

## 2021 JANE CHAMBERS AWARD for PLAYWRITING

### MAIN CONTEST WINNER for 2021

***Peeling Oranges* (5w, 1 genderqueer) by Patty Kim Hamilton.** Haunting and hybridic, this dreamlike play—set in Sisters, Oregon—reveals the inner lives and multigenerational memories of a Korean American family of daughters, mother, and sisters. With lush imagery, cyclic structure, and playful humor, *Peeling Oranges* traces the homecoming, queer romance and mixed cultural identity of Jae, as well as the intersecting memories of her sister and mom. The play's signature Ghosts of Frida Kahlo and the family Halmeoni are always present, hovering on the lawn. Elegant in language, deeply feminist in insights—"At some point you don't know exactly what is stored in your body," shares one character— *Peeling Oranges* listens astutely to The Great Sadness, coming of age as an Asian-American female, and caregiving. Judges commended its varied roles for women of Asian and mixed-race descent, its intersectional storytelling, and genderqueer possibilities. Unapologetically raw, uncanny in form, this play's characters strive to maintain fragile relationships—and complex selves.

**Patty Kim Hamilton** is a poet-playwright, dramaturg, director and performance artist, currently pursuing her MFA in Playwriting from the University of the Arts in Berlin. Her work exists at the intersection of the intimate and the political— meditating on bodies, language and memory. Kim's Play, *Peeling Oranges* (developed as Playwright-in-Residence at the Shakespeare Academy Stratford and through the Bechdel Group) is the recipient of the Heidelberger Stückemarkt 2021 Radio Play Prize, among other nominations and mentions (Special Mention Autorentheatertage Deutsches Theater Berlin, Semi-Finalist Bay Area Playwrights Award, Semi-Finalist Blue Ink Playwriting Award, Semi-Finalist Ojai Seven Devils Playwrights Festival). Her play *Sex Play* was invited to the European Theater Convention 2021. Her play *when it hurts // this body is just a house* was a semi-finalist for the Eugene O'Neill Playwrights Conference in 2020 and part of Cimientos 2021 at IATI Theatre NY. She is currently working on a commissioned play for Ballhaus Ost. Past work includes assistantships for Gob Squad and Netflix, running an underground drag collective, directing immersive performance installations, and dramaturging Christopher Adams-Cohen's *Hecate House*. She is a graduate of Stanford University. In Germany Patty Kim is represented by Suhrkamp. More about her can be found at [pattykimhamilton.com](http://pattykimhamilton.com) or [instagram.com/grumpy.love](https://www.instagram.com/grumpy.love)

### Jane Chambers Prize Update

***Lesbian & Queer Plays from the Jane Chambers Prize***—featuring plays and interviews by five award-winning writers, including M. Casey, C. Chafee, M. Cohn, MJ Kaufman, and G.Young—is available from NoPassport Press. *Cross-Cultural Plays from the Jane Chambers Prize* is forthcoming, featuring prize-winner's plays and interviews by C.Evans, N. Goodnow, L. Loomer, J.Silverman and E.Stanton. Coedited by Jen-Scott Mobley and Maya E Roth, this twinset of volumes features Jill Dolan provides the Preface for the first volume and Quiara Alegría Hudes the second, with framing essays by Roth and (for the first) Sara Warner.. *Proceeds go to the Award, which has no endowment.*

### 2021 Runner-Up to the Jane Chambers Award

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***The Ghosts of Bogotá* (4w, 2m, 1performing object; 3+ bilingual)** by Diana Burbano. Bold and theatrical, this darkly humorous play —set in Colombia —excavates legacies of immigration and dislocation, incest and survival as present-day siblings raised in the US face their family ghosts in Bogotá. Judges commended the play’s vivid cast of characters and creative storytelling (including a talking ‘Jesus head in a jar’), the play’s feminist query of silence and abuse, the bilingual exploration of loss of home as well as dramatic homecoming, and the vivid multigenerational family with boldly staged rifts. Commissioned and Premiered by AlterTheater Ensemble (San Rafael, CA), ***The Ghosts of Bogotá*** also received a Rella Lossy Award and won the NuVoices Festival (2019 )at the Actors Theatre of Charlotte. For rights, contact the Playwright.

