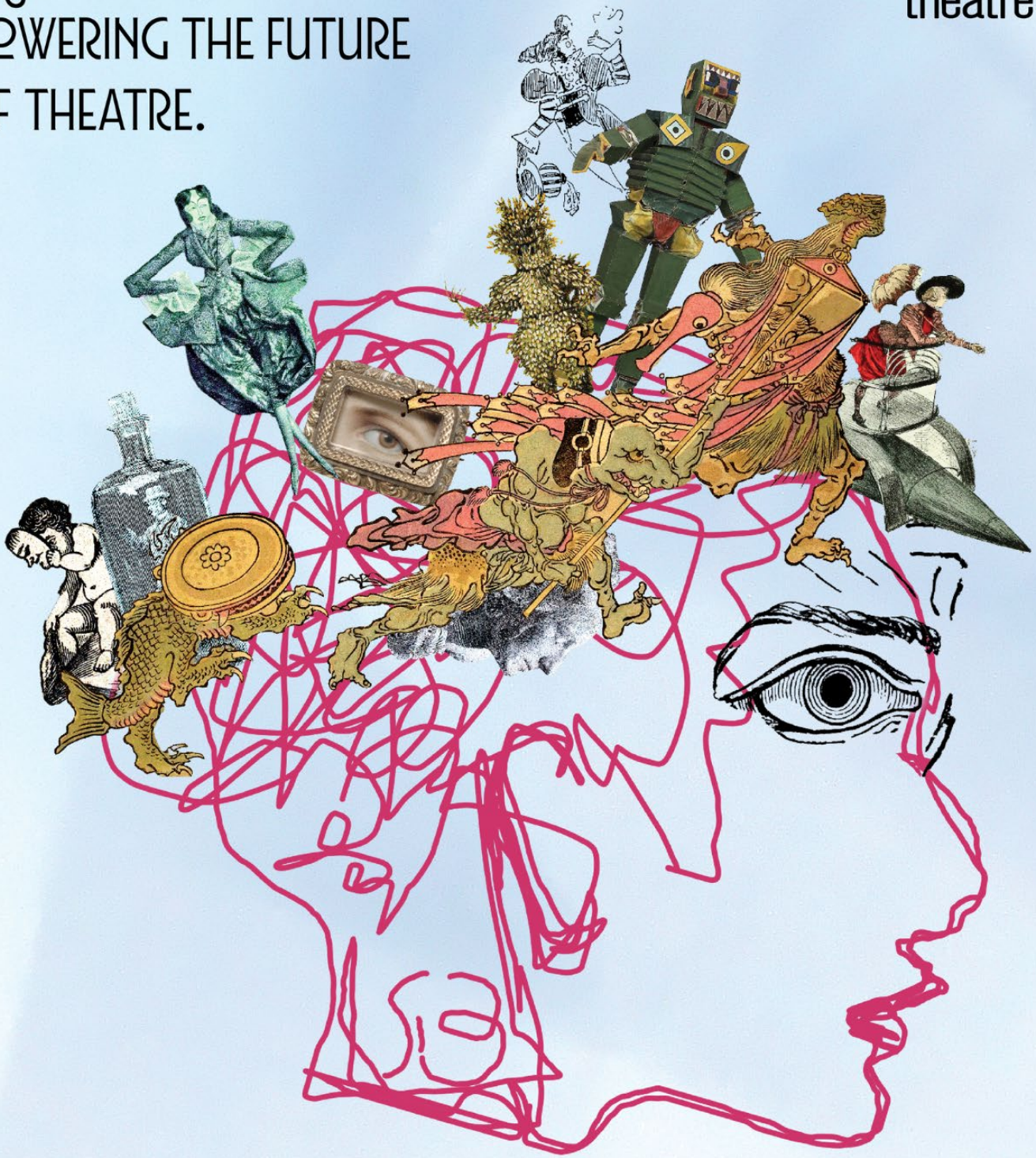
FIFTY YEARS OF
theatre bay area

HUMAN CREATIVITY
POWERING THE FUTURE
OF THEATRE.



CALIFORNIA THEATRE CONFERENCE

ARTISTIC INTELLIGENCE

CALIFORNIA THEATRE CONFERENCE

ARTISTIC INTELLIGENCE

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CALIFORNIA THEATRE CONFERENCE

ARTISTIC INTELLIGENCE

Welcome to the California Theatre Conference: *Artistic Intelligence*

Whether you came in today from down the street or down the state, we would like to extend a warm welcome to our conference.

Today's conference was conceived in conversation with the local and statewide theate community to be a time for us all to connect, learn, and share space as we tackle the most pressing issues facing our field. Among the workshops and panels on the schedule today, you'll find conversations about new methods of storytelling, new technologies with their potential risks and benefits, new solutions for the ever-present challenges in hiring and sustaining a theatre company, and, hopefully, some new friends to learn from and be inspired by.

We are so grateful that you are here.

Our deep thanks to our board, our partners, and our venue hosts—Z Space, Theatre of Yugen, and Joe Goode Performance Group—for bringing this community together. We're especially grateful to our conference sponsors; Ensemble, Benvenuti Arts, Ashville Creative Arts, and Partake Arts whose generosity sustains this event and the creative community it celebrates, along with all our community partners and attendees who make the California Theatre Conference possible.

Thank you for being here as part of California's largest convening of theatre practitioners. Thank you for your creativity in the face of immense challenges. Thank you for showing up for your artists, your audiences, and for the large constellation of companies that make up the California theatre scene.



With Gratitude,
Theatre Bay Area Cast & Crew
Sean Fenton, Ann Marie Lonsdale, Melissa Hillman, Meghan Crosby-Jolliffe, Suz Longworth, and Hilary Buffum

Land Acknowledgment

We are here in celebration at Z Space for the Theatre Bay Area California Theatre Conference: *Artistic Intelligence*. We'd like to take this moment to recognize and acknowledge that we are on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone, which encompasses the San Francisco Peninsula. The Ramaytush Ohlone are the original inhabitants and Indigenous stewards of this land. They are still here and have never ceded, nor forgotten, their responsibilities as caretakers of this land, as well as for the people who reside in their traditional territory.

Now, I'd like you to take this moment to open your hearts and minds to a Native way of thinking about land. Ownership of land is a European settler's concept. Native people don't look at land as an object to possess, but rather land is looked at as an Elder or a relative that you have great responsibilities, commitments, and obligations to take care of. To take care of your mother, Mother Earth. Natives don't just live **on** the land; we are **of** the land, with an interconnectedness of traditions and endless futuristic possibilities.

So, today as you participate in the California Theatre Conference at Z Space, as you walk through the homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone, through theatres, halls, and streets of the San Francisco Peninsula, I invite you to adopt a Native way of thinking about the land you stand on today; that you are not just **on** this land but rather you are **of** this land.

by Linda Amayo-Hassan

Thank You to Our Sponsors !

THEATRE BAY AREA PARTNER

ENSEMBLE

BREAKFAST SPONSORS

PARTAKE ARTS

Benvenuti Arts
Solutions for the Small and Mighty

ASHEVILLE CREATIVE ARTS

SPACE PARTNERS

Z SPACE
NEW WORKS + WORD FOR WORD + YOUTH ARTS

THEATRE OF YUGEN

JOE GOODE PERFORMANCE GROUP
inspiring movement

We want to extend a special thank you to Z Space for being TBA's administrative home for the past 6 years!

