



**irt**

ANNUAL REPORT

**2018**

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# MISSION

IRT is a grassroots laboratory for independent theater and performance in New York City, providing space and support to a new generation of artists. Tucked away in the old Archive Building in Greenwich Village, IRT's mission is to build a community of emerging and established artists by creating a home for the development and presentation of new work.



# HISTORY

In 2007, IRT Theater embarked on a groundbreaking journey to support emerging and established artists, to give young artists a unique opportunity to work with professionals, and to offer development and performance opportunities for Deaf artists and audiences. With new Artistic Director, Kori Rushton, the company created its artist in residency program & completely revamped its staff & business model. Today IRT Theater is focused in two primary areas. First, IRT fosters independent artists by providing space, support, and most important, time to create their work through its Archive Residency and 3B Development Series, in which there are several residencies reserved for Deaf artists. Second, IRT mentors the next generation of theater artists through its educational program. Launched in 2012, Westside Experiment, is a teen acting laboratory that pairs students with working experimental theater artists to learn about their craft and create an original theater piece at IRT.

Some of the pioneering artists who have developed work at IRT are: Young Jean Lee, Reggie Watts, Mike Daisey, New York Live Arts, Tommy Smith, Thomas Bradshaw, Crystal Skillman, Jose Zayas, May Adrales, terraNOVA Collective, Immediate Medium, Vampire Cowboys, The Nonsense Company/Rick Burkhardt, The Mad Ones, Collaboration Town, Rady&Bloom, Katt Lissard, Erica Fay and many others.

Established in 1986 as Interborough Repertory Theater by Luane Haggerty & Jonathan Fluck, IRT spent its first two decades nurturing artistic freedom & career development for a wide-ranging community of performing artists, providing over 200 first-time professional NYC creative jobs while producing over sixty-eight original scripts in forms ranging from staged readings to full off-Broadway productions. With respect for the past, IRT looks forward to a bright future.





## Dear Friends,

IRT Theater's 2017-2018 Artist in Residency Program included 22 residencies, 4 Archive residencies, 634 artists, and 243 performances for 5,354 audience members.

IRT's 3B development series gave many artists at IRT the time and space to develop and perform new work. Spring brought Chad Kessler and David James Boyd back to IRT with a new musical STEPCHILD, an original piece co-created by IRT's own Kori Rushton, focusing on the complex and magical fusion of theater, music and American

Sign Language. Through the eyes of a Deaf heroine, the underrepresented historical topic of the stigma of signing is given a Gothic folktale spin in this story of empowerment.

We would like to congratulate the two new Archive Residents- One-Eighth Theater and The Drunkard's Wife. They were in development in February and ran a workshop performance of their new theatre pieces. *The Archive Residency*, our two-year development and presenting program in partnership with New Ohio Theatre, culminates in a four-week world premiere presentation at New Ohio.

In early June, Project Y Theatre Company held their *Women in Theatre Festival* including 35 performances of the work of emerging women playwrights. The *Women in Theatre Festival* is dedicated to commissioning, developing, and producing the work of female playwrights.

This year, IRT Theater's Westside Experiment Education Program was able to be fully accessible to Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and hearing students due to the generous support of The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and The Nancy Quinn Fund (a project of ART-NY). In addition, for the first time IRT received funding from New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA), along with a contract

with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

There were 18 middle school and high school students enrolled, with several students returning from the previous year. Westside Experiment was lead by Monique Holt and Luane Davis Haggerty, supported by guest artists: Julia C. Levy, Executive Director of Roundabout Theatre Company, Alexandria Wailes and Kim Weild. Assistant teachers included: Danica Zielinski, Malik Paris and Lucia Constantino. The group created an original work titled *Handshake*, which was inspired by the vignettes created by Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and hearing students.

The young people had a fun and educational time working with lead teachers, Monique Holt and Luane Davis Haggerty. In its 6th year, IRT's Westside Experiment enhanced its reputation for being a top notch and vitally unique summer program for young students of the theater.

The past year has been an exciting one filled with landmark moments and inspirational work. We at IRT look forward to the coming year with new energy and high hope for another year filled with the work of ingenious NYC artists.

—Kori Rushton,  
*Producing Artistic Director*



# SEASON HIGHLIGHTS







## **Built for Collapse** *DANGER SIGNALS*

October 31–November 27, 2017

IRT 3B Development Workshop

April 27–May 19, 2018

New Ohio Premier

Text by Nina Segal

Directed by Sanaz Ghajar

Composed by Jen Goma

An Archive Residency Production, in  
collaboration with IRT Theater

It's 2018 in New York City and a woman  
is giving a lecture about the brain.

It's 1935 in London, England, at the second  
International Neurological Congress.  
It's 1847 somewhere in the  
Canadian Arctic.

Sometimes history resurfaces without  
someone—some man—having to dig  
it up.

But we're here to talk about the brain.

A unique collaboration between the  
award-winning New York based  
theater company Built for Collapse,  
led by Iranian-American director Sanaz  
Ghajar, British playwright Nina Segal,  
and pop musician Jen Goma, *DANGER  
SIGNALS* was a searing exploration of  
traumatic brain injuries, the medical  
history of lobotomies, and western cul-  
ture's insatiable desire to control and  
colonize. A multi-disciplinary fantasia  
that questioned the cost of ambition.

BUILT FOR COLLAPSE is an award-  
winning theater company committed  
to building multidisciplinary work  
that challenges theatrical form. They  
develop each project through a highly  
physical approach to writing, rehearsal  
and performance that places specific



importance on audience feedback  
and diverse source material including  
images, videos, pop culture, and found  
text. At times an erotic opera, at times  
a freakish and violent circus, Built  
for Collapse has been described as a  
“creative new approach to theatre.”

