

Los Angeles
Collegiate Playwrights
Festival

An Evening of
Six Original One-Acts
by the
Future Playwrights
From America's Institutions of Higher Learning

Produced by
James Elden

Note from the Producer

There are many theater festivals across the country and around the world. Hollywood Fringe is around the corner, and the most prominent, Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland, celebrated its 70th anniversary last year. The Irene Ryans (American Collegiate Theatre Festival) is dedicated to college theatre as a whole, where Northern California's Lenaea Festival celebrates the performing arts in high school, and for fifteen years, I have been honored to be a part of Harvard-Westlake's Young Playwrights Festival, in which many of its writers go on to participate in Daniel Henning's Young Playwrights Festival at The Blank Theater here in Los Angeles. Hell, there's even a festival dedicated to the Film Noir genre. (wink, wink) Who knew?

Suffice to say, theatre festivals are not in short supply, and I would like to believe theatre is alive and well in a time where Hollywood churns out the formulaic blockbuster by the week. That is in no way a criticism. It is what works, and it is what sells....most of the time. However, there are stories that are not formulaic. They do not fit a mold. They are not car chases and explosions, and they do not always have a happy ending. These stories hold relevance in the present and are penned by the very people witnessing and experiencing them as they unfold, sometimes with an ending that has yet to be written. Hopefully, these stories may find a way to be shared beyond the campus in which they were developed. Perhaps, that time is now.

The Los Angeles Collegiate Playwrights Festival is geared toward bringing college playwrights together with industry professionals active in the Hollywood community, allowing these stories to be told and giving them a platform to be heard in hopes of providing them with a stepping stone and opportunity to expand their résumé.

There is a vulnerability when starting such an endeavor, even letting the concept escape one's lips opens the door for criticism and questioning failure, but that's what theatre truly is; in its purest form and underlying essence, theatre is vulnerability. From the playwright spilling their deepest thoughts and feelings on to the page to the performer on stage bearing their soul for judgment, to you, who reads this, offering yourself and saying "Make me feel alive." You offer yourselves, the sacrifice of your time and outer armor to Dionysus, in hopes of being moved.

Yet, with the other side of that vulnerable coin comes trust, for you cannot have one without the other. The playwright trusting the director to be truthful to the story on the page. The actress trusting her counterpart to remember their lines. The technician trusting the performers to find their light and the costumer trusting them not to tear or stain that sacred garment. The audience trusting that ensemble to entertain.

With a simple website and a dream, LACPFest has come to fruition with trusting vulnerability. I truly believe this festival has the potential to be something very special. Thank you to the playwrights for trusting me to share their stories. Thank you to the directors for trusting my vision. Thank you to the actors for trusting me with your talent. Thank you, the audience, for trusting us with your time, and thank you to those who came before, allowing me to participate in your festivals and, in turn, create and share The Los Angeles Collegiate Playwrights Festival with the world.