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sfac san francisco arts commission

CALIFORNIA THEATRE CONFERENCE

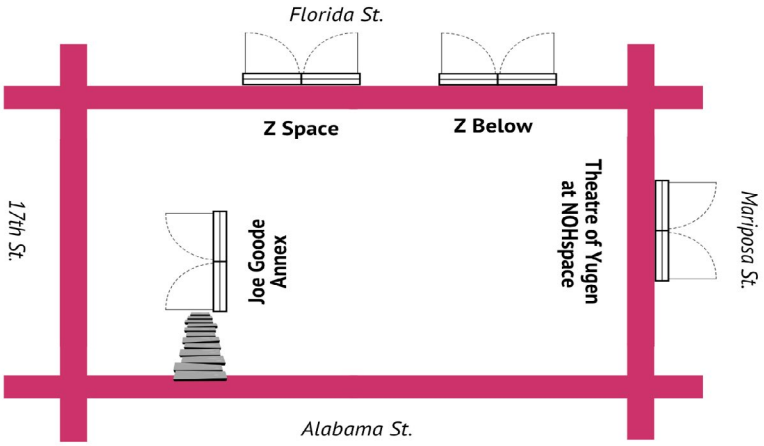
ARTISTIC INTELLIGENCE

Schedule-At-A-Glance

Time	Event	Location
9:30 - 10 AM	**Conference Check-In**	Z Space Lobby
10 - 11:15 AM 	**Morning Plenary** *This session will have ASL interpretation.*	Z Space Steindler Stage
	Welcome by Theatre Bay Area & Z Space	
	Land Acknowledgement	
	Plenary Panel State of the State: Arts and Culture in California	
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM	**Breakout Session A**	
	Unlocking the Promise of Prop 28: Strategies for Sustainable Arts Education Programs	Z Space Steindler Stage
	What Lasts: A Movement Inquiry for Theatremakers	Joe Goode Annex
	Multilingual Theatre: Producing in Our Own Words *This session will have ASL interpretation.*	Theatre of Yugen NOH Space
	Before You Decide: A Working Session on AI and Theatre	Z Below
12:30 - 2 PM	**Lunch** *Pre-ordered lunches will be available for pick-up in the Z Space lobby.*	
	**Lunch Group:** Dress Rehearsal: Donor Dialogues *This session will have ASL interpretation.*	Z Space Steindler Stage
	Lunch Group: AI in the Field	Z Below Lobby
2 - 3 PM 	**Afternoon Plenary** *This session will have ASL interpretation.*	Z Space Steindler Stage
	Afternoon Performance: Auntie Pho Comedy Hour	
	Presentation of Arts Leadership Residents and RHE Charitable Foundation Artistic Fellowship	
	Keynote Address The Entanglements of Poetic Will, Public Will, and Political Will with Roberto Bedoya	
3:15 - 4:15 PM	**Breakout Session B**	
	Art in the Face of Demonization	Z Space Steindler Stage
	The Art of Clown: Legacy Trailblazers Teaching Us About Today	Joe Goode Annex
	Narrative Justice Storytelling: A Framework for Transformative Theatre	Z Below
	The Group Chat Problem: Building a Safer, Smarter Theatre Community *Presented by California Theatre Conference sponsor Ensemble.*	Theatre of Yugen NOH Space

Time	Event	Location
4:30 - 5:30 PM	**Breakout Session C**	
	New Journalism Theatre: Rooting New Work in Reported Truth	Z Below
	AB5 and Beyond: Employing CA Theatre Workers Today	Z Space Steindler Stage
	Get Practical: Hand-to-Hand Stage Combat Workshop	Joe Goode Annex
5:45 - 6:15 PM	**Closing**	Z Space Lobby

Conference Map



Z SPACE (FLORIDA STREET)
Main Lobby
Steindler Stage
Conference Room
Multi-Stall All Gender Restrooms

Z BELOW (FLORIDA STREET)
Z Below Lobby
Z Below Stage
Z Below Dressing Room *(Nursing Room*)*
Single-Stall All Gender Restroom

*Ask Z Space staff for access

THEATRE OF YUGEN NOH SPACE (MARIPOSA STREET)
NOH Space Theatre
Multi-Stall All Gender Restrooms

JOE GOODE ANNEX (ALABAMA STREET)
Studio/stage space
Multi-Stall All Gender Restrooms

Accessibility

The venues are wheelchair accessible.

For a low-fragrance environment, we ask that attendees refrain from using perfumes, colognes, and other fragrances on the day of the event. Learn more about the impact of chemical fragrances and how to reduce your usage.

We're asking everyone at California Theatre Conference: *Artistic Intelligence* to help reduce the risk of transmission. To prevent everything from negative health impacts to the cancellation of performances, it's important we all work together to reduce risk where we can.

Here's how you can reduce risk:

- Wear a high-quality, fitted mask like a KN95 or N95 when not eating or drinking. If you don't bring a mask, we'll have extras.
- Take a PCR or at-home rapid test at least 2 hours before attending.
- Get the most recent Covid-19 booster or vaccination you are eligible for.

While we will not be enforcing these measures, we strongly recommend you use them as much as you are able. We ask that you do not attend if you have tested positive for Covid-19 within 10 days prior to the event or are experiencing symptoms of Covid-19.

Any other access needs? We will do our best to meet them! If you have a need not being met please find a TBA staff member and let us know how we can better support you and we will do our best to meet those needs.

Media Disclaimer

There will be professional photographers, videographers and TBA staff recording and sharing photo and video of the event. By joining us for this conference you are consenting to being recorded. Photos and video from the conference may be used by Theatre Bay Area for marketing purposes.

About Theatre Bay Area

Founded in 1976, Theatre Bay Area (TBA) is the largest theatre service organization of its kind, representing theatre companies and individual artists across the San Francisco Bay Area. With over 200 member companies and more than 3,000 individual artists, TBA offers advertising resources, network connections, and professional development that steward engagement with local theatre arts and the artists who make them.

Our mission is to unite, strengthen, promote, and advance the theatre community in the San Francisco Bay Area. The performing arts are an essential public good, and for 50 years TBA has nourished our creative community and expanded access to the arts for all.

For 50 years, Theatre Bay Area has been the cornerstone of the artistic excellence of the Bay Area theatre scene. Through innovative programs, a commitment to collaboration, and a drive for sustainable careers, TBA supports and uplifts our members as they create the groundbreaking art that this region is known for.

We are so proud to serve this community of artists and art lovers in one of the most vibrant theatre regions in the world. Whether you've been here for 50 years or 5 minutes, thank you for being part of our community.

50th Anniversary Callboard Magazine

As a part of our 50th anniversary celebrations Theatre Bay Area published a 50th Anniversary edition of our historic *Callboard* magazine! This special 50th anniversary edition of TBA's *Callboard* Magazine is a celebration of Bay Area theatre in 2026 and over the past 50 years. We are producing a physical magazine for the first time in over a decade to honor the last half century of work and the community that has gotten us here.

The 48-page magazine features articles and images by current Bay Area theatremakers, as well as a comprehensive directory of all of TBA's 200+ member companies. This commemorative magazine blends past and present by celebrating the legacy we inherit and the one we build together.

You can purchase your copy today at the conference or online at:

www.theatrebayarea.org/callboard-magazine

The 50th anniversary edition of *Callboard* is made possible thanks to the Producers' Circle

Sarah Benvenuti, Brad Erickson, Sara Kannen Dean, James Freeman, Barbara Hodgen, Jay and Jennifer Jolliffe, Peter J. Kuo, Ann Marie Lonsdale, Fred Lonsdale, Luba Markoff, Craig Moody, Performers Under Stress, Jerome Solberg in memory of Robert Gudmundsson, and John Straigis.

TBA Membership

Theatre Bay Area has proudly served the San Francisco Bay Area theatre community for the past 50 years.