*“Visually arresting....Boasts three great  
performances.” —ONE Magazine*

*“The play keeps your synapses firing....  
Unapologetically experimental.”  
—Time Out NY*

## anecdota

### SAVED AGAIN AND BY HIM

October 31–November 27, 2018

IRT 3B Development Workshop

May 23–June 3, 2018

New Ohio Premier

A solo by Erica Fae

With words by Sarah Wakefield

Made in collaboration with

Nicholas Galanin

Creative & Cultural Consultant

Sheldon Raymore

An Archive Residency Production, in  
collaboration with IRT Theater

Drawn directly from Sarah Wakefield's auto-biographical narrative *Six Weeks in the Sioux Tepees*, *SAVED AGAIN AND BY HIM* recounted Sarah's experiences during the 1862 Dakota Uprising in Minnesota – a conflict that ended with President Lincoln's approval of the



largest mass execution in United States history. Were it not for the protection provided by one Dakota man and his family, Sarah likely would not have lived to tell her story. A complicated narrator, by turns admirable and offensive, Sarah's gratitude and prejudice endow her voice with sharp resonance for audiences still grappling with the legacy of America's brutal past (and present).

anecdota is dedicated to telling too-little-known true stories of American history. Its first piece, *Take What Is Yours*, centered on Alice Paul and the woman's suffrage movement, and was

a Critic's Pick in the NY Times. Fae's feature film *To Keep the Light*, about a female lighthouse keeper in the 1860's, won the Fipresci Prize in Germany, Best Director at Berlin Indp Film Festival, and numerous other festival awards. Her second feature film, set in New England in the 1840's, is currently in development.

*"... a powerful physical performance of survival and independence, delivering Wakefield as a fascinatingly woke frontierswoman... Fae's Sarah retains an intriguing complexity..."*

—Exeunt Magazine

## IRT & TGF 12 Productions , in association with LaGuardia

### Performing Arts Center

#### Stepchild, A New Musical

April 13–20, 2018

Music & Lyrics by David James Boyd

Book by David James Boyd

& Chad Kessler

Based on an Original Idea By Kori Rushton

Directed by Kim Weild

Director of Artistic Sign Language

Alexandria Wailes

Musical Director Dan Pardo

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Orella is born deaf at the brink of the Italian Renaissance. Her journey takes her through a childhood of poverty, an adolescence in hiding, and a young adulthood at an asylum for the

"cursed". However, her drive to learn and her courage to communicate with Sign Language unites a broken kingdom, and Orella is ultimately crowned the world's first proud Deaf queen.





# 3B DEVELOPMENT SERIES

2017—2018

IRT's 3B Development Series hosts radically affordable, full-immersion development residencies for emerging and established artists. Our intimate performance space offers artists the flexibility and autonomy to mount full-bodied workshops and do robust technical experimentation, creating a supportive environment for taking risks and test-driving new work before adventurous audiences and potential producers.





## **G45 Productions**

### *Light Bulb Reading Series*

June 27–July 2, 2017

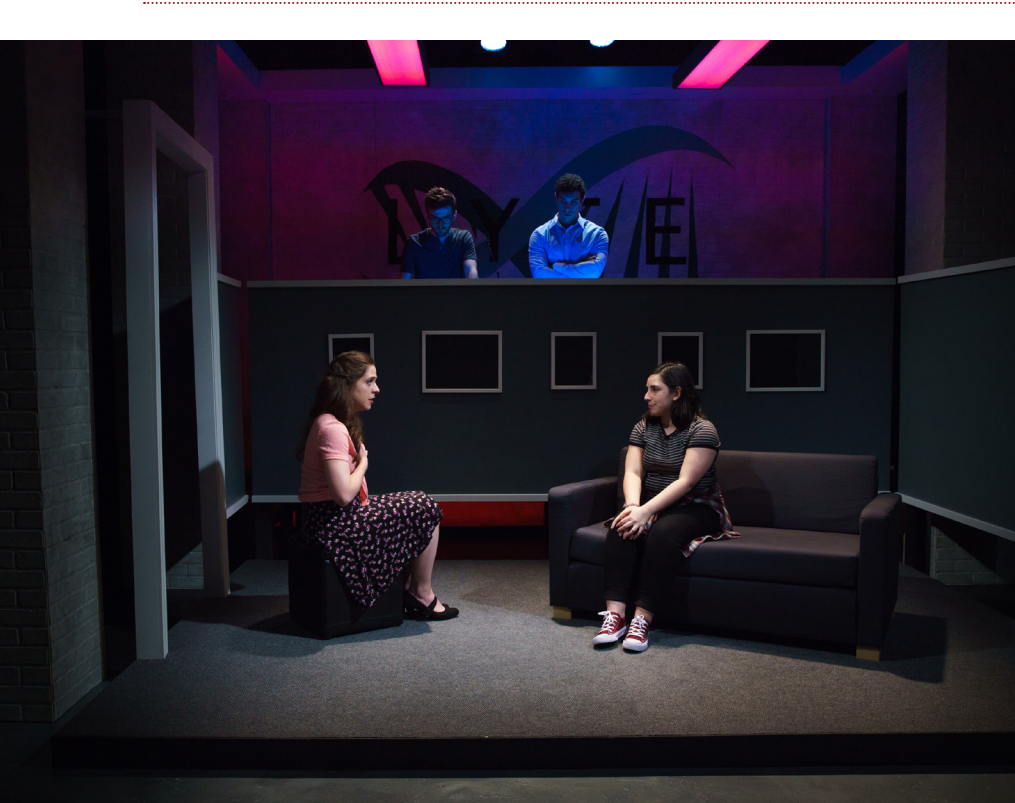
Written by India Kotis, Parade Stone, Samantha Mueller, and Shara Feit

Directed by Charlotte Durkee,

Sadie Scott, Gina Marie Hayes, and Michael Herwitz

Over the course of a one week residency, four young playwrights collaborated with G45 Productions to develop their own new works. Through intensive workshoping, rehearsal,

and feedback sessions with actors and artistic consultants from the G45 ensemble, the playwrights developed their voices, build collaboration skills, and ultimately refined their scripts and their storytelling. The residency culminated in a series of readings at IRT that were open to the public.



## **Sanguine Theatre Company**

### *Jessica*

July 18, 2017–August 7, 2017

Written by Patrick Vermillion

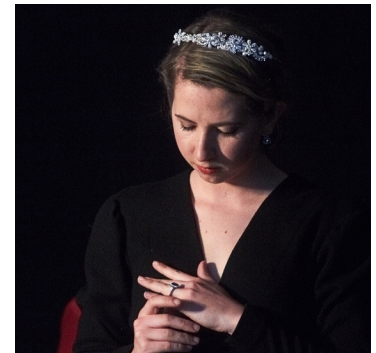
Directed by Emily Jackson

In 2013, Jessica vanished. Now, her closest friends are reconstructing her with cutting-edge technology to try and track her down. They prime the android with

memories from Jessica's past, but it's clear that their stories don't add up. As Jessica's friends fight for ownership over an artificial Jessica, the android listens, learns, and plays along. Suddenly, the line between robot and real life is very, very thin.