- James Elden

Zap by Sean Dunnington

University of Redlands '19

Directed by Shaun Landry

Jessie - Jessica Park

Mom - Jessica Abrams **Dad** - Rich Cassone

Director - Mark Motyl **Gale** - Melibelle Lavandier

Boyfriend - Elias Magers **Danielle** - Lisa Goodman

Adoption by Gillian Gurney and Jesse Nadel

Boston University '21/Yale University '21

Directed by Gwen Hillier

Brian Jacobson - Travon McCall

Michelle Jacobson - Laura Bohlin

Sandy - Tara Emerson

Bud, Wiser by Michael Narkunski

Stony Brook University '18

Directed by Dean Bruggeman

Freddy - Lee Pollero

Ryan - Phil Biedron

INTERMISSION

American Pie by Rebecca Katz

University of Southern California '19

Directed by James Elden

Jackson Bailey - Damon McKinnis

Jenny Slater - Sami Henry

Harry the Hippo by Megan Rivkin

Tufts University '20

Directed by Dan Fishbach

Jeffrey - Nick DiCola **David** - Vince DonVito

Laura - Mary Carrig

Ghost Girl by Covi Loveridge Brannan

The New School College of Performing Arts '20

Directed by James Elden

Boy - Nikolai Berk

Girl - Coco Lloyd

OUR PLAYWRIGHTS

Covi Loveridge Brannan (Ghost Girl) Covi Loveridge Brannan is an actress, playwright, and stage manager currently based in New York City. She began playwriting in high school and has since collaborated with Naked Angels and The New School for Drama. She is pursuing both a BFA in Dramatic Arts and MA in Arts Management & Entrepreneurship. This May, her play "Force et Confiance" will be included in a reading series at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Sean Dunnington (Zap) Sean Dunnington, from Hawai'i Island, is a rising senior at the University of Redlands, in the Johnston Center for Integrative Studies. His emphasis is Playcraft: Writing, Analysis, & Adaptation. Sean's play, Flat Fish, recently premiered in NYC at the off-off Broadway "Fresh Grind Festival." He'll be spending his summer in NYC as a literary intern at the Vineyard Theatre, off-Broadway. He would like to thank LACPF for this wonderful opportunity!

Gillian Gurney (Adoption) Gillian Gurney is from Los Angeles, CA and graduated from Harvard Westlake School in 2017 and is currently attending Boston University. Adoption was originally performed at Harvard Westlake's Playwrights Festival. She would like to thank coauthor, Jesse Nadel, for being a great writing partner as well as a life-long friend, her parents Nancy and Don Gurney, as well Christopher Moore, the pioneer of the Playwrights Festival at Harvard Westlake, for giving her this opportunity.

Rebecca Katz (American Pie) Rebecca Katz is a junior at the University of Southern California. "I was inspired to write American Pie because I was intrigued by the socio-economic differences and the influence of sports in a small town, since it was so different to how I grew up here in L.A.

Jesse Nadel (Adoption) Jesse Nadel is a rising sophomore at Yale University, where he is studying chemistry and economics. Adoption is the first and only play that Jesse has written (so far).

Michael Narkunski (Bud, Wiser) Michael Narkunski is a Staten Island "survivor" who works on his MFA at Stony Brook University and earned his BFA from NYU Tisch. His plays have had readings and performances presented by Dixon Place, Snorks & Pins, Left Hip, Naked Angels' Tuesdays@9, and The Playground Experiment. His overly personal essays can be seen in Out, Narratively, Hippocampus Magazine, Full Grown People, and Queer Families, an LGBT anthology. www.michaelnarkunski.com

Megan Rivkin (Harry the Hippo) Megan Rivkin is a sophomore at Tufts University studying Drama and Political Science. She is a writer for The Institute Sketch Comedy, and has written for short play festivals at Skokie Theatre and Manhattan Repertory Theatre. Her short play "Little Things" recently premiered at Tufts. She also serves as Workshop Coordinator for Bare Bodkin Theatre Company. Special thanks to her family and Rachel Bloom. meganrivkin.com

CAST



Jessica Abrams (Mom - Zap) Jessica Abrams is an actress, writer and standup comic. Her web series KNOCKING ON DOORS is in its third season and she performs every week at the Comedy Store. Her full-length play "The Laughing Cow" received Pick of The Week by LA Weekly in 2012 and her play "Happy Returns" was a finalist for the Heide-man Award. www.jessicaabrams.com



Nikolai Berk (Boy - Ghost Girl) Nikolai is a Los Angeles native, born and raised in Valley Village. He began acting in college where he attended UC Santa Barbara. He studied under Stephanie Feury at the SFS Theatre and was a part of three productions with the theatre. He recently spent 4 and a half months in Japan. and now he's back and ready to get his acting on.



Phil Biedron (Ryan - Bud, Wiser) Phil is thrilled to grace the stage as Ryan. In addition to cutting his teeth in the Chicago theatre scene, Phil has appeared in HEATHERS, Days of our Lives, and Family Time. Phil would like to thank his wonderful director and fellow actor for their dedication and talent.