When you join Theatre Bay Area, you become part of a community of theatremakers and theatre lovers — a vibrant tapestry of audiences, performers, writers, directors, designers, administrators, and performing arts organizations who make up the unique diversity of our Bay Area theatre scene. Together, we are a powerful alliance that promotes, strengthens, and advocates for the theatre industry in our region.

Our over 200 Company Members reflect the full spectrum of theatre companies across 11 counties, including nonprofit theatres of all sizes, from the largest LORT to the smallest indie theatre, as well as cultural centers, venues, training and development centers, for-profit companies, and more! .

Learn more about TBA Member Benefits

Job & Audition Listings

TBA's job and audition listings are a trusted source among theatremakers of all disciplines across all 11 Bay Area counties. We ensure listings have the detailed information job seekers need — every listing must include the job requirements, expected schedule, location, and salary. In addition, every company that is able to post here has signed on to our EDI Accountability pledge that promises to uphold EDI values, speak out against practices incompatible with those values, and practice inclusive & equity based theatre making.

TBA Company members receive unlimited listings with their membership, all others may purchase a one-time listing for a reasonable fee.

Talent Bank

The Theatre Bay Area Talent Bank is the place to find new collaborators and expand your talent network in the Bay! It is the definitive directory of theatremakers in the San Francisco Bay Area, regularly updated and easily searchable by TBA Company and Premium Individual Members.

Upcoming Programs



The Writers' Room at Z Space
Fridays 11 AM - 2 PM

Writing is done better near others! Join a weekly, structured playwriting room, intended to create a focused and accountable space for writers to do their craft without distraction.



Teaching Artist Open Call
December 7th 2 - 8:30 PM
Berkeley Rep School of Theatre

A collection of Bay Area theatre companies, Theatre Bay Area, and Arts Education Alliance of the Bay Area are combining efforts to host an open call for theatre teaching artists.



General Auditions 2027
Saturday & Sunday, February 6th - 7th, 2027
A.C.T.'s Strand Theater in San Francisco, CA

TBA's 2027 General Auditions will bring together casting professionals, artistic directors, and over 250 local actors for a weekend of Bay Area talent.

Role-Based Networking

Virtual Coffee Hours: Managing Directors
First Wednesday of the month
4-5 PM Pacific

Virtual Coffee Hours: Artistic Directors
Third Monday of the month
4-5 PM Pacific

Theatre Services Committe
Third Thursday of the month
12-1 PM Pacific

Theatre For Young Audiences: TYA Roundtable
Fourth Friday of the month
1-2 PM Pacific

Mary Mason Memorial Lemonade Fund

Making Lemons into Lemonade since 1988.

The **Mary Mason Memorial Lemonade Fund** is a confidential resource for theatre practitioners with critical illnesses, conditions, or injuries who are in need of supplemental financial assistance.

Since 2000, Theatre Bay Area has distributed over $100,000 to theatre workers in need through the Lemonade Fund. Much of it is made possible through generous donations by fellow artists.

Giving to the Lemonade Fund

Join the hundreds of theatre artists and other supporters who have made tax-deductible donations to the Lemonade Fund. (Please note: A donation cannot be earmarked for a specific person. Monies will be distributed equitably among all qualified applicants.)

Donate to the Lemonade Fund.

Theatre companies and producers are also encouraged to host Lemonade Nights at their shows to raise money and awareness for the fund. Interested in hosting a Lemonade Night at your upcoming show? Reach out to our Membership and Community Engagement Officer, Meghan at Meghan@TheatreBayArea.org to learn more.

Who is eligible to apply to the Lemonade Fund?

Any TBA member residing in the San Francisco Bay Area who has been an active participant in the theatre community — regardless of the income derived from that work — in at least two of the past five years and is currently living with a critical illness, condition, or injury is eligible to apply for the program. Applicants can request $250, $500, or $1000.

MARY MASON MEMORIAL
Lemonade Fund



CALIFORNIA THEATRE CONFERENCE

ARTISTIC INTELLIGENCE

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

FIFTY YEARS OF
theatre bay area

10:00 - 11:15 AM | Morning Plenary

This session will have ASL interpretation.

Welcome by Theatre Bay Area and Z Space

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

Land Acknowledgement

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

State of the State: Arts and Culture in California

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

California theatre is evolving. New partnerships are emerging, audiences are changing, and the challenges facing our field demand fresh thinking. Join arts leaders Julie Baker (Californians for the Arts), Lyz Luke (City of Oakland), Josy Miller (California Arts Council), and Lily Tung Crystal (East West Players), moderated by Emilya Cachapero (Theatre Communications Group) for a conversation about the forces shaping theatre today and the opportunities ahead. Together, we'll explore where we're gaining momentum, what questions deserve our attention, and how we can build a stronger, more connected future for California theatre.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM | Breakout Session A

Unlocking the Promise of Prop 28: Strategies for Sustainable Arts Education Programs

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

California's Prop 28 represents a historic investment in arts education, but many districts and arts organizations are still figuring out how to use these funds strategically and sustainably. This session focuses on how theatre educators, administrators, and arts organizations can leverage Prop 28 to build long-term, equitable theatre programs rather than short-term fixes.

Participants will gain a clear understanding of what Prop 28 does and does not allow, including common compliance pitfalls such as supplement vs. supplant and the 80 percent staffing requirement. From there, the session shifts into practical strategy. How do we design theatre pathways that last? How do we partner with districts to expand access and deepen impact? How can arts organizations position themselves as essential collaborators in this new funding landscape?

Multilingual Theatre: Producing in Our Own Words

THEATRE OF YUGEN NOH SPACE

Language shapes how we see the world and how we tell our stories, yet most of our performances are limited to English. What happens when we expand our scripts, making space for more languages to take center stage? Our panel of experts invite you to join them as they share the joys of producing theatre in their own words, how they explore language in their shows, and the unique gifts linguistic access can bring to an audience.

This session will have ASL interpretation.

Before You Decide: A Working Session on AI and Theatre

Z BELOW

Some of us are already using AI in their work. Some have decided not to. Most have questions they haven't had a good place to ask. What does it actually do? When it makes something, whose work is it? What happens to the people who were paid for that work? Join Dr. Shubham Atreja of USF's Center for AI and Data Ethics for a session that's neither a sales pitch nor a eulogy. A short, plain-language look at what these systems really do and don't do. Most of the hour will focus on real situations theatres are facing now, where the answer isn't obvious, and the room won't agree. No technical background required. No position required. Bring your enthusiasm (or skepticism); it will be useful here.

What Lasts: A Movement Inquiry for Theatremakers

JOE GOODE ANNEX

What can we learn about longevity from making? Right here. Right now.

This session is a Choreographic Lab — an in-your-body inquiry experience designed for theater makers who want to step into the question. Using the tools of choreographic practice, we'll investigate what legacy, sustainability, and longevity actually feel like in the body. Not as concepts. As lived experience.

No dance background required. No performance pressure. Real, on-our-feet work that meets us where we are.

Every person in the room is a contributor. Your movement, your perspective, your presence will shape what we discover together.

12:30 - 2:00 PM | LUNCH

OPTIONAL LUNCH GROUPS

Dress Rehearsal: Donor Dialogues

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

Join other theatre leaders for a lunch group facilitated by Tiiu Rebane and Julie McCormick and practice the art of light shmoozing over food to help strengthen your connections to your patrons and donors.

This session will have ASL interpretation.

AI in the Field

Z BELOW LOBBY

Join this discussion group to talk with other theatre professionals about the impacts of AI in your work, the field, and our world. This conversation will be informed by information presented in the morning breakout session on AI, but attendance at that session is not required to join this discussion.

2:00 - 3:00 PM | Afternoon Plenary

This session will have ASL interpretation.

