

AATE Distinguished Award Ceremony

Saturday, July 20, 2024, at 6:45pm

Don and Elizabeth Doyle Fellowship: *Lily Oderkirk*

Open to a student enrolled in a graduate degree program in a United States college or university with a theatre program that supports drama and theatre for youth, this award honors an outstanding graduate-level student of demonstrated artistic ability in the area of Theatre for Youth. The student must have at least one additional year of study to complete. In addition, the candidate should indicate a professional interest in pursuing career goals consistent with the legacy of the Doyles. It is named for Don and Elizabeth Doyle for a lifetime of creative work in Theatre for Youth and is awarded annually by the Don and Elizabeth Doyle Fellowship Foundation.

Lily Odekirk is an applied theatre maker, educator, and producer. Currently pursuing her MFA in Drama and Theatre for Youth and Communities (UT Austin), Lily was born and raised in West Virginia and has worked both across the United States and internationally; her experience as a guest in each place she has lived in influences her practice. Projects include co-deviser of *Metamorphosis*, a performance piece at The Blanton Museum of Art with GirlForward; artistic producer for climate justice documentary theatre project *Wild Home* (Notch Theatre Company); co-facilitator for the international Applied Drama Institute. She is the Artistic Producer for the 2025 Cohen New Works Festival. Lily's research interests include youth agency and softness as a resource in documentary theatre practices.

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Lin Wright Special Recognition Award: *Rebecca Campana*

This award honors persons who have established special programs, developed experimental work, made a distinctive educational contribution or provided meritorious service thus furthering theatre and drama for young people. This award recognizes and supports these unique contributions of artists, educators and advocates wherever they are found. It is named in honor of Lin Wright, Professor and Chair of the Theatre Department at Arizona State University, researcher and President of CTAA.

Rebecca Campana is a theater educator, director, and writer from rural Western New York. She has had a 20-year career at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. In 2004, she and Anita Maynard-Losh co-founded Camp Arena Stage, the theater's vibrant multi-arts day camp, of which she is now director. She is also the school programs manager, leading the D.C. Ticket Partnership matinee program. Through DCTP, Becca has clocked thousands of miles facilitating pre- and post-show workshops at dozens of schools across the city. She is a director/deviser for Voices of Now, in particular for the Wendt Center for Loss and Healing Ensemble. At the invitation of the U.S. Department of State, Becca has devised five plays in Croatia and in four cities in India. She has also been an annual guest artist at the University of Notre Dame for the Michiana Young Playwrights Program. A proud St. Bonaventure University alumna, she is currently completing her masters degree in fiction writing at Johns Hopkins University. One of her proudest professional moments is when two students passed her in a crowded hallway and

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one said to the other, "that's the play lady!" She is happiest spending time with people.

Robertson Award (CTFA): *Julia Cuppy*

The Reba R. Robertson Award for an Outstanding American High School Drama Teacher is presented in memory of Reba R. Robertson, who was a public school teacher of drama, speech, and debate. Her nearly forty-year tenure at Richfield High School in Waco, Texas, was filled with teaching, directing, coaching, mentoring, producing, and administering programs that not only trained students, but also brought the impact of drama and communication into developing community outside the school and encouraging historic preservation. This award honors her memory and teachers who follow enthusiastically in her path.

Julia Cuppy is a multi-hyphenated theatre artist. As an arts administrator, she was the Director of Education & Outreach at the Tony Award winning La Jolla Playhouse. As an educator, she has worked as a teaching artist for EDTA, iTheatics, Digital Theatre+ and Arts for Learning Northwest. Currently, she is the Director of Theatre at Grants Pass High School in Southern Oregon and is adjunct faculty teaching Theatre Education at Southern Oregon University. She is a national teacher leader in the US Department of Education's Connected Arts Network program where she leads professional learning communities with theatre educators focused on SEL and DEI teaching methodologies. She is on the design team for Oregon Department of Education's K - 5 SEL statewide arts curriculum titled "Arts, Care, and Connection". She also serves on the Oregon Thespians adult board as Director of

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Membership and is the troupe director of Thespian Troupe 2354. As an actor and member of Actor's Equity, she loves working on new plays and musicals. She originated the role of Jayna in La Jolla Playhouse's POP Tour production of Lee Cataluna's HOME OF THE BRAVE and played alongside BD Wong in a workshop production of the TYA musical MISTER DOCTOR. She is the Co-Founder/Artistic Director of Aggregate Collective, a theatre company that cultivates new plays for and with young adults. She is a mother of two imaginative young girls and wife to a passionate triathlete. M.F.A. Musical Theatre - San Diego State University & M.A.T. Theatre Education - Southern Oregon University.
www.juliacuppy.com

Outstanding Undergraduate Student Award: *Mattea Moench*

This award honors an undergraduate whose project or paper demonstrates superior effort in relation to the 2024 Conference Theme "Rooting Change".

