

2025 FELLOWSHIP PLAYS

Four all new plays by four NYC public high school playwrights

FEATURING

I Hate Choices by **Orli Frank**

From Roots to Detached Branches by **Divyasri Pandey**

The Diagnosis by **Ariana White**

Into Thin Air by **Cindy Zhong**



LUCILLE LORTEL THEATRE presents
2025 FELLOWSHIP PLAYS

The Sixth Annual NYC Public High School
Playwriting Fellowship Program

Director:
Kimille Howard

Mentor:
Nilan

Monday, March 31, 2025

Lucille Lortel Theatre

121 Christopher Street
New York, NY 10014

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City
Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



For more information visit www.Lortel.org/HSPF

THE 2025 FELLOWSHIP PLAYS

***I Hate Choices* by Orli Frank**

Brooklyn Latin School, Brooklyn

CAMILLE - **Dorothea Gloria**

JORDAN - **Rebecca Hargrove**

AARON - **Lambert Tamin**

***From Roots to Detached Branches* by Divyasri Pandey**

Queens High School for Sciences at York College, Queens

SAWASTINI - **Rita Wolf**

MAMTA - **Dorothea Gloria**

***The Diagnosis* by Ariana White**

Belmont Preparatory High School, Bronx

RIVER - **Rebecca Hargrove**

MATHEW - **Lambert Tamin**

ROSE - **Pascale Armand**

***Into Thin Air* by Chuer Zhong**

Stuyvesant High School, Manhattan

ANDREW - **Jeffrey Omura**

PLUTO - **Fang Du**

Stage Directions - **Arielle Gonzalez**





Kimille Howard DIRECTOR

Kimille Howard is a director, deviser, writer and filmmaker. She's an Assistant Stage Director at the Metropolitan Opera, Artistic Director of the Lucille Lortel Theatre's NYC Public High School Playwriting Fellowship, and a founder of the Black Diaspora Theatre Collective. Recent directing credits: The 2024 New Works Collective (Opera Theatre of St. Louis), *Sanctuary Road* (Virginia Opera), The Oscar Micheaux Project (NAMT Fest), *Treemonisha* (Opera Theatre of St. Louis), *The Passion of Mary Cardwell Dawson* (Glimmerglass/Washington National Opera, Opera Carolina), *Songs in Flight* (Sparks and Wiry Cries/Met Live), *The Italian Girl* (Tulsa Opera), *American Apollo* (DMMO), *B.R.O.K.E.N Code B.I.R.D Switching* (Berkshire Theatre Group), *Quamino's Map* (Chicago Opera Theater). Her work has also been seen at Playwrights' Horizons, 59E59, Wolf Trap Opera, Cherry Lane Theatre, among others. Broadway: *Ain't Too Proud* (Assistant Director) Met Opera: *Champion*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Porgy And Bess*, *Tosca* (Assistant Stage Director). Recent Fellowships: NYTW 2050 Fellowship, MTC Jonathan Alper Directing Fellowship, New York Stage and Film's inaugural NYSAF NEXUS project. She is a recipient of OPERA America's 2023 Robert L. B. Tobin Director-Designer Prize.

www.kimillehoward.com



Nilan MENTOR

Nilan (he/him+) is the Associate Artistic Director of The Drama League of New York and a founder of the award-winning production company A Certain Something. He has been in over 35 theatrical, film, and television projects nationally and internationally. He is the co-host of the podcast TA(L)KING DIRECTION. His plays include *Endangered Species*, *FOLKtales*, *Blood Promises*, *We Like To Party*, *The Rainbow Plays* (a cycle of plays that chronicle queer life across the U.S. post-AIDS epidemic), and others. Recently, Nilan has helped co-facilitate and curate the first major International Directors Summit post-pandemic, gathering nine countries to together to talk art policy and cultural affairs. His tv show RENAISSANCE will be coming to a screen near you. Check out my website for more information.

nilan.me | acertainsomething.org

THE FELLOWS



Orli Frank

Hello! My name is Orli Frank and I'm currently a junior at the Brooklyn Latin School. Ever since I was in elementary school, I've always loved theater –with the gorgeous costumes and the blinding stage lights, every time I watch a production it feels like a dream playing out before my eyes. What's stood out to me above all are the stories that leave a true impact on the audience watching and I'm so excited to have the opportunity to learn how to write a play myself!



