 121st Street* which is currently in previews. The production runs through June 10th.

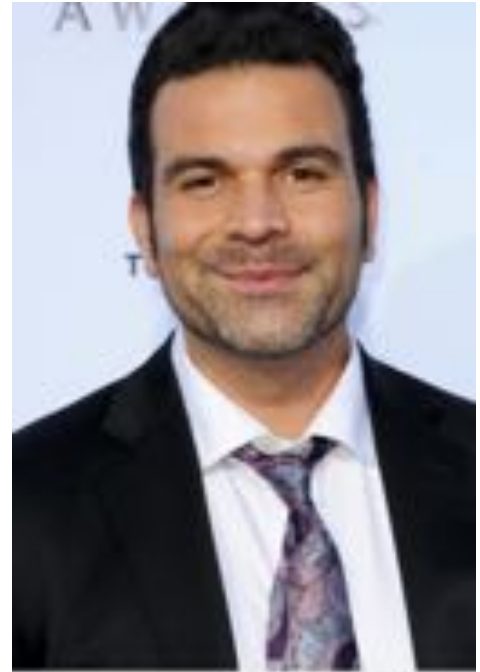
After the death of the beloved Sister Rose, a group of her former students return to their Harlem neighborhood to pay respects. But at the Funeral Home, there's a problem—her dead body has been stolen. An irreverently brash and insightful dark comedy, *Our Lady of 121st Street* paints a vivid comic portrait of what happens when old friends meet old wounds and how old habits die hard.

For tickets and more information, [click here](#).

R.A. CHAVIRA APPEARS IN GUTHRIE'S *ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE*

MFA Acting alumna R.a. Chavira is currently appearing as Peter Stockman in the Guthrie Theatre's production of *Enemy of the People*, now running through June 3rd.

An *Enemy of the People* follows Tom Stockmann, a geologist who discovers dangerous water pollution in the Springs, a highly anticipated resort that recently opened in his Norwegian town. In Tom's mind, the path to a solution is clear: inform the public and close the resort to prevent a crisis. But gradually, he comes under fire – from his brother (the town's mayor), to the press, to his neighbors and his own family – for wanting to publicize a problem that threatens to destroy the town's economy and reputation. With ripped-from-the-headlines relevance, this high-intensity drama is a powerful investigation of ambition, integrity and the price we pay for truth.



LILA ROSE KAPLAN'S PLAY PERFORMS AT MERRIMACK REP

MFA Playwriting alumna Lila Rose Kaplan's play *The Villains Supper Club* is in performance until May 20th at Merrimack Repertory Theatre. The production features **MFA Acting alumna Lorene Chesley** in the show.

The Villains' Supper Club features Galactic Girl, the world's last living superhero—who is on her first day back from maternity leave. Kapow! Galactic Girl fights off multiple dastardly villains, including their tiny, vicious leader, The Boss. Woosh! She's home in time to feed her baby. When the last superhero on earth is also a new mom, there's no time to lose! Can she save the planet and call back the pediatrician? Or will she fall victim to her arch rival's nefarious schemes? In a twist, the first half of the play is told from a traditional male comic book perspective with high heels and suggestive clothing; in the second act, Galactic Girl takes control of her own story, choosing her no-nonsense pediatrician as the narrator. An irresistible comedy for anyone who's ever had to be a superhero..



CHAZ SHERMIL AND MONIQUE GAFFNEY APPEAR AT CYGNET

MFA Acting alumna Chaz Shermil and **BA alumna Monique Gaffney** are appearing in *The Wind and the Breeze* at Cygnet Theatre in a production which runs through June 10th.

Sam, the legendary, undisputed, greatest emcee in Rockford, IL, plans to rest on his laurels all winter and, if possible, stake out an early spot to watch the Independence Day fireworks -but his closest mentees and their outsized dreams challenge him to a battle he can't win. *The Wind and the Breeze* explores the politics of place, the unspoken expectations of friendship and what happens when we choose to stand our ground on shifting sands

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