**Diana Burbano**, a Colombian immigrant, is a playwright, Equity actor, and teaching artist with South Coast Rep and Breath of Fire Latina Theatre Ensemble. Part of the Geffen’s Writers Lab 2021, she has recent commissions from Artists Repertory Theatre, Center Theatre Group, Livermore Shakespeare Festival, and Lower Depths. Recent other plays include: *Policarpa* (Jane Chambers Award Honorable Mention, OSF Brown Swan Lab, and Drama League Rough Draft Series 2017), *Fabulous Monsters*, about women in Punk Rock (Latinx Play Festival, San Diego Rep 2017); *Picture me Rollin’* (35<sup>th</sup> annual William Inge Festival); *Siluetta*, (about Cuban artist Ana Mendieta), with Tom and Chris Shelton; and the TYA Shakespeare mash-up, *Caliban’s Island* (published by YouthPLAYS ). Her *Libertadoras*, *Vamping* and *Linda* were written for the 365 Women a Year Project, which she performed around the world. Diana manages Sleep Till Noon Productions and The Gourmet Detective. She is a member of the Dramatists Guild.  
<[www.dianaburbano.com](http://www.dianaburbano.com)>

**HONORABLE MENTIONS**

***AGATHE* (2w, 4m)** by Angela J. Davis. This taut, moving new play is inspired by the real-life heroism of Agathe Uwilingiyimana, an education minister and advocate for democracy who served as Rwanda’s president for just fourteen hours prior to her assassination in Rwanda’s rising genocide of 1994. With deft focus on her harrowing final days and her country’s spiral to genocide, as “peacekeepers” flee, this play centers the protagonist’s clear-sighted vision as she successfully —remarkably—saves her children through strategy, relationship and courage. Judges commended the play’s vivid cast of characters, its multi-faceted human window on virulent social violence, and its introduction for international audiences to Agathe’s African feminist legacy. Excellent roles for men and women, with four roles specified for actors of African descent.

**Angela J. Davis** is the author of *The Spanish Prayer Book* (The Road Theatre Company 2019-20 season); named an *L.A. Times* Best Bet and “aliterate meditation on art and social responsibility,” as well as a “beautiful, intricate, and important new play” by literary critic and former Pulitzer Prize Jury Chair Steven Leigh Morris), *AGATHE* (New American Voices Award - The Landing Theatre, SETC Getchell Award for best full-length play, Official Selection: Playhouse on the Square New Works at The Works); and *Clara and Serra* and *The Talking Bear* (commissioned in 2020 by Antaeus Theatre Company as a radio play and produced in digital format in 2021 by

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Playhouse Creatures - NYC), among other works. A poet, playwright and essayist, she has been selected three-time as an O'Neill semi-finalist, was a Pushcart Prize nominee and served as 2018 Literary Host for the PEN America Lit/Fest. Angela holds degrees from Stanford and UCLA. She is a member of the Dramatists Guild. <https://angelajdavis.com/>.

***For the People*** (5w). This thought-provoking play focuses on thirty-one-year-old Pittsburgh City Councilor Meg Cabot — the first openly lesbian elected official in the state of Pennsylvania. Less than a month into her first term, a violent hate crime targets the Lesbian and Gay Community Center and lands Meg in the middle of a media maelstrom — caught between her queer community and political goals. Tensions between her closest friends help us to question what is right, how (different) women relate to power, and surprising human choices. Judges appreciated the play's multi-faceted roles for women and diverse lesbian characters, its complex exploration of how activism, media and leadership interact, and the play's timely focus on gun violence in America today.

**Carol Mullen's** plays have been produced by the Los Angeles Women's Theatre Project, Shelterbelt Theater, Stage Q, Emerging Artists Theater, and Blue Pearl Theatrics, among others. A Pittsburgh writer, she frequently centers lesbian stories and brings an "outsider's desire to understand," honed by work in journalism, as well as "the storyteller's passion to share. Other festivals and theatres who have produced her work include: 10 x 10 in the Triangle; Kick It! Festival; NativeAliens Theater Collective; Outvisible Theatre; Pittsburgh New Works Festival; Shelterbelt Theater;; and, Off-Off Broadway at Emerging Artists Theater. She has an MFA in Writing for the Screen and Stage from Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts and is a member of the Dramatists Guild. *For the People* is an O'Neill finalist. Her work can be perused via NNPN's New Play Exchange.