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Mattea Muench is an interdisciplinary artist, educator, and advocate for the arts as a means of community building and social justice. With a desire to foster storytelling practices that are equitable and accessible for all, especially young people, Mattea's experience includes working as the Education and Engagement Director of Northwestern University's Imagine U program, a Peer Mentor for the Advanced Creative Drama course taught by Betsy Quinn, an undergraduate researcher on representation and accessibility in theater for young audiences, and as Equity Administrator of WAVE Productions (a student theater organization dedicated to mentorship).

Mattea holds a BA in Communication from Northwestern University with a major in Theatre, a minor in English Literature, and certificates in Theatre Management and Theatre for Young Audiences.

Campton Bell Lifetime Achievement Award: *Rives B. Collins*

This award honors persons who have established special programs, developed experimental work, made a distinctive educational contribution or provided meritorious service thus furthering theatre and drama for young people. This award recognizes and supports these unique contributions of artists, educators and advocates wherever they are found. It is named in honor of Lin Wright, Professor and Chair of the Theatre Department at Arizona State University, researcher and President of CTAA.

Rives Collins is truly thankful to have found a way to make a life doing what he has loved ever since he was a rambunctious kindergarten child.

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He was recently inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Theatre and is honored to be receiving the Campton Bell Lifetime Achievement award from the American Alliance for Theatre and Education. He has told stories on three continents and is the proud recipient of the Oracle Award from the National Storytelling Network. A theater director, prison educator, and champion of children, he was endowed with the Charles Deering McCormick Professorship of Teaching Excellence from Northwestern University. He is particularly delighted to step into a new role, as he has recently become an exuberant grandfather to a beautiful baby girl.

Distinguished Play Awards

These awards honor playwrights and publishers of the most outstanding plays for young people published or written during the past calendar year (January to December). Published or unpublished plays are permitted. Plays may be nominated by publishers, or by members of AATE. Self-nominations are permitted. In accordance with AATE's Anti-Racism Plan, publishers must submit at least one play by a BIPOC author. The successful script should demonstrate superiority in execution, delineation of characters, theatricality, and appropriateness of the style. Selected scripts should respect young people's understandings and abilities, providing them with perspectives on their own experiences while enhancing their imagination and emotional growth. Plays in translation should be submitted in the appropriate category for source material; a play translated from an original play falls

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in Category A or C, and a play translated from an adaptation falls in Category C or D.

Distinguished Play Awards Category A: Plays Primarily for Middle and Secondary School Age Audiences: *THE AMAZING LEMONADE GIRL BY: JAMES DEVITA - published by Dramatic Publishing*

James DeVita, a native of Long Island, NY, grew up in North Babylon and spent his youth fishing at the beach. He is an accomplished author, actor, and theater director, and serves as a core company member and the literary manager at American Players Theater in Wisconsin. His acting career has taken him to Japan, Germany, Australia, Ireland, and across the United States.

James volunteered as an EMT in Spring Green, WI, for fifteen years and worked as a first mate on a fishing boat out of Captree Boat Basin, Long Island, for five seasons. He has written novels including *A Winsome Murder*, *The Silenced*, and *Blue*, as well as numerous plays for young audiences. His contributions to theater have earned him the Distinguished Play Award, the Intellectual Freedom Award, the Shubert Fendrich Memorial Playwriting Contest, and the Charlotte B. Chorpensing Award.

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His adult stage plays include *Christmas in Babylon*, *Learning to Stay*, *A Gift of the Magi* (with composer Josh Schmidt), *In Acting Shakespeare*, *The Desert Queen*, *Dickens In America*, *LakeView*, and *Waiting for Vern*. He is also a recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship for Fiction.

James holds an AS from Suffolk County Community College and a BFA in Theater from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. A lifelong writer, he began pursuing his passion seriously at thirty, finding immense joy in writing, almost as much as in fishing.

