

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

WINNERS ANNOUNCED
for the 2021 2nd Annual
'HEAR ME OUT' MONOLOGUE COMPETITION

With over 400 submissions worldwide, judges managed to identify the best 13 writers as finalists for the **Hear Me Out New American Monologue Competition**. The finalists' pieces were performed live(via Zoom) in front of an audience of nearly 300 people during the Labor Day Festival on September 6, 2021.

Festival judges **Gretchen Cryer, Gary Garrison, Christine Toy Johnson, Craig Lucas, Austin Pendleton, and Charlayne Woodard** recognized the following award-winners in this year's Hear Me Out New American Monologue Competition:

2021 AUGUST VAN DER BECQ MEMORIAL PRIZE FOR DARING (\$2,001)

***Border Lines (Looks Like I'm Going to Lose My Mind)* by Rick Park** (Cambridge, MA)

2021 GOLDEN EAR - LONGER FORM (\$1,999)

2021 MOST UNFORGETTABLE CHARACTER AWARD (\$975 + 4-month scholarship RT Private Studio)

***I Love Parties* by Kate Cortesi** (Brooklyn, NY and Somerville, MA)

2021 GOLDEN EAR - SHORT FORM (\$1,999)

***Boot's Vacation* by Rex McGregor** (Auckland, New Zealand)

2021 SILVER EAR - LONGER FORM (\$750)

***Ecce Mom* by Patrick Mulcahey** (Concrete, WA)

2021 SILVER EAR - SHORT FORM (\$750)

***Mother(Land) Will Teach You That* by Anya Martin** (Pittsburgh, PA)

2021 AUDIENCE FAVORITE (\$650)

***It's So Nice to Be Out in Society* by Andrea Aptecker** (Cambridge, MA)

Each of the finalists were given the prompt "Borders" for their submission. Each entry is evaluated for its Character Development, Ear for Authentic Speech, Camouflage of Exposition, Thrilling Story, Dramatic Structure, and Clever Use of Festival Theme. This year's competition will feature two competitive divisions: Short Form Monologues (under 650 words) and Longer Form Monologues (word count between 750-1850).

Complete list of the 2021 finalists are (in alphabetical order, winners have been highlighted):

***It's Nice to be Out in Society* by Andrea Aptecker** (Cambridge, MA)

Sometimes a lady just wants a nice dinner out in society—she wants to be noticed, seen, and feel special. She wants what she wants. Is that too much to ask?

Andrea Aptecker is a playwright and teacher from Cambridge, Massachusetts. Aptecker's plays and monologues have been performed in the United States and the UK. Andrea began writing plays five years ago, fell in love with playwrighting, joined writing groups and classes to learn the craft (as she knew nothing!), and was lucky enough to find a writing mentor in teacher and theatre artist Peter Littlefield. Today, Andrea writes in her free time when not teaching. Her new play (*Unrequited*), a spine-tingling suspense/drama, is available with [Next Stage Press](#). She serves on the Board of Directors of Playwrights' Platform and is a

member of the Dramatists Guild of America. For additional information, and to read Andrea Aptecker's plays: [New Play Exchange: Andrea Aptecker](#).

***In A Petrified Wood* by Mike Brannon** (Greensboro NC, USA)

Tom, a socially awkward archeologist and a lifelong bachelor, decides that he's tired of being alone and summons up the courage to do what all nerdy science guys did in the 1980s – he signs up for a video dating service.

After thirty years of a career and raising a family, **Mike Brannon** has returned to his first love, writing for the theater. He began writing plays for local festivals, has had over 20 plays produced in a variety of formats: on stage, on Zoom, and on the radio, as well as short-short play competitions and in play-in-a-day workshops.

***I Love Parties* by Kate Cortesi** (Brooklyn, NY and Somerville, MA)

Elderly Auntie Patty is presumed to be a member of a “vulnerable population” these days, so she's here to set the record straight on exactly who is vulnerable to whom.

