

FRANKLIN

By Samantha Noble
Directed by Stephanie LeBolt

March 23 - April 2

Boston **PLAYWRIGHTS'** *Theatre*

Tickets: (866) 811-4111 or BostonPlaywrights.org

Boston University Graduate School of Arts & Sciences
Playwriting



A WELCOME FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends:

Welcome to *Franklin* by Samantha Noble, and directed by Stephanie LeBolt, our fifth show of our Season of New Plays. Time has flown this past year, and it's hard to believe that we're headed into the spring. But the characters rendered in *Franklin* are still suffering through the winter, and I mean big time. The Arctic seasons are difficult in any case, and this based-in-truth story of Franklin and his crew remains fascinating, exciting, and ultimately mysterious. We know little of how these expeditions wandered the Arctic, but we do know how they ended. Much of their stories are passed down in the Inuit oral histories which, by the way, are not to be taken lightly. Please check our lobby for more information, or read our program notes online at <http://www.bu.edu/bpt/our-season/digital-programs/>.

Samantha began this play two years ago, and in the interim, Franklin's second ship—The Terror—was located off of King Edward's Island. Life imitates art in this way, but the discovery leaves even more mystery to ponder. How did these men survive three Arctic winters, and how did they die; moreover, did any of them survive? Our modern-day researchers came looking for answers, and they found them. Some of them. Franklin's yearning for the Northwest Passage and our journey to locate remains of The Terror are similar in many ways, and, given our human curiosity and our demand for answers, both explorations illuminate the human spirit.

I hope you enjoy the production as much as I do! And I hope you'll join us for our last play of the season in April—Mary Conroy's *Every Piece of Me*, directed by Zohar Fuller. Onward!

With warmest regards,



Kate Snodgrass
Artistic Director, Boston Playwrights' Theatre
Director, MFA in Playwriting/English Department

Boston Playwrights' Theatre
presents

FRANKLIN

by Samantha Noble
directed by Stephanie LeBolt

Scenic Design	Mary Sader
Lighting Design	Gifford Williams
Sound Design	J Jumbelic
Costume Design	Stephanie K. Brownell
Dramaturgy	Marzie Ghasempour
Stage Manager	Marsha Smith*
Assistant Stage Manager	Tasha K. Matthews
Master Electrician	Sean Baird
Electricians	Aaron Henry, Amanda Holt, Aurelia Lyman
Fight Choreography	Matt Dray
Dialect Coach	Charles Linshaw
Production Assistants	Anmol Dhaliwal, Ben Lenk-Walker, Jake Mellen, Anna Oehlberg, Linda Seminario
Costume Master	Beirut Balutis
Properties Master	Kira Rockwell
Run Crew	Laura Neill
Paint Charges	Trish Hawkins
House Managers	Anna Oehlberg, Paisley Piasecki
Front of House Staff	Beirut Balutis, Anmol Dhaliwal, Marzie Ghasempour, Matt Manarchy, Kira Rockwell, Sarah Shin

CAST

Handford/Brett	David Berger-Jones
Johnson	Caleb Cedrone
Caroline	Stacy Fischer*
Henry	Felix Teich
David	Kai Tshikosi
Kira	Alexis Scheer

Franklin runs 115 minutes in two acts. There will be one 10-minute intermission.

*Appears courtesy of Actors' Equity Association.

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited.

A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

Ronan Noone set me a challenge to write him a historical scene set at a moment that changed everything for the people involved, and my mind instantly went to the last hours of the sailors of the Franklin expedition. It's a moment when a great ambition became a great disaster. But for the men involved, it's something worse: it's a moment of realizing that the ambition that you thought would make you great has doomed you.

There's so much hope in an attempt to do what, at the time, was considered to be impossible, and it's painful—and powerful—to watch that fall apart.

The rediscovery of HMS Erebus in 2014 created a tangible link between that moment in the past and our moment in the present. That connection has been cemented by the rediscovery of HMS Terror in September, 2016. There's an equal ambition in the Franklin expedition's search for the Northwest Passage, and the search by modern researchers to find the lost ships. The link between the past and present is fascinating: two groups of people linked across history by the same drive toward discovery. The moments of connection are what opened up the play—the connections between people in desperate states of mind, the connections forged (and broken) by shared ambition, and the strange and painful identification with people across history who might have been more like us than we think.