*"Jessica is a memory worth adding to your own neural network."*

—*Culture Catch*



## **What Will the Neighbors Say?**

### *In Her Own Words: The Diana Tapes*

August 8–28, 2017

Written by James Clements

Directed by Wednesday

Sue Derrico

This tense thriller presents the true story of one of the greatest media scandals in British history – the publication of Andrew Morton's book about Diana, Princess of Wales, which ended her marriage and shook the monarchy to its core. The question remains: who was the victim, and who the victor?



## What Will the Neighbors Say?

*Untitled Shape Show:  
A New Musical for Young  
Audiences- ASL Interpreted  
Performances*

August 8–28, 2017

Music & Lyrics by Will Davis

Book by Sam Hood Adrain

Untitled Shape Show is a new musical for young audiences that celebrates self-expression, promotes individuality, and posits that it is our differences that make us beautiful. Inspired by the WWTNS? commitment to diversity and inclusion, the show uses the metaphor of shapes to create a positive, affirmative theatrical experience.



## The Arctic Group

*The 1st New York International  
FRIDGE Festival*

August 29–September 25, 2017

Written by Daniel Talbott, Katie Cappiello, Matthew Minnicino, Jenny King, Korde Arrington Tuttle, Steve McMahon, MJ Halberstadt, Jordan G. Teicher, Glenn marla, and Suzanne Willett

Directed by Shira-Lee Shalit, Benjamin

Viertel, Kate Hopkins, Kathe Mull, and Katie Cappiello

FRIDGE Fest was born out of the Arctic Group's mission *to pick a snowflake out of an avalanche*. With this in mind, TAG has curated a festival of unique, thought-provoking works by both establish and emerging artists. It was a multidisciplinary theater festival featuring new works of all genres. All plays included a fridge. No matter what night

they attended, audiences were captivated. Come chill with us!

*"Like the refrigerator itself, Fridge Fest holds a veritable feast of possibilities. Deceptively simple and refreshingly unorthodox, its central image prompts deeper inquiry and allows its writers' stylistic innovations to emerge. With five concurrent programs and ten original plays, this quirky new festival promises to please any theatrical palate."* —Theatre Is Easy



## The Arctic Group

### *Daphne & Pomegrenade*

August 29, 2017–September 25, 2017

#### *Daphne*

Written by Alice Pencavel

Directed by Paul Bedard

#### *Pomegrenade*

Written and Directed by Ran Xia

DAPHNE: Daphne is a tree. But she wasn't always. In fact, she'd do anything to be human again. Even if it

means undergoing the ax...

Spun from a love of vegetation and Greek mythology, Daphne is a hero's journey of survival, symbol, and poetic endurance.

POMEGRANADE: Persephone gets snatched to the underworld, but the place isn't really what she expected. Hades has his own problems to deal with as well, especially when the memory archive is at capacity with the refugees pouring into the world of the dead.

*"Pomegrenades' thoughtful script gives new life to its ancient source material, its characters equally mythic and relatable. Brimming with idealism but limited in scope, Lincoln's 'Persephone' embodies our concern and frustration as privileged bystanders, and we share in her journey from passivity to empowerment... Inspired by the accounts of war correspondents, and writer-director Xia's work with Doctors Without Borders, the play's journalistic subfocus heightens its impact."—Theatre Is Easy*





## Random Access Theatre

### *HERstory*

September 26, 2017–October 23, 2017

Written by Aphra Behn, Caroline Prugh, Victoria Teague and Mike Gregork  
Directed by Jennifer Sandella, Jennifer Sandella & Victoria Teague, Victoria Teague and Mike Gregork

In the fall, Random Access Theatre (long devoted to reclaiming and re-examining works of the past) asked: who are the women that changed the face of theatre? *HERstory* hoped to delve into that question through a series of performative exercises which explored the role and contribution of women in historical

drama. From Aphra Behn to Margo Jones and Lorraine Hansberry to Sarah Bernhardt, this series provided an opportunity to dive into the lives of the women who have participated in theatre throughout history while highlighting the immense impact they have had on theatre worldwide.

## Sam Schanwald

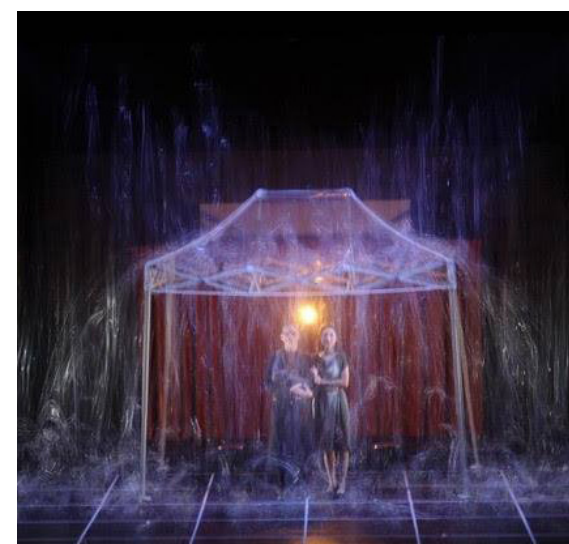
### *Pidor and the Wolf (a staged reading)*

October 24–30, 2017

Writer and Director Sam Schanwald  
Composer Nikolai Mishler

Told in rich narrative prose, *Pidor and*

*the Wolf* set a classic tale of man-versus-nature against the hotbed of an oppressive Russian republic. Using original cello music and inventive use of found props, the artists told a story that was both a popup book and a map of desires: simultaneously childlike in wonder, yet sensual and dark.





**PAT TO YAN & EUGENE MA**

*A Staged Reading of "A CONCISE HISTORY OF FUTURE CHINA"*

October 24–30, 2017

Written by Pat To Yan

Directed by Eugene Ma

Originally penned in English, while having received its first full production

in Hong Kong performed in Cantonese Chinese, *A Concise History of Future China* became the first play ever to have been featured in the world-renowned Berliner Festspiele Theaterertreffen Stückemarkt by a Chinese playwright in 2016. Playwright Pat To Yan's text is recalibrated by Drama Desk-nominated theater-maker Eugene Ma in this staged reading.



