

atplay

15 EMERGING PLAYWRIGHTS

From Clifford Odets to Tennessee Williams to Stephen Karam, Lillian Hellman to Paula Vogel to Katori Hall, Kaufman & Hart and Edna Ferber to Wendy Wasserstein to Annie Baker and Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, DPS has been the proud first publisher of plays by writers who went on to define, and redefine, the American theater.

Founded as essentially a cooperative between the Dramatists Guild and playwriting agents, the Play Service's commitment to nurturing new talent is foregrounded in the company's mission. While we are ever proud to represent plays honored by Tony Awards® (including all four of the 2017 Best Play Tony nominees) and Pulitzer Prizes, we are equally proud to count among our writers every year the fresh faces whose work may not yet be nationally known but whose talent is immense. The plays highlighted by these 15 emerging writers published in 2016-2017 are astonishing, invigorating explorations of identity, history, consciousness, politics, and language.

Though their subjects range from slaughterhouse employees to the titans of global finance to families in the not-so-distant future, each of these plays challenges readers and audiences to consider what theater, that most humanist of mediums, can be. And, in an embarrassment of riches, the 15 writers featured herein are only a fraction of the individuals whose first plays or early-stage career efforts DPS publishes.

On the back of this newsletter you'll find an overview of new partnerships between DPS and play development organizations, who do the critical daily work of providing resources for artists at all stages in their careers.



Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally

KEVIN ARMENTO

A turbulent affair between a teenage boy and his math teacher is brought to life from the surprising perspective of the boy's best friend: his cell phone. (flexible casting) "Screams of novelty. Armento pushes boundaries, challenging his spectator to engage with the modern environment instead of ignorantly accepting it." —Huffington Post



Old Love New Love

LAURA BRIENZA

Gloria's husband has fallen for another Alzheimer's patient at the facility where he resides. Her daughter Michelle's husband has strayed after wrestling with his unfulfilled ambitions. A play about what we can't remember and what we can forgive. (3M, 4W) "A mind is a terrible thing to lose. Feeling it go, [as with] Alzheimer's...must be like living inside a pit of dread. [OLD LOVE NEW LOVE] dramatizes that beautifully." —Montclair Times



Caught

CHRISTOPHER CHEN

An art gallery hosts a retrospective of a Chinese dissident artist who was once imprisoned. And the artist himself is present for the evening. A labyrinthine exploration of truth, art, and cultural appropriation, where nothing is as it first appears. (2M, 2W) "...[an] intricately constructed, unrelentingly destabilizing puzzle of a play about the anatomy of truth and the provocative power of illusion..." —New York Times



Men on Boats

JACLYN BACKHAUS

Ten explorers. Four boats. One Grand Canyon. The true(ish) story of an 1869 expedition when a one-armed captain and a crew of insane yet loyal volunteers set out to chart the course of the Colorado River. (10W) "...marvelously destabilizing both as history and theater. The stalwartness and selfishness of the adventurers...become biting satire when sent up by women." —New York Magazine



Dry Powder

SARAH BURGESS

While his private equity firm forces layoffs for average workers at a national grocery chain, Rick Hannel throws himself an extravagant party, setting off a publicity nightmare. Fortunately his partner Seth has a plan to invest in an American-made luggage company. But Jenny, the other partner, wants to maximize returns, no matter the consequences. (3M, 1W) "With biting wit and shrewd insight, Burgess pulls back the veil on private equity..." —TheaterMania



The Feast

CORY FINLEY

Matt and Anna's relationship is going swimmingly, until the sewers under their apartment open up and begin to speak to Matt. An eerie comedy about what is real, what is not, and who knows. (2M, 1W) "[THE FEAST] has an old-fashioned Gothic feel to it...the ambiguity between [mental] breakdown and ghost story leads to a denouement that is genuinely scary and surprising." —Exeunt Magazine



Kill Floor

ABE KOOGLER

Andy returns home after five years in prison and takes a job at a local slaughterhouse, determined to rebuild a relationship with her son. But when he objects to her working on the kill floor, and her boss starts demanding more than she can give, Andy discovers how hard it is to start over. (3M, 2W) "Melancholy and moving...a beautifully observed character study focused on the difficulty of pulling yourself up from America's bottom rung, however willing the spirit and able the body." —Chicago Tribune