I started writing the play because of what we do know about the expedition, but I think what keeps me coming back to the story is what we don't know. In one sense, the loss of the Franklin expedition is a mystery that's been solved in our lifetime: we finally know the location of two lost ships that had practically become mythology in Canada. In another sense, though, it's a mystery that we'll never solve. What really happened to and between the people on those ships? We can learn a lot from the Inuit oral history surrounding the expedition, and we can discover a great deal through ongoing research. We can speculate about lead poisoning, or the long-term effects of isolation and increasing desperation. But no matter what the science turns up or what information is preserved, we'll only ever have the basic facts. We'll never actually know what happened to Franklin's men.

—Samantha Noble

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Ah, for just one time
I would take the Northwest Passage
To find the hand of Franklin
Reaching for the Beaufort Sea
Tracing one warm line
Through a land so wild and savage
And make a Northwest Passage to the sea*

When the Franklin expedition set sail from England on May 19, 1845 no one knew the doomed, disastrous journey that lay ahead. Fearless Captain Franklin led 129 men into the mysterious depths of the Arctic, the last unexplored corner of the world, in a stand for science and human curiosity. And they were never heard from again.

I am fascinated by this quest. Imagine: ships setting off into the unknown with the romantic hope of finding another way around the world. Not to profit, not to conquer, but to expose the truth. To uncover a secret of the planet.

We can only conjecture what happened once those men became stuck in the ice. Isolated from civilization, alone, freezing, slowly poisoned by their food supply—they had to make choices in order to survive. But what does it mean to be lost, and what does it mean to be found? What point is there in choosing heroism in the face of the inevitable?

The human will to survive is powerful. Pair that with hope, and there is little that cannot be accomplished even in the face of unfathomable conditions.

*How then am I so different
From the first men through this way?
Like them, I left a settled life
I threw it all away
To seek a Northwest Passage
At the call of many men
To find there but the road back home again*
—Stan Rodgers, Northwest Passage

—Stephanie LeBolt

A NOTE FROM THE DRAMATURG

As early as 1490s, Europeans have been in search of a shortcut by sea from Europe to Asia. The long series of exploratory expeditions, originating mainly in England and funded by The Royal Navy, continued through the mid 19th century. By 1800, the discoveries of the explorers showed that there was no Northwest Passage navigable by ships between the Pacific and the Atlantic oceans.

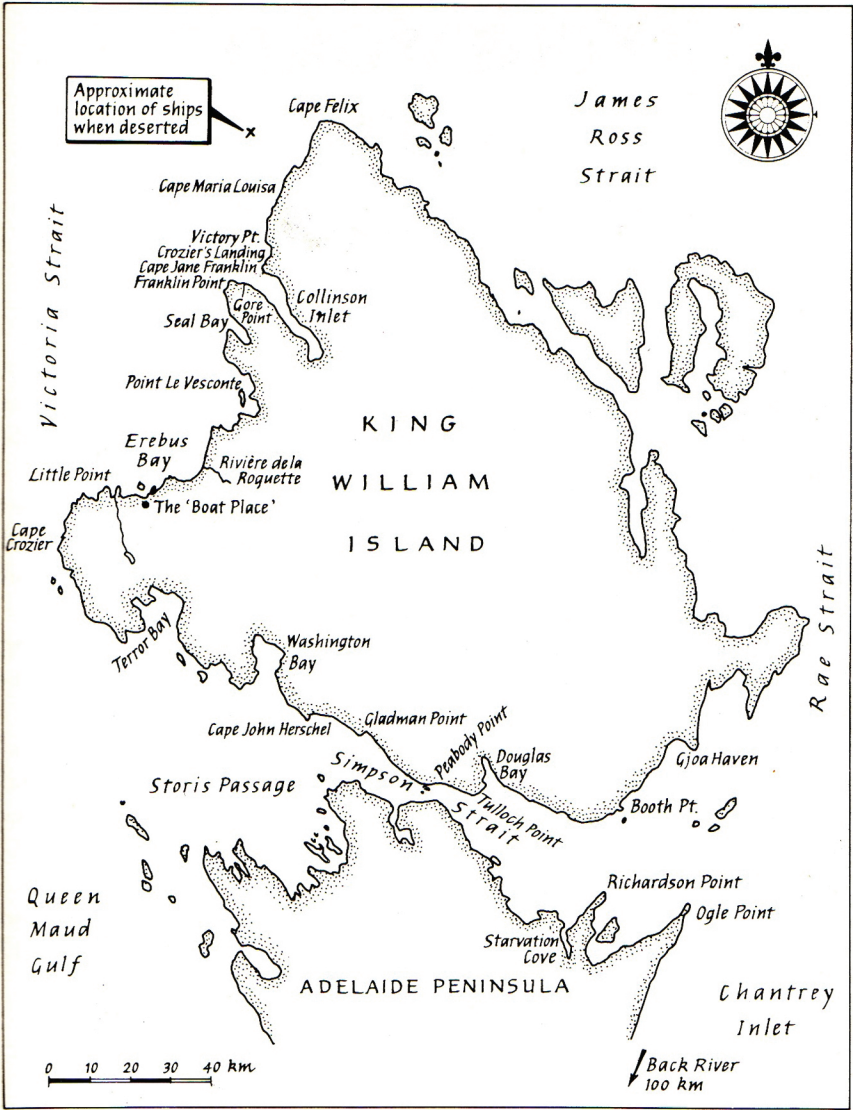
On his fourth and last arctic expedition voyage, Sir John Franklin, 59 at the time, departed England in 1845 aboard two ships, HMS Erebus and HMS Terror. The two ships became icebound in the Victoria Strait, near King William Island in Canadian territory, and 129 men were lost, including Captain Franklin.