**The Farm Theater in association with Stable Cable Lab Co.**

*Solo Show Festival: Three Award-Winning Solo Performances*

November 28–December 18, 2017

Written by Lee Kaplan, Padraic Lillis and Douglas Taurel

Directed by Padraic Lillis and Scott Illingworth

*Solo Show Festival: Three Award-Winning Solo Performances* was a series of critically acclaimed solo shows that have been developed in partnership with The Farm Theater. Lee Kaplan's *BULLY*, Padraic Lillis' *Hope You Get To Eleven or What are we going to do about Sally?*, and Douglas Taurel's *THE AMERICAN SOLDIER* was performed in rep between November 29th through December 10th.

*"Thank you for doing what you do. Your helping us brother. I'm grateful for you and your show. God bless!" — DAVID RANDALL, RETIRED MARINE SERGEANT*



**Stable Cable Lab Co.**

*Static: An Intergenerational Playwrights Experiment*

November 28–December 18, 2017

Written by Stephen Brown and

Tim Pinchney

Directed by Courtney Ulrich and

Carl Andress

In the first ever *STATIC: An Intergenerational Playwrights Experiment*, Stable Cable commissioned a millennial and baby boomer playwright to each write a play exploring a theme that they were mutually excited to dig into. The first acts of these two plays in process were presented as double bill workshop productions at IRT Theater.

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**Michael Eichler & Nic Adams**

*Holy Name – Work in Progress Showing*

January 2–15, 2018

Written by Michael Eichler

Directed by Nic Adams

*Holy Name* is the story of a working-class family in 1960's Buffalo, NY. The matriarch of the family—Mindy—is suffering from

a mental illness which expresses itself in verbal abuse and physically-threatening behavior. The men of the family – father Van and brothers Ron and Mickey – devise a plan to get Mindy treatment, but when it backfires it sends the family – especially youngest brother, Mickey – into a deep psychological battle of determination vs. free will, family obligations vs. a happier life.

## Meta-Phys Ed.

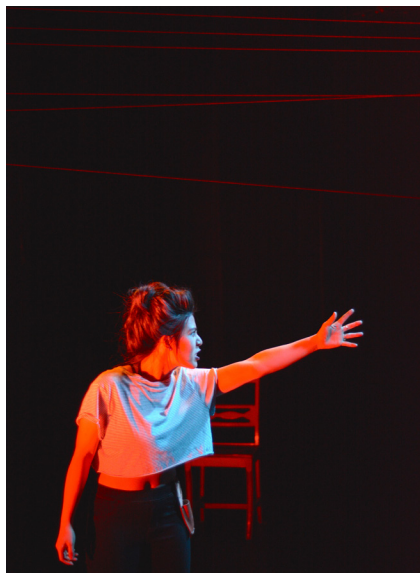
### *Wake...Sing...*

January 16, 2018–February 5, 2018

Conceived and Directed by Jesse Freedman

Meta-Phys Ed.'s new multi-media performance based on Clifford Odet's depres-

sion era drama "Awake and Sing", Zombie movies and biblical books about the resurrection of the dead. WAKE...SING... was a meditation on "Wokeness" and "wakefulness", exploring the tension between middle class aspirations and utopian vision using theater, music video and dance.



## The New Collectives

### *Life Brief & Glorious*

March 6–26, 2018

Written by Bryn Manion

Directed by Rachel Dart

Men and ships and men and ships and men and ships... Murder. Sex. Achilles' heel. A modern re-telling of the events leading up to the fall of Troy, as seen through the eyes of the women responsible for holding the city together.

*"Life Brief & Glorious is part of IRT Theater's 3B Development Series, which has allowed The New Collectives to develop new material during the day while mounting a full-fledged show at night. And, like most of the troupe's shows, it's predominantly led by women. Although there's nothing about gender in The New Collectives' mission, three of its four founding members are female, and a majority of its original work has been created or co-created by women."*

—Regina Robbins, TDF Stages Magazine

## The New Collectives

### *Daily Development: A Showing of Works in Progress*

March 6–26, 2018

Written by Laura Iris Hill, Robert A. K. Gonyo, and Anna Savant, Elizabeth May, Arika Larson

Directed by Laura Iris Hill, Robert A. K. Gonyo, and Anna Savant, Lindsey Hope Pearlman, Nina Fry

A showing of excerpts from three shows in development that explored gender roles, sexuality, and man-made disasters as told through poetry, farce, and millennial altpop.





## **Sanguine Theatre Company**

### *Sanguine Spring Break: Playwrights' Week*

March 27–April 2, 2018

Written by Josh Bonzie, Lindsay Joy, Darrel Holnes, Alexis Scheer, and Calamity West  
Directed by Rachel Dart, Lucy Gram, Emily Jackson, Jenny Lester, and Kel Haney

Sanguine Spring Break: Playwrights' Week was designed to cultivate relationships with playwrights both in NYC and regionally, and to expand opportunities for writers to work on whatever they choose with a new group of high-caliber collaborators.

## **Church of the Millennials**

### *The AMERIKA! Series*

April 3–16, 2018

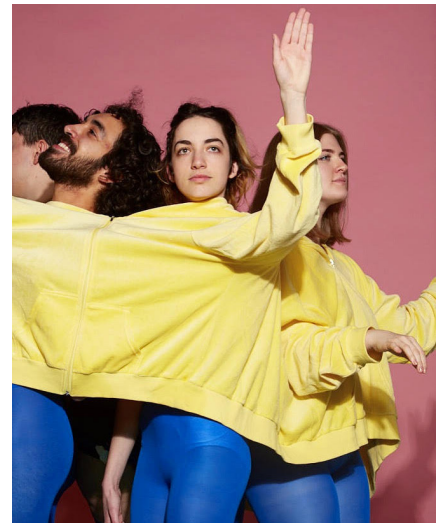
Created and Performed by Church of the Millennials

Church is operated by ABBY ADLER, ANTONIO IRIZARRY, DANA SAVAGE, KEDIAN KEOHAN and REEVES MORRIS-STAN

#### AMERIKA! Episode 3

A professor. a socialite. a newscaster. a housewife. a doctor.  
a cul-de-sac.  
a message.  
an invasion.  
Houston, we might have a problem.  
After an arduous journey, our Ingenues have landed out West. Will they be

seduced by the cameras, or will they succumb to a white picket fence and a 401k? What happens when five strangers have five secrets to keep, and not enough time to mow the lawn before sunset? In a vicious game of who's who, audiences joined Church of the Millennials for the tumultuous finale of AMERIKA.



