ensemble studio theatre EST/LA

A BENEFIT FOR EST/LA

ONE ACTS FESTIVAL FUNDRAISER

PROGRAM B

FRIDAY, NOV 13 @ 8:00 PM
SUNDAY, NOV 15 @ 1:00 PM

FAMILYTIES.COM
BY MARY PORTSER
DIRECTED BY CHRISTOPHER CURRY

ONWARD
BY NICK ULLETT
DIRECTED BY LISA JAMES

UNTITLED GAY GOTHIC PLAY
BY COLE FRIEDMAN
DIRECTED BY SAMARA MALIK

SICK AT HEART
BY TONY FOSTER
DIRECTED BY WILLIAM CHARLTON

BAD DATE
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
DEBORAH PEARL

BUILT TOUGH
BY TOM STRINGER
DIRECTED BY ROBERT BURGOS

3269 CASITAS AVE 90039

OUR NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

NEW WEST PLAYWRIGHTS
THE IGNITE PROJECT
Playwrights Unit
EST/LA DEVELOPMENT LAB
Sunday BEST LA

estlosangeles.org

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

Producing Team

Don Cummings, Tracey A. Leigh, Kate Prendergast, Christopher Reiling, Ashley Denise Robinson

Technical Director
Brad Bentz

Sound and Lights
Tracey A. Leigh

Board Operator
Tracey A. Leigh
& Christopher Reiling

Graphics/Publicity
Tracey A. Leigh

The Board

Angela Bullock

Patrick Hurley

Tracey A. Leigh

Susie Tanner

Deborah Stricklin

Michael Tomlinson

Michael C. Mahon, Chair

Advisory Board

Don Cummings, Peter Doms, William Duffy, Jenny O'Hara

Supporters and Volunteers

A tremendous "Thank you!" to ALL of our supporters and volunteers, without whom this festival would not be possible.

OUR SPONSORS

EST/LA, located at Atwater Village Theatre, acknowledges our presence on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded homelands of the Tongva, Chumash, and Kizh people, who resided here and stewarded this land before the city of Los Angeles was formed, and are still living here among us today.

estlosangeles.org

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

Familyties.com

Written by Marty Portser PU

directed by Christopher Curry

CAST

Donna……Tara Alexandra Brown+

Martha……Mary Portser*+PU

Ted……Steve Burleigh*+PU

Johnnie……John Snow+

SETTING

Santa Monica, CA

TIME

Present

*	EST/LA Member
+	Proud member of Actors Equity Association
NW	NewWest Member
IP	Ignite Project Member
PU	Playwrights Unit Member

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

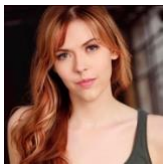
FAMILYTIES.COM COMPANY



MARY PORTSER (Playwright, Martha)
Mary Portser has had short and full length plays produced or developed by Fishamble(Dublin, Ireland), Inspira To(Toronto, Canada), Judith Anderson Theatre(NYC), Terry Shreiber Studio(NYC), Ensemble Studio Theatre/LA, Pacific Resident Theatre(LA), Theatre West(LA)and the Seven Devils Playwrights Conference in Idaho. She is a recipient of the *Otis Guernsey New Voices Award* from the William Inge Theatre and the winner of the Los Angeles City College One Act Festival. Her prose has been published in the journals: Nightscript, Bartleby Snopes, and Hobart, among others. So happy to be part of this program!



CHRISTOPHER CURRY (Director)
Christopher Curry is happy to direct his wife Mary Portser's *familyties.com*. He has previously directed--and performed in—a number of staged readings of her plays here and in New York. He has worked as an actor here, in New York (On and Off Broadway), and in regional theaters all over the place, including the O'Neill Playwrights Conference in Connecticut and Seven Devils Playwrights Conference in Idaho.