15

Orange Julius

BASIL KREIMENDAHL

Nut, the youngest child of Julius, a Vietnam vet, grows up watching Julius suffer the effects of Agent Orange. Leaping through time and memory, tracing the complex intimacy between war vet father and transgender child, Nut guides us through a relationship fighting for mutual recognition before it's too late. (3M, 2W) "...a sympathetic, eloquent...effort to grapple with family, gender identity, and the legacy of the Vietnam War." —Village Voice



Empanada Loca

AARON MARK

Now living deep under Manhattan in an abandoned subway tunnel, a very hungry Dolores recounts the bloodbath that sent her fleeing underground. Loosely inspired by the legend of Sweeney Todd, EMPANADA LOCA is contemporary Grand Guignol horror in the style of Spalding Gray. (1W) "Utterly transfixing...a real hair-raiser. Anyone looking for a good fright won't want to miss it." —TheaterMania



Loose Canon

BRIAN RENO
& GABRIEL VEGA WEISSMAN

From Molière in IKEA to Chekhov in a Taco Bell, this series of short comedies satirizes the world of the American consumer in the style of canonical playwrights. It's a walk through history...if history were a strip mall. (flexible casting) "...bridges the knowledge of a theatre history class with the raucous fun of sketch comedy..." —NYTheatreNow



Engagements

LUCY TEITLER

It's summer in New England and every weekend is someone's engagement party. The flowers, cocktails, and artisanal appetizers are perfect, but the people have a lot to hide. And Lauren is not at all ready for everyone to settle down, least of all her best friend, Allison. (2M, 3W) "...bitingly funny...Ms. Teitler writes tangy dialogue rich in sharp-witted repartee." —New York Times



Ironbound

MARTYNA MAJOK

Over the course of 20 years, and three relationships, Darja, a Polish immigrant cleaning lady, negotiates for her future with men who can offer her love or security, but never both. (1W, 3M) "Ms. Majok's perceptive drama, with its bone-dry humor and vivid characters, illustrates how vulnerable people like Darja are hostages to the vagaries of chance, unless they can manage to climb out of poverty." —New York Times



Judy

MAX POSNER

It's the winter of 2040, and the world has changed—but maybe not by much. Timothy's wife has just left him. His sisters are trying to help him cope while wrestling with their own lives. And the kids are starting to ask questions. (3M, 3W) "This smart, disturbing comedy...touching on the linguistic, the sociological, and the theological...gives us something funny and scary to ponder." —New Yorker



The Hunchback of Seville

CHARISE CASTRO SMITH

At the turn of the 16th century, Maxima Terriblé Segunda, sister of Queen Isabella, is living out her life locked away in a tower... until it is decided that the future of the country is in her nerdy, reclusive hands. A bitingly funny, madcap take on Spanish history and colonialism. (3M, 5W) "...an incredibly clever look at colonialism and religion...a bawdy funfest...that isn't afraid of skewering history..." —BroadwayWorld



Kentucky

LEAH NANAOKO WINKLER

Hiro is a self-made woman in New York. But she is also single, almost thirty, and estranged from her dysfunctional family in Kentucky. When her little sister, a born-again Christian, decides to marry, Hiro takes it upon herself to stop the wedding and salvage her sister's future. (5M, 11W) "...the debut of a distinctive new voice—mouthy, sly and bourbon sweet, with the expected kick." —New York Times





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new PARTNERSHIPS



DPS is thrilled to announce a publication partnership with Waterwell, as part of their New Works Lab. Each year Waterwell commissions a new full length play by an emerging playwright written specifically for the actors in their senior year in the drama program at the Professional Performing Arts School. Previously commissioned playwrights include Stephen

Karam and Dael Orlandersmith. The 2017 playwright will be announced in the coming weeks.

Now entering its 7th year, the Lilly Awards Foundation is committed to celebrating the work of women in the theater, and to nurturing future generations of female-identifying theater artists. DPS is proud to sponsor the spring Lilly Awards ceremony for the third year in a row.



www.dramatists.com

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We are also joining forces with The Lark to help present their annual Playwrights' Week—a phenomenal resource for established and emerging writers to develop their works-in-process.

Selected via a year-long open submissions process, The Lark provides approximately seven playwrights with crucial creative resources in a nurturing and rigorous laboratory setting, which includes a series of group conversations around the work. Each new play receives ten hours of rehearsal in advance of a public staged reading, focusing on the writer's self-stated developmental goals.



DPS is very pleased to sponsor the 2017 Educational Theatre Association's Commissioned Play Project, and we are particularly happy that DPS playwright Max Posner (JUDY) has been selected by the EdTA for this honor. We look forward to a new play from Max that will be produced in schools across the country.



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