Kate Cortesi is a Brooklyn- and Boston-based playwright from Washington, DC, who writes about women, young people, liars, and the American psyche - with jokes. Full-length plays include *Great Kills* (Princess Grace Award), *A Patron of the Arts* (Cherry Lane Theatre, South Coast Rep New Scripts Series), *ONE MORE LESS* (NYFA award, Relentless Award finalist, Playwrights Horizons New Works Lab), *Love* (Sky Cooper New American Play Prize, Marin Theatre Company, Ojai Playwrights Conference, Kilroys List) and *Is Edward Snowden Single?* (The Jungle Theater, Single Carrot Theatre, Dorset Theatre Festival, The Pool). Commissions from Playwrights Horizons, Keen Company, and South Coast Rep. Cortesi is a resident playwright at New Dramatists, a Huntington Playwriting Fellow, and a New Georges Affiliated Artist. This past year, Cortesi wrote two quarantine theater works: an audio play called *Radio Nowhere*, produced by Keen Company, directed by Taylor Reynolds, starring George Salazar, and a short monologue play called “I love parties” - and here we are. For more, visit katecortesi.com

***In-Between Spaces* by Josh Drimmer** (Brooklyn, NY)

Cynthia feels stuck. Stuck in her Queens apartment with her stuffed animals, stuck thinking about her uncreative daughter in Connecticut, stuck hearing her neighbor's music through the ceiling. But there's magic everywhere, at least to Cynthia, and she will find some wherever she can, as always.

Josh Drimmer's plays include the full-length monologue *Story, and Her* (Downtown Urban Arts Festival), *the lighthouse invites the storm* (Sanguine Theater Company, winner of Project Playwright), *Halcyon Days* (T. Schreiber Studio's New Works Initiative), *The Beeping* (ARTC Winterfest), *Love Is Good* (Producer's Club, workshops with Lincoln Center Theater's Directors' Lab and Feed the Herd) and *Falling* (readings at the Dramatists Guild and Theater for the New City). He is the book writer of a new musical (*The Last Days of Pompeii*) and a cabaret (*Rejected Showgirl*), a member of American Renaissance Theater Company and The Pool, and a Brooklynite until the city finally spits him out. joshdrimmer.com

***Crossed* by Isidore Elias** (Brooklyn, NY)

A guard at the southern border has an illegal immigrant who is awaiting deportation in his custody. He is resolved to do his duty, but he would like his prisoner to know he's not entirely unsympathetic.

Isidore Elias is a playwright/librettist/songwriter whose work has been produced in the US, Canada, and Europe. Honors: grants from the BMI Foundation and the NYS Council on the Arts; commissions from the Royal Carré Theatre (Amsterdam) and Cross-the-Pond Productions (London); Carbonell nomination for best new work. Recent productions of his plays include *Muffin* (Nylon Fusion Theatre, NYC), *Jim Silverstein's Will* (Fresh Produc'd, NYC), *Willow Grove* (Metropolitan Playhouse, NYC). Taught Writing For Musical Theatre at the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, an NEA-funded program he created. Member, BMI-Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop and The Dramatists Guild.

Made In China by Maggie Gallant (Austin, TX)

London's her home, mate; it's all she knows. So why are they trying to send her back to a place she doesn't even remember?

Maggie Gallant is a British-born writer and performer who grew up in a small English village and escaped to London as soon as humanly possible. In 2000 she moved to Austin, Texas, and jumped into a creative life. First came stand-up comedy, and after not being discovered as a comedy genius, she started writing solo shows, which she's performed across the US and Canada. Stand-alone monologues are a more recent passion. She is very fond of pandas (can't eat a whole one) and is interested in their history as China's international diplomats. The piece came together after considering the theme as it relates to the tenuous position of many foreign citizens under Brexit, the treatment of the Windrush generation, and of her own status and privilege as an immigrant too, and now a citizen of, the United States.

