



Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**July 7, 2020**

**The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
announces the**

**Award and Scholarship Recipients of the 2020  
Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival**

**Honoring Outstanding Student Achievement**

**Awards Were to Have Been Received at the National Festival in April 2020**

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced the national awardees of the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). Dozens of students received recognition of their outstanding work. These student artists from across the United States were recognized from the eight regional festivals that were held January 7 through February 27, 2020. More than 120 students were selected to travel to Washington, D.C. for an all-expenses paid trip to participate in National Festival events at the Kennedy Center, April 6–10, but the 2020 Festival was unfortunately later canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“In this time of isolation, we are all examining the way forward as citizens, as friends, as loved ones, as both teachers and students, and as artistic collaborators who must face bigotry and racism’s uncomfortable truths and, if nothing else, challenge our own professional ethics as artist educators if we are to make our work with any semblance of integrity.” said Gregg Henry, Artistic Director of KCACTF. “It is in this context that I remember fondly the diverse range of work from these student artists that were showcased during the regional festivals. We are blessed by gifted students, and teaching artists nationwide making a very real impact through the work, day in and day out, using the arts to amplify necessary conversations and encourage change.”

Normally, each April the Kennedy Center welcomes students from across the country to the KCACTF National Festival. The week-long festival includes opportunities for participants to take part in master classes and engage with colleagues and peers from across the nation and the Washington, D.C. theater community. Furthermore, students participate in a closing day ceremony for awards in production, directing, choreography, acting, playwriting, design, stage management, dramaturgy, and theater criticism.

The honors below represent the outstanding and distinguished achievement recognized by the KCACTF National Committee, Guest Artistic Director Sonja Parks, and the KCACTF National Office at the Kennedy Center. Said awards would have been received in person this past April during the National Festival.

### **THE KENNEDY CENTER CITIZEN ARTIST AWARDS**

The Kennedy Center Citizen Artist Awards recognizes programs in higher education using theatrical production to promote long-term societal impact through an artistic, to encourage empathetic exploration of the complex cultural and physical world, and to advocate for justice on campus and throughout the world.

*Oedipus el Rey* by Luis Alfaro, **CSU Fullerton**

*Revolt She Said, Revolt Again* by Alice Birch, **University of Connecticut**

*Pass Over* by Antoinette Nwandu, **Kingsborough Community College**

*Criminal*, company-generated, **Los Angeles Southwest College**

*The Revolutionists* by Lauren Gunderson, **University of Southern Indiana**

*American Griot* by Reginald Edmund and Ronnie Malley, **Moraine Valley Community College**

*An Iowa Odyssey (Or How We Got Here)*, **Iowa State University**

*What We Leave Behind: Addressing Climate Change through Dance*, company-generated by the Co/lab Collective, the OM Music Group, and Jessica Thompson, **Northern Michigan University**

*Nat Turner in Jerusalem* by Nathan Alan Davis, **University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh**

*Student Body* by Frank Winters, **Lone Star College-Montgomery**

*Wild Fire* by Jody Gehrman, **Mendocino College**

*Facing Our Truth: Ten-Minute Plays on Trayvon, Race and Privilege* by Dan O'Brien and Quetzal Flores, Winter Miller, Dominique Morisseau; Mona Mansour, Tala Manassah, Marcus Gardley, A. Rey Pamatmat, **Oakland University**

*Here Too, WWU*, company-generated with Barbara Pitts McAdams and Rich Brown, **Western Washington University**

*For Colored Girl Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf* by Ntozake Shange, **Five Towns College**

**A SPECIAL AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN  
INNOVATIVE, INCLUSIVE PRODUCTION PROGRAMMING**

The Repertory of *The Wolves* (Sarah DeLappe) and *Colossal* (Andrew Hinderaker),  
**Normandale Community College**

**KCACTF National Playwriting Program (NPP)**

**The Michael Kanin Playwriting Awards for the 2019 Festival Year**

**THE HAROLD AND MIMI STEINBERG NATIONAL STUDENT PLAYWRITING AWARD**

First Place: *Laughs in Spanish* by [Alexis Scheer](#), **Boston University**

Second Place: *What We Scream Under Water When No One Can Hear Us* by [Caitlin Turnage](#), **Texas State University**

**THE KCACTF NATIONAL UNDERGRADUATE PLAYWRITING AWARD**

First Place: *how to clean your room (and remember all your trauma)* by j.chavez **Western Washington University**

Second Place: *The Size of a Fist* by [Delaney Kelly](#), **Oberlin College**

Distinguished Achievement:

*Legend City-A New Musical*, Book, Music and Lyrics by Justin Rayna, **East Tennessee State University**

*sons that wear dresses and mothers that love sweet potatoes*, by Gage Tarlton, **University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill**