Apperance by Auntie Pho Comedy Hour

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

We start the afternoon session with a special appearance from TBA CA$H Theatre grantee Auntie Pho Comedy Hour.

Presentation of RHE Charitable Artistic Fellowship and Arts Leadership Residents

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

The **RHE Charitable Foundation Artistic Fellowship** makes a significant investment in an individual female or nonbinary artist of color that will allow her to take the next step in their career. Nominees are selected by a diverse panel of established Bay Area theatre professionals.

This program is made possible through a generous grant from the RHE Charitable Foundation.

The **Arts Leadership Residency** funds aspiring artistic directors and managing directors in residence at Bay Area theatres for a 12-16 week residency during which the residents will be mentored by the artistic and/or managing director and lead a significant project during the season.

The Entanglements of Poetic Will, Public Will, and Political Will with Roberto Bedoya

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

Speaking from his perspective as a public servant, writer, cultural strategist, and the former Cultural Affairs Manager for the City of Oakland, Roberto Bedoya will speak about the enmeshment of an artist's political, public, and poetic will. What dynamics and conditions do the entanglement of these wills create for us as theatremakers? Join Bedoya as he explores how policy and imagination condition each other and invites us to consider the power of our wills as artists.

3:15 - 4:15 PM | Breakout Session B

The Art of Clown: Legacy Trailblazers Teaching Us About Today

JOE GOODE ANNEX

This panel is dedicated to Judy Finelli.

The Bay Area has a rich tradition of Clown and Physical Theatre, with an exciting range of organizations including performance companies, training programs, and healthcare clowning. Join this session where trailblazers and keepers of these artistic traditions share what they find crucial in Clown in the current moment, socially, politically, and artistically. Inviting us in as they look forward to the future of Clown and Physical Theatre and share their hard-won knowledge from the past.

Art in the Face of Demonization

STEINDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

Art is an essential tool of resistance, and yet artists are also often targets. In the face of bigotry, fascism, and demonization, what is our role as theatremakers? How can we continue to meet this moment sustainably? Join panelists Nabra Nelson, Ezra Reaves, and Deanalís Arocho Resto for a conversation led by director and TBA Board Chair, Dr. Dawn Monique Williams, in which they break down the impact of systemic demonization on targeted artists, what we can do to support one another, and how theatremakers can use the power of our art to shift the national narrative towards justice.

Narrative Justice Storytelling: A Framework for Transformative Theatre

Z BELOW

As theatre makers, we believe our work does good, makes change, and positively impacts thought around us, but what does that mean in measurable terms? This session introduces participants to a framework called Narrative Justice Storytelling (NJS), which was developed over the last seven years by Dr. Timmia DeRoy, a professor at UC Berkeley and life-long theatre director, to enable the facilitation of social transformation through storytelling. NJS includes a series of practices and principles designed to empower those who have been and continue to experience harm to identify their own power and heal self and community. This session will provide participants with the opportunity to discuss case-studies of the impact-focused work they have done in the past, or are planning for the future, utilizing NJS to understand more deeply its efficacy and potential.

The Group Chat Problem: Building a Safer, Smarter Theatre Community

THEATRE OF YUGEN NOH SPACE

This session is presented by conference sponsor Ensemble.

A practical conversation with theatre entrepreneur Jack Bloome about safer, more effective theatre communication. The session will examine the challenges of Facebook groups, group texts, and other production workarounds, particularly in youth theatre, along with better practices and what theatre leaders should consider when evaluating modern tools. Includes a live Q&A and a behind-the-curtain look at new technology improving the way productions are coordinated.

4:30 - 5:30 PM | BREAKOUT SESSION C

New Journalism Theatre: Rooting New Work in Reported Truth

Z BELOW

Explore the world of New Journalism Theatre and learn what it takes to incorporate primary sources into playwriting or season curation! Playwrights Julius Rea and Megan Calfas will share tools for how to incorporate interviews, reporting, and true personal experiences into theatrical processes. By staying grounded in truth and telling stories with local relevance, theatremakers can build a sustainable relationship with our audiences and create theatre that has the potential to inspire lasting change. This session will feature a live interview demonstration and a practical toolset to get started in this work. Dig into the world of New Journalism Theatre to discover how incorporating personal experiences can inform your next work and authentically engage your communities and audiences!

AB5 and Beyond: Employing CA Theatre Workers Today

STIENDLER STAGE | Z SPACE

With the changing theatre employment landscape here in California, it can be hard to know how to access accurate and up-to-date information. Join local labor and employment experts as they breakdown what theatres actually need to know to be in compliance with the current laws. This session will help you navigate working with union and nonunion employees, how to align with best practices, and what it takes to create a person-centered workplace that protects and supports our theatre workers while ensuring the stability and resilience of our theatre organizations.

Get Practical: Hand-to-Hand Stage Combat Workshop

JOE GOODE ANNEX

Take That! Learn to take a punch in this workshop covering unarmed stage combat basics. Get practical experience in this hands-on workshop with stage combat expert Dave Maier. Learn safe practices and protocols for rehearsal and performance of convincing theatrical violence and put these protocols into practice today!

5:45 - 6:15 PM | Closing

Closing Reflection

Z SPACE LOBBY

We will round out the day with a closing reflection in the Z Space Lobby.

Add-on Session Schedule

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

30-minute Individual Coaching Sessions with victor cervantes jr

CONFERENCE ROOM | Z SPACE

30-minute individual session with theatremaker, educator, and community organizer, victor cervantes jr.

3:30 - 5:30 PM

30-minute Small Group Q&A with Anthony A. Jackson

CONFERENCE ROOM | Z SPACE

30-minute Q&A with Anthony A. Jackson, director of the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre.

30-minute Individual Coaching Sessions with Daria Hepps

Z BELOW LOBBY

30-minute individual coaching session with dynamic fundraising professional, Daria Hepps.



CALIFORNIA THEATRE CONFERENCE

ARTISTIC INTELLIGENCE

ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

FIFTY YEARS OF
theatre bay area

Morning Plenary

This session will have ASL interpretation.



Linda Amayo-Hassan
Linda Amayo-Hassan is an enrolled member of the Spirit Lake Tribe. She's a Native/Chicana actor, playwright, and director. Linda is the Founder & Artistic Director of Theatre Cultura, and a board member with PlayGround. Linda has performed at the Aurora Theatre, Shotgun Players, Oakland Theater Project and Town Hall. She had the honor of a summer residency at Berkeley Rep Ground Floor in 2024. Linda has an MFA from UMKC and teaches at Chabot College.

Plenary Panel



Lyz Luke
Lyz Luke is a cultural leader and arts advocate with more than 20 years of experience advancing arts, culture, and community empowerment. As Cultural Affairs Manager for the City of Oakland, she leads investments in the creative economy, cultural infrastructure, and cross-sector partnerships. Previously, she served as Executive Director of Living Jazz and founded the award-winning UnderCover Presents, engaging thousands of artists throughout her career.



Josy Miller
Josy Miller is an Arts Programs Manager at the California Arts Council, where she has served since 2016. At the CAC, Miller manages a team that oversees the agency's statewide Cultural Districts program, Individual Artist Fellowships, California Creative Corps, and Arts & Youth portfolio. A theatre director and scholar, she received her Ph.D. in Performance Studies from the University of California, Davis. Miller has been the recipient of the Center for Cultural Innovation's Emerging Arts Leader Award, the Mellon Foundation Teaching/Research Fellowship in Early Modern Studies, and the University of California Institute for Research in the Arts' Major Grant Award (for her production of The Dogs of War at the 2014 Edinburgh Fringe Festival). She works regularly as visiting faculty for the UC Davis Department of Theatre and Dance and as a freelance theatre director in the greater Capital region. Her article "Performing Collective Trauma: 9/11 and the Reconstruction of American Identity" appears in the collection History, Memory, Performance. She is co-editor, with Peter Lichtenfels, of Shakespeare and Realism: On the Politics of Style.