## **Wandering Bark Theatre Company**

### *YOU / EMMA*

April 17– 30, 2018

Written by Paz Pardo

Directed by Devin Brain

Conceived and Performed by Valerie Redd

In this postmodern fever dream of Madame Bovary, Flaubert's 19th century protofeminist masterpiece collided with retro Americana and a future that's female. Emma Bovary's voracious desire cracked the facade of domestic life, unleashed a flood that challenged the constructs of femininity.

*"Redd's performance is a delight as she brings wit and irreverence to Emma, shining a light on everything that makes the character all at once extraordinary, relatable, and deeply*

*flawed. She's a perfect fit for Pardo's razor-sharp humor, and the design team has deftly brought to life the show's penchant for time-trotting."*  
—Theatre is Easy





## F\*It Club

### *The Spring Fling: Chemistry*

May 1–14, 2018

Written by Mario Correa, Jahna Ferron-Smith, Jon Kern, Dan McCabe, Mara Nelson-Greenberg, Erica Saleh, and Amy Staats

Directed by Rachel Dart, Matt Dickson, Luke Harlan, Mikhaela Mahony, Danny Sharron, and Courtney Ulrich

The Spring Fling is an annual, award-winning presentation of seven world-premiere, commissioned short plays

around a central theme, written specifically for this project by seven different playwrights of note, just finished its eighth year. In 2018, playwrights drew inspiration from the theme “chemistry.”

*“It is filled with both funny dialogue – and occasionally some thought-provoking moments – that make it worth seeing. There are still a few more nights left to catch these plays, so if you’re a fan of silly, and sometimes raunchy, romantic comedy, than you should especially consider coming out to the IRT Theater to check out this production.”—Onstage Blog*



## Mindy Pfeffer

### *There's Iron in Your Future*

May 15–21, 2018

Written by Mindy Pfeffer

Directed by Peter Michael Marino

A one-person play about triathlon training, finding one's “inner athlete,” and reaching for the unreachable. From the waters of the Hudson River to the hills of Lake Placid... Swimming onstage without a pool! Biking without a bike! Humor, pathos, and life lessons!



**Project Y Theatre Company**  
*3rd Annual Women in Theatre Festival*

May 22—June 25, 2018  
 Written by Tori Keenan-Zelt,

Lia Romeo, Amina Henry, Nimisha Ladva,  
 Devin Burnam, and Erin Mallon  
 Directed by Andrew W. Smith, Allison  
 Benko, Michole Biancosino, Ed Sobel, Kris  
 Thor, and Mark Cirnigliaro

Women in Theatre  
 Festival (#WiTFESTNYC) is dedicated to  
 commissioning, developing, and produc-  
 ing the work of women playwrights.  
 This year's festival included new works  
 by many women-led theatre companies  
 and theatre leaders. With a commit-  
 ment to going #BeyondParity, the major-  
 ity of roles – both on-stage and behind  
 the scenes – were filled by women.

By supporting work written by women  
 and plays that feature large numbers of  
 roles for women actors, Women in The-  
 atre Festival produced work that both  
 reflects and responds to our time.

*"A powerful piece... the four actors  
 are top-notch.... the overall story  
 is compelling and is a good opening  
 to Project Y's expose of Women in  
 Theater. They are presenting 32 works  
 in 22 days, an impressive feat. If all  
 the pieces are as provocative and  
 intricate as Truth or Dare, the series  
 is bound to be a success."*  
 —Theatre That Matters



**Improbable Stage**  
*New Development*

June 2—July 1, 2018  
 Participating Company members:  
 Artistic Director, Stacy A.  
 Donovan, Associate Artistic  
 Director, Tali Custer, Sarah  
 Misch, Julia Hansen, Emily Pintel,

Kenny Fedorko, Tristan J. Shuler  
 and Ryan Castro.

The week at IRT was used for movement  
 improvisation and topic exploration.  
 Improbable Stage used the time to  
 consider different ideas for a new  
 show and to evaluate our development  
 process as a company. Associate

Artistic Director, Tali Custer, directed the  
 sessions, bringing in new topic ideas  
 for each rehearsal. Sarah Misch led  
 the company in new movement/dance  
 techniques to discover the choreographic  
 potential within the development  
 process. The week at IRT provided many  
 new ideas about both the process and  
 the content of the upcoming show.



# WESTSIDE EXPERIMENT

2017—2018







**IRT Theater, Kennedy Center,  
Monique Holt &  
Luane Davis Haggerty**

*HandShake*

July 3–15, 2017

**LEAD TEACHING ARTISTS**

Monique Holt and  
Luane Davis Haggerty

**HONORARY GUEST TEACHERS**

Julia C. Levy is Executive Director of  
Roundabout Theatre Company, Alexan-  
dria Wailes, and Kim Weild

**ASSISTANT TEACHERS**

Danica Zielinski, Malik Paris,  
and Lucia Constantino

Since 2007, IRT Theater has made a mission of hosting radically affordable, full-immersion development residences for emerging and established artists. An offshoot of IRT's 3B Development Series, the Westside Experiment offers students the skills to create original devised theater in collaboration with a working theater company in residency at IRT.

The progressive Young Actors Laboratory program still covered all the theater essentials, like physical-acting technique, improvisation & script writing, but with a decidedly down-town twist. This years unique summer experience included a fusion of sign language, spoken word, mime, story-telling, dance and music. The program was a great choice for students, hearing, Deaf, and Hard-of hearing, who are interested in theater but eager to try something more offbeat than, say, Oklahoma.

IRT's Westside Experiment joined Monique Holt and Luane Davis Haggerty as they led students grades 6-12 through an incredible development process resulting in a show at IRT!

This years program was provided under a contract with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. It was designed to provide enriching career development opportunities to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing youth through the Westside Experiment.





## LEAD TEACHING ARTISTS:

**Monique Holt** is a performer, director, acting coach, script translator (including Shakespearean text to artistic sign language), visual/tactile interpreter and Director of Artistic Sign Language working with interpreters interpreting the shows. For 8 years, she worked as a teaching artist for MTC/Theatre Education Program and TDF/Theatre Access Project – Education Program. Under TDF, she visited 22 'K-12 public/private schools and bring the students to see the Broadway matinee shows. Her trainings came from Merce Cunningham, Butoh, Commedia dell'Arte, Grotowski, Visual Gestural Communication (VGC) and Visual Vernacular (VV). She got her BFA in Acting, NYU and MFA in Theatre, Towson University.

