

PLEASE EMBARGO FOR: Tuesday, March 30 at 12:00PM ET  
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## ANNOUNCING THE 2021 NOMINEES FOR THE 87<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DRAMA LEAGUE AWARDS

HONORING OUTSTANDING ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT  
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



33 NATIONWIDE PRODUCTIONS RECOGNIZED IN FIVE UNIQUE CATEGORIES  
CELEBRATING ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN DIGITAL PRODUCTIONS & FESTIVALS, INTERACTIVE &  
SOCIALY-DISTANCED THEATER, AUDIO PLAYS, AND VIRTUAL CONCERT PRESENTATIONS

2021 SPECIAL RECOGNITION HONOREES INCLUDE  
IRIS SMITH, LIESL TOMMY,  
RICHARD & DEMI WEITZ, AND THE ACTORS FUND

VOTING OPEN NOW THROUGH APRIL 16, FOR DRAMA LEAGUE MEMBERS

THE 2021 DRAMA LEAGUE AWARDS WILL BE PRESENTED ONLINE  
FRIDAY, MAY 21 AT 7:00PM ET  
RSVP NOW AT [DRAMALEAGUE.ORG](http://DRAMALEAGUE.ORG)

PRESS DOWNLOAD: PHOTO MATERIALS OF NOMINATED PRODUCTIONS:

<https://bit.ly/3fs1xNE>

(NEW YORK, NY – MARCH 30, 2021) **The Drama League** (Artistic Director, Gabriel Stelian-Shanks; Executive Director, Bevin Ross) is pleased to announce the **2021 Nominees and Special Recognition Honorees for The 87<sup>th</sup> Annual Drama League Awards**. Keeping in the tradition of honoring the outstanding accomplishments of the theatrical community, as they have since 1935, this year the organization has established five unique categories to honor the extraordinary achievements of artists across the nation who created digital and socially-distanced theatrical productions during this challenging year of suspension for live arts. The list of nominations follows; voting is now open for Drama League members, through April 16. The **87<sup>th</sup> Annual Drama League Awards** will be streamed on **Friday, May 21, 2021 at 7:00PM ET**.

The 33 nominated productions were selected from submissions by 400+ directors and theatre professionals who are the alumni of The Drama League's support programs for directors. There are five categories of distinction: **Outstanding Digital Theater, Individual Production; Outstanding Digital Theater, Collection or Festival; Outstanding Interactive or Socially-Distanced Theater; Outstanding Audio Theater Production; and Outstanding Digital Concert**. Eligible productions premiered between March 12, 2020 – March 15, 2021.

The Drama League Awards' 2021 Special Recognition Honorees are: **Iris Smith**, who will receive the inaugural **Gratitude Award** for her fearless support of the The Drama League and the theater community at large; **Liesl Tommy**, who will be presented with the **Founders Award for Excellence in Directing** for her extraordinary work on stages across the country and commitment to mentorship in the field; father-daughter duo **Richard & Demi Weitz**, who will be honored with the **Distinguished Achievement in Musical Theater Award** for their creation of the "Quarantunes" series, which provides a virtual platform for musical theater artists and generated over \$20 million in funds for nonprofits across the country; and **The Actors Fund**, recipient of the **Unique Contribution to Theater Award** for its emergency relief efforts through COVID-19, the Winter Storms, and Oregon Wildfires this past season and its ongoing commitment to providing resources for artists.

"In this most difficult time, when stages across America were forced to darken, theater artists responded with light -- producing bold new work in ways most of us never dreamed of," said Artistic Director **Gabriel Stelian-Shanks**. "Thanks to the artists who are alumni of The Drama League's programs, we're thrilled to be able to celebrate a few of the extraordinary productions made in the last year -- pieces that exemplify inspiration, innovation, and imagination. Thanks to all of them, from all of us, for the joy and hope they created all over the world."

New members registered before April 9 can participate in this year's voting period, and members registered before May 17 will receive access to attend the May 21 event for free. Tickets for non-members start at \$15 with additional VIP upgrades, Virtual Tables, Tribute Ads, and sponsorship packages available for corporations, producers, and patrons. All are welcome to attend with a Pass-it-Forward ticket available for those unable to donate.

Drama League Membership is an audience support program for the American theatre; members receive access to special members-only events, Broadway, Off-Broadway, and West End tickets, discounts at local businesses, industry insider updates, and more. Membership is tax-deductible, with annual and monthly membership options available. To become a voting member, visit [dramaleague.org/membership](https://dramaleague.org/membership) or call (212) 244-9494, Ext. 101.