### **STUDENT CONTEST WINNER**

***LOVE IAWETHU FURTHER*** (8 w). When the tree falls outside Mistress's house, Callie and Beneatha know it is time to heed their late mother's visions. In this adaptation of *Julius Caesar*, two sisters of color plan a revolt in the Antebellum South. From the fields and from the house come more women as the revolution spreads like wildfire, as all imagine a world where they are free to live and love in full.

**a.k. payne** is a playwright, artist-theorist and theater-maker whose people are rooted in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Her plays love on and engage the interdependencies of Black pasts, presents and futures and seek to find/remember language that might move us towards our collective liberation(s). She has served on leadership of several Black theatre ensembles and they believe passionately in theatre's capacity to create blueprints for our freedom dreams in community. They hold a B.A. in English and African-American Studies from Yale College and are currently pursuing an MFA in playwriting from Yale School of Drama.

### **HONORABLE MENTIONS**

***En Las Sombras*** (2w, 1m, 1 non-gendered). *En Las Sombras* is the mythical tale of Xenia and Luz, two children travelling with their mother, Mari. Their destination is The God's Gate, beyond

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which is the promise of safety and a life free from hunger and suffering. When Xenia and Luz are separated from Mari, and it becomes clear that the gods may not be quite so ready to share the riches that lie beyond the gate, the myth asks us to consider why we've allowed our gods to become so powerful, and what we can do to stop them.

**Jordan Ramirez Puckett** is a Chicana playwright, lighting designer, and producer based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Her plays include *En Las Sombras*, *To Saints and Stars*, *A Driving Beat*, *Las Pajaritas*, *Restore*, and *Inevitable*. These works have been produced and/or developed by Abingdon Theatre Company (New York, NY), Goodman Theatre (Chicago, IL), Harold Clurman Laboratory Theatre Company (New York, NY), Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival, Playwrights Realm (New York, NY), San Diego Repertory Theatre, San Francisco Playhouse, among others. She most recently participated in the 2020 Bay Area Playwrights Festival and is the Producer of the 2021 Bay Area Playwrights Festival.

**Arcade** (7w). After surviving a traumatic experience, high school soccer star Gabriella finds herself in a dilapidated arcade run by two teen sisters. While sharing pizza slices, geometry formulas, and their sweet dance moves, the three bond and create a brief but magical sanctuary from the abuse and injustices tied to womanhood.

**Madeline Mahrer** (she/hers) is a playwright and screenwriter working in Los Angeles. She recently graduated UCLA with an MFA in theater with a focus in playwriting. Madeline writes scripts that explore the hidden lives of women and the emotional worlds they inhabit. Madeline creates fantastical elements amidst the mundane as a way of revealing the poetic nature of everyday life and issues. Madeline is drawn to lonely characters longing for community and oddballs whose absurdity is charming yet isolating. Characters are brought together by peculiar happenstance, creating intimate relationships that otherwise may have been impossible.

**THE JANE CHAMBERS AWARD** recognizes plays & performance texts by women and genderqueer writers that present feminist perspectives & significant roles for female performers. This annual award, established in 1984, is given in memory of lesbian playwright Jane Chambers who, through her plays *A LATE SNOW*, *LAST SUMMER AT BLUEFISH COVE*, *MY BLUE HEAVEN*, *KUDZU*, & *THE QUINTESSENTIAL IMAGE*, became a major feminist voice in American theatre. We understand feminism to refract across diversity, welcome experimentation in theme and form, and often honor works that stage under-represented lives for the stage. Sponsored by the Women and Theatre Program with the Association for Theater in Higher Education, the Jane Chambers winner receives \$1000 & a reading of the winning play at ATHE, and year's membership with WTP. Guidelines for submission—and our archive of recent winners—can be viewed at [www.athe.org/wtp/](http://www.athe.org/wtp/). This year's winning play *Peeling Oranges* by Patty Kim Hamilton rose from more than 230 submissions, across three rounds of adjudication involving over 20 feminist critics, theater artists and educators. Honored plays suit a variety of theatre missions and feminist perspectives. The Jane Chambers Winning Student Play receives \$250 and a reading at the WTP Conference.

We have no endowment. We welcome and rely upon private donations to honor women's playwriting. The Prize Committee and curation is stewarded by Jen-Scott Mobley and Maya Roth on behalf of WTP and ATHE. The Student Prize is stewarded by Megan Stahl on behalf of WTP.

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