

“It’s an in-house play development process for Undergrads. We are working with a 22 year-old playwright who has a dozen experienced, smart people in the room. He can’t stop smiling. Neither can we.” Jennifer Mendenhall, DC-based, two-time Helen Hayes Award-winning actress.

Dear Colleagues-

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is offering the Second Annual Undergraduate Playwrights’ Workshop at the Kennedy Center, May 30-June 4, 2017.

Up to five current undergraduate playwrights will be selected and brought to the Kennedy Center for five days to develop one of their full-length plays with a director/dramaturg team, and an acting company made up of leading actors from the Washington, D.C. community.

The workshop process will be completely driven by the particular needs of the playwright and her/his play. There is ample writing time, meetings with the director/dramaturg team, daily four-hour rehearsal blocks with actors, and a concert reading at the end of the process to showcase the work of the residency. Any end of workshop feedback session will led by the play’s dramaturg and are wholly based on the playwright’s objectives for the development process.

The creative teams will be supplemented, as needed, with additional artists that the playwright feels are necessary to the exploration of the work [for example: a sound designer, a choreographer, a federal prosecutor, a composer, a movement consultant, a puppetry consultant, etc.]

Students receiving their degrees in the Spring of 2017 **are** eligible for nomination.

This is an invitation to nominate outstanding undergraduate playwrights from your school. The nomination need only be the name and email address of the playwright, no letters of recommendation are required or expected, at this stage. The selection process will proceed on the assumption that if you’ve nominated the student, you feel s/he’s ready for the experience. Representatives from the reading panel may reach out to you for more information and guidance as final invitations are being considered. Please communicate your nominees to me at your convenience (via ghenry@kennedy-center.org) and ask your nominees to send the following:

- 1- A letter that introduces the playwright, the playwright’s work, and a brief discussion of one or more works-in-progress that s/he is interested in developing while in residence at the Kennedy Center in late Spring.
- 2- A selection of work that the playwright feels best represents their voice (ten-minute plays, one-acts, monologues, spoken-word poetry)

[In Word: with a full title page as page 1 and a blinded title page [title only] as page 2.

or

[In PDF: the complete play with a blinded title page and a full title page sent as a separate document]

- 3- A complete or partial draft of full-length work, or a detailed “treatment” and discussion of a proposed full-length work-in-process.

[In Word: with a full title page as page 1 and a blinded title page [title only] as page 2.

or

[In PDF: the complete play with a blinded title page and a full title page sent as a separate document]

via PDF or word document to: ghenry@kennedy-center.org by December 16, 2016. All of the work will be read “blind”- the reading panel will not know the student’s name or school affiliation.

In late-January 2017, the selection panel will contact a group of finalists to discuss the workshop further. These playwrights will be invited to send updated information and a current draft or “treatment” of a proposed work-in-progress for the Kennedy Center residency.

The reading and selection panel will be made up of literary managers, dramaturgs, directors, and actors with an affinity for the development of new work.

The selected playwrights will be provided with round-trip transportation, lodging in a George Washington University residence hall, and per diem of \$50 for the period of the residency. The playwrights and teams will be gathered on Tuesday May 30 and head home late afternoon on Sunday, June 4, 2017.

Every effort will be made to notify the invited playwrights by April 1, 2017.

Some thoughts from the inaugural Workshop in June 2016:

“Growing up and leaving home means finding many new homes along the way, and I can say that I have found one at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. I am still blown away by the experience; it was totally surreal in the most wonderful way. Thank you for making my experience not only possible, but brilliant and inspiring.” Jamie Berry, University of Missouri

“To the *Someone Who Isn’t Me* Team: It’s taken me a few days to process my thoughts. Here goes: your support and belief in this process has been absolutely invaluable. As a first foray into playwriting, your insightful feedback and generous and specific attention to the inner workings of the script have unlocked many possibilities for where the story may go- and I owe that to each and every one of you. To have people as talented and intelligent as all of you was truly a gift.” Michael Keita Hisamoto, Boston University

“It has taken me a few days to gather my thoughts and write this. Over the past week, I have been at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts at the first Undergraduate Playwrights’ Workshop... During the week, I workshopped my full-length play Snapdragon with the most amazing team: Director [Gus Heagerty](#), Dramaturg [Ally Currin](#), Stage Manager Joey Blakely and actors [Audrey Bertaux](#), Gabriela Fernandez-Coffey, [Laura C. Harris](#), [Alyssa Wilmoth-Keegan](#), [Thomas Keegan](#) and Kimberly Schraf. Your talent, honesty and support served as inspiration for me to write like I never had before and take this script to a new level I am so proud of. This immersive experience has changed the way I look at the future of theatre and I will take all the lessons (and many pages of notes I took) with me as a compass for becoming a playwright who isn’t afraid to collaborate and take risks in order to create impactful theatre.” Nicholas De Los Santos, Loyola Marymount University

I’m happy to answer any questions you or your students may have.

With Best Wishes,
Gregg

Gregg Henry, Artistic Director

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