Sound Mind by Dana Hall (Orland Park, IL)

Sam is dying of cancer and recording a portion of their last will and testament via video recording. Sam has fought bravely with the help of their partner, and they have come to terms with the fact the 'fight' is over. They were scared and lost at times during their journey, but we see a new side of Sam in this piece, perhaps a bit more of the "old Sam" - humor, reminiscing, and yet still conflicted as she stands on the border of two worlds.

Dana Hall is an accomplished and award-winning author, playwright, speaker, and mental health therapist. It is important for her to tell stories that often go untold from the mental health perspective. She enjoys writing plays that elevate the platform for historically marginalized communities. Her plays have been featured nation-wide this year at Inkwell Theatre (CA), Drawing Cats Theatre (NYC), Palos Village Players (Chicago), Equity Theatre (NYC), Triangle Rainbow Theatre & Riente Theatre (NYC), The New Deal Creative Arts Center (NY), Dramatic Question Theatre (DQT) (NYC), Prism Theatre Company (MO), Scripps Onstage (CA), and 5 & Dime Theater (FL). She is also a member of the Dramatist Guild of America, International Centre for Women Playwrights, and HonorRoll!

Rhymes With Border by Janet Kenney (Boston, MA)

Hanna just wants to be left alone, but her daughter Marjorie is there anyway, prying into Hanna's business. And if Marjorie doesn't stop touching her stuff, there's going to be trouble.

Janet Kenney is thrilled to be included in the Hear Me Out finalist pool for the second time (last year's entry was *What I Wear Outside*). She spent the pandemic year writing her new full-length play, *Cape Haven*, a story of a family whose members are forced to re-define themselves. Full-length plays include her "one woman show for three or more actresses," *Theresa at Home* (Boston), *More Than What* (Boston), a collection of short, intertwined plays, *My Heart & My Flesh* (Boston, Sonoma, CA), and *Globus Hystericus* (commissioned by Theater Emory, Atlanta). She has written over a dozen 10-minute plays as well as some one-acts, screenplays, and short stories. Her memoir, *What Else But Grace*, was recently completed. She has a MA in Playwriting from Boston University and a degree in Theater Arts from The University of Massachusetts at Boston.

Mother(Land) Will Teach You That by Anya Martin (Pittsburgh, PA)

The pain of an electric fence is meant to keep Pat's dog, Stella, safe. When this border is unexpectedly crossed by a little girl, blood and boundaries are drawn as Pat navigates invisible fences in the ground and in the current of her heart.

Anya Martin is a playwright, director, producer, and theatre thinker. Her plays have been praised as "smart, sharp and witty" (Pittsburgh City Paper) with "scenes of imagination and poetic insight." (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette) In 2018 her play *Helen at the Gym* was a winner in RedBull Theater's Annual Short Play Festival (Published by Stage Rights). In the thick of the pandemic, Martin was introduced to "Hear Me Out" in an online playwriting class in which she asked Roland Tec to read for President James Buchanan in her

full-length play, *The President's Pants*. (In which the ghost of the 15th president haunts a gay woman who must return home to live with her Mennonite family. Roland was very good!) Martin grew up in a conservative Mennonite family in rural Mercersburg, PA, where she graduated from James Buchanan High School. She then ran away to drama school and earned her BFA from Carnegie Mellon University and her MFA in theatre from Sarah Lawrence College. Currently, she lives in Pittsburgh, where she is the Founding Artistic Director of Hiawatha Project. www.hiawathaproject.org.

***Boot's Vacation* by Rex McGregor** (Auckland, New Zealand)

Boot is a teenager whose entire life revolves around his skateboard. When he has to go on a trip to Europe without it, he is not happy.