TARA ALEXANDRA BROWN (Donna) Tara Alexandra Brown is an award winning actress, director, writer, and producer originally from Reno, Nevada. A theater major in college, she was the recipient of the University of Nevada's Grace Semenza Drama Scholarship and was one of the original members of the acclaimed "Good Luck Macbeth" theater company. Past film and TV credits include SWAT on CBS, Keegan Michael Key's Dream Sequence, and Every Day starring Vivica A. Fox. Theater credits include: Ken Levine's Guilty Pleasures (Top 10 LA Play 2026) Imago (Theater Unleashed) The Importance of Being Earnest (GLM), Henry IV (PRT), Love in Bloom (Santa Monica Playhouse), Grease, Romeo and Juliet, Much Ado About Nothing, and High School Musical to name a few. She is thrilled to be a part of the One Act Play Festival. IG: @taraalexandrabrown.



STEVE BURLEIGH (Ted) Hannah Kenah is a playwright, performer, and devised theatre artist. She is currently in the 2026-2027 Geffen Writers' Room, and she recently joined Public Assembly as an Associated Artist. In 2025, she was in Rogue Machine's Playwright's Roundtable where she developed her play HELEN GIVES A SERIES OF PRESS CONFERENCES. Hannah developed her play GRIEF WORLD through Echo Theatre's Playwrights Lab, with further development in IAMA's 2024 New Works Festival. Hannah wrote and performed with the Rude Mechs for over a decade, including a premiere of her play FIELD GUIDE at Yale Repertory Theatre, a national tour of her play NOW NOW OH NOW, as well as national and international tours of THE METHOD GUN. Hannah's theatrical education includes an MFA from the Michener Center for Writers at UT Austin, a BA from Dartmouth College, and a certificate of physical theatre from Dell'Arte International.



JOHN SNOW (Johnnie) John Snow is a professional actor, musician, director, and music director living between Los Angeles and New York. Performance credits include Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Off and On Broadway, Hollywood Bowl, and regional theatres and venues throughout the country and Europe. He is glad to be sharing the boards with these comrades today.

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

Onward

Written by Nick Ullett*

directed by Lisa James*

CAST

Tom……..……..Nick Ullett*+

Elizabeth…….Jenny O'Hara*+

SETTING

A Zoom chat

TIME

Present

*	EST/LA Member
+	Proud member of Actors Equity Association
NW	NewWest Member
IP	Ignite Project Member
PU	Playwrights Unit Member

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

ONWARD COMPANY



NICK ULLETT (Playwright, Tom) Actor, writer, raconteur!
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nick_Ullett



JENNY O'HARA (Elizabeth)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jenny_O%27Hara

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

Untitled Gay Gothic Play

Written by Cole Friedman NW
Directed by Samara Malik NW

CAST

Jared……Stephen Lightfoot III

Aidan……Carey Cannata

Narrator……Jake Montgomery

SETTING

Suburban Virginia

TIME

Modern day

*	EST/LA Member
+	Proud member of Actors Equity Association
NW	NewWest Member
IP	Ignite Project Member
PU	Playwrights Unit Member

SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to Jamie Bogle, our intimacy coordinator.

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

UNTITLED GAY GOTHIC PLAY COMPANY



COLE FRIEDMAN (Playwright) Jude Lutz is a playwright/screenwriter whose work has been performed at EST/LA, the Alliance Repertory Company, and the LA Theater Women's Writing Project. She has developed/soldmaterial to ABC, Disney, Imagine, The Food Network, and Universal, in genres from thrillers to dystopian sci-fi. Honors include Grant Recipient Kenyon Playwright's Conference, Plume and Pellicule Switzerland Residency, Final Draft Winner TV, NYFA Fellowship. A graduate of Syracuse University's Journalism School and AFI's Screenwriting program, Jude is a member EST/LA, the Dramatists Guild, and the WGA. She's excited to present THE NEW YOU and is grateful for her team.



