
TANYA WHITE

PLAYWRIGHT, ACTOR, DIRECTOR, POET, TEACHING ARTIST

COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION

2017-present - Santa Monica Repertory Theater

2025-2026 - Accelerator Cohort , Los Angeles Performance Practice
Facilitators: *Gina Young, Scarlett Kim, Marsian De Lellis, Yumi Sakugawa, William Ruiz Morales, Jazz Zhu*

2026 - Demidov Master Class - International Demidov Association
Facilitator: *Andrei Malaev-Babel*

2025 - National Alliance Acting Teachers - Professional Training Program
Facilitators: *Alexandra Billings, Jim Calder, Hugh O’Gorman, Michele Shay, Gregory Wallace*

2018 - Antioch University - Creative Writing, Dual Focus, Poetry and Playwriting/MFA
Facilitators: *Carol Potter, Daniel Bellm, Jim Daniels, Coleen Freeman, Victoria Chang*

1984 - Webster University - Acting Conservatory, Independent Study Playwriting/ BFA

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- The schools and lineage of acting teachers specifically focused on American practitioners influenced by Stanislavsky, Chekov and Hagen
- The intersections and contradictions of mainstream and culturally specific African American acting practices/methods
- The impact of twenty first century technology on pedagogy and practice

A. PLAYWRIGHT

- *LANA/SMOKING* - One Act play following a young woman’s journey through sexual trauma as she quits smoking. Presented by The Firehouse/Latino Chicago. Voted Best Late-Night Show at Edinburgh Festival Fringe
- *A PRELIMINARY INQUIRY INTO THE METHODS USED TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN A SEGREGATED SOCIETY* - Ensemble generated script, developed from found material and co- directed with Clay Shirkey (Wooster Group). Presented by Bailiwick Theater on the northside of Chicago and the Chicago Theatre Company on the southside of Chicago
- *ATLANTA* - supported by an NEA grant in conjunction with and presented by Northlight Theater, a play examining the case of the missing and murdered children in Atlanta in the 1970s.

(Playwright cont.)

- *BIG BLUE RIDE- a piece performed with musician Amber Morse, chronicling adventures on public transportation as an artist turning fifty years old*
- *7 CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SLAVERY - a two-act play for three voices, and one dancer a poetic exploration of the impact of slavery on African-American people in particular and our national character as a whole. Presented by Highways Performance Space*
- *HOT MIC- a short play about city government presented by Santa Monica Repertory Theater*
- *CAREFULLY TAUGHT- a short play about the Daughters of the Confederacy and their impact on early textbooks furthering the 'Lost Cause' narrative, presented by Santa Monica Repertory Theater*
- *LEMON YELLOW KITCHEN- a two-act play, A Santa Monica family is literally haunted by a past they are unaware of until it threatens to take their home. Suddenly their comfort and confidence is shattered as they face each other and the ghosts who bring the truth to their front door. Presented by Santa Monica Repertory Theater*

B. TEACHING ARTIST and DIRECTOR

- 2019-2025 - Adjunct Faculty AMDA Los Angeles, Fifteen week semester courses in:
 - ❖ Acting One, Fundamentals
 - ❖ Acting Two, Scene Study
 - ❖ Advanced Scene Study
 - ❖ History of Western Theater (Ancient Greece to mid-twentieth century)
 - ❖ Artists Lab: Creative Writing, Finding your Voice across Genres
 - ❖ Artists Lab: Storytelling for performance
 - ❖ Artists Lab: Playwriting Mentorship
 - ❖ Ruined by Lynn Nottage (Director)
 - ❖ Permanent Collection by Thomas Gibbons (Director)
 - ❖ Trifles by Susan Glaspell (Director)
 - ❖ Rachel by Angelina Grimké (Director)
- 2021 - The Advot Project, teaching ESL to young women through poetry
- 2018-2025 - Broad Stage in collaboration with Santa Monica Repertory Theater
 - ❖ Developed curriculum meeting VAPA and SEL standards to teach Grapes of Wrath and The Diary of Anne Frank
 - ❖ Taught workshops at Lincoln, John Adams Middle Schools and Santa Monica High School
- 2017 - Five Keys Charter School - Led poetry workshop for high school age students experiencing relationship with the juvenile justice system