**THE KEN LUDWIG PLAYWRITING SCHOLARSHIP**

[Eliana Pipes](#), **Boston University**

**THE KENNEDY CENTER LATINX PLAYWRITING AWARD**

*To Saints and Stars* by [Jordan Ramirez Puckett](#), **Ohio University**

*Dry Swallow* by [Lucas Baisch](#), **Brown University**

*All the Men Who Have Frightened Me* by [Noah Diaz](#), **Yale School of Drama**

Distinguished Achievement:

*Wet Brain* by [John J. Caswell, Jr.](#), **Hunter College**

*Catalina in Love: A Happy Gay Latina Play* by [Eliana Pipes](#), **Boston University**

### **THE LORRAINE HANSBERRY PLAYWRITING AWARD**

First Place: *Alaiyo* by [Micah Ariel Watson](#), **New York University**

Second Place: *Tambo and Bones* by [Dave Harris](#), **University of California San Diego**

*Maiden Voyage* by [Cayenne Douglass](#), **Boston University**

Distinguished Achievement:

*Fall the House* by Nicholas Kaidoo, **University of Texas at Austin**

*BURNBABYBURN: AN AMERICAN DREAM* by Alexis Payne, **Yale School of Drama**

### **THE DARRELL AYERS NATIONAL PLAYWRITING AWARD**

For the outstanding student-written play for Young Audiences.

*Jack and June and the Great Bassoon!* by [Noah Diaz](#), **Yale School of Drama**

### **THE JUDITH ROYER PLAYWRITING AWARD**

In association with the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)

*Paper Dream* by [Lyra Yang](#), **Northwestern University**

### **THE MARK TWAIN PRIZE FOR COMIC PLAYWRITING**

First Place: *Stuck* by Ellen Doyle, **New York University**

Second Place: *Tambo and Bones* by [Dave Harris](#), **University of California San Diego**

*The Oracle* by [Emily Feldman](#), **The Juilliard School**

Distinguished Achievement:

*Fall the House* by Nicholas Kaidoo, **University of Texas at Austin**

**THE JEAN KENNEDY SMITH PLAYWRITING AWARD**

*Wet Brain* by [John J. Caswell, Jr.](#), **Hunter College**

**THE HIP HOP THEATER CREATOR AWARD**

*Alaiyo* by [Micah Ariel Watson](#), **New York University**

**THE PAULA VOGEL PLAYWRITING AWARD**

*I Will Be Your Feet When You Need Them* by Scottie Harvey, **New York University**

*The Oracle* by [Emily Feldman](#), **The Juilliard School**

Distinguished Achievement

*Maiden Voyage* by [Cayenne Douglass](#), **Boston University**

*BURNBABYBURN: AN AMERICAN DREAM* by Alexis Payne, **Yale School of Drama**

*Catalina in Love: A Happy Gay Latina Play* by [Eliana Pipes](#), **Boston University**

**THE PAUL STEPHEN LIM PLAYWRITING AWARD**

*Mother of Exiles* by [Jessica Huang](#), **The Juilliard School**

Distinguished Achievement:

*Paper Dream* by [Lyra Yang](#), **Northwestern University**

**THE ROSA PARKS PLAYWRITING AWARD**

*Mother of Exiles* by [Jessica Huang](#), **The Juilliard School**

*Alaiyo* by [Micah Arliel Watson](#), **New York University**

Distinguished Achievement:

*Maiden Voyage* by [Cayenne Douglass](#), **Boston University**

*Fall the House* by Nicholas Kaidoo, **University of Texas at Austin**

*BURNBABYBURN: AN AMERICAN DREAM* by Alexis Payne, **Yale School of Drama**

**THE NATIONAL PARTNERS OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE PLAYWRITING AWARD**

*The Love Code* by [Kate Leslie](#), **Hollins University**

**THE DAVID MARK COHEN PLAYWRITING AWARD**

First Place: *Borrowed Babies* by [Jennifer Blackmer](#), **Ball State University**

Second Place: *The Three Keys of Captain Hellfire* by [Ariana Burns](#), **University of Idaho**

**THE KCACTF MUSICAL THEATER AWARD**

*People You May Know*, Book by Katie Duggan, Music & Lyrics by Jordan Knitzer and Alec Steinhorn, **Northwestern University**

Distinguished Achievement:

*Legend City-A New Musical*, Book, Music and Lyrics by Justin Rayna, **East Tennessee State University**

## **THE GARY GARRISON NATIONAL TEN-MINUTE PLAY AWARD**

First Place: *Slow Jam* by [Caity-Shea Violette](#), **Boston University**

Second Place: *The Golem and the Maharal's Wife* by Lila Perlman, **Texas State University**