**Luane Davis Haggerty, Ph.D.** is a Senior Lecturer at RIT/NTID in Creative and Cultural Studies. She is a professional actress and has appeared on Broadway as a featured performer. Her Off-Broadway credits include thirteen Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and

premieres of works by Robert Patrick and Joyce Carol Oates. Her regional and stock credits range from Shakespeare to Sondheim and she has been heard in a range of commercial voiceovers. Notable awards for her theater work include an Off-Off-Broadway Review award for Best Director in an NYC Showcase, and a Pulitzer nomination for her play "Windows of the Soul."

## HONORARY GUEST TEACHERS:

**Julia C. Levy** is Executive Director of Roundabout Theatre Company. In her 25 years with Roundabout, Julia has guided its growth from a small off-Broadway company to a leading not-for-profit institution. Prior to Roundabout, she held positions at the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. She received her BS the University of Vermont and attended Harvard Business School Executive Education program. She currently serves on the Times Square Alliance Board of Directors and the NYC Department of Education Advisory Council for Arts Education. She is a frequent lecturer on arts

management, sponsorship, governance and fundraising.

**Alexandria Wailes** is a professional actress. Broadway: Spring Awakening (associate choreographer & Adult Woman), Big River. NY/Regional: Mother Courage (with Meryl Streep), A Kind of Alaska, Pippin, Sleeping Beauty Wakes (LA Ovation nomination). Television: Law & Order: Criminal Intent, Nurse Jackie. Film: The Hyperglot. Web Series: High Maintenance, Don't Shoot The Messenger. AT&T's Feel the Music campaign: Walk The Moon's Different Colors. Ms. Wailes is also a member of the Heidi Latsky Dance Company. Besides endeavors within the performing arts fields, she is a museum educator for the Whitney Museum, The Jewish Museum and the Lower East Side Tenement museum.

**Kim Weild** is a Drama Desk nominated director, whose work has been seen at Lincoln Center Theater, Carnegie Hall, Teatro alla Scala, New York Theater Workshop, Theater Row, Primary Stages, New York Live Arts, Mark Taper Forum and Williamstown Theater Festival. She is the Founding Artistic Director of OUR VOICES, a company dedicated to investigating themes of otherness in society. They created a world premiere American Sign Language production of Pinter's A Kind of Alaska, weaving three forms of ASL into the text. Weild is a Visiting Associate Professor of Theater at Wesleyan University.



## ASSISTANT TEACHERS:

**Danica Zielinski** is a graduate of the Masters of Secondary and Special Education with focus on English and Theatre from the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology. She had been a performer and writer for Dangerous Signs, An American Sign Language performance group, for the last four years. Last year she had the opportunity to perform in "Twelfth Night" a Public Theater production at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park through the New York Deaf Theatre. Favorite signing roles include Catherine in "Pippin" Peggy from "Godspell," and Tracy Turnblad in "Hairspray." Danica is a freelance theatre designer and has designed over fifteen productions. She is a merited designer through the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. She looks forward to new produc-

tion of a remake of "Tell Tale Heart" that she co-created and working on becoming a Certified Deaf Interpreter. Please visit and like Dangerous Signs on Facebook to follow to see future work.

**Malik Paris** is from Philadelphia, born and raised. He has been performed and co-founder member of Dangerous Signs since 2011. Godspell as Jesus and Pippin as Leading Player at GEVA in Rochester and tour in NYC last year. He has worked with New York Deaf Theatre (NYDT) in TITUS as Aaron the Moor and Rocky Horror Picture Show as Riff Raff. He was pleased to work with both instructors and kids past two weeks.

**Lucia Constantino** is a Long Island native who has been immersed in the Deaf community for most of her life. Learning from her immigrant parents and Deaf older sister, she has incorporated

diversity and inclusion in her life with her peers as well as in her work. She has spent much of her high school career and summer vacations as a junior coordinator of youth ministry at Good Shepherd Church in Holbrook, NY as well as previous summers working as an assistant teaching at Developmental Disabilities Institute (DDI) of Long Island. She currently attends Rochester Institute of Technology where she is studying ASL English interpreting with an immersion in Deaf theatre to be able to provide access to and inclusion of the Deaf community in theater. She is a member of the ASL based performing arts group 'Dangerous Sign' performing in diverse plays and workshops in local theaters, elementary schools and universities for the past two years. She hopes to continue teaching acceptance and inclusion within theater and the Deaf community.





*"The environment at IRT Westside Experiment was phenomenal, I've had a great experience learning a lot of new things at Westside Experiment. I'm glad I got the opportunity to get this experience."*

*I have to admit that being in there has changed my perspective of what I want to become in the future. I'm glad I took this opportunity so I could explore and see what fits me or not. I appreciate so much my experience at IRT because they have been so amazing to us. Having Deaf and hearing people integrated is also an amazing thing to show the world that we could collaborate together instead of being separate. With the IRT Westside Experiment, it has been a success."*

—**Amos Fletcher**, Deaf Student

*"Elizabeth really enjoyed her two weeks at IRT. She felt that the program enabled her to expand her theatrical knowledge, specifically in learning to be more deliberate in her actions on stage. Working with Deaf/hard of hearing students presented a new (and unfamiliar) element to her and Elizabeth liked the challenges of being more creative in her non-verbal communication."*

—**Karin Fuire**, Parent

*"I thought that at first I wouldn't really be able to make any friends in the deaf community because there was this big language barrier, but it turned out that they were actually really willing to teach me what I wanted to know. And if we wanted to talk we could just write it down or someone would translate for us—I really liked that."*

*And I appreciated that we focused a lot not just on acting with your face but acting with your whole body -- I think that's a really useful tool. I especially liked when we did the activity with the masks, when we put masks on and did an improv scene, because it really forced you to articulate your movements and make them really precise and show what you were doing not just from your face but with your entire body."*

—**Violet Newman**, Hearing Student



# ARCHIVE RESIDENCY ARTISTS

2017—2019

The Archive Residency is our ongoing development and presenting program, providing a two-year commitment of time, space, and support to select independent theater companies. Each residency culminates in a world premiere of a new work. In partnership with New Ohio Theatre, our neighbors in the Archive Building, we provide independent theater companies with that most elusive and invaluable resource: an artistic home.

In the first year we provide them with one month in IRT Theater's development space to investigate, workshop, and rehearse the work. We then present a simple but fully realized four performance run as part of the New Ohio's OBIE Award-winning Ice Factory Festival. This invaluable opportunity allows the director, designers, and actors to evaluate and calibrate their progress in response to a paying audience. The second year includes another month of development at IRT, and finally a four week run of the World Premiere as part of our main-stage season, giving the company a professional downtown platform to present their work.