- 2014 - 2016 - Speak Up! - mentored people with lived experience of homelessness in telling their stories for advocacy, they participated in storytelling shows and traveled to Sacramento to tell their stories to policy makers. Organized communication, schedules and curriculum for participants, coaches and staff. Also organized and tracked external speaking engagements and coordinated the alumni group
- 1985-2001 (Chicago, IL)
 - ❖ Free Street Programs - Created and taught performance and creative writing curriculum for grades 1-8 as part of arts based education implemented in Chicago
 - ❖ Public Schools; taught pregnant and parenting teens through theater games and storytelling
 - ❖ Beacon Street Programs - Created and implemented dramatic arts curriculum for after school program for grades 7-8. The curriculum was created by workshopping with the students
 - ❖ Mayor's Office of Workforce Development - Working with an ensemble of teens from the Cabrini-Green housing projects in creating and performing an original play, and touring as part of a job skills program. Work included ongoing documentation and administration of participants success and challenges.
 - ❖ Chicago Academy for the Performing Arts, Act 1 - Taught high school age performers analysis and performance of Shakespeare monologues
 - ❖ DuSable High School - Taught acting and script development to graduating seniors interested in pursuing careers in the arts.
 - ❖ School of the Art Institute - Taught a semester of Acting Technique for Performance Artists. Working with seven performance artists and using Uta Hagen's *Respect for Acting* and Stanislavsky's *An Actor Prepares*, we explored creating a narrative inner life to support non-linear and abstract art performances

C. ACTOR (selected roles)

- 2025 - Getty Center (Los Angeles, CA)
 - ❖ Book Of Names - *Clytemnestra* - adapted and directed by Ralph Flores
- 2013-Current - Santa Monica Repertory Theater (Santa Monica, CA)
 - ❖ The Importance of Being Earnest - *Miss Prism* - directed by Sarah Gurfield
 - ❖ The Skin of Our Teeth - *Maggie Antrobus* - directed by Eric Bloom
 - ❖ The Grapes of Wrath - *Ma Joad* - directed by Jen Bloom
 - ❖ A Christmas Carol - *Ghost of Christmas Past* - directed by Jen Bloom
 - ❖ The Foreigner - *Betty* - directed by Sarah Gurfield

(Actor cont.)

- ❖ The Mad Woman of Chaillot - *Countess Aurelia* - directed by Eric Bloom
- ❖ Diary of Anne Frank - *Mrs. Van Dann* - directed by Sarah Gurfield
- ❖ Wit - *Vivian Bearing* - directed by Jen Bloom
- 1987-1992 Court Theater (Chicago, IL)
 - ❖ The Oresteia - *Ensemble, Understudy/Clytemnestra* - Dirs. Nick Rudall and Nick Faust
 - ❖ Macbeth - *Witch* - directed by Nicholas Pennell
 - ❖ The Mystery Cycle - *Virgin Mary* - directed by Nick Rudall
 - ❖ Miss Julie - *Christine* - directed by Carmen Roman
- 1987 - Goodman Theater (Chicago, IL)
 - ❖ Red Noses - *Ensemble* - directed by Jeff Steitzer
- 1986 - Edgewater Theater
 - ❖ For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf - *Woman in Brown* - directed by Sydney Daniels

D. DIRECTOR

- Boise Contemporary Theater
 - ❖ Being Black Outside by Venicia Coleman
- Santa Monica Repertory Theater
 - ❖ The House on Mango Street based on novel by Sandra Cisneros, adaptation by Amy Ludwig (student ensemble)
 - ❖ Carefully Taught by Tanya White
 - ❖ Seven Conversations About Slavery by Tanya White
 - ❖ Clybourne Park by Bruce Norris
 - ❖ The Sign In Sidney Brustein's Window by Lorraine Hansberry
- Chicago, IL (selected venues)
 - ❖ (Asst. Director to Shirley Finney) The Ties That Bind - Goodman Theater
 - ❖ A Preliminary Inquiry into the Methods used to Create and Maintain a Segregated Society - Bailiwick Theater, Chicago Ensemble Theater
 - ❖ Lana/Smoking - The Firehouse, Edinburgh Festival Fringe

E. ARTISTIC DIRECTOR - Santa Monica Repertory Theater

- Produced five Playreading Festivals - plays written and directed by women

(Artistic Director cont.)

- Teaching Artist and Curriculum Development for in-school, after-school and professional level programming
- In collaboration with City of Santa Monica, produces a Summer Reading Series
- Offers training and classes in playwriting, acting and theater devising to company and community members

F. CO-FOUNDER - Supporting Playwrights And Creative Expression (SPACE) is a non-competitive, freely given solo retreat, hosted by women for women playwrights in nature to nurture the heart, mind, and creativity. spacetowrite.org

G. AWARDS, GRANTS & PUBLICATIONS

- Fred Hampton award for contribution to the community
- 2018 and 2022 City of Santa Monica Artist Fellow
- *P-FORM: Performance Art News No. 31 - Music & Patriotism*

<https://digitalcollections.saic.edu/islandora/object/islandora%3A6048>

- *WE THE TENDERHEARTED* - online poetry magazine

<https://naomi-shon-mna8.squarespace.com/#/tanya-white/>

- *CULTURAL DAILY* - online magazine

<https://www.culturaldaily.com/tanya-white-three-poems/>

- *THE POETRY CIRCUS* - Ladies Night celebrating the ninety seventh anniversary of the nineteenth amendment, Yak Press, Littlerock, CA