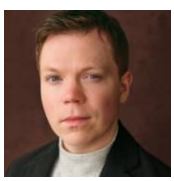
SAMARA MALIK (Director) Samara Malik currently works in Drama Series at Netflix. She graduated from Northwestern University with a major in theatre & a minor in art. Most recently, she won "Best Director" at the 2025 SheLA Arts Festival. Selected Credits: Directing: john(s) - a stand up set (EST/LA), SheLA (Bacchanalia), Improv Playhouse (Anansi the Spider), AMTP (Change My Mind; Illest Dance), Northwestern (MAMMA MIA!; The Haunting of Hill House; The Old Man & the Old Moon). Independent: Little Shop of Horrors: Shadowcast; Our New Town. AD: Marin Theatre Company (Suessical; Dear Edwina), Wirtz Center (Voyeurs de Venus; Machinal; Peter & the Starcatcher; Something Rotten!).



STEPHEN LIGHTFOOT III (Jared) Stephen Lightfoot III is a voice, stage, and film actor originally from the Bay Area. He received a BA in Theatre from UC San Diego, and is excited to make his Los Angeles stage debut with EST/LA! Stephen would like to thank his friends, family, and loved ones for their continuous support. Selected credits: lily's world XD (Radiant Path Leader / Trevor), The Bathroom (Mo Mold / John the Toilet), Tommy Gun (Sam).



CAREY CANNATA (Aidan) Carey Cannata is a Connecticut-born, Silver Lake-based actor and Occidental College graduate. He is a member of the Echo Theater Company and City Garage Theatre, and a not-infrequent participant in ESTLA's Sunday's Best series. One of his greatest joys is contributing to the development of new work, and he is thrilled to collaborate with the talented playwrights featured in this festival.



JAKE MONTGOMERY (Narrator) Jake Montgomery (he/him) is an actor and writer based in Los Angeles from Dallas, Texas. He most recently appeared onstage in The Irish Curse at the Broadwater Theatre. Notable regional credits include HIR, The Nina Variations, Equus, Puffs, and Spring Awakening. Jake holds a B.F.A. in Acting and Playwriting from Southern Methodist University in Dallas. IG: @jakewmontgomery

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

Sick at Heart

Written by Tony Foster*

Directed by William Charlton*

CAST

May.....Angela Bullock*+

Virginia.....Tristina Lee+

Roy.....Michael C. Mahon*+

SETTING

An apartment in Sunnydale CA

TIME

January, 1968

*	EST/LA Member
+	Proud member of Actors Equity Association
NW	NewWest Member
IP	Ignite Project Member
PU	Playwrights Unit Member

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

SICK AT HEART COMPANY



TONY FOSTER (Playwright) Tony is a Los Angeles based playwright and proud member of EST/LA. He has been produced, published, workshopped, developed, cancelled and rejected all over the world. He still bites his nails.



William Charlton (Director) Actor. Director. Directing: LA: *Mammoth Gorge, Landline*, *Apocrypha, So Odd to Hear a Lark this Time of Year, Ordinary Girls* (also at the Holocaust Museum*)*. NYC: *Sunstroke, Johnny Got his Gun, Anything for You*, *The Last Stick.* Recent TV (actor): *Law & Order, Quantum Leap*, *Winning Time*, *NCIS, S.W.A.T., Get Shorty, Criminal Minds,* Film: *The Rum Diary; The Changeling, Flags of Our Fathers, Money Train, Get Smart.* Training: London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA); Director's Lab West; Filmmaking at NYU, the New School, School for Visual Arts.



ANGELA BULLOCK (May) Angela Bullock is an Actor/Writer and Teaching Artist. She has received both a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle and Stage Raw nomination for *Watching OJ* at Ensemble Studio Theater Los Angeles, and an NAACP nomination for *Cassiopeia* at The Boston Court. Television guest and costar appearances include *Young Sheldon*, *Shameless*, *Dexter*, *Californication*, *Oz* and *The Sopranos*. Regional theater includes The Guthrie, Yale Repertory and Actors Theater of Louisville. Angela has published in *Arts & Letters* and *Lunch Ticket*. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Antioch University LA and is currently working on her first book.



