

CU ★ PRESENTS

2020-21 Season
Digital program



Theatre & Dance

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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*The Department of Theatre & Dance acknowledges that the University sits upon land within **the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne, and Arapaho** peoples and are grateful to have the opportunity to be here. Further, we acknowledge the 48 contemporary tribal nations that are historically tied to lands that make up Colorado. We recognize and pay our respects to these Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories. We pay our respects to the ancestors, elders, relations past, present and emerging.*



In *Appropriate*, America grapples with its ghosts

By Becca Vaclavik

appropriate

adj.

1. suitable or fitting for a particular purpose, person, occasion, etc.
2. belonging to or peculiar to a person; proper.

v.

1. to set apart, authorize, or legislate for some specific purpose or use
2. to take to or for oneself; take possession of
3. to take without permission or consent; seize; expropriate
4. to steal, especially to commit petty theft.

How is the American experience defined? Who defines it and what are its histories? These are questions playwright Branden Jacobs-Jenkins found himself digging into when he noticed how differently stories about White families and Black families are

critically received. Speaking to BOMB Magazine in 2018, **Jacobs-Jenkins said:**

“... Nobody calls *A Raisin in the Sun* or *The Piano Lesson* family dramas—they’re plays about the ‘Black experience in America.’ So I read all those ‘American family’ plays and started thinking about the way whiteness was being encoded. Like, how might I read these plays as being about the ‘white experience in America?’ ... I wanted to write a self-consciously ‘American family drama.’ ... I had this impulse to see what would happen if I made blackness present but essentially invisible.”

The result was his work *Appropriate*—whether pronounced ap·PRO·priate or appropri·ATE· is intentionally vague; both definitions are present on the opening pages of the script—a play about a White family unpacking their family’s dilapidated Arkansas plantation in the wake of their patriarch’s death. It is “classic” American family drama. But it’s also brimming with more, through its double meanings in the text and cultural iconography.

“I like that something can look like one thing, but mean two different things,” **said Jacobs-Jenkins** in

an interview with Vogue. “Language is really unstable in that way.”

Heather Kelley, who serves as the production’s dramaturg as well as a cast member, encourages audiences to listen for how the characters discuss ownership—of the property, of people—as well as how ghosts, both literal and figurative, are present in the play.

“This play asks who’s *not* there on stage—whose story is not being told, whose story is not being privileged—in a very deliberate and meaningful way,” said Kelley. “How often—when people think of an American family—are we picturing a White one? And what does that mean? How can we begin to unpack and challenge that in all forms?”

“[As White cast and audience members,] we have a responsibility to know as much as we can about this history and grapple with its ongoing perpetuation and legacy, rather than rest in our privilege.”

*The Department of Theatre & Dance production of **Appropriate** is available to stream at cupresents.org from April 23-30, 2021. Virtual tickets start at \$7.*

2020-21 New Play Festival

April 15, 2021

The Lotus

A one act play by Esther Omegba

Troy Coleman, director

Rain Young, production coordinator

Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Jayda

Isabella Jones

Brea

Lucinda Lazo

Rick

Nolan Carey

Jude

Khalil Flowers

Old Lady, Homeless Man, Erin, Coworker

Mikayla Jassem

Mitchell

Rodrigo Gallardo

Hugo

Ian McCance

Synopsis

Two sisters, a computer virus, and a young man. A story about trust and success.

Whys Guy

A ten minute play

Zoe Fischhoff, author

Peri Cooper, director

Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Mel

Darcy Brander

John

Jaclyn Barnes

Synopsis

A young man, interested in buying a particular book, meets some resistance from the elderly proprietor of the bookshop.

The Road to Good Intentions

Nolan Carey, author
Jashodhara Sen, director

Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Melissa

Katie Lennon

Doug/ Bamford

Ben Stasny

Synopsis

If love is one of the most profound and deliberate emotions in human beings, this play is definitely a love story.

Soups, Knives, and the Unreachable Sublime

Crank and Cog argue over Crank's strange addiction of scratching lottery

Rita DiSibio, author

Annanya George, director

Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Disembodied Voice/TV

Annanya George

COG

Jo Hoagland

CRANK

Cameron Hazlip

The Boat Races, or Happy Birthday Max

Rita DiSibio, author

Oliver Gerland III, director

Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Ford

Cameron Hazlip

Max

Matthias Bolon

Synopsis

A beautiful short play about Max, a young transgender man, making a last-ditch effort to reach his absent father, Ford.