The most meaningful outcome of the Franklin expedition was the mapping of several thousand miles of arctic lands by explorers searching for Franklin's lost ships and crew.

In 2016, wreckage from HMS Terror was found in Terror Bay, off the southwest coast of King William Island.

— Marzie Ghasempour

A MAP OF KING WILLIAM ISLAND



<http://www.blupete.com/Arctic%20Archipelago/Arctic13.htm>

CAST & CREW

DAVID BERGER-JONES (Handford/Brett) is appearing in a BPT production for the first time, and he couldn't be happier to be a part of this show. He holds a BFA in acting from Carnegie Mellon University. Previous Boston credits include *Absurd Person Singular* with Central Square Theater, *Playhouse Creatures* with Maiden Phoenix, and *Blue Window* and *Boxer Shorts* with Brown Box Theatre Project.

STEPHANIE K. BROWNELL (Costume Design) is an interdisciplinary writer, artist, and educator based in Boston. Local design credits include *The Honey Trap*, *Sickle*, and *Restricted* (Boston Playwrights' Theatre); *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.* (Company One); *From the Deep* (FringeNYC); *Eyes Shut. Door Open.* (Wax Wings Productions); *Radium Girls* (Flat Earth Theatre); *I, Snowflake* (Anthem Theatre Company); *Julius Caesar* (Bridge Rep). Assistant Design: *Fiddler on the Roof* (New Repertory Theatre); *Twelfth Night* and *Bride*Widow*Hag* (ART Institute); *Hello Again* (Bridge Rep). Stephanie is the recipient of the 2015 NAPAT Playwriting Excellence Award and a 2014 national finalist for the Gary Garrison Award. She is a member of Company One's 2017 PlayLab and an artistic associate at Artists' Theatre of Boston. Stephanie teaches writing at Bentley University and Grub Street Writing Community. Upcoming designs: *Every Piece of Me* (Boston Playwrights' Theatre). MFA: Boston University. BA: Carroll University. skbrownell.com

CALEB CEDRONE (Johnson) is thrilled to be making his debut with the Boston Playwrights' Theatre. A Massachusetts native, he recently returned to Boston after touring the country performing *A Midsummer Nights Dream*, *Julius Caesar*, and *A Tale of Two Cities* with the National Players based out of the Olney Theatre Center in the greater D.C. Metro area. Recent local credit includes *GREEK* (Boston Lyric Opera). He is a proud graduate of Boston University's BFA Acting program and attained his diploma in classical acting with the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. After years in high school attending shows at the BPT, it is a surreal moment for him to be playing on this stage.