Divyasri Pandey

Divyasri Pandey is a senior at Queens High School for the Sciences at York College and an incoming freshman at Brown University. For her, playwriting sprung from the quarantine tendency to reimagine text conversations as staged dialogue. She would soon join a team of writers at her school's drama club, where she discovered that even her dramatized daydreams made for great material. See, whether by masking flecks of reality in outlandish worlds or merely sensationalizing the mundane, plays spotlight the world's happenings in motion. All playwrights like Divyasri must do is reimagine.



Ariana White

My name is Ariana White, I'm 16 years old and of Jamaican and Cuban Heritage. This fellowship has given me the opportunity to explore theater in New York and a chance to create a play I hope to will touch people's lives.



Cindy Zhong

I'm Cindy Zhong, a senior at Stuyvesant High School. I love writing about the mundane, the unheard, and everything in between. Stories like these anchored me in the moments where I felt all alone. As I flipped open a book, watched a movie, or went to a play, I realized that even centuries ago, people like Arthur Miller and Shakespeare wrote about characters grappling with the same frustrations and thoughts I was experiencing. Maybe a decade from now, or just around this time tomorrow, someone will think

THE PANELISTS



Preston Burger

Preston Burger (he/him) is an NYC-based multi-disciplinary artist and educator. His creative work explores themes of self-concept, embodiment, and neurodivergence. Choreography credits include *The Perfection of the Donut* (The Tank/dir. Katilin Trammell), *Total Bummer Summer* (Barch PAC/Actionplay), and *Mr. Botibol's First Dance* (Roundabout Theatre Reverb Virtual Arts Festival). He currently sings with the Dalton Chorale and the Cornerstone Chorale. As an educator, he has worked as a counselor in Good Shepherd Services' Young Adult Borough Centers and a career counselor for community college students with disabilities through CUNY LEADS (Linking Employment, Academic, and Disability Services). He is currently a Career Counselor with the Center for Military-Affiliated Students at The New School. He is proud to be serving as a judge for the Lortel High School Playwriting Fellowship for his 4th consecutive year.



Gethsemane Herron

Gethsemane Herron is a playwright from Washington, D.C. She has developed work with Ars Nova, The Fire This Time Festival, The Hearth, JAG Productions, The Liberation Theater Company, The Playwright's Center, Roundabout Theatre Company, and WP Theater. She was a 20-22 member of Ars Nova's Play Group, a 20-22 member of the WP Lab, and a 21-22 Jerome Fellow/22-23 Many Voices Fellow at the Playwright's Center. Winner of the Columbia@Roundabout Reading Series. Winner of the 45th Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Short Play Festival. 2022 Recipient of the Helen Merrill Award. Finalist for the Van Lier New Voices Fellowship at the Lark and the Founders Award at New York Stage and Film. MFA: Columbia University. Proud member of the Dramatist's Guild. Gethsemane is currently under commission with Woolly Mammoth Theater Company, Mosaic Theater Company, and the Drinking Gourd Collective. She will work on a new play with the Playwright's Center as a 2023-2024 McKnight Fellow. She's enamored with Sailor Moon & other magical girl warriors. She writes for survivors.