Julie Baker

Julie Baker has been the CEO of California's statewide arts advocacy organizations since late 2018. During her tenure, she has increased the legislative influence and visibility of arts and culture communities by building coalitions across for-profit and non-profit sectors of California's creative industries. She has championed a month-long arts awareness and advocacy campaign every April and fought for resources and legislation to serve and protect artists and cultural workers. Julie has served in various leadership roles, including California State Captain to Americans for the Arts' National Arts Action Summit, co-chair of the creative economy working group at the CA Economic Summit, and co-chair of the Western Arts Advocacy network for Creative West, where she is also a member of the Board of Trustees.

In 2025, she was appointed to the CalNonprofits Board of Directors. She also serves as Board President of California Heritage: Indigenous Research Project. Her past roles include serving on the Nevada County school board (2020-2024) and as an appointed member of the State of California's 2022 Entrepreneurship & Economic Mobility Task Force (EEMTF) and the Creative Economy Working Group (2024-25).

Julie's background in arts administration and non-profit management includes eight years as Executive Director of The Center for the Arts and the California WorldFest. Her entrepreneurial and commercial arts experience includes owning a fine arts gallery for emerging artists, co-founding the Flow art fair, founding the consulting firm Julie Baker Projects, curating a world music series at the Crocker Art Museum, serving as President of a NYC arts marketing firm, and working with Christie's Auction House.

Her advocacy and community impact have been widely recognized. In 2021, she received the Americans for the Arts Alene Valkanas State Arts Advocacy Award for transformative legislative advocacy. She was also honored with the Nevada County Arts Council's inaugural Peggy Levine Arts & Community Service Award.



Lily Tung Crystal

Lily Tung Crystal is a director, actor/singer, and the artistic director of East West Players, the largest and longest-running Asian American theatre in the country, located in Los Angeles. She is also the former artistic director of Theater Mu in Minneapolis-St. Paul and the co-founder of Ferocious Lotus Theatre Company in the Bay Area. She is excited to return to San Francisco, her first theatre home, for this Conference. Lily has directed the world premieres of David Henry Hwang's 2026 version of Flower Drum Song (East West Players); R.A. Shiomi's Secret Warriors (History Theatre); Jessica Huang and Jacinth Greywoode's musical Blended (Harmony) (Mu/History); Saymoukda Duangphouxay Vongsay's The Kung Fu Zombies Saga (Mu); and Leah Nanako Winkler's Two Mile Hollow (Ferocious Lotus). Other credits include: Lauren Yee's Cambodian Rock Band (Mu/Jungle); David Henry Hwang's Chinglish (Palo Alto Players); Susan Soon He Stanton's Today Is My Birthday (Mu); and Steven Karam's The Humans (Park Square Theatre), which won the Twin Cities Theater Bloggers' Favorite Play 2022. She is also an inaugural YBCA 100 Honoree, StageSceneLA Scenie Award Winner, and three-time Theatre Bay Area Award Finalist for Outstanding Direction. As an actor/singer, Lily has performed nationally at theaters including Cal Shakes, Jungle Theater, Magic Theatre, Mixed Blood, New World Stages, Playwrights' Center, Portland Center Stage, SF Playhouse, Syracuse Stage, and Theater Mu.



Emilya Cachapero

Emilya Cachapero (she/her/siya) is the Co-Executive Director for National and Global Programming for Theatre Communications Group and has been active in the global arts community for more than 40 years. Formerly as TCG's Director of Grantmaking Programs she guided TCG's grant programs, professional development programs, international programs and selected special projects. That work is represented by 1200+ grants to theatre organizations and individuals and the development of 22 impactful national re-grant programs. For 11 years she was a member of the Executive Board and Council of International Theatre Institute (ITI) Worldwide and was a US National Commissioner to UNESCO from 2002 – 2008. Ms. Cachapero has facilitated workshops and trainings for groups that include the Norwegian Consulate, Grantmakers in the Arts, Chorus America, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, the Weissberg Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon foundation, and the Pew Charitable Trusts. She was instrumental in creating the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival and was its founding producer for the first two years of the program. Ms. Cachapero is a published poet who received her Bachelor of Arts degree in creative writing from San Francisco State University and an honorary M.F.A. from the American Conservatory Theater. She is an alumna of the James P. Shannon Leadership Institute and artEquity National Facilitator Training.

Breakout Session A

Unlocking the Promise of Prop 28: Strategies for Sustainable Arts Education Programs



Alli Gamlen
Alli Gamlen is an award-winning performer, director, and arts educator committed to equity and anti-racist practices in arts education. A Bay Area native, she has spent more than 20 years serving students, families, and educators through culturally sustaining and inclusive arts practices. Alli is a Musical Theatre Instructor at Studio A.C.T. and the Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator at the San Mateo County Office of Education.

Multilingual Theatre: Producing in Our Own Words



Allan "Samson" Manalo
Allan "Samson" Manalo is a Filipino American writer, director, producer, theatre artist, and stand-up comic who has performed in venues throughout 46 States and three countries. He, along with his wife Joyce Juan Manalo, is credited with ushering in the Filipino American era of Bindlestiff Studio, a San Francisco black box theatre which has operated in the heart of SOMA Pilipinas since 1989. In May 2025, with funding support from Theatre Bay Area's CA$H grant program, Samson wrote and performed his only solo theatrical show, IN BITUIN, as a way to deal with the grief of losing his wife Joyce to cancer. Samson is also the author of GOSSIP, SEX, AND THE END OF THE WORLD: THE COLLECTED WORKS OF TONGUE IN A MOOD, a book that chronicles the popularity of his sketch comedy troupe "tongue in A mood" and the takeover of Bindlestiff Studio. Click here to learn about the Joyce Juan Manalo Legacy Fund for Pinay Artists and click here to learn more about Joyce Juan Manalo.



Lorna Velasco
Lorna Velasco is a theatre artist who began her training at Bindlestiff Studio under founding director Chrystene Ells. She earned a B.A. in Anthropology from UC Berkeley, studied traditional performance at the Arts Institute of Indonesia, and received an M.A. in Drama from San Francisco State University. A former principal puppeteer with Larry Reed's ShadowLight Theatre, she toured nationally and internationally. After Allan Manalo and Joyce Juan Manalo transformed Bindlestiff into the nation's only permanent Filipino theatre arts space, Lorna succeeded Allan as Artistic Director. Today, Bindlestiff is San Francisco's longest-running black box theatre. Now based in Seattle, Lorna founded Sariwa Farm, a sustainable agricultural program that centers bayanihan (collective power) through inspired gatherings, performance, and storytelling.



Virginia Blanco
Virginia Blanco is an actor, director, and theatremaker with regional acting credits including Oakland Theater Project, TheatreFirst, Theatre of Yugen, Cutting Ball Theater, Anton's Well Theater Company, and La Lengua Theater. She trained at Studio ACT, Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, and Shakespeare & Company, and holds a bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Buenos Aires. In 2019, she founded La Lengua Theater, serving as Artistic Director and Producer. She's an artist in residence at Brava Theater and a TBA Arts Leadership fellow.



Sujit Saraf
Sujit Saraf is the artistic director of Naatak, a theatre company he co-founded in 1995 when a graduate student at UC Berkeley. Naatak has since grown to be the largest Indian-American theatre group in the country. Sujit is the author of six novels and about 25 plays. His plays have been staged all over the US and India, and his novels have been nominated for or won awards such as the Encore Prize in London (2009), the Crossword Fiction Award in Mumbai (2017), the Tata Literature Live Award in India (2018), the DSC Prize in London (2018), and the Mumbai LitFest Book of the Year (2025).