TRISTINA LEE (Virginia) Tristina Lee is thrilled to return to EST/LA, where she starred in the world premiere of David Johann Kim's *Two Stop*. A New Yorker who started in musical theater, she moved to LA in 2014 and has since worked in TV and film in addition to theater, including HBO's *Rap Sh!t*, Peacock's *Bel-Air* and *Unstoppable* opposite Jennifer Lopez. *Sick at Heart* is close to home: Tristina lived much of what Virginia goes through, and revisiting it has been a journey. Thanks to Tracey for always believing in her, to Tony for having her and, of course, to her mom and light, Sue.



MICHAEL C. MAHON (Roy) is a New Yorker who was performing from the gate. He attended NY's Music & Art High School, on to Clark University, on to the Neighborhood Playhouse and later worked for a decade with Wynn Handman. He was on Broadway in *The Soft Touch* and also in *Rubbers* as well as *Yanks 3 Detroit 0 Top of the Seventh*, both directed by Alan Arkin. He was in the premiere of Sam Shepherd's *Geography of a Horse Dreamer* at the Manhattan Theatre Club. He became a member of EST in 1976. He is married to journalist Ann Louise Bardach and is a happy guy.

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

Bad Date

Written and Directed by Deborah Pearl*PU

CAST

Marcy……Tara Alexandra Brown+

Bill……Carey Cannata

SETTING

A city somewhere

TIME

The present

*	EST/LA Member
+	Proud member of Actors Equity Association
NW	NewWest Member
IP	Ignite Project Member
PU	Playwrights Unit Member

SPECIAL THANKS

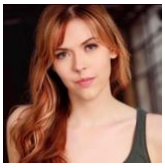
Special thanks to the Production Team for taking on this mammoth 26-play festival!

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

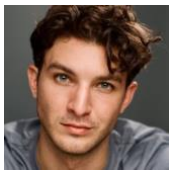
BAD DATE COMPANY



DEBORAH PEARL (Playwright/Director) Deborah has been a writer for TV, film and stage, a singer and recording artist. As a writer/ producer, she worked on numerous TV shows including the acclaimed "Designing Women". A two-time semifinalist in the Eugene O'Neil Playwrights Competition, finalist at HBO's Comedy Fest, she's written three shorts "Waiting for Yvette", starring Wendie Malick; "In Confidence"; starring Beege Barkette and "Getting Ed Laid" starring Ed Asner and Jean Smart, also her directorial debut available on Amazon. Her singing credits include "Souvenir of You," an CD of Grammy-winning jazz legend Benny Carter tunes with her lyrics; the album "Pearl" on London Records with her sister Leslie who wrote the famous Folgers "Best part of wakin' up" jingle, available digitally as EP "PearlVintage"; jingles, and backup for artists from Linda Ronstadt to Neil Young. Deborah won the KNX Radio Hero of the Week in 2026 for her work as co-founder and director of "The National In-Choir," a volunteer holiday choir now in its 46th year. She is a cum laude graduate of Barnard College, Columbia University. www.deborahpearl.com.



TARA ALEXANDRA BROWN (Donna) Tara Alexandra Brown is an award winning actress, director, writer, and producer originally from Reno, Nevada. A theater major in college, she was the recipient of the University of Nevada's Grace Semenza Drama Scholarship and was one of the original members of the acclaimed "Good Luck Macbeth" theater company. Past film and TV credits include SWAT on CBS, Keegan Michael Key's Dream Sequence, and Every Day starring Vivica A. Fox. Theater credits include: Ken Levine's Guilty Pleasures (Top 10 LA Play 2026) Imago (Theater Unleashed) The Importance of Being Earnest (GLM), Henry IV (PRT), Love in Bloom (Santa Monica Playhouse), Grease, Romeo and Juliet, Much Ado About Nothing, and High School Musical to name a few. She is thrilled to be a part of the One Act Play Festival. IG: @taraalexandrabrown.