MATT DRAY (Fight Choreography) is a fight choreographer and actor in the Boston area. He is very excited to be working with Boston Playwrights' Theatre. Some fight credits include *Twelfth Night of the Living Dead* (Anthem), *The Texas Chainsaw Musical* (Arts After Hours), *The Cripple of Inishman*, *Boom*, *The Effect* (Boston University).

STACY FISCHER* (Caroline) was previously seen at Boston Playwrights' Theatre in *The Secret Love Life of Ophelia*, *Theresa at Home*, and *Permanent Whole Life*. Some of her most recent credits include: *Miss Julie*, *The Kritik*, and *The River* (Harbor Stage Company), *Luna Gale* (Stoneham Theatre), and *Necessary Monsters* (Speakeasy Stage). Stacy has performed in numerous theatres in the Boston area including: Central Square Theatre, Gloucester Stage, Huntington Theatre Company, Lyric Stage, New Rep, North Shore Music Theatre, and WHAT.

She is the recipient of an Elliot Norton Award for Best Actress for her role in *Hysteria* (Nora Theatre). Stacy is a graduate of Emerson College, and is a founding member of Harbor Stage Company in Wellfleet, MA.

MARZIE GHASEMPOUR (Dramaturgy) was born in Tehran, Iran. She received her BA in English in Iran, and she has an MFA in Creative Writing from New Mexico State University. Currently, Marzie is a member of the MFA Playwriting cohort at Boston University.

J JUMBELIC (Sound Design) has been working in New England for nearly ten years. He most recently designed *The Honey Trap* at Boston Playwrights' Theatre. Previous designs include *Faithless* (BPT), *A Palpable Hit* presented by Cambridge Historical Tours, *Small Craft Warnings* (Provincetown Tennessee Williams Festival), *A Great Wilderness* (Zeitgeist Stage Company), and *The Laramie Project* (Curry College). In his spare time, he is the full time sound engineer at the Huntington Theatre Company's mainstage venue. www.jjumbelic.com

STEPHANIE LEBOLT (Director) is thrilled to make her directorial debut at Boston Playwrights' with *Franklin*. Upcoming work includes *La Llorona* (Fresh Ink Theatre) and *The Ordinary Epic* (Podcast). Boston credits include work with Huntington Theatre Company, Fresh Ink Theatre, Lyric Stage, Bad Habit Productions, the Umbrella Arts Center, Solas Nua in Boston, The Open Theatre Project, One Minute Play Festival, and Boston Theater Marathon. She is a director, choreographer, producer, and artist-administrator based in Cambridge and a proud graduate of the University of Virginia.

CHARLES LINSHAW (Dialect Coach) is delighted to be working with Boston Playwrights' Theatre. As a voice and dialect coach he has worked with New Repertory Theatre, Stoneham Theatre, The Nora Theatre Company, Happy Medium Theatre, Maiden Phoenix Theatre Company, Titanic Theatre Company, The Theatre Offensive, Wellesley College Theatre, Boston University CFA, Northeastern University, and Lesley University. As an actor Charles recently appeared in *Emilie* and *Three Sisters* (Wellesley Repertory Theatre) and *From The Deep* (FringeNYC 2016/CMS Productions & Boston Public Works/2015 IRNE Award Nomination: Best Actor). Charles has done voiceover work over the years for *Frontline* on WGBH/PBS, indie film and television work, and will be in the upcoming web series, *The Naturals*. Previous academic appointments: The Boston Conservatory, Boston University CFA, Northeastern University, and Brandeis University. MFA in Acting, Columbia University. Proud member of AEA, SAG-AFTRA, and VASTA. www.charleslinshaw.com

TASHA K. MATTHEWS (Assistant Stage Manager) is thrilled to be making her debut with Boston Playwrights' Theatre. Recent stage management credits include SLAM Boston, The Fear Project, JP Porchfest (Open Theatre Project); MASTERCLASS Showcase (Steve Blackwood Productions); *Laughing Wild* (HUB Theatre Company); *The Voices of We* (333 Productions); *A Street Car Named Desire*, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, *The Most Dangerous Woman* (4th Wall Stage Company); *42nd Street* (Vanilla Box Productions); and *Death and the*

Maiden (Open Theatre Project).