## One-Eighth Theater

### *NUMBNESS: Chapter 2*

February 6–March 5, 2018

IRT 3B Development Workshop

June 27–June 30, 2018

New Ohio Ice Factory

Directed by Daniel Irizarry

Conceived by Laura Butler Rivera and  
Daniel Irizarry

Written by various New York and  
international playwrights

An Archive Residency First-  
Look Showing

A visceral, highly-stylized, unforgiving tragicomedy of the unfelt. An exploration of the physical and psychological state of feeling numb. What does it mean to be numb? Why are we numb? Is it possible to feel again?

One-Eighth Theater is an internationally-touring company based in NYC. Previous NYC gigs include a three-year residency at INTAR theatre, as well as productions at TerraNova, IRT Theater, and Mabou Mines. They have been a Time Out NY critics pick for their production of UBU

and a New York Times critics pick for their adaptation of *The Maids* by José Rivera. They have toured or created work in Poland, Japan, United Kingdom, Lithuania, Germany, Turkey, Romania, Korea, and Puerto Rico. Founded in 2008 by Artistic Directors Daniel Irizarry and Laura Butler Rivera, One-Eighth is inspired by Hemingway's Iceberg Theory. It's the alluring idea that some things are better left unexplained or open to interpretation. The tip of an iceberg is only one-eighth of what's there, so much more lies beneath the surface. [Oneeighth.org](http://Oneeighth.org)



## **The Drunkard's Wife**

*MADAME LYNCH*

February 6–March 5, 2018

IRT 3B Development Workshop

June 27–June 30, 2018

New Ohio Ice Factory

Written and Directed by Normandy  
Sherwood and Craig Flanagin

An Archive Residency First-Look Showing

A spectacle with music that took on the story of Eliza Lynch, an Irish prostitute who, through fate and machination,

became de facto Empress of Paraguay in the mid 19th century. Lynch made it her project to bring European high culture to Paraguay, and she's revered by some as a national heroine for her contributions to music and dance. But she's also reviled: many accuse her of fomenting the war in which 90% of Paraguay's male population was killed. We worked to create a complex portrait of a complicated figure.

The Drunkard's Wife creates theatrical and musical spectacles with a generous, maximalist design sense and brings

experimental music to experimental theater. Their shows are darkly comic, language-drunk, full of reverence for the hand-made, and therefore wholeheartedly feminist and anticapitalist. Helmed by Normandy Sherwood (of The National Theater of the United States of America) and Craig Flanagin (of God is My Co-Pilot and ½ Japanese), their shows have been seen at Rubulad (Tiny Hornets) Brick Theater (Permanent Caterpillar), New Ohio Theatre (Feather Gatherers), as well as block parties and bookstores and parades all over New York City.







# EVENTS/ WORKSHOPS

2017—2018

## **Monique Holt**

*Workshop: “Developing Your One-Person Show”*

July 9–15, 2017

‘One Person Show’ is a specific theater genre. The show depends on you and ... the spectators, who come to see you perform some kind of magic. This workshop welcomed both SERIOUS and CURIOUS participants: in creating their own one person show. It was tailored to the participants interest, personal-

ity, style, and journey. Monique Holt showed her box of tools: techniques, strategies, ideas, and many joys in helping to create the participants one-person-show. The students became their own dramaturg, own director, own critic.

Monique Holt: a Deaf performer, actress, director, dramaturg, acting instructor, DASL (director of artistic sign language), script translator, acting coach, theater consultant... She has performed her one-person-show: The

‘OR’bit – Mabou Mines/Suite Fellow, NY, Men Don’t Listen To Naked Women – DC Cap Fringe, DC, and Zeer Duur’s Locket – Towson MFA, MD. She taught various theatre courses at Gallaudet University, Rutgers University, NYU/ETW in Paris, NYU/Playwrights Horizon Theater School, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company...

## **What Will the Neighbors Say?**

*People as People: A Symposium on Diversity*

August 26, 2017

Panelists: Kelly Webb, Futaba Shioda, Ashley Rogers, and Sylver Wallace  
All donations given to Houston Food Bank for Hurricane Harvey Relief

Artists as of late have been making an effort to collaborate with new faces and bodies, striving to have the stage reflect the diverse reality we live in. Yet, the imbalances remain stark. In an effort to have more diverse bodies represented on stage, many artists, including ourselves, fall into the trap of casting a specific type to make a statement, as opposed to casting the actor as a whole, living being. Why are we not casting people as people? In 2017, WWTNS? posits that “not knowing” diverse artists cannot be an excuse. But the way forward is unclear and full of risk. Distinguished guest speakers debated this exciting issue as we continue to work together to map out a different future.





## Eugene Ma

### *A WEEKEND OF CLOWN WORK-SHOP with Eugene Ma*

October 28–29, 2017

Let's soften our brains, open up our hearts and shake up our bodies! This ten-hour workshop started with precursor exercises to the pursuit of our uniquely individual clowns down the road, as we necessarily welcomed a sense of play and imagination back into our work. We attempted to begin melting that top layer of the iceberg that is your socially-conditioned selves. We invited your generous

openness, ferocious abandon, insistent honesty and gleeful mischief to make a larger footprint in your presence on stage. We sweat. We made songs. We listened deeper and harder. We released some glorious ha-ha's and emotional wa-wa's (amidst other weird sounds and sensations) into the ether. We were silly. This class required you to breathe and believe. We made something disastrous and messy. We made something wonderful and surprising. We reignited a teeny-weeny sparkly inkling to lead from the bravery, integrity and generosity of your child within once again!?

Eugene Ma is a Drama Desk-nominated, New York-based theater-maker who directs, acts, composes and teaches internationally. Deeply inspired by the clown's uncensored spontaneity, vulnerability, and its profound impact on the actor's presence and emotional availability as well as the prerequisite of total psucho-physical transformation in Commedia dell'Arte, Ma completed a two-year teaching apprenticeship with Christopher Bayes, serving as his teaching assistant and music director at the Yale School of Drama and the Juilliard School; and has studied with "OG" Le Coq clown teacher, Pierre Byland, in Switzerland. Currently Adjunct Assistant





Professor at Columbia University's Graduate Acting Program, he was most recently Lecturer of Acting at SUNY Purchase and has guest taught at Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts, Yale College, Fordham University, NYU and PPAS.