Laura Bohlin (Michelle Jacobson - Adoption) Laura Bohlin is an east coast native who loves performing on camera and on stage. Her extensive résumé includes short and feature films, national commercials, hosting, musical theatre, improv, stand-up and sketch comedy, voiceover, and modeling. She is thrilled to be part of this festival!



Mary Carrig (Laura - Harry the Hippo) WORST BIRTHDAY EVER, Law & Order: Menendez, Young & the Restless, Criminal Minds, Make it or Break it, Just Add Magic, Stepping High, The Escort, Amanda (The Rainbow Bridge), Minnie (Leaving Home), Sue Bayliss (All My Sons), Louise (After the Fall), Lindy (Stuck in Neutral), TALHOTBLOND, Reborning, Macbeth, Gertrude (Hamlet).

www.imdb.me/marycarrig



Rich Cassone (Dad - Zap) Rich is proud to be working with Punk Monkey Productions again. Previously, he has appeared in the P.L.A.Y Noir series in several roles. His most recent stage work was as Charles "Pa" Ingalls in "A Little House Christmas" at the Sierra Madre Playhouse.



Nick DiCola (Jeffrey - Harry the Hippo) Nick's recent theatre experience has been as voice and dialect coach in London and touring productions of Jersey Boys, Billy Elliot, Vanities, A Lie in the Mind. He has taught voice and accent for Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, The Musical Theatre Academy, Rose Bruford College and London Dramatic Academy with Fordham University. For résumé:

www.nicholasdicola.com



Vince DonVito (David - Harry the Hippo) Film: La La Land, How To Beat A Bully, Angels On Tap, 8 Days in September. TV: Criminal Minds, Squeeze, CSI NY, & Seinfeld. Theater: The Tragedy of JFK, Charlie Moose Makes His Move, Monster, God: The Early Years, The Odd Couple & Fixing Frank. Webseries: Giants, The Final Solution & One Dead Donkey and a Bullet. Krav-Maga instructor & 5th degree Black Belt.



Tara Emerson (Sandy - Adoption) Tara Emerson is originally from Seattle and has won numerous festival awards for both her acting and writing/producing. She has worked on more than 30 films and TV shows and is thrilled to be back on stage after many years!



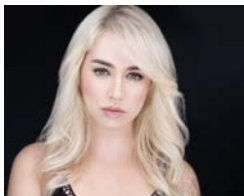
Lisa Goodman (Danielle - Zap) Lisa Goodman appeared in *Our Town* at the Broad Stage with Helen Hunt, *Stop Kiss* at the Lounge Theatre and *Helsignor* with EST-LA. She can be seen in leading roles in the upcoming feature films *The Russian Bride* and *I May Regret*. Best wishes to all the talented cast, crew and playwrights this evening!



Sami Henry (Jenny Slater - American Pie) Sami Henry is an actress, singer, comedian, and writer, as well as a newcomer to the west coast from New York. She has performed anywhere and everywhere from Off-Broadway to underground improv theater to Carnegie Hall. Sami is elated to join the LACPFest cast and to be working with so many talented artists. She hopes you enjoy this little slice of American pie!



Melibelle Lavandier (Gale - Zap) Melibelle is a recent NYC transplant excited to break into the LA theatre scene. In NYC, she studied theatre at Lehman College and at HB Studio, LAByrinth Theater Company. She is also a writer and amateur filmmaker. "I'm so grateful for this opportunity to get back on stage and share this touching story. Hugs and thanks to my cast and crew!"



Coco Lloyd (Girl - Ghost Girl) Coco Lloyd is an English/Australian actress born and raised in London. Coco trained in England and moved to LA this year. She has had two successful music projects in the UK both of which were playlisted on the coveted BBC Radio One. As an actress Coco has been in several films and

TV shows including Footballers Wives, New You, Berlin, and What Would Happen If.