LAURA NEILL (Run Crew) is a Boston playwright whose work centers on strong women. Her play *Don't Give Up the Ship* premiered with Fresh Ink Theatre this February. Her play *Cap, or, El Límite* is currently a semi-finalist for the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference. Laura was an affiliate of the 2016 Company One PlayLab, and her play *Skin and Bones* was a semi-finalist for the 2016 Princess Grace Fellowship. She won the Eleanor Frost Playwriting Award in 2012 for her plays *Conditions* and *Fall*. Laura is earning her MFA in Playwriting at Boston University. She has been commissioned to write the book of OperaHub's feminist pastiche fantasy piece, which will premiere in Fall 2017. She is a member of the Dramatists Guild, StageSource, and the New England New Play Alliance, for which she co-edited the *New England New Play Anthology* with Patrick Ga-bridge. Learn more at <http://laurajneill.wixsite.com/home> or read her work at <https://newplayexchange.org/users/1933/laura-neill>.

SAMANTHA NOBLE (Playwright) is a Boston-based playwright and theatre artist. She attended Smith College where she was awarded the Denis Johnston Playwriting Prize. While at Smith, she acted as a Research Fellow in the joint faculty and student Louise W. and Edmund J. Kahn Liberal Arts Institute's project titled *Evil*, for which she developed and staged her play *The Strength of Stones*. In 2013, she partnered with director Kathryn Stewart to create a Seattle-based theatre project, The Tenacity Theatre Collective, through which she premiered her original work *An Actress vs. William Shakespeare* as part of Seattle's Arts Crush Festival. The play came to the East Coast as part of the Hamilton & Wenham Art Grows Here Festival. She worked with New Century Theatre in all aspects of theatrical production from 2008-2011. Her play *A Drink* was sponsored by The Nora Theatre Company in Boston Theater Marathon XVIII. In summer of 2016, her newest play *Franklin* was developed as part of the Kennedy Center and National New Play Network's MFA Playwrights' Workshop. She has worked as a dramaturg developing new works through Boston University and Boston Playwrights' Theatre and has taught creative writing at Boston University.

MARY SADER (Scenic Design) returns to BPT after designing *Memorial* earlier this season, and in the past two years: *Sickle* and *Exposed*. She is a third year MFA candidate in Scene Design at Boston University where she just designed *Much Ado About Nothing*. She has also recently worked on New Rep's Classic Repertory Company's 2016/17 tour and with Gloucester Stage Company, Anthem Theatre Company, and OperaHub. She earned her BA with Honors from Virginia Tech. www.marysader.com

ALEXIS SCHEER (Kira) is thrilled to be making her BPT debut. Boston acting credits include *Blasted* (IRNE nom Best Play), *Equus*, and *Dog Sees God* (Off the Grid); *The Housekeeper* (Fresh Ink Theatre); *Romeo and Juliet* (Arts After Hours); *Annotated History...Muskrat* (Circuit Theatre Company); *a soft murder*, *Noises Off*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (The Boston Conservatory). Alexis is originally from Miami, received her BFA in Musical The-

atre from The Boston Conservatory, and is currently pursuing a MFA in Playwriting at Boston University. She also moonlights as the Producing Artistic Director of Off the Grid Theatre Company. www.alexisscheer.com

MARSHA SMITH* (Stage Manager) is very excited to return to Boston Playwrights' Theatre. She is a graduate of Emerson College with a degree in Stage Management. Previous BPT credits include *Little Black Dress*, *Five Down One Across*, *The Farm*, *The Company We Keep*, and *Reconsidering Hanna(h)*. Some other recent local credits: *The Scottsboro Boys* remount, *Violet* (SpeakEasy Stage Company); *Songs for a New World*, *Man in Snow*, *The Flick* (Gloucester Stage Company); *The School for Scandal* (Actors' Shakespeare Project). Marsha lives on her family's farm in southern New Hampshire.