Antoine Hunter
Oakland native Antoine Hunter aka PurpleFireCrow is an award-winning internationally known Black, Indigenous, Deaf, Disabled, choreographer, dancer, actor, instructor, speaker, producer and Deaf advocate. PurpleFireCrow creates opportunities for Disabled, Deaf, and hearing artists, produces Deaf-friendly events, and founded the Urban Jazz Dance Company in 2007 and Bay Area International Deaf Dance Festival in 2013. Awards include the 2023 Dance Magazine Award, 2022 Disability Futures Fellowship, 2021 Dance Teacher Award, 2019 Disability Changemaker, 2019 National Dance/USA fellowship recognized by the Mayor of Oakland, 2018 inaugural Jeanette Lomujo Bremond Humanity Arts Award and 2017 Isadora Duncan (Izzie) for BAIDDF.

Hunter's work has been performed globally and he has lectured across the U.S. including at Kennedy Center's VSA, Harvard and Duke University, and the National Assembly of State Arts as an ambassador for social change. Hunter utilizes his company's artistic talents to engage with audiences, empower Deaf and disabled communities, and advocate for human rights and access, working to end discrimination and prejudice.

Hunter's shoe company DropLabs and Susan Paley released an innovative haptic product to help people feel music. Hunter curated 2021 Bay Area Deaf Arts at SOMArts, is a 2021 YBCA 100 honoree, is on the production team of Signing Animation actively working on inclusive films, and serves on the boards of Dance/USA, BABDA, Museum of Dance and councils for CalArts Alumnx and Intrinsic Arts.

In response to Covid-19 in July 2020, Hunter founded #DeafWoke, an online talk show that amplifies BIPOC Deaf and Disabled stories as a force for cultural change. www.realurbanjazzdance.com



Karina Gutiérrez

Karina Gutiérrez (She/Her) is a Bay Area-based director, dramaturg, and scholar. She is passionate about supporting new play development, fostering local artists, and creating welcoming, equitable, and accessible theatre spaces and classrooms. She considers theatre a powerful space for social change and the mending, healing, and restoring of communities.

As a director and dramaturg, Karina has had the pleasure of working with Bay Area Children's Theatre, BRAVA, Magic Theatre, Crowded Fire, Huntington Theatre, Magic Theatre, PlayGround, Playwright's Foundation, Shotgun Players, Stanford University, TheatreFirst, Townhall Theatre, UC Berkeley, West Edge Opera, and Word for Word. She is additionally a member of the Latinx Theatre Commons Steering Committee, Theatre Bay Area, and a founding member of the Bay Area Latinx Theatre Alliance Network (BALTAN).

Karina received her Ph.D. in Theatre and Performance Studies from Stanford University, where she was awarded the Carl Weber Prize for integration of Creative Practice and Scholarly Research. Her scholarship concentrates on the intersection of politics and performance, specifically how digital interventions, institutionalization efforts, and historical narrative affect the development and sustainability of social and politically engaged performance companies and collectives in the Americas. Karina currently serves as the Theatre Bay Area Board secretary.

Before You Decide: A Working Session on AI and Theatre



Dr. Shubham Atreja
Dr. Shubham Atreja is an Assistant Professor of Data Science and AI at the University of San Francisco. He brings deep experience designing computing technologies in both industry and academia, and understands how these systems shape human behavior and society. He holds a PhD in Information Science from the University of Michigan.

What Lasts: A Movement Inquiry for Theatremakers



Claire Alexander
Claire Alexander is a dance artist and educator based in San Jose, California. Her research centers on the body as a primary site of knowing, and how movement shapes the way we connect, communicate, and experience being human together. Her practice spans original choreography for theater and film, devised work, and embodied movement experiences for organizations and communities. Her roots are in youth theater and contemporary physical storytelling, where she developed a practice grounded in unprecious making, active collaboration, and creating with and for the people in the room.

Photo: Scott Donschikowski Photography

Lunch Groups

Dress Rehearsal: Donor Dialogues



Julie McCormick
Through her work as an arts administrator, dramaturg, and fundraiser, Julie supports new theatrical works and the people who make them. As a dramaturg, Julie has helped develop new work at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Crowded Fire Theater, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Bay Area Children's Theatre, Just Theater New Play Lab, Theatreworks, and more. As a fundraiser, she has helped to raise and manage more than $6M to bring meaningful arts experiences to Bay Area audiences and students. In 2021, Julie participated in Intersection for the Arts' first Nonprofit Arts Finance Program, which trained five local artists in the principles of financial management and bookkeeping. She holds a B.A. from Carleton College and is an alum of the Berkeley Rep Fellowship program. In addition to her work at Crowded Fire, Julie is proud to serve as Treasurer of the Playwrights Foundation Board and as a member of Theatre Bay Area's Theatre Services Committee.



Tiiu Rebane
Tiiu Rebane has worked professionally in the theatre for nearly three decades as a performer, administrator, and advocate. Before her eleven-year tenure at San Francisco Playhouse, Tiiu worked in ticketing, front of house, and concessions positions in orgs across NYC, and performed in nearly all 50 states and overseas. She is a proud member of AEA and sits on the boards of Ring of Keys and Playwrights' Foundation.

AI in the Field



Dr. Shubham Atreja
Dr. Shubham Atreja is an Assistant Professor of Data Science and AI at the University of San Francisco. He brings deep experience designing computing technologies in both industry and academia, and understands how these systems shape human behavior and society. He holds a PhD in Information Science from the University of Michigan.

Afternoon Plenary

Auntie Pho Comedy Hour
The Auntie Pho Comedy Hour is the Bay Area's brand new gleefully anti-fascist sketch and late night talk show from the demented liberal minds of Phil Wong, Tirumari Jothi, Rebecca Pierce, Alvin Adrian Lee, Sarah Ranney and April Pascua. Fresh off a sold-out run at Z Below, *Auntie Pho* is an anarchic purveyor of sketches, characters, and songs lampooning our current socio-political climate and providing a much needed comedic catharsis that farts in the stupid, ever-encroaching face of fascism and capitalism. They partner their anarchic brand of comedy with real Bay Area community leaders at the frontlines of resistance, activating their audience with actionable tasks and activities to help them easily organize within their communities. @AuntiePhoComedy

RHE Charitable Foundation Artistic Fellowship



Deanalís Arocho Resto
Deanalís Arocho Resto (they/he/she) is a proud queer Boricua theatre artist, singer, presence seeker, nature lover, and nap enthusiast, born on/raised by Susquehannock lands in northeastern Turtle Island. Since first coming to Ohlone lands in 2022, he has worked with San Francisco Playhouse, Center REP, San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Playhouse, American Conservatory Theater, Oakland Theater Project, Marin Shakespeare Company, and Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor. The prayer in their heart right now: through presence, connection, shared joy, willingness to change and be changed, and some good naps, we can weave the art magic that inspires us to live into our liberation with vitality and create more possibility.

2026-27 Arts Leadership Residents



Qian Zhang in Residence at The Pear Theatre
Qian Zhang (she/they) is a Bay Area-based theatre actor, designer, and musician. Qian is passionate about using storytelling to build empathy and help create a more just and compassionate world. Qian strives to continuously grow their skillsets to better create impactful theatre and is grateful to Theatre Bay Area for the 2026-2027 Arts Leadership Residency and the opportunity to develop new works with The Pear Theatre.