Content Warning: This play contains dead naming, misgendering, talk of a head injury, and mentions of suicide.

Smart Love, Dumb Love

Gina Parrish, author

Judith Jessup, director

Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Janelle

Kara D'Alessandro

Winnie

Jolie Derosa

Noah

Jacob Stock

Synopsis

A heartbroken college student gets in over her head trying to make her ex-boyfriend jealous, roping in a friend who owes her a big favor.

Sky Books

Jennifer Gilbert, author
Janelle Nedrow, director

Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Lilah

Casey Walsh

Butch

Jamie Lammers

Caeza

Tilly Musser

Director's note

This script was a lot of fun to dissect and then put back together. The characters are very dynamic, and my cast delivers these personalities beautifully. I encourage the audience to listen to Butch's lines carefully and see if you can figure out who his mark is before Lilah does. I want to thank Jennifer for writing this genius concept and for my cast for having as much fun with the script as I did.

The 11th Commandment

Beth Osnes, author

Aidan Heydt, director

Cast *(in alphabetical order)*

Announcer / Talk Show Host

Jo Hoagland

Global Warming

Taylor Rivet

Synopsis

An interview with Global Warming shows just how tricky the issue can be.

a Scenic Outlook

A one-act play

Sarah Powers, author

Elise Collins, director

Cast *(in alphabetical order)*

Avi

Harper Branch

June

Hallie K Schwartz

Synopsis

Two sisters, June and Avi, are driving to Bend, Oregon so Avi can receive a life-saving heart surgery when they suddenly hit a deer. This scary, adrenaline-filled experience forces both sisters to reckon with the impending reality of death. Being in a state of shock together, they become honest and vulnerable with each other. By living through this accident, they are able to make sense of their circumstances and their relationship. This one-act play by Sarah Powers is a bold, gutsy exploration of mortality and sisterhood.

Director's note

a Scenic Outlook by Sarah Powers explores themes of sisterhood and how people relate to death. At the start of the play, the sisters barely acknowledge the risks of Avi's potentially fatal heart surgery and the numerous subjects that go unaddressed in their own relationship. After hitting a deer while driving, both sisters have to directly acknowledge death and all of the things that have gone unsaid between them over the years.

Humans often have difficulty reckoning with death. While it is the only inevitability all of us must face, it is hard to comprehend or accept. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, a Swiss-American psychiatrist and pioneer in near-death studies, postulated that individuals experience five stages of processing death. Those five stages are:

1. Denial
2. Anger
3. Bargaining
4. Depression, and
5. Acceptance.

Both sisters in *a Scenic Outlook* experience these phases at different points throughout the play, not

necessarily in that order. In fact, an undergraduate class discussing the human relationship to death was one of Sarah Powers's inspirations for the play.

Sarah has written a thoughtful and nuanced script with unexpected twists and turns. This well-crafted drama offers new discoveries and insights with each reading or viewing. It has been a joy working on this masterful play by Sarah Powers with such a talented cast.

Content Warning: This play contains adult language, descriptions of gore, and content surrounding death.

The Agency

A full-length play by Lia Romeo, Roe Green Traveling Master for CU Boulder, 2020-21

Special addition to NPF made possible by the Dramatists Guild Foundation.

Rita Disibio, director

Cast *(in order of appearance)*

Ani

Sammie Piel

Duck

Kyle Lawrence

Jennica

Darcy Brander

Gale

Katie Lennon

Camo Gray

Sarah Powers

Kelly

Asha Romeo

Synopsis

Ani has always dreamed of becoming an actress, so she's saved up and moved to New York City. But she's not getting cast, and she's almost out of money. So she takes a job at a "rental agency," where lonely clients can hire actors to serve as surrogate friends or loved ones. A play for a world where we can buy whatever we want—if we're willing to pay the price.