Since 1922, **The Drama League Awards** have been presented by The Drama League, an arts service organization that, for over a century, has provided vital support to the field and its artists. The organization's mission provides the nation's only full-time, lifelong creative home for stage directors and the audiences that enjoy their work across the world. The five traditional competitive categories are Outstanding Production of a Play, Outstanding Production of a Musical, Outstanding Revival of a Play, Outstanding Revival of a Musical, and the highly coveted Distinguished Performance Award. Additionally, each year theater luminaries are selected to receive Special Honors: The Founders Award for Excellence in Directing, the award for Unique Contribution to the Theater, the award for Distinguished Achievement in Musical Theater, and the new Gratitude Award. For a complete list of productions and performers that have won Drama League Awards in the event's history, as well as all past honorees, [click here](#).

The Drama League is grateful for support from its generous donors and current Drama League Awards Sponsors including Iris Smith, Sceneworks Studios; Stan Ponte; BroadwayHD (Bonnie Comley & Stewart F. Lane); Kathy Henderson; Paula Kaminsky Davis; JoAnn Weisel; Talu Productions & Lakeview Productions (Una Jackman & Jay Alix); and Tony Benten.

More information about our programs, alumni, and the history of the Drama League Awards can be found at [www.dramaleague.org](https://www.dramaleague.org).

# **NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2021 DRAMA LEAGUE AWARDS**

## **OUTSTANDING DIGITAL THEATER, INDIVIDUAL PRODUCTION**

### **Belly of the Beast**

Directed by Lisa Rothe

Written by Margaret Vandenburg

Daniel Dae Kim/3AD, in partnership with TodayTix and New York Theatre Workshop (New York, NY)

<https://www.nytw.org/show/the-belly-of-the-beast-one-night-only/>

### **Circle Jerk**

Conceived and Written by Michael Breslin and Patrick Foley

in Collaboration with Cat Rodriguez and Ariel Sibert

Directed by Rory Pelsue

Produced by Caroline Gart

Fake Friends (New York, NY)

<https://circlejerk.live>

### **Disclaimer**

Written by Tara Ahmadinejad

Directed by Jeff Wood & Tara Ahmadinejad

Created by Piehole

The Public Theater (New York, NY)\

<https://publictheater.org/productions/season/2021/utr-2021/disclaimer/>

### **Don't Stay Safe**

Book and Lyrics by Cheryl L. Davis, Music by Douglas J. Cohen

Directed by Christina Franklin

Prospect Theater Company (New York, NY)

<https://www.prospecttheater.org/visionseries-dont-stay-safe>

### **Duchess! Duchess! Duchess!**

Written by Vivian J.O. Barnes

Directed by Weyni Mengesha

Steppenwolf Theatre Company (Chicago, IL)

<https://www.steppenwolf.org/tickets--events/steppenwolf-now/2020-21/duchess-duchess-duchess/>

### **The Great Work Begins: Scenes from Angels In America**

Written by Tony Kushner

Directed by Ellie Heyman

Presented by amfAR (The Foundation for AIDS Research)

<https://www.thegreatworkbegins.org>

### **GRIMMZ Fairy Tales**

Written by Christopher Parks, Rahsheem Shabazz, and Ron Lee McGill

Directed by Christopher Parks

Children's Theatre of Charlotte (Charlotte, NC)

<https://ctcharlotte.org/online/>

### **Heroes of the Fourth Turning**

Written by Will Arbery

Directed by Blanka Zizka

Wilma Theater (Philadelphia, PA)

<https://wilmatheater.org/event/heroes-of-the-fourth-turning/>

### **Last Gasp**

Written by Lois Weaver and Peggy Shaw

Directed by Lois Weaver

Split Britches (New York, NY)

<https://www.split-britches.com/last-gasp>

### **The Last 5 Years**

Written and Composed by Jason Robert Brown

Directed by Jason Michael Webb

Out Of The Box Theatrics (New York, NY)

<https://www.ootbtheatrics.com/15y>

### **What Do They Call Us**

Created and Directed by Qween Jean

Ars Nova (New York, NY)

<https://arsnovanyc.com/VR-DM-QweenJean>

### **Where Did We Sit on the Bus?**

Written by Brian Quijada

Directed by Matt Dickson

A digital creation by Satya Chávez and Matt Dickson

Actors Theatre of Louisville (Louisville, KY)