Zoe Chien in Residence at PlayGround
Zoe Chien is a mixed-race Taiwanese and Italian-American actor, model, casting director, theatre producer, teaching artist, and arts administrator. She received her BFA in Theatre from the NYU Tisch School of the Arts. Zoe is the Artistic Lead for 3Girls Theatre Company, and is the Casting Director and Associate Producer for PlayGround. She is a PlayGround company member, and a graduate of the 2023/24 PlayGround Producing Fellowship. She is honored to receive the 2026 TBA Arts Leadership Residency Grant.



Tiiu Rebane in Residence at Town Hall Theatre Company
Tiiu Rebane has worked professionally in the theatre for nearly three decades as a performer, administrator, and advocate. Before her eleven-year tenure at San Francisco Playhouse, Tiiu worked in ticketing, front of house, and concessions positions in orgs across NYC, and performed in nearly all 50 states and overseas. She is a proud member of AEA and sits on the boards of Ring of Keys and Playwrights' Foundation. She is delighted to expand her theatrical work in partnership with Town Hall. .

Keynote Address: The Entanglements of Poetic Will, Public Will, and Political Will



Roberto Bedoya
Roberto Bedoya is a writer, cultural strategist, and the former Cultural Affairs Manager for the City of Oakland where he shepherded the City's Cultural Plan, "Belonging in Oakland" and Oakland's Cultural Strategist in Government Program, which placed artists and cultural workers in various city departments aiming to operationalize belonging as a democratic charge within government. Throughout his career he has consistently supported artist-centered cultural practices and advocated for expansive definitions of inclusion and belonging in the cultural sector. His essays "Placemaking and the Politics of Belonging and Dis-belonging," "Spatial Justice: Rasquachification, Race and the City," and "The Courage of Imagination, A Pro-Democracy Movement, and the Civic We" have reframed cultural policy to shed light on exclusionary practices, decision making processes, and its creative potential. He has been a Rockefeller Fellow at New York University and a Getty Visiting Scholar at the Getty Research Institute. As a public speaker he has addressed audiences at the Creative Time Summit, Grantmakers in the Arts conference, Americans for the Arts conference, and The Other & Belonging Conference. He is the recipient of the United States Artists 2021 Berresford Prize given annually to a cultural practitioner who has contributed significantly to the advancement, well-being, and care of artists in society.

Breakout Session B

The Art of Clown: Legacy Trailblazers Teaching Us About Today

This panel is dedicated to Judy Finelli.



Josh Matthews
Josh Matthews (They/He) is a teacher, actor, and clown/ circus performer. He has traveled around the world with his theater company, Under the Table, performing original physical comedies. Josh Has performed at The Lincoln Center (NYC), The Big Apple Circus (NYC) and Third Rail Projects (NYC) to name a few companies. Josh has been a teaching artist and guest lecturer for the past 25 years, some of the organizations Josh has worked with have been the New Victory Theater, Word For Word theater company, American Conservatory Theater, Occidental College, Sarah Lawrence College, and New York University. Currently Josh serves as a lead clown and artistic director for Medical Clown Project.



Wendy Parkman
Wendy has been involved with circus arts in the Bay Area, both teaching and performing, for over fifty years. Starting as a novice with Make-A-Circus in the mid-seventies, she went on to perform with the Pickle Family Circus as a juggler, acrobat, clown and aerialist. She co-founded the Pickle Family Circus School, which has evolved into Circus Center San Francisco. She performed in the Flying Karamozov's production of The Comedy of Errors at the Goodman Theatre, Chicago, the Los Angeles Olympic Arts Festival, and at Lincoln Center. She taught theatre and circus at The Urban School of San Francisco for thirty years, and has been a guest teacher at Lowell High School, guest director at Tamalpais High School, and directed eighth grade Shakespeare productions at The San Francisco School. She has worked with Tandy Beal, Joanna Haigood, and taught youth in the summer teaching programs of Cal Shakes and Marin Theatre. She is currently on the board of Camp Winnara-inbow and Circus Bella and continues to believe in the power of circus to transform lives and make the world a better place.



Lance “Derique” McGee
Lance “Derique” McGee (Unique Derique) blends clowning and Hambone body percussion with community healing. An international TV performer who has opened for major celebrities, McGee returns to The Marsh Berkeley in December 2026 for his annual holiday show, Fool La La: Whimsical. For 11 years, Lance has also served as a Trauma-Informed Wellness Consultant, coaching educators and teaching artists throughout the Bay Area to build compassionate relationships so students can thrive.



Jeff Raz
Jeff Raz has performed nationally and internationally for decades, starring in Cirque du Soleil’s Corteo, in Comedy of Errors on Broadway, with the Pickle Family Circus, Make*A*Circus, and many other circuses and theatres. He is the co-founder of the Medical Clown Project and five other arts organizations and worked globally as a communications and leadership consultant. His four books are inspired by his career.

Art in the Face of Demonization



Dr. Dawn Monique Williams
Dr. Dawn Monique Williams (she/her), an Oakland, CA native, served four years as Associate Artistic Director at Aurora Theatre Company. She was the Artistic Associate and a resident artist at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival for six seasons before that. Williams is a nationally celebrated director who has worked in theatres across the U.S., including The Kennedy Center, Orlando Shakespeare, American Shakespeare Center, Cal Shakes, Profile Theatre (Portland), Third Rail Rep, American Conservatory Theatre, Chautauqua Theatre Company, Marin Theatre Company, Elm Shakespeare, New Jersey Rep, and African American Shakespeare Company. She holds an MA in Dramatic Literature, an MFA in Directing, and advanced certificates in Film Studies and Screenwriting. Her first book of poetry, Clothed in My Right Mind, was published earlier this year. She serves on the Board of Directors for Theatre Bay Area and the Playwrights’ Foundation and sits on the Drama League National Directors Council. Dawn is a proud member of SDC.



Nabra Nelson
Nabra Nelson is the Artistic Director of Golden Thread Productions, the first US theatre company dedicated to the Middle East. She is a founding company member of the Seattle-based MENA theater company, Dunya Productions, leads the Nubian Foundation for Preserving a Cultural Heritage, and is the co-host of the Kunafa & Shay Theater Podcast. Her plays have been produced and developed in Los Angeles, Seattle, Milwaukee, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Portland, and Minneapolis. nabranelson.com



Ezra Reaves
Ezra Reaves (they/them) is an actor, writer, director, comedian, and drag king. They've appeared in TRAVESTY at Woolly Mammoth, VELOUR: A DRAG SPECTACULAR at La Jolla Playhouse (dir. Moisés Kaufman), and THE WIZARD OF OZ at A.C.T. (dir. Sam Pinkleton). TV includes 4400 (CW, GLAAD-nominated). Regional work spans TheatreWorks SF, Center Rep, SF Playhouse, Z Space, and more. NYC: WORLD ECONOMICS (La Mama). Former Co-Artistic Director of NY Neo-Futurists. Director of COMPTON'S CAFETERIA RIOT, now playing in San Francisco.



Deanalís Arocho Resto
Deanalís Arocho Resto (they/he/she) is a proud queer Boricua theatre artist, singer, presence seeker, nature lover, and nap enthusiast, born on/raised by Susquehannock lands in northeastern Turtle Island. Since first coming to Ohlone lands in 2022, he has worked with San Francisco Playhouse, Center REP, San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Playhouse, American Conservatory Theater, Oakland Theater Project, Marin Shakespeare Company, and Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor. The prayer in their heart right now: through presence, connection, shared joy, willingness to change and be changed, and some good naps, we can weave the art magic that inspires us to live into our liberation with vitality and create more possibility.