## **THE JOHN CAUBLE AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SHORT PLAY**

*Rabbit* by [Samantha Friskey](#), **Pennsylvania State University**

*Displace* by [Zoha Bharwani](#), **University of Michigan**

## **THE PLANET EARTH ARTS PLAYWRITING AWARD**

*Becoming Forgotten* by [Josiah Turner](#), **University of Texas at Austin**

National Finalists:

*Isla and Her Earth* by [Daniel C. Blanda](#), **Boston University**

*After Dark* by [Lavinia Roberts](#), **Southern Illinois University at Carbondale**

*The Wanderer* by [Taylor Sklenar](#), **University of Missouri**

*That Day of Blackest Sky* by Kevin Harris, **Western Washington University**

*en-DANGER!-ed* by A.R. Corvin, **Arizona State University**

## **OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION ENSEMBLES**

*Oedipus el Rey*, **CSU Fullerton**

*Fires in the Mirror*, **University of Louisville**

*Girls on a Dirt Pile*, **University of Maryland-Baltimore County**

*Pass Over*, **Kingsborough Community College**

*For Colored Girl Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*, **Five Towns College**

*I and You*, **Rochester Institute of Technology and School of the Deaf**

*Colossal*, **Normandale Community College**

*Criminal*, **Los Angeles Southwest College**

*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, **Albright College**

*Little Wars*, **University of Nebraska at Omaha**

*Student Body*, **Lone Star College-Montgomery**

*The Wolves*, **Normandale Community College**

*The Wolves*, **University of New Haven**

*The Wolves*, **SUNY Oneonta**

## **OUTSTANDING SCENIC DESIGN**

**Ross Fleming**, *Red*, Sul Ross University

## **DISTINGUISHED SCENIC DESIGN**

**Jared Sorenson**, *This Random World*, University of Idaho

**Dahlia Al-Habieli**, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Albright College

**Nate Sinnott**, *Girls on a Dirt Pile*, University of Maryland Baltimore County

## **DISTINGUISHED SOUND DESIGN**

**Jeffrey Lentz**, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Albright College

## **OUTSTANDING LIGHTING DESIGN**

**Wayne E. Vettleon**, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Albright College

## **DISTINGUISHED LIGHTING DESIGN**

**Aaron Hook**, *The Little Prince*, St. Ambrose University

**Chian-Ann Lu**, *This Random World*, University of Idaho



## **OUTSTANDING COSTUME DESIGN**

**Anne Medlock**, *Ada and the Engine*, West Texas A&M University

## **DISTINGUISHED COSTUME DESIGN**

**Amanda Pertierra**, *Red Velvet*, Florida International University

## **OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION OF A PLAY**

*Colossal* by Andrew Hinderaker, **Normandale Community College**

## **DISTINGUISHED PRODUCTION OF A PLAY**

*This Random World* by Steven Dietz, **University of Idaho**

*Pass Over* by Antoinette Nwandu, **Kingsborough Community College**

*The Wolves* by Sarah DeLappe, **SUNY Oneonta**

*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* by Simon Stephens, from the book by Mark Haddon, **Albright College**

*An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen, adapted by Tom Isbell, **University of Minnesota at Duluth**

*Red* by John Logan, **Sul Ross University**

*Ada and the Engine* by Lauren Gunderson, **West Texas A&M University**

## **OUTSTANDING COMPANY-GENERATED WORK**

*Criminal*, **Los Angeles Southwest College**

## **DISTINGUISHED COMPANY-GENERATED OR DEvised WORK**

*Here Too*-WWU, **Western Washington University**

*Unheard/Unspoken*, **Bucknell University**

*Little Wars*, **University of Nebraska at Omaha**

*An Iowa Odyssey (Or How We Got Here)*, **Iowa State University**

## **OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION OF A NEW PLAY**

*Girls on a Dirt Pile* by Susan McCully, **University of Maryland-Baltimore County**

## **OUTSTANDING DIRECTOR OF A DEvised WORK**

**Jeremy Stoll**, *Little Wars*, University of Nebraska at Omaha

## **OUTSTANDING LEAD DEvisERS OF A COMPANY-GENERATED WORK**

**Rich Brown and Barbara Pitts McAdams**, *Here Too*-WWU, Western Washington University

## **OUTSTANDING DIRECTOR OF A PLAY**

**Kiara Pipino**, *The Wolves*, SUNY Oneonta

## **DISTINGUISHED DIRECTOR OF A PLAY**

**Amanda White**, *Colossal* by Andrew Hinderaker, Normandale Community College

**Eve Muson**, *Girls on a Dirt Pile* by Susan McCully, University of Maryland-Baltimore County

**David Lee-Painter**, *This Random World* by Steven Dietz, University of Idaho

**Jeffrey Lentz**, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Albright College

**Tom Isbell**, *An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen, adapted by Tom Isbell, University of Minnesota-Duluth