Eugene Ma

Eugene Ma is a multidisciplinary theatre-maker and educator currently working across Toronto, New York and Hong Kong. He founded Performance Atelier Toronto, dedicated to liberatory actor training research. Trained primarily as a director, he has helmed the works of Suzan-Lori Parks, Paula Vogel, Thornton Wilder, Moliere, Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhill and Saviana Stănescu, and most recently *Wild*, a concert-theater spectacle, at the Rose Theater in the UK, garnering a warm reception by Prince Edward and a 5-star review. He has also developed new works with Lisa Clair, Cherry Lou Sy, Mike Lew, Shane Sakhrani, EllaRose Chary and Sooyeon Lee among others. From 2016 to 2018 he was appointed resident director at The Flea Theatre in New York. As a member of the Actors' Equity Association in the USA, Eugene Ma has worked under Tony Award-winning director Mary Zimmerman and celebrated auteur Stan Lai Sheng Chuan. His acting credits include

performances for Theatre for a New Audience, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, Seattle Rep, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and the Wallis Annenberg Centre for the Performing Arts in Los Angeles. Eugene Ma is also a Drama Desk-nominated composer and a lauded acting teacher. A certified teacher of Clown and Commedia dell'Arte, he completed his teaching apprenticeship at the Yale School of Drama and at the Juilliard School under Professor Christopher Bayes and has since given workshops and classes at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts, Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, The Dome Studio and New York University and has coached on a number of projects for the screen. Eugene Ma has served as a faculty member of Columbia University's Graduate Acting Programme, Yale School of Drama and at Harvard. More recently he has been teaching at Toronto Metropolitan University in Toronto, at the Hong Kong Baptist University and Toronto Metropolitan University.



Cherry Lou Sy

is a writer and playwright originally from the Philippines currently based in Brooklyn, NY. She received her BA at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at NYU and her MFA in playwriting from Brooklyn College, where she has been an adjunct lecturer in the English and American Studies departments. Cherry is also a teacher with PEN America's DREAMing Out Loud. She has received fellowships and residencies from VONA, Tin House, and elsewhere. *Love Can't Feed You* is her debut novel.



Gabriel Vega Weissman

Directing work includes *Machine Learning* (2023 Elliot Norton nominee for best new play) and *Guards at the Taj* (Central Square Theatre, Boston Globe Top 10 Theatre of 2018), Charles Cissel's *MUST* (Theatre at St. Clements, produced by Bruce Willis); as well as collaborations with Emmy Award nominated actor and musician, Tituss Burgess, on concert events at the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall. Gabriel is an alum of the Drama League Director's Project, Lincoln Center Directors Lab, Manhattan Theatre Club Directing Fellowship, and Williamstown Theatre Festival Professional Training Program. He is a New York Theatre Workshop Usual Suspect. His collection of short plays, *Loose Canon*, and adaptation, *Aristophanes' The Birds* (co-written with Brian Reno) are licensed and published by Broadway Licensing. He recently directed his first short film, *Clay Pigeons*. Proud father to Caleb and Javier. Gabrielvegaweissman.com

THE PERFORMERS



Pascale Armand

Pascale Armand starred on Broadway in *Eclipsed*, for which she received a Tony nomination, and *The Trip to Bountiful* with the late Ms. Cicely Tyson. Additional stage credits include *Love's Labor's Lost*, *Hamlet*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Jitney*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Ruined*, *The Convert*, for which she received the 2012 Los Angeles Ovation Award for Best Leading Actress, *Belleville*, *An Octoroon*, *Relevance*, and *Bad Kreyòl*. Her screen credits include *East New York*, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, *Chicago Med*, *Prodigal Son*, *The Blacklist*, *Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.*, and *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. Armand is an alumna of NYU's Graduate Acting Program, core member of Quick Silver Theater, and creator of her one-woman show, *\$#!thole Country Clapback*.