Narrative Justice Storytelling: A Framework for Transformative Theatre



Dr. Timmia Hearn DeRoy

Dr. Timmia Hearn DeRoy is a practitioner and scholar of social justice-based theatre and film. She directs, writes, produces, dramaturgs, and teaches. She was a founding member of the Trinidad and Tobago PRIDE Arts Festival, former Director of the School for the Arts at the Trinidad Theatre Workshop, the Caribbean's oldest theater company, and former Marketing Manager at the CaribbeanTales International Film Festival. She works in areas of post-colonial theater practice, transnational feminist praxis, and Disability Justice, and engages in community-oriented and social change focused theater across the Diasporas to which she belongs. Timmia's directing credits include 10,000: A One-Woman New Play Development by Victoria Taurean (2020) at the Lawrence Arts Center, In the Blood by Suzan-Lori Parks (2019) at the KU University Theatre, an original I Am One musical comedy called Buss de Mark (2016) which premiered at the PRIDE Arts Festival in Trinidad, A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare (2013/4), Two Can Play by Trevor Rhone (2013/4), and An Echo in the Bone by Dennis Scott (2012) at the Trinidad Theatre Workshop. Timmia has taught both acting and playwriting in Trinidad and Tobago as well as the United States and Nepal. She additionally has worked as a new script development consultant in both theater and film, and provides dramaturgical frameworks that decolonize scripts and directing practice. Timmia holds a Ph.D. and an M.A. in Theatre and Performance Studies from the University of Kansas, and a B.A. in Theatre Studies from Yale University. You can see her work at TimmiaHearn.com

The Group Chat Problem: Building a Safer, Smarter Theatre Community



Jack Bloome

Jack Bloome is a theatre performer, marketer, and entrepreneur. Drawing on decades of experience across dozens of productions, he brings firsthand insight into how theatres operate and where things can break down. His latest work focuses on how technology can improve communication, streamline production, and strengthen theatre communities.

New Journalism Theatre: Rooting New Work in Reported Truth



Julius Rea

Based in the SF Bay Area, Julius Ernesto Rea uses playwriting, conflict resolution and arts producing to hold an empathetic mirror to the world—encouraging deep listening and deeper discourse. With a background as a journalist, he obtained a degree in Philosophy at San Francisco State University. He co-founded The Forum Collective, a multidisciplinary arts organization that focuses on new journalism, theatre, and community-focused events. Currently fiscally sponsored under Playground SF's Innovator Incubator, the company has received support from the Sam Mazza Foundation, the California Arts Council, and Zellerbach Family Foundation. As a playwright, Rea has participated in Crowded Fire Theater's Resilience and Development Lab, and is now part of the 2026-27 Playwrights Foundation Resident Playwrights Program. In 2025, he premiered The Day the Sky Turned Orange as the playwright / book writer, produced by SFBATCO and Z Space. He is a previous recipient of a Theatre Bay Area (TBA) Arts Leadership Residency and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Creative Corps Initiative Grant.

photo: Cheshire Isaacs



Megan Calfas

Megan Calfas is a 2026-2027 Resident Playwright at the Playwrights Foundation in San Francisco. Her play, Sleepover, was performed at the 2024 Edinburgh Fringe Festival. She co-directed two sold-out runs of the original show Crushing at the Dixon Place Theater in New York City in April 2023 and at the Bayfront Theater in San Francisco in February 2025. She has coached over 200 people on telling their true, personal stories live on stage and has, herself, performed stories for Back Pocket Media, First Person Story, and on PBS with Stories from the Stage. As a journalist, she has reported on the environment for theLos Angeles Timesand investigated maternal mortality in Zanzibar. She is on staff with the Stanford Storytelling Project.

AB5 and Beyond: Employing CA Theatre Workers Today



Velina Brown
Velina Brown is an actor, director, and co-artistic director of the Tony and Obie award winning San Francisco Mime Troupe with which she's toured nationally and internationally. For 14 years Velina wrote a monthly advice column called "The Business of Show Biz," named after her coaching practice and workshops. Velina is also a Drama and Film Appreciation teacher at Gateway High School and is currently performing at ACT's Strand Theater in SFBATCO's Every Saturday Night.



Lisa A Tromovitch
Lisa A Tromovitch, founder and Executive/Artistic Director of the Shakespeare & Performing Arts Regional Company (SPARC), has over 40 years of experience directing, producing and teaching live theatre. She has led SPARC (formerly Livermore Shakes) for 20 years, with additional leadership experience including PCPA TheatreFest. A past president of the Shakespeare Theatre Association and member of AEA, she remains active with business and theatre organizations that support nonprofits. BA, Dartmouth College. MFA, SMU.



Shireen Wetmore
Shireen Wetmore is a dedicated mediator specializing in complex employment disputes. She has extensive experience with wage and hour matters, including class actions and Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) matters across California and the United States. With a foundation built on 15 years of legal experience, including as a litigation partner at two AM Law 100 firms, and a heartfelt commitment to understanding all parties, Shireen's empathy-focused approach empowers participants to resolve their most complex disputes.

Get Practical: Hand-to-Hand Stage Combat Workshop



Dave Maier
Dave Maier is a multi-award-winning fight director and stage combat instructor with over 20 years of experience creating the illusion of violence in the Bay Area. He is currently in residence at San Francisco Opera, Marin Shakespeare Company, and Oakland Theater Project. He is currently teaching at UC Santa Cruz, SF State University, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Studio ACT, and Berkeley Rep School of Theatre.

Add-on Coaching Sessions



Anthony A. Jackson
Anthony A. Jackson is a director, educator, and arts administrator. As Director of the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, he leads a team serving students and adults across nine Bay Area counties. Previously at Arena Stage, he managed training programs and partnerships, and traveled to India and Croatia as a U.S. State Department guest artist, devising original plays with youth and community organizations. As an actor, Anthony has toured nationally and performed with the Shakespeare Theatre Company, Olney Theatre, Arena Stage, and other regional theatres.



victor cervantes jr
victor cervantes jr (they/elle/iel) is a theatremaker, educator, and community organizer from Phoenix, AZ. they have served on the selection panels for American Playwriting Foundation's Relentless Award; American Musical Theatre Project; HERE Arts HARP Residency Award; NAMT: Impact & Exploration Fund Grant Award; Eugene O'Neill's Musical Theater and Playwrights Conference; Playwrights Realm's Development Programs; Princess Grace Awards; Terrence McNally Fellowship at Rattlestick; and the Theater Producers of Color Cohort. they served as the Associate Producer of New Work and Innovation & Strategy at Oregon Shakespeare Festival; Associate Producer at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater; and Co-Artistic Director of Middle Voice at Rattlestick. they have enjoyed teaching for ASU, Columbia University, Hunter College, NTI at The O'Neill Theater Center, NYU's Tisch School for the Arts, and schools serving the ASD community. First-Generation College Graduate: BFA NYU/Tisch School for the Arts — Lee Strasberg Centennial Scholar and Martin Luther King Jr. Scholar; and Laurents/Hatcher Centennial Award recipient.



Daria Hepps
Daria Hepps is a dynamic fundraising professional with over 25 years of experience, exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, and a proven track record of building strategic, meaningful, and lasting relationships with individual and institutional supporters. She is a trusted thought-partner for nonprofit leaders looking to grow their organization's fundraising capacity. Daria served as Associate Director of Development for 14 years (2009–2022) at the acclaimed Berkeley Repertory Theatre, where she led institutional and planned giving and oversaw a major gifts portfolio. Earlier in her career, she served as Development Director for both Smuin Ballet and Aurora Theatre Company, and she now serves as President of Aurora's Board of Trustees. Today, as principal of Daria Hepps Consulting, Daria works with individuals and organizations across the arts and beyond, helping them build the fundraising capacity to create a more empathetic, humane, and just world.

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