## **OUTSTANDING CHOREOGRAPHY**

**Joe Crook**, *Colossal* by Andrew Hinderaker, Normandale Community College

## **OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTOR**

**Kaitlyn Kearschner**, *The Revolutionists*, University of Southern Indiana

**Isabel Lyda**, *Ada and the Engine*, West Texas A&M University

**Enrique Dueñas**, *Oedipus el Rey*, CSU Fullerton

**Bryan Carter**, *Nat Turner in Jerusalem*, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh

## **DISTINGUISHED PERFORMANCE BY AN ACTOR**

**Katy Sokol**, *This Random World*, University of Idaho

**Rani Alina Shori**, *Oedipus el Rey*, CSU Fullerton

**Tyler Tate**, *Fires in the Mirror*, University of Louisville

**Christopher Ross**, *Pass Over*, Kingsborough Community College

**Kiana Wilson**, *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf*, Five Towns College

**Jarrin Comer**, *American Griot*, Moraine Valley Community College

**Jesmelia Williams**, *The Revolutionists*, University of Southern Indiana

**Bence Veres**, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Albright College

**Michael Hundevad**, *Colossal*, Normandale Community College

**Alice Wilson**, *Be More Chill*, State Fair Community College

**Joseph Lasher**, *The Little Prince*, St. Ambrose University

**Jeremy Mahr**, *The Little Prince*, St. Ambrose University

**Adam Hainsel**, *Ada and the Engine*, West Texas A&M University

## **THE KENNEDY CENTER AMERICAN COLLEGE THEATER FESTIVAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT:**

The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival affirms its commitment to policies and practices of promoting inclusion and diversity in its leadership, both regional and national, as well as in its programming. We pledge to nurture talent in all areas of the theater based solely on merit and achievement. We encourage production respondents to avoid discriminatory comments and embrace the variety of artistic choices generated by the diversity of perspective that exists on college campuses across the country. We promote collegial exploration of new ideas, supported by a clear understanding of long-held artistic practices, fully respecting the communicated intentions of the playwright. We encourage discourse that effects positive change in the ways that under-represented groups are portrayed onstage, and we oppose acts of cultural appropriation and character depictions that deepen existing cultural divides. We embrace the idea that diversity in experience and perspective makes our organization stronger and more relevant and is therefore essential to our educational mission of training the future artistic leadership in American theater.

## **ABOUT THE KENNEDY CENTER AMERICAN COLLEGE THEATER FESTIVAL**

Envisioned in 1968 and launched in 1969 by Roger L. Stevens, the Kennedy Center's founding Chairman, KCACTF encourages and celebrates the finest and most diverse theatrical productions from colleges and universities nationwide. Through the regional and national festivals, KCACTF celebrates the achievements of theater programs, individual students, and faculty of colleges and universities throughout the United States.

The eight regional festivals provide opportunities for colleges and universities to showcase their finest work to diverse audiences of theater students and faculty from their regions. In addition to the invited productions, students and faculty attend workshops, master classes, juried design expositions, seminars, summer stock and graduate school auditions, and other professional development opportunities that build bridges between higher education and the professional theater community. In July 2014, the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center along with the Kennedy Center, National New Play Network, and Stage Directors & Choreographers Foundation announced the start of the National Directors Fellowship (NDF), a five-year joint initiative which will fast track the professional development of 25 early-career stage directors, five per year. As part of this year-long fellowship, the fellows will attend the MFA Playwrights' Workshop and Directing Intensive, led by NNPN and KCACTF.

Since its establishment 51 years ago, KCACTF has reached millions of theatergoers and made important contributions to the professional development of countless college and university theater students nationwide. This year, eight regional festivals were hosted by the following institutions: Cape Cod Community College; University of Maryland, College Park; Madison College; University of South Carolina Upstate and Converse College; The City of Sioux Falls, South Dakota; The City of Abilene, Texas; Colorado State University; and California State University, Fullerton.

## **EDUCATION AT THE KENNEDY CENTER**

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is the national champion for arts learning and creativity. Committed to increasing opportunities for all people to participate in, learn about, and understand the arts, the Center offers programs and events that strive to reflect the nation and its communities, and that are accessible and inclusive for all. From the Center's stages to classrooms and communities across the country, to online resources accessible nearly anywhere, the Center serves the burgeoning artist, the curious explorer, the student (of any age), the teacher and teaching artist—any person interested in arts learning and utilizing the arts for positive change.

As an essential component of the living memorial to President Kennedy, the Center's Education programs utilize the arts to embrace the ideals of service, justice, freedom, courage, and gratitude, and cultivate the

Citizen Artists in all the people we serve. For more information, please visit [kennedy-center.org/education/](http://kennedy-center.org/education/).

**FUNDING CREDITS**

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**For more information, please visit:**  
**[Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.](#)**

Discover the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival on social media:



#KennedyCenter

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