CAREY CANNATA (Aidan) Carey Cannata is a Connecticut-born, Silver Lake-based actor and Occidental College graduate. He is a member of the Echo Theater Company and City Garage Theatre, and a not-infrequent participant in ESTLA's Sunday's Best series. One of his greatest joys is contributing to the development of new work, and he is thrilled to collaborate with the talented playwrights featured in this festival.

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

Built Tough

Written by Tom Stringer*PU

Directed by Robert Burgos*

CAST

Jane.....Kate Prendergast*+

Rob.....David Starzyk *+

Sheila.....Kate Fuglei+

Chago.....Justin Huen+

Rob.....David Starzyk *+

SETTING

West side of Los Angeles.

TIME

Recent past – one month before the midterms.

*	EST/LA Member
+	Proud member of Actors Equity Association
NW	NewWest Member
IP	Ignite Project Member
PU	Playwrights Unit Member

Tracey A. Leigh, Artistic Director

BUILT TOUGH COMPANY



TOM STRINGER (**Playwright)** Tom Stringer has had four one-act plays produced at Ensemble Studio Theatre/LA, including The Mediator, Writing to Mrs. Ots, Sheila (digital short), and Assisted Living. Two of his full-length plays have been selected as semi-finalists in the Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference. He has presented over a dozen mini-memoirs in EST/LA's True Story reading series. He studied in the Writing Seminars at Johns Hopkins University and is currently a member of the EST/LA Playwrights Unit. He has published numerous theater articles and essays as well as interviews with playwrights such as August Wilson, Neil Simon and Edward Albee.



ROBERT BURGOS (Director) Robert has appeared in plays at Lincoln Center, The New York Shakespeare Festival, The Circle in the Square, The Roundabout, The American Place Theater, Playwrights Horizons, and in major regional theaters. Hs film and television directing credits include the award winning, "The Horse Dealer's Daughter" and episodes of the series "Strange Therapy". A graduate of the American Film Institute, he's been an adjunct professor in the film schools at Chapman University, LMU and UCLA.



KATE PRENDERGAST (Jane) Jasmine Kimiko is a Japanese American actress, singer, and clown raised in Honolulu and based in Los Angeles. She recently played Olha in Slava Ukraini! (or Waiting for Elon), written by Keith Szarabajka and directed by Tony Pasqualini. Other stage credits include Pang Spa (Chalk Repertory Theatre), Juliet in Romeo and Juliet (Gorilla Rep.), and Hansel in Hansel and Gretel (Hawaii Opera Theatre). Television credits include Magnum P.I., Hawaii Five-0, Doogie Kamealoha, M.D., and Off the Map. She holds a BFA in Acting from UNCSA.



KATE FUGLEI (Sheila) Kate can currently be seen as Eurycleia in Christopher Nolan's THE ODYSSEY. Upcoming guest roles include HOME TO HARMONY, a pilot premiering on the Angel platform 11/17 and LOVE COMES SOFTLY a series premiering in January, 2027. Kate has written and performed IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, a musical memoir about gun violence, based on her family, that was produced at Pico/LA in June. She was Anna Akhmatova in BEAUTIFUL LADY, a Liz Swados musical directed by Anne Bogart, at LAMama/NYC, Adult Female in the first national Broadway tour of SPRING AWAKENING and has performed leading roles in regional theaters across the country. Katefuglei.com.



DAVID STARZYK (Sam) David Starzyk began acting in college and went on to perform in Boston, London, and New York in works by Shakespeare, Chekhov, Christopher Hampton, and David Simpatico. His extensive television career includes Veronica Mars, Hot in Cleveland, Lost, Pacific Blue, Veronica's Closet, and The Young and the Restless. His film credits include Erosion, Bring It On: Fight to the Finish, and Haunted Echoes. Originally from Springfield, Massachusetts, he has worked on stage and screen throughout the United States and internationally.



JUSTIN HUEN (Chago) Justin is in an award-winning actor/director/designer. He is thrilled to be taking part in EST/LA's One Act Festival Fundraiser. He would like to Thank Tom, Bob, Kate F. , Kate P. and David S. for letting him play with them.