CU Theatre & Dance Production team

2020-21 NEW PLAY FESTIVAL PRODUCTION TEAM

Festival Coordinators

Ashlyn Barnett, Nolan Carey, Hanna Gollan, Matara Hitchcock, Heather Kelley and Ben Stasny

Production Coordinator

Rain Young

Faculty Advisor

Kevin Rich, Associate Chair

COSTUMES

Costume Shop production assistants:

Mari Beazley, Darcy Brander, Kaylyn, Buehler, Celeste Fenton, Sarah Jeffers, Joe Kennedy, Victor Longman, Graham Longworth, Emily Ray, Winnie Wenger. **Practicum students:** Matthias Bolon, Stephanie Castro-Rivera, Evan Cerda, Rachel Fields, Zoe Fischhoff, Eric Gaydon, Cameron Hazlip, Grace Kohler, Sabrina Mason, Sophia Morris, Kinari Rima

SCENERY AND ELECTRICS

Scene shop production assistants:

Stephanie Castro-Rivera, Peri Cooper, Aleighya Dawkins, Asher Farr, Rachael Fields, Cali Greenbaum, Nikky Haabestad, Aiden Heydt, Ari Kutzer, Kyle Lawrence, Calvin Logan, Hannah Male, Edwin McArthur, Sam Morin, Vik Padilla, Hayley Parnell, Connor Robertson, Kelsea Sibold, Logan Wallace, Madelyn Wible, Destin Woods. **Production Practicum**

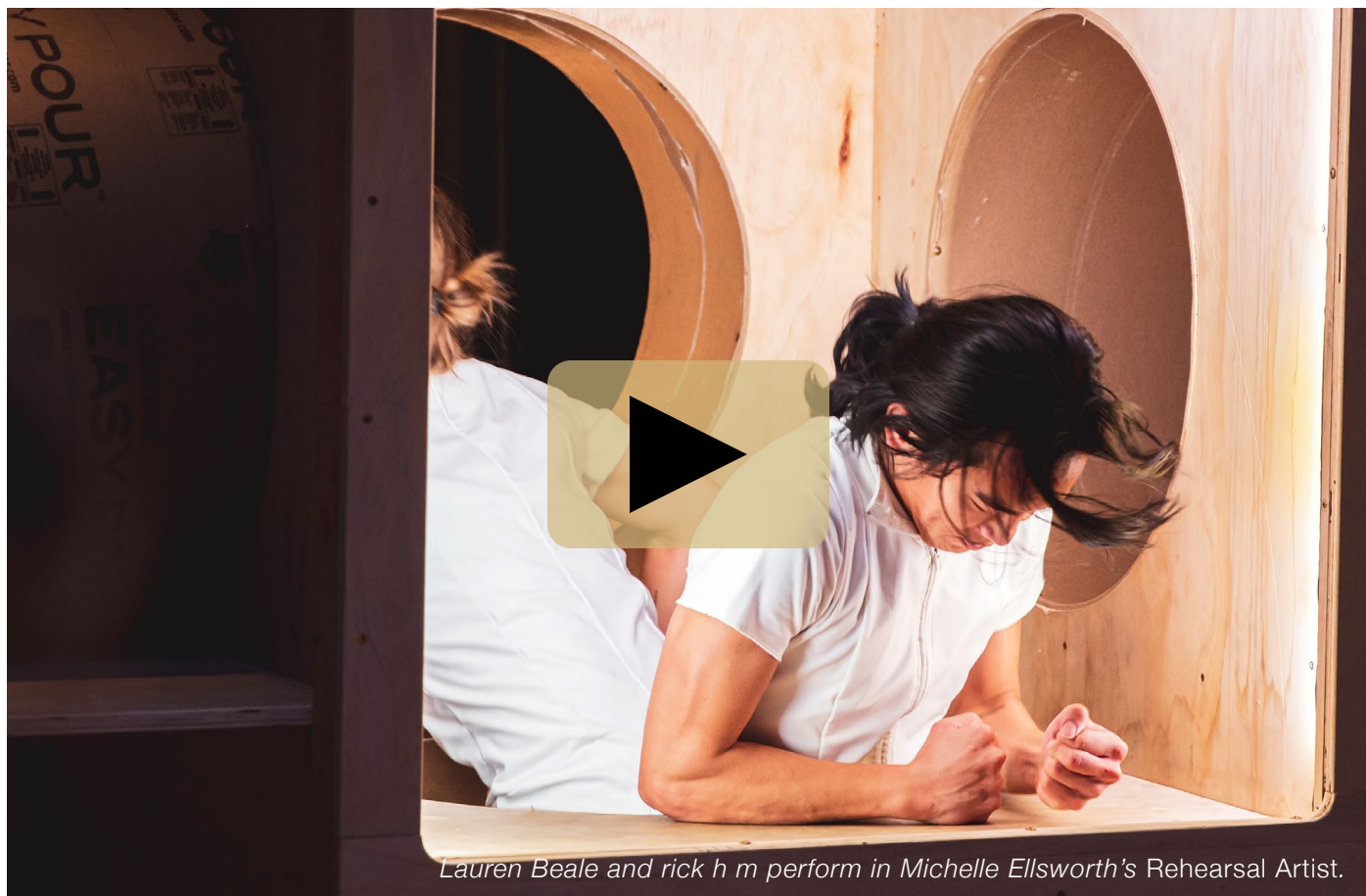
students: Matthias Bolon, Kaylyn Buehler, Natalie Connelly, Claudia Davis, Jo Hoagland, Greta Hooston, Clara Hoppe, Isabella Jones, Mimi Kuntz, Maya Owens, Hayley Parnell, Emily Ray, Taylor Rivet, Connor Robertson, Stephanie Talder. **Lighting**