Elias Magers (Boyfriend - Zap) Elias is an improviser and sketch writer for The Pack Theater in Hollywood, California. He performs with his improv teams Townies: the improvised play, Ashley the Cow, and Finesse at the theater and around Los Angeles. He's also a milkshake enthusiast - ask him about his favorite flavors.



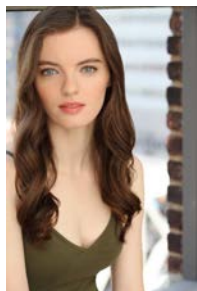
Travon McCall (Brian Jacobson - Adoption) Travon is excited to be a part of L.A. Collegiate Playwrights Festival. He's been lucky enough to star in the web series "Ken" for two seasons, as well as perform as the lead in the "Existential Magical 8-Ball" at the Stella Adler Theatre in Hollywood. Most recently, Travon appeared in a guest star role in the second season of "We Need to Talk" on Facebook Watch.



Damon McKinnis (Jackson Bailey - American Pie) Damon McKinnis is a graduate of the New York Film Academy. His most recent stage credits include Macbeth, To Kill a Mockingbird, A Clockwork Orange, and the Bechdel Babes Writer's Showcase. Damon would like to thank the cast and crew, as well as James Elden for the opportunity. www.damonmckinnis.com



Mark Motyl (Director - Zap) Mark is a native of Prague. His recent theatrical credits include Coloner in the Archway Theater's Ghost Sonata and multiple roles in the Actor Group Studio's TV Live. Mark would like to thank James Elden for the opportunity to be part of the LACP festival.



Jessica Park (Jessie - Zap) Jessica's work spans regional theatre from Buffalo (Studio Arena) to Germany, experimental theatre (NYC Fringe), sketch comedy in NYC (PIT, UCB, National Lampoon's Final Edition). Favorite roles: Stop Kiss (Callie), Les Liaisons Dangereuses (Cecile). Holds a B.A. in Theatre, M.A. in Applied Theatre, bilingual English-German. Screen credits include: Daredevil, Sleep Tight, Consumed.



Lee Pollero (Freddy - Bud, Wiser) Lee Pollero is a stage and film actor in L.A. He can often be seen in stage productions with Theatre Unleashed. Most recently he starred in the feature film, Lemon Drop, which is set to open in 2018.

Are you on social media?

**So are we. Find us on Facebook at [fb.com/lacpfest](https://www.facebook.com/lacpfest) and
Twitter @lacpfest**

Are you or someone you know an emerging playwright? Good news, LACPFest will be accepting submissions soon for next year's production, so be sure to Like and Follow us or check in frequently at www.lacpfest.com to be kept in the know and help spread the word.

Directed by

Dean Bruggeman (Bud, Wiser) Dean's directorial stage credits include the one-acts "Sex and Money and Money and Sex" by Jack Karp; "A Frog in Boiling Water" by Dallas Woodburn; and "The Possession" by Ron Burch, all at Eclectic Company Theatre, NoHo. Thanks to James for producing and to Michael for this play's heart/soul. deanfarellbruggeman.com

James Elden (American Pie, Ghost Girl) James is founder of the Los Angeles Collegiate Playwrights Festival and owner of Punk Monkey Productions, LLC, the parent company that oversees the annual Film-Noir styled one-act play festival, P.L.A.Y Noir, which he co-created and will celebrate its seventh season this fall. James can also be seen frequently on CONAN and General Hospital. www.punkmonkeyproductions.com
www.playnoir.com

Dan Fishbach (Harry the Hippo) Recent Directing credits include NOISES OFF (Oklahoma City), JACQUES BREL...(The Odyssey Theatre,) ASSASSINS (Pico Playhouse, BroadwayWorld Award nom.), the new musical WE'RE HERE FOR YOU (Las Vegas, NV), the international tour of ONE NIGHT STAND for producer Marc Platt (Wicked), HAIR (collaboration with original author James Rado). Faculty, USC School of Dramatic Arts. Dan has taught at AMDA, Oklahoma City University, and Harvard-Westlake School where he was Head of Performing Arts. Member, SDC.