Distinguished Play Awards Category B: Plays Primarily for Pre-K and Elementary School Age Audiences: *BINA'S SIX APPLES* BY LLOYD SUH - published by TWR Plays

Lloyd Suh is the author of *The Chinese Lady* (upcoming at Long Wharf Theatre, Barrington Stage, Ma-Yi, and Milwaukee Rep), *Charles Francis Chan Jr's Exotic Oriental Murder Mystery* (NAATCO, Guthrie with Mu, and others), *Franklinland* (Jackalope), *The Wong Kids in the Secret of the Space Chupacabra Go!* (Children's Theatre Company, Ma-Yi with La Mama, ArtsEmerson, Cultural Center of the Philippines), *American Hwangap* (Magic Theatre, Ma-Yi, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Halcyon/A-Squared, and with PCPA in Seoul, Korea), *Jesus in India* (Magic, Ma-Yi), *Great Wall Story* (Denver Center), and others. He has received support from the NEA Arena Stage New Play Development program, Andrew W. Mellon Launching New Plays initiative via the Lark, NYFA, NYSCA, Jerome, TCG, Dramatists Guild, and the New York

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Community Trust (Helen Merrill Award). He is an alum of Youngblood and the Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab, and from 2005-2010 served as Artistic Director of Second Generation and Co-Director of the Ma-Yi Writers Lab. He serves on the Dramatists Guild Council and has since 2011 served as Director of Artistic Programs at The Lark.

Distinguished Play Awards Category C: Adaptations from Existing Children's Literature Primarily for Pre-K and Elementary Age Audiences: *MORRIS MICKELWHITE AND THE TANGERINE DRESS BY JULIANY TAVERAS - published by Plays for New Audiences*

juliany taveras (they/them/elle) is a storyteller from Ayiti Bohio (Dominican Republic) by way of Lenapehoking (New York City). their work, which centers the lives & liberation of the Afro/Indigenous & queer/trans diasporas, takes many forms, including playwriting, screenwriting, poetry, photography, graphic design, teaching artistry, & (perhaps most importantly) kinship.

Distinguished Play Awards Category D: Adaptations from Existing Children's Literature Primarily for Middle and Secondary Age Audiences: *GHOST BY IDRIS GOODWIN - published by TRW Plays*

Idris Goodwin is a multiple award-winning playwright, breakbeat poet, content creator and arts champion. A 2021 United States Artist Fellow, Goodwin is recognized as a culture bearer who celebrates community values and cultivates histories with care. Idris is the author of over 60 original plays ranging from his hip hop-inspired breakbeat series to

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historical dramas to works for young audiences. Titles such as *And In This Corner Cassius Clay*, *How We Got On*, *Hype Man: A Break Beat Play*, *This is Modern Art*, and the ground-breaking *Free Play: open source scripts for an antiracist tomorrow*, are widely produced across the country by a diverse mix of professional theaters, academic environments, and non-traditional spaces alike. Goodwin's created original content for and/or appeared on Nickelodeon, HBO Def Poetry, Sesame Street, NPR, BBC Radio, and the Discovery Channel. "Your House is Not Just A House," his first picture book, will be published by Harper Collins in 2024. Passionate about cultivating new audiences in the arts, Idris served as Executive Director of The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at Colorado College (the first Black man to hold the position in its 100 year history). Prior to that, Goodwin served two seasons as Producing Artistic Director at StageOne Family Theatre in Louisville, Kentucky. Idris sits on the board of the Children's Theatre Foundation Association and was recently named Board President of Theater For Young Audiences/USA. Find him at www.idrisgoodwin.com and on across all the socials

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Playwrights for Change Awards

Playwrights for Change is a national playwriting competition run by the American Alliance for Theatre & Education (AATE). The mission of Playwrights for Change is to produce meaningful conversations that will ripple across our nation to provoke change. The goal is to spark conversation and discussion throughout classrooms, schools, and communities.

This year's theme for Playwrights for Change is "Caring For Our World". At times the world seems small and other times vast. How do you care for the earth? How does the earth care for you? Whether through science or connecting with wild things, seeing the earth as a scientific marvel or a mother, how does caring for our earth create change for the climate of your heart or the climate of our entire planet.