Rex McGregor is a New Zealand playwright. His short comedies have been produced on four continents, from New York and London to Sydney and Chennai. His monologue *TABBY'S PLAGUE DIARY* was performed live by Kira Hoag at Some1Speaking in February 2021. Website: <https://www.rexmccgregor.com/>

***Ecce Mom* by Patrick Mulcahey** (Concrete, WA)

A widowed mother protests her adult children's censure and desertion of her.

Patrick Mulcahey wrote plays in his youth, but when health insurance and food on the table asserted themselves as priorities, he took up writing for television, mostly soap operas, over forty years and nine Emmys. The engine of soaps — two people alone in a room — is not so far removed from “two boards and a passion”: it was the work he was given and mostly loved. When he was ready to leave it and write for the stage again, the pandemic had other ideas. But magically, thanks to Roland and “Hear Me Out Monologues,” despite all, a virtual stage made room for me.

***Border Lines(Feels Like I'm Going to Lose My Mind)* by Rick Park** (Cambridge, MA)

A Vincent Van Gogh self-portrait contemplates the thin border between love and hate, life and death, and sanity and madness when recounting a childhood trip to the seaside.

Rick Park is a writer/actor in Cambridge, MA. He has been writing plays for 35 years, which have been performed throughout the US, Canada, and the UK. While temporarily stalled in his writing through much of the pandemic, he finds the form and structure provided by Hear Me Out to be a much-needed balm in jumpstarting his creativity.

***The Power of Blanca ¡El poder de Blanca!* by Michael Wells-Oakes** (Saratoga Springs, New York)

Blanca, 40, married, mother of two has the power! She never questions its source until Stanley Weissman kisses her at Royalty Ribbon in early morning Manhattan. Then, she questions—then she knows the answer!

Michael Wells-Oakes is a Resident Playwright at the 29th Street Playwright's Collective. His Monologue, *You Labor*, received the Silver Ear Award at the “Me & My Masks” Monologue Festival in September 2020. Since then, *You Labor*, performed by Stephen Greif, had its London premiere as part of [Lost Soul Monologues podcast](#). Michael is currently part of the Rose Theater Co.'s podcast: [The Rose Rhapsody. In Character](#). *Winter Wheat*, full-length, was nominated as a semi-finalist for the Risk Theater Modern Tragedy Competition 2020. His play *Sea Vine, NJ*, was zoomed in November 2020. His work has been seen at The Triangle (SC), Luna Stage (NJ), Puzzle Theater; Bernie Wohl Center; The Ko Festival (MA); the Marble Collegiate Church Theater, and Manhattan Class Company. His screenplay, *Drive All Night/ Miraculous Turnaround* (with Jennifer Wells), received the NYFA grant for screenwriting. Michael is a member of the Dramatist Guild and Actors Equity. He is a MacDowell Colony Fellow, a National Playwrights Conference Finalist, and received the DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Writer of Distinction Award. His newest plays, including *Crazy, Leave Philadelphia, Never; Tidings; Corn Fritters: and Remembrance*, are available at [The New Play Exchange](#).

Hear Me Out Monologues seeks to encourage exploration of the monologue form and continue to expand the Audience for all new work. A key focus of the competition is nurturing the relationships between scriptwriters and their audiences. The relationship between a playwright and her Audience is unique in its power. In no other art form does the writer receive immediate and continuously evolving audible feedback from their Audience. In this way, the playwright-audience relationship is closer and more intimate than most. The playwright knows immediately whether a particular beat in a scene in their play is working because they can hear it through the laughter, sighs, tears, gasps, or stunned silences that audiences respond with. That's in a traditional live in-person theatre. During the pandemic, too many Zoom presentations silenced everyone who was not themselves a part of the performance. The result was an amputation of the key line of communication which normally flows from the Audience directly to the writer and the Audience itself during the performance. All **Hear Me Out Monologues** presentations encourage the Unmuting of audience members who join the Zoom meeting equipped with headphones and/or earbuds.

The Hear Me Out New American Monologue Competition is presented by Pinkplot Productions with funding from the August van der Becq Family Foundation.

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