Fang Du

Fang Du was born in Dandong, China. National Tour: *Thoroughly Modern Millie*. NY Theatre: *Golden Shield* (MTC), *Golem* (La Mama), *Julius Caesar* (CSC), *Low Power* (EST). Film: *Slanted*, *Starring Jerry as Himself*, *In A New York Minute*, *The Assistant*. TV: *Madam Secretary*, *The Blacklist*, *The Haves and The Have Nots*. Training: MFA Columbia University; BA, University of Virginia. He's a proud member of SAG-AFTRA. He is also a founding member of Squeaky Wheelz Productions. When he's not creating, he heals with his hands and shapes young minds by coaching debate at a NYC middle school.



Dorothea Gloria

Dorothea is an artist from Manila, Philippines. She is currently a teaching artist in several New York city schools as well as a resident artist for Spellbound Theatre and Hedgepig Ensemble Theatre. She is often seen in Bryant Park where she practices her juggling and flow arts. For more info, check her website at www.dorotheagloria.com



Arielle Gonzalez

Arielle Gonzalez is thrilled to be returning to the Lucille Lortel High School Playwriting Fellowship. She was recently seen in the cast of *El Otro Oz* at Atlantic Theater Company which was a New York Times Critics Pick, and Jesse Jae Hoon's *12 Chairs* at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. Select credits include: *Thirty* (The 24 Hour Plays: Viral Monologues), *I'm Going To Make An Academy Award®-Winning Movie* (Ma-Yi Theater Company Short Stacks Playfest), and *Not My Monster!* (The Flea Theater) which was nominated for an Off-Broadway Alliance Award for Best Family Show. She has her BFA in Drama from NYU. You can find out more at ariellegonzalez.com



Rebecca Hargrove

is a 2x Best Opera Album Grammy Award Winner for The Metropolitan Opera's *Porgy & Bess* (Gershwin) and *Fire Shut up in My Bones* (Blanchard). Recently, she starred in The Fire This Time Festival season 16, NYGASP's *Trial by Jury* as Angelina, and *The Mikado* as Yum-Yum. Previous productions include *Our Town* (Baltimore Center Stage), *B.R.O.K.E.N Code B.I.R.D Switching* (Berkshire Theater Group), *In the Parlour* (National Black Theater), *Evita* and *Cabin in the Sky* (City Center Encores!), and *The Garden of the Finzi-Contini* (New York City Opera). Television credits include *FBI: Most Wanted* (CBS), *Law & Order* (NBC), and *Dear Edward* (Apple+). Follow her IG/FB @RebeccaLHargrove!



Jeffrey Omura

Jeffrey was recently seen in the MAP Theater's production of James Joyce's *Exiles*. He's known for his work in New York with the Public Theater, Playwrights' Realm, Ma-Yi Theater Company, and National Asian American Theater Company, and around the country with Arena Stage, Weston Playhouse, St. Louis Rep, Hartford Stage, and more. Some television credits include "Hawaii Five-0," "Succession," "Elementary," "Limitless," "The Blacklist," "Gossip Girl"; "High Maintenance". His voiceover work can be heard in more than 50 films and television shows. He's a co-founder of Fair Wage Onstage, Be An #ArtsHero, and Queers for Kamala; and a three-time elected officer of Actors' Equity's National Council. He's a proud graduate of the Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama. Instagram: @jeffreymura. www.jeffreyomura.com.



Lambert Tamin

Lambert recently wrapped production in a supporting role on the film WYAIH (*working title*) playing opposite Marc Menchaca (*Ozark, The Sinner, Manifest*). Stage credits: *HOODED: Or Being Black for Dummies* by Tarrance Arvelle Chisholm at 59E59 Theaters, Taylor Mac's world premiere of *The Fre* at The Flea Theatre, Mac Wellman's *Bad Penny* (The Flea), *Winter's Tale* (STNJ), *Naisula* (Guild Hall, John Drew Theater), *In Mysterious Ways* (Theater at St. Clements), etc. Other film: *Idea* (by Itamar Moses), *Thresholds* (by Nathan Alan Davis), *On The Floor, N.ot W.ithout A.lonzo*. Lambert recently graduated from the Juilliard School.