Gwen Hillier (Adoption) Gwen directing credits include two one-acts for P.L.A.Y NOIR, two one man musicals for the Hollywood Fringe festival, "Blithe Spirit" for the Old Globe in West Hollywood, "The Taming of the Shrew" for the Shakespeare at Play Company, and "Cyrano - the New American Musical" at the El Portal.

Shaun Landry (Zap) Shaun is a teacher of improvisation at the Pack Theatre, was part of African American Shakespeare, Geese Company and The Second City Chicago. She teaches, directs and performs theatre nationally and internationally www.shaunlandry.com

Technical Crew

Michael Massey (Co-Producer, Technical Advisor) Michael is an artist and educator for live performance. Recently moving to Los Angeles after working in the Seattle and Austin theatre communities, Michael believes the performing arts are a gateway to solving some of our most challenging problems and that, with a great team and a little planning, anything is possible. Michael has had the pleasure of working with Punk Monkey Productions with P.L.A.Y NOIR, AMDA, Flat Tire Theatre Company, Seattle Children's Theatre, New Century Theatre Company, Cornish College of the Arts, Seattle Public Theatre, Freehold Theatre Studio/ LAB, The Rude Mechanicals, and The VORTEX Repertory Theatre. Michael holds a BA in Theatre and Dance from The University of Texas at Austin.

JanyNicole Stehman (Stage Manager, Light and Soundboard Operator) JanyNicole Stehman has been writing and performing comedy for three years. She originally hails from Sacramento but has been wandering her way through the LA theater scene for over a year. She produces the critically acknowledged Tony the Wonder Llama at The Pack Theater and performs around town. Her sketch team Very Famous will also be appearing this month at the Austin Sketch Fest in Austin, Texas.

SPECIAL THANKS

PJ and Camilla Ochlan, Christopher Michael Moore, Ted Walch, Rich Cassone, Betsy Wanner, April Littlejohn, Christopher Flowers, Andrew Hillis, Michael Massey, Covi Loveridge Brannan, Rebecca Katz, Gillian Gurney, Jesse Nadel, Tom Whelan, Laurie Dew, Samantha Rodriguez and Hotel Amarano, Dan Fishbach, Gwen Hillier, Shaun Landry, Dean Bruggeman, Michael Silva, Vince DonVito, Colleen Morris, Lon Gowan, Paul Surace, Wendy Jensen, Elisa Dyann, Johnny Ray Nelson, Dusan Zaritch, Cecilia Specht, Justin Fein, Susan Harvey, Kayla Harvey, Marty Yadrick, Art Oden, Rebecca Grossman Duncan, Monique Tomaske, Lisa de Pari, Adam Howard, Laura Boccaletti, Barbra Feld, Candice Martin and to anyone else whom may have helped this vision become a reality - THANK YOU!


PLEASE DONATE

The continued goal of the Los Collegiate Playwrights Festival is to provide new and emerging playwrights from America's institutions of higher learning the opportunity and platform to showcase their work with the cooperation and talent of industry professionals active in the Hollywood community and industry. In order to spread the word and offer quality facilities requires funding and resources in many forms. You can help LACPFest achieve these goals by donating in one, or all, of three ways -

Monetarily via paypal through our website at www.lacpfest.com

By joining our mailing list and donating your time or talent. If you, or someone you know, are an industry professional whom would like to give back by loaning your experience to a great cause, we would love to meet you. You can speak to our lobby attendant to add your information to our email list or contact us directly at info@lacpfest.com.

Following us and sharing on social media -

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Your support is greatly appreciated. We hope that you enjoyed the show and will help spread the word and encourage you to cultivate your own creativity and the community at large, and of course, continue to support live theatre.

Thank you for attending tonight's performance.

The Los Angeles Collegiate Playwrights Festival