Playwrights for Change Adult Category Winner: *HER HANDFUL OF EARTH* BY HALEY ANDERSON

Playwrights for Change Adult Category Runner Up: *THE GODDESS OF BRAN MUFFINS* BY J.S. Puller

Playwrights for Change High School Category Winner: *UNIVERSAL REUNION* BY AVA MIZE

Playwrights for Change High School Category Runner Up: *I'M SURE* BY LUCY GIBSON

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Playwrights for Change Middle School Category Winner: *MASKS* BY ELENA M. MELOY

Playwrights for Change Middle School Category Runner Up: *THE 1.5 LIVES OF OLIVER PETERS* BY ANNABETH GLICK

Winifred Ward Scholar: DEEN RAWLINS-HARRIS

This award honors a graduate-level scholar of demonstrated intellectual and artistic ability in child drama/theatre. Nominees are judged on the basis of scholarship, faculty recommendations, indication of strong professional interest and growth, successful performance in some aspect of children's theatre or creative drama work, and other criteria. It is named in honor of Winifred Ward, often considered the 'mother of creative drama,' who taught at Northwestern University, developed the creative drama programming at Evanston Public Schools and launched the Children's Theater Conference, which became AATE. The Winifred Ward Scholarship is awarded annually by the Winifred Ward Memorial Fund, Inc. (WWMF) and selected by the Winifred Ward Scholarship Committee, appointed by the WWMF Board.

Deen Rawlins-Harris (they/them) is a theatremaker, educator, and organizer from Boston, Massachusetts. They received their bachelor's degree from Bucknell University, majoring in education and political science, and completed the Headlong Performance Institute Fellowship

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in collaborative and devised performance. Rawlins-Harris is an MFA candidate at The University of Texas at Austin in the Department of Theatre and Dance, specializing in drama and theatre for youth and communities. Deen worked as a special education and theatre teacher in the Boston Public Schools and Queer sexual health educator in Philadelphia, PA, before attending UT Austin.

In addition to their work as actors and directors, Rawlins-Harris regularly designs and implements dynamic art and culture events with the support of youth leaders. They are the current co-chair of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education's Research Network Committee and board members of TC Squared Theatre Company (Cambridge, Massachusetts). Rawlins-Harris is creating and facilitating the Youth Producer Program with Fusebox Festival (Austin, Texas), an immersive youth leadership training program in which youth program a city-wide festival for youth by youth.

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Distinguished Dissertation and Thesis Awards

These awards honor research that focuses on questions pertinent to informal Drama in Education or to more formal Theatre produced for, by, or with young people. The award includes two categories: Dissertation and Thesis.

Distinguished Dissertation: “FLOODLIGHTS FLARE UPS AND FRAMEWORKS” BY Chris Summers

Dr. Chris Summers is a Lecturer in Arts Education (Drama) at the University of Melbourne and Co-Director of the Research-based Theatre Lab at the Faculty of Education. Recipient of a Dyason Fellowship in 2024, Chris’s research explores the intersection between social justice, education and arts-based methodologies, with a particular interest in research-based theatre, playwriting and LGBTQIA+ advocacy. Chris is also a multi-award-winning Australian playwright whose work has been commissioned, developed and performed by Sydney Theatre Company, Melbourne Theatre Company and others across Australia and internationally. Since 2023, Chris has held the position of the Chair of the University of Melbourne Theatre Board and has been a member of the Faculty of Education's Diversity and Inclusion Committee. He teaches and coordinates across the Masters of Teaching (Secondary), Masters of Education and undergraduate Breadth subjects. Formerly, Chris practiced law at Sydney’s HIV/AIDS Legal Centre and was a secondary teacher in low-socioeconomic high schools.

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Distinguished Thesis Award: “*GETTING FREE: EXPLORING FREEDOM DREAMING AND ABOLITION THROUGH APPLIED THEATRE*” BY CAITLYN MCCAIN

Caitlyn McCain (she/her) is an [award winning](#) NYC based applied theatre practitioner, educator, and actor. As an artist and educator, Caitlyn has collaborated with a wide range of student populations through theatre including K-12 students across all five boroughs of NYC, young people in transitional housing facilities, and young people with neuro-divergent and disabled identities. Her work centers social-emotional growth through a trauma-informed lens that supports creative critical thinking and meaning making through theatre. Currently, Caitlyn is the Associate Program Director of the [Creative Arts Team \(CAT\) Youth Theatre](#) and a Drama Curriculum Specialist with [The Juilliard School’s K-12 Programs and Initiatives](#). Additionally, Caitlyn is the creator and host of the educational series [Start the Conversation](#), and the co-creator and co-host of [The Trauma-Informed Toolkit for Educators](#). Caitlyn holds an MA in Applied Theatre from the City University of New York and a BFA in Drama from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts.

Website: CaitlynMcCain.com