<https://www.actors theatre.org/shows/2020-2021/where-did-we-sit-on-the-bus/>

## **OUTSTANDING DIGITAL THEATER, COLLECTION OR FESTIVAL**

### **1MOVE: DESIGNED BY...**

Created by Alan C. Edwards, Brittany Bland, Christopher Darbassie, Dominique Fawn Hill, Kameron Neal, Mika Eubanks, Nehprie Amenii, nicHi douglas, Nikiya Mathis, Qween Jean, Ramaj Jamar, Taylor Lilly, Teniece Divya Johnson, Teresa L. Williams, Twi McCallum, Ao Li, Chen-Wei Liao, Dina El-Aziz, Edurne Fernandez, Kimie Nishikawa, María Feuereisen, Megumi Katayama, Ntokozo Fuzunina Kunene, Omar Madkour, Reza Behjat, Riw Rakkulchon, Rodrigo Muñoz, Stefania Bulbarella, Wenzheng (Wen) Zhang, and Yee Eun Nam

Co-Curated by Dede Ayite, Stacey Derosier, Clint Ramos, Cha See, and Paul Tazewell

The Movement Theatre Company (New York, NY)

<https://www.themovementtheatrecompany.org/1move>

### **AFO Solo Shorts (Round 1 and 2)**

Written, created, and directed by Veronica Barron, Beaudau Karel Banks, Eliza Bent, Ellarose Chary, Jody Christopherson, Jasmine Eileen Coles, Kendra Cui, Darian Dauchan, Toni Ann DeNoble, Tayna Everett, Gina Femia, Nela Fortunato, Raz Golden, Nathan Gebhard, Charles Gershman, Kathryn Grody, Brandon James Gwinn, Katie Melby, Matthew Paul Olmos, Erika Sheffer, Casey Alexander Smith, William Steinberger, Melissa Tien, Rhys Tivey, Emily Waters, Sybil Wigglesworth, Zonia, Tsang Lok Sze

All For One Theater (New York, NY)

<https://www.afo.nyc/afo-solo-shorts>

### **The Manic Monologues**

Originally Created by Zachary Burton and Elisa Hofmeister

Virtual Experience Conceived and Directed by Elena Araoz

McCarter Theater Center in collaboration with Princeton University Health Services, The 24 Hour Plays, and Innovations in Socially Distant Performance at the Lewis Center for the Arts (Princeton, NJ)

<https://www.mccarter.org/manicmonologues>

### **The Work of Adrienne Kennedy: Inspiration and Influence**

Written by Adrienne Kennedy (Sleep Deprivation Chamber by Adam P. Kennedy and Adrienne Kennedy)  
Directed by Raymond O. Caldwell, Timothy Douglas, Valerie Curtis-Newton, and Nicole A. Watson  
Round House Theatre (Bethesda, MD) in association with McCarter Theater Center (Princeton, NJ);  
Conceived by Nicole A. Watson  
<https://www.roundhousetheatre.org/>

### **Theater in Quarantine**

Created by founder Joshua William Gelb (New York, NY) and Katie Rose McLaughlin (New York, NY)  
<http://www.youtube.com/theaterinquarantine>

## **OUTSTANDING INTERACTIVE OR SOCIALLY-DISTANCED THEATER**

### **American Dreams**

Written by Leila Buck  
Directed by Tamilla Woodard  
Created and developed by Leila Buck and Tamilla Woodard with Jens Rasmussen,  
in collaboration with Osh Ghanimah, Imran Sheikh, and the company  
Working Theater (New York, NY)  
<https://theworkingtheater.org/events/american-dreams/>

### **Carla's Quince**

Created by The Voting Project (Ashley Alvarez, Galia Backal, Yadira De La Riva, Jorge Donoso, Estefanía Fadul, Michael León, María Peyramaure, Camila Pérez Santiago, and Christina Watanabe)  
Directed by Estefanía Fadul  
With guest artists Jason Aguirre (tech facilitator), Jamie Salinger (stage manager), Haydee Zelideth (costume consultant), and Sebastian Zuniga (performer)  
<https://www.carlasquince.com>

*\*Trigger warning - references to racial violence*

### **Fort Worth Lynching Tour: Honoring the Memory of Mr. Fred Rouse**

Concept and Choreography: Adam W. McKinney  
Director: Daniel Banks  
App Design: Digital Ant Media  
Music by: Third Wind Productions/Maritri Garrett and David Winder  
Graphic Design: Troy Lambert  
Tintype Photography: Will Wilson  
Guest Artists: Edykah Chilome, Julienne Greer, Sedrick Huckaby, Jordan Jones, Opal Lee, Pastor Kyev P. Tatum, Sr.  
Associate Producer: Jiles King; Production Associate: NaTasha Thompson; Production Manager: Jamelyn Ebelacker; Production Assistant: Lauren Huynh; Sound Engineering: Michael Billow and Gregg Powers  
A DNAWORKS Production (Fort Worth, TX)  
<https://www.dnaworks.org/fwlt>