Practicum students: Darcy Brander, Lexi Brooker, Christian Castañeda, Evan Cerda, Rita DiSibio, Bennet Forsyth, Eric Gaydon, Victoria Harbison, Aidan Heydt, Greta Hooston, Wesley Juels, Mimi Kuntz, Maya Owens, Lauren Perlis, Marianne Pettis, Connor Robertson, Stephanie Talder

DANCE PRODUCTION

Technical crew: Nathan Bala, Aleighya Dawkins, Xaalan Dolence, Brealyn Hager, Sam Morin, Viktoria Padilla, Olivia Sander, James Solis-Gutierrez

CU ★ PRESENTS Digital



Lauren Beale and Rick H M perform in Michelle Ellsworth's Rehearsal Artist.

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Spring 2021 at CU Theatre & Dance



Measure for Measure

A play by William Shakespeare
Premiering March 12

[Learn more](#)



LoveFest:

A Concert of Songs, Scenes and
Stories from the musical Loveville High
Premiering April 2

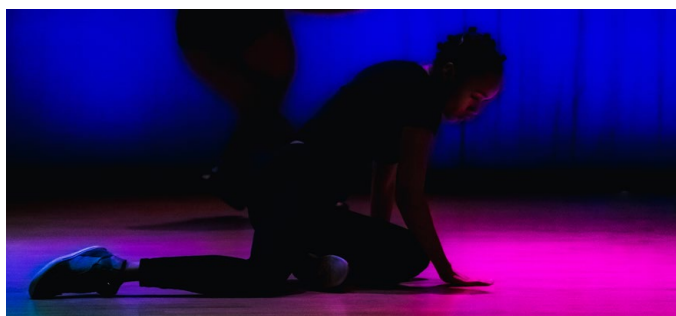
[Learn more](#)



2020-21 New Play Festival

Premiering April 15

[Learn more](#)