**The New Collectives: Erin Maxon**  
*Teaching the Teaching Artists:*  
*Professional Development*  
*Workshops for Arts Educators*

March 18, 2018

Stepping into History: Theatre Arts  
 Integration in History and Social  
 Studies Classes

Using theatre arts in History and Social  
 Studies classes can expand both factual  
 knowledge on a subject, as well as deep-  
 en a student's empathetic connection to

what they are learning. This workshop  
 focused on using historical source  
 material for dramatic exploration. We  
 worked with a wide variety of historical  
 source materials – newspaper articles,  
 eyewitness accounts, diary entries,  
 photographs, objects, historical fiction,  
 poetry, pieces of art – and shared  
 activities, exercises and ideas for using  
 this kind of rich material for dramatic  
 creation. We brainstormed about how  
 Teaching Artists can collaborate with  
 Classroom Teachers in devising lesson  
 plans that will have students encoun-  
 tering history on their feet, exploring  
 characters, events and motivations,  
 while also building theatrical skills and  
 gaining confidence in public speaking  
 and performance.

Erin Maxon (Education Director):  
 has more than 12 years experience  
 teaching and facilitating art, drama,

and music to people age 0 to 90. Her  
 expertise lies in the use of ethical  
 facilitation to create a safe space for  
 people to try on different aspects of  
 themselves. She is thrilled to pass on  
 elements of her expertise as a Profes-  
 sional Development Facilitator for  
 teaching artists. Erin is trained in the  
 student-centered Responsive Class-  
 room educational philosophy, NoBully  
 response techniques, and the Harkness  
 Method of discussion-based learning.  
 She has her Master's in Applied Dra-  
 ma: Theatre in Educational, Community  
 and Social Contexts from the Univer-  
 sity of London at Goldsmiths, and a BA  
 in Anthropology and Theater from UC  
 Berkeley. Erin has spent time working  
 with numerous educational and artistic  
 organizations including but not limited  
 to Z Space; National Trust UK; Cabrillo  
 Community College; San Francisco Day  
 School; Ring Mountain Day School;  
 Berkeley Playhouse; Tenryu and Urugi  
 Board of Education in Nagano, Japan;  
 Action for Refugees; Eastside West-  
 side Music Together; Lawrence Hall of  
 Science; and more. For a full resume  
 and examples of her work, please visit  
[erintatemaxon.com](http://erintatemaxon.com).

The New Collectives is New York  
 based theatre and film collective. We  
 gather stories, ideas, and inspiration.  
 We find individuals with wildly differ-  
 ent talents. We collect it all together,  
 connect the dots, and create some-  
 thing new that runs beautifully.

# AFTER RESIDENCY

2017—2018

## LIFE JACKET THEATRE COMPANY

### *America is Hard to See*

October 11–24, 2016

IRT Theater 3B Development

Jan 30–Feb 24, 2018

HERE Premier

Written and directed by Travis Russ

Original Songs by Priscilla Holbrook

Researched and developed by Travis Russ,  
Anthony Dvarskas, and Amelia Parenteau

AMERICA IS HARD TO SEE investigated  
Miracle Village, a small rural commu-  
nity for sex offenders buried deep in  
Southern Florida's sugarcane fields.

Residents live in places like Miracle  
Village because they are not permitted

by law to live near schools, parks, or  
bus stops. Also, they must register their  
crimes, addresses, and vehicles on online  
public databases. These factors limit  
their chances of finding employment.

Several years ago, members of Life  
Jacket Theatre Co. travelled to South-  
ern Florida to interview residents of  
Miracle Village, law enforcement  
officials, lawmakers, religious leaders,  
and other prominent figures on all sides  
of this controversial issue. An ensemble  
of seven powerful actors embodies over  
50 people in this dynamic play.

Based solely on verbatim interviews  
and field research, the play blends  
spoken text and original songs to

bring to life the interviewees' actual  
words. This uncomfortable and un-  
orthodox play tells tough, thoughtful,  
and real stories about darkness,  
uncertainty, and healing in small-  
town America.

*"A smart and troubling new piece of  
documentary theater... This play, an  
investigation of transgression, redemp-  
tion and the limits of compassion,  
takes a hard, uncomfortable look at  
forgiveness and what it means to put it  
into action."—THE NEW YORK TIMES*

*"Lovely... A deceptively gentle look at  
redemption, faith, and what makes a  
community... A heartbreaking, compli-  
cated portrait of people adrift."  
—THE NEW YORKER*

*"Hands down – the bravest show cur-  
rently playing in New York... Powerful  
performances electrify an already su-  
percharged script."— THEATERMANIA*

## CAPS LOCK THEATRE AND JACK SHARKEY

### *Baby Mama: One Woman's Quest to Give Her Child to Gay People*

January 3–30, 2017

IRT Theater 3B Development

August 4–12, 2017

Edinburgh Fringe (2017)

Written and performed by

Mariah MacCarthy

Directed by Sara Lyons

Baby Mama: One Woman's Quest to Give  
Her Child to Gay People tracks one birth  
mother's true adoption journey, from con-  
ception to placement with the gay couple  
of her dreams—while still living her life,  
dating, and attending the occasional  
orgy. From adoption agencies to vaginal  
discharge, from burlesque to goodbyes,  
this intimate night of storytelling is up  
close and personal. Winner of The Dr.  
Robert J. Thierauf Producer's Pick Award  
of the Cincy Fringe. Bring hankies.







## HARD SPARKS

### *The Cabaret At The End Of The World*

February 28–March 20, 2017

IRT Theater 3B Development

September 25, 2017

OUTSTANDING ORIGINAL MUSIC for  
the 13th Annual New York Innovative  
Theatre Awards!

Written by Melody Bates and  
Rebecca Hart

Directed by Joan Jubett

It's the Ides of March—What could go  
wrong? Irreverent and vivacious hosts

Flora and Fawna invite you to the hot-  
test club in Ancient Rome for a sly, sexy,  
hilarious romp through Julius Caesar,  
affectionately burlesquing Shakespeare  
and Rome while casting a sharply satiri-  
cal light on the play's themes and how  
they reflect our own times.

The Cabaret At The End Of The World  
is a play with songs created by Melody  
Bates (book) and Rebecca Hart (mu-  
sic and lyrics), and directed by Joan  
Jubett. It was originally commissioned  
by Maine's Opera House Arts at The  
Stonington Opera House.







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