Rita Wolf

2024 Beinecke Fellow David Geffen School of Drama at Yale
appearing in Caryl Churchill's *Escaped Alone* Yale Rep.

Recent NYC theatre: *Out of time* at The Public Theater and *Edward Albee's A Delicate Balance* for The Transport Group/NAATCO. Richard Nelson's *The Michaels* and *What Happened? The Michaels Abroad* (Public Theater and Hunter College); World Premiere Tony Kushner's *Homebody/ Kabul* at NYTW (also BAM); David Grieg's *The American Pilot* (MTC) **Drama Desk nomination: featured actress** TV/film work includes: *My Beautiful Laundrette* dir.Stephen Frears, *Girl Six* dir. Spike Lee, *Law & Order*, *The Good Wife*. Audio work includes: Audible's *Evil Eye* (Winner, Audie Best Original Work).

LUCILLE LORTEL THEATRE STAFF

Executive Director: **George Forbes**

Artistic Directors: **Michael Heitzman, Kimille Howard, Caridad Svich**

Senior Directors: **Jeffrey Shubart and Nancy Hurvitz**

General Managers: **Alana Canty-Samuel, Maura Le Viness, and Karla Liriano**

Administrative Associate: **Rascher Alcasid**

Digital Designer: **John Hayek**

ABOUT THE NYC PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PLAYWRITING FELLOWSHIP

The Lucille Lortel Theatre, in collaboration with the Department of Education Arts Office Theater Program, created the NYC Public High School Student Playwriting Fellowship as an opportunity for young writers citywide to get unparalleled access to NYC professional artists for mentoring. Funded entirely by the Lucille Lortel Theatre, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, this innovative theater education program sends a high-profile message of inclusivity and artistry to both the educational and professional worlds. The program engages public school students of all levels of ability who devise an original one-act play. Master theater artists from across the professional theatre community and who represent the diverse continuum of the participating students will participate in the program, mentoring and directing the students to create fully realized plays based on their collective experiences and imagination. The free program provides approximately two months for students to write their plays, with the program culminating in a performance. The opportunities provided by this program encourage NYC public high school students to become the next generation of playwrights.

ABOUT THE LUCILLE LORTEL THEATRE

Lucille Lortel Theatre's mission is to foster both new and established artists, increase awareness and appreciation of Off-Broadway, and uphold fair and equitable business and artistic practices in service of creating a larger, more diverse community of theatre makers and audiences. The Company builds on the legacy of its founder, Lucille Lortel (1900–1999), who was a champion of work by artists including Samuel Beckett, Caryl Churchill, Athol Fugard, Jean Genet, Adrienne Kennedy, Larry Kramer, Terrence McNally, Marsha Norman, Sam Shepard, and Wendy Wasserstein, among others. In addition to its Off Broadway theatre, which has been in continuous operation since 1955, the Company is renovating a three-story carriage house in Chelsea that will act as the Company's new headquarters and a new studio theatre committed to the development of new works. The Lortel's programs include The Alcove at the Lortel, a commissioning and development program for early and mid-career playwrights; the 121 Project, a bespoke development program for new musicals; NYC Public High School Playwriting Fellowship, Fellowships in NYC Theatre at Bennington College, the New York Emmy-Winning Dangerous Acts: A Series Uplifting Black Writers from Our Past (in partnership with HBCUs), Lucille Lortel Awards and Playwrights' Sidewalk, Internet Off-Broadway Database (IOBDB.com), and Non-Profit Theatre Strategic and Management Services. www.lortel.org.

ABOUT THE NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The NYC Department of Education is the largest system of public schools in the United States, serving about 1.1 million students in approximately 1,800 schools. The Department of Education supports universal access to arts education through the ArtsCount initiative, which tracks and reports student participation in arts education and tracks progress at the school and city-wide levels for meeting New York State Instructional Requirements for the Arts. For more information, visit NYC DOE Office of Arts and Special Projects.