### **Package Play**

Created and Performed by Katie Farmin  
Tricklock Company (Albuquerque, NM)  
<http://www.tricklock.com/packageplay/>

### **7 Deadly Sins**

Written by Hilary Bettis, Nilo Cruz, Moisés Kaufman, Rogelio Martinez, Dael Orlandersmith, Carmen Pelaez, and Aurin Squire  
Conceived and directed by Michel Hausmann  
Miami New Drama (Miami Beach, FL)  
<https://www.miaminewdrama.org/7deadlysins>

### **A Thousand Ways (Part One)**

Created by 600 HIGHWAYMEN | Abigail Browde & Michael Silverstone (Brooklyn, NY)

ArKtype/Thomas O. Kriegsmann, Executive Producer

<http://www.600highwaymen.org/a-thousand-ways/>

### **Wild Thyme**

Written by Liz Duffy Adams

Produced by West Hyler and Shelley Butler

Artistic Stamp (New York, NY)

<https://artisticstamp.com/tickets.html>

## **BEST AUDIO THEATER PRODUCTION**

### **G.O.A.T.**

Written by Ngozi Anyanwu

Directed by Whitney White

Playing On Air (Hillsdale, NY)

<https://playingonair.org/new-releases/goat>

### **OUTTAKES**

Written by Qui Nguyen

Directed by May Adrales

Playwrights Horizons (New York, NY)

<https://www.playwrightshorizons.org/shows/trailers/outtakes-qui-nguyen/>

### **The Chonburi International Hotel and Butterfly Club**

Written by Shakina Nayfack

Directed by Laura Savia

Williamstown Theatre Festival (Williamstown, MA) and Audible

<https://wtfestival.org/main-events/chonburi-international-hotel-butterfly-club/>

### **Prime: A Practical Breviary**

Written, Composed and Performed by Heather Christian

Playwrights Horizons (New York, NY)

<https://www.playwrightshorizons.org/shows/trailers/prime-practical-breviary-heather-christian/>

### **Tiger Style!**

Written by Mike Lew

Directed by Moritz von Stuelpnagel

Huntington Theatre Company and WGBH Radio (Boston, MA)

<https://www.huntingtontheatre.org/tiger-style>

## **OUTSTANDING DIGITAL CONCERT PRODUCTION**

### **BREATHING FREE, a visual album**

featuring excerpts from Beethoven's Fidelio, Negro Spirituals, and songs by Harry T. Burleigh, Florence Price, Langston Hughes, Anthony Davis, and Thulani Davis

Heartbeat Opera, NYC

[www.heartbeatopera.org/breathing-free](http://www.heartbeatopera.org/breathing-free)

### **Myths and Hymns (Chapters 1 and 2)**

Music and Lyrics by Adam Guettel

Conceived and supervised by Ted Sperling

Directed by Greg Anderson, Sammi Cannold, Anthony Roth Costanzo, Lear deBessonet, Khristian Dentley, Doug Fitch, Anne Kauffman, and Ted Sperling

Presented by Mastervoices

<https://www.mastervoices.org/>

### **Ratatouille: The TikTok Musical**

Conceived by The #RatatouilleMusical Community

Featuring Work by Danny Bernstein, Gabbi Bolt, Kevin Chamberlin, RJ Christian, Nathan Fosbinder, Emily Jacobsen, Sophia James, Katie Johantgen, Daniel Mertzlufft, Alec Powell, Blake Rouse and Jessica Siswick

Adapted for the stage by Michael Breslin and Patrick Foley

Directed by Lucy Moss

Presented by Seaview

<https://ratatousical.com/>

### **Take Me To The World: A Sondheim 90th Birthday Celebration**

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Produced by Stephen Sondheim, Mary-Mitchell Campbell, Bill Curran, Raúl Esparza, John Gore and Paul Wontorek

Directed by Paul Wontorek

Benefit for ASTEP (Artists Striving to End Poverty)

<https://www.broadway.com/sondheim90/>

## **2021 SPECIAL RECOGNITION DRAMA LEAGUE AWARDS**

### **Gratitude Award Honoree**

Iris Smith

### **The Founders Award for Excellence in Directing Honoree**

Liesl Tommy

### **Distinguished Achievement in Musical Theater Honoree**

Richard & Demi Weitz

### **Unique Contribution to Theater Award Honoree**

The Actors Fund

<https://dramaleague.org/2021-nominees/>

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