Open Space

Curated by CU Dance Connection
April 22-30

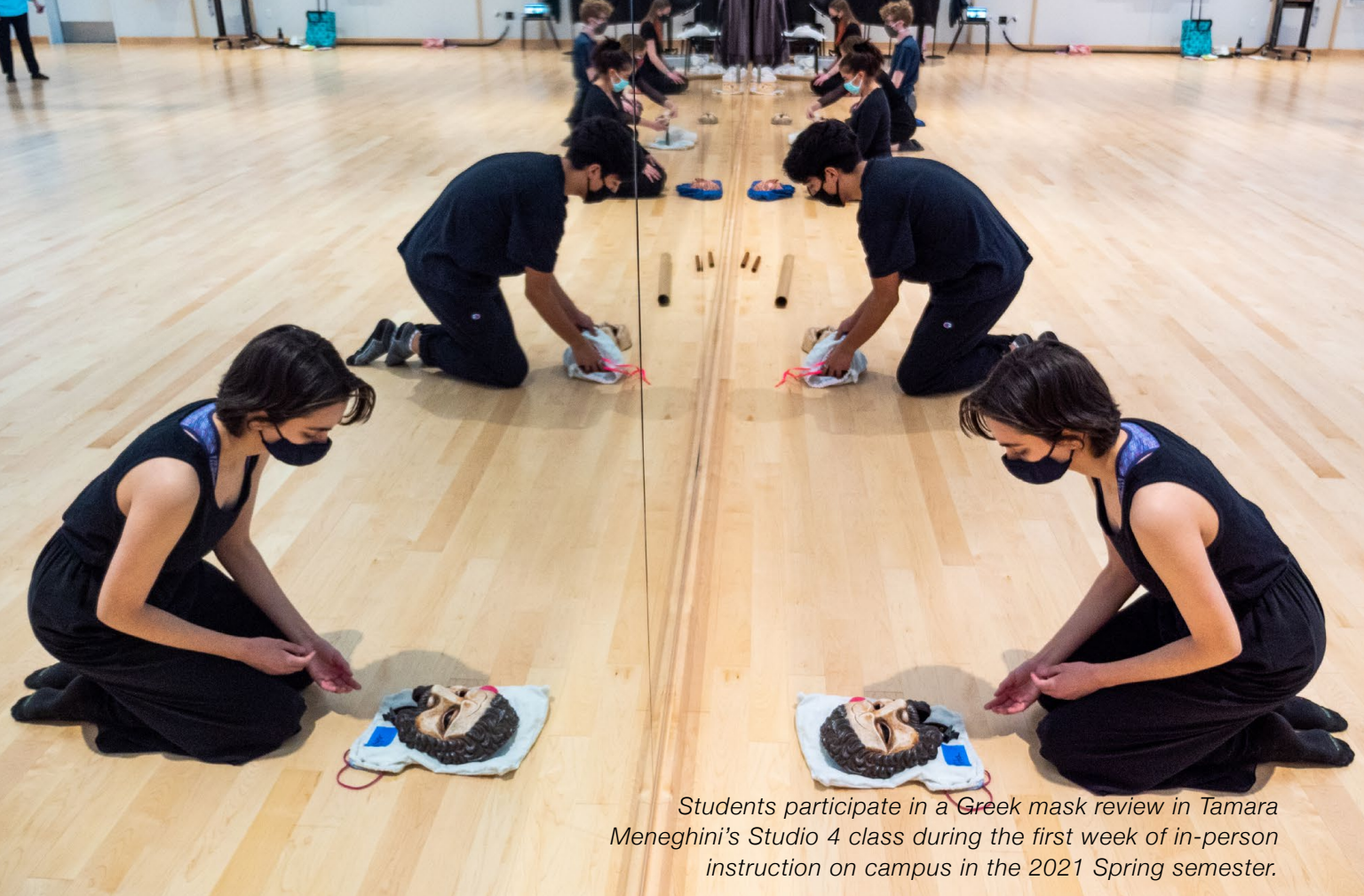
[Learn more](#)



Appropriate

A play by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins
April 23-30

[Learn more](#)



Students participate in a Greek mask review in Tamara Meneghini's Studio 4 class during the first week of in-person instruction on campus in the 2021 Spring semester.

Today and every day, **your support matters.**

CU Presents inspires thousands of arts patrons of all ages every year. Your gift supports the people and activities of CU's Theatre & Dance Department in this time of uncertainty.

How to give to the Department of Theatre & Dance:

OR **Call to make a gift
at 303-492-3054**

Personnel

As of March 9, 2021

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Associate Chair & Director of Theatre
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Associate Chair of Dance
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Director of Dance Production
Iain Court

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Stephen Balgooyen

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Cooper Braun-Enos

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Production Outreach & Engagement Liaison
Ondine Geary

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Ciera Barrow

Academic Advisor
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Ana Langmead

Costume Shop Bookkeeper
Natalie Connelly

Costume Shopper
Clara Hoppe

Dance Costume Coordinator
Sarah Napier

Dance Events Coordinator
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Dance Video Recording/Archivist
rick h m

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Matara Hitchcock

House Managers
Xaalan Dolance, Matara Hitchcock, Lauren Perlis

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2020-21 Digital Programs

March-May 2021

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Becca Vaclavik

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