FELIX TEICH (Henry) is overjoyed to make his Boston Playwrights' Theatre debut. Boston credits include *The Winter's Tale* (Actors' Shakespeare Project); *Lobster Girl*, *Meet Me in St. Louis* (Stoneham Theatre); *In the Summer House* (Fort Point Theatre Channel); *Invasion!*, *iBocon!* (Apollinaire Theatre Company); *27 Tips for Banishing the Blues*, *In the Wake of the Graybow Riots* (Sleeping Weazel); and *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company). He appears regularly in *Shit-faced Shakespeare* in Somerville and South Boston in multiple roles, and can also be seen this spring in *Songs for a New World* with Brown Box Theatre Project. He graduated from Emerson College with a BFA in Acting in 2016. Love and gratitude for the constant support of Maya, Dad, Mom, and Nana.

KAI TSHIKOSI (David) is thrilled to make his debut with Boston Playwrights' Theatre. Some recent local credits include *The Tempest* (Actors' Shakespeare Project), *Cymbeline* (Brown Box Theatre Project), *Julius Caesar* (Classic Repertory Company/New Repertory Theatre), and *Colossal* (Company One). Next up: *Romeo and Juliet* on the Boston Common with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company in July 2017.

GIFFORD WILLIAMS (Lighting Design) is a second-year Lighting Design MFA candidate at Boston University. He got a BA in Theatrical Design from Fordham University, and has designed for several years throughout New York City professionally. Design credits include *Emmeline*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Hothouse*, *Seven Deadly Sins*, *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Boston University); *That Time the House Burned Down* (Fresh Ink Theatre); *Short Eyes*, *Waiting for the Parade*, *One Flea Spare*, *Fen*, *Medea*, *Lysistrata* (Stella Adler Studio); *Friends Don't Let Friends*, *Little Town Blues* (Less Than Rent Theatre), and others. Assistant Design credits include *Bedroom Farce*, *Tiger Style!*, *A Confederacy of Dunces* (Huntington Theatre Company), and *Love's Labours Lost* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company). He was the master electrician at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting and at New York Stage and Film, an electrician for The Lighting Syndicate, and was on the stage crew of *Sleep No More*. www.giffordwilliams.com



SPECIAL THANKS

Revels, Inc., Liv Honer, Anthony Phelps, Mark Rockwell, Huntington Theatre Company Props Department



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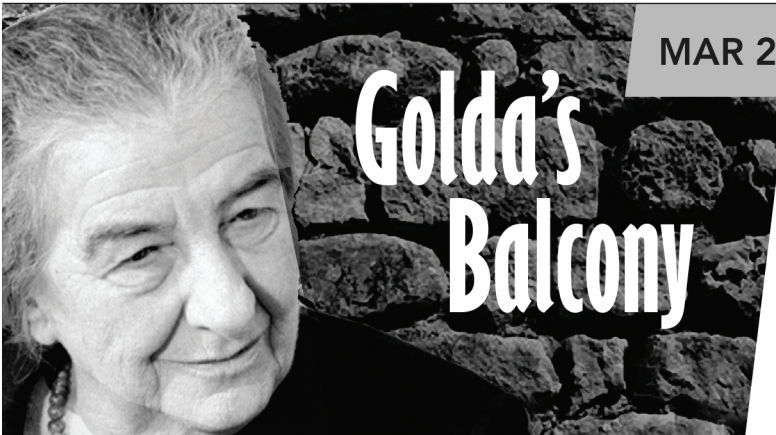
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 **Boston PLAYWRIGHTS' Theatre**

Founded in 1981 at Boston University by Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott, Boston Playwrights' Theatre is an award-winning professional theatre dedicated to new works. At the core of our programs is the Playwriting MFA offered in the celebrated English Department in the College of Arts & Sciences and in collaboration with the award-winning School of Theatre in the College of Fine Arts. Alumni of our program have been produced in regional and New York houses as well as in London's West End; our own productions of alumni work have garnered regional and Boston awards, including numerous Best New Script Awards from the Elliot Norton committee and the Independent Reviewers of New England.

From class workshops to our Season of New Plays, BPT employs the best of New England's professional actors, directors, and designers to bring each playwright's vision to its first audiences.

Each spring, in collaboration with Boston Children's Theatre, we produce New Noises: Massachusetts Young Playwrights' Project. Area high schools work with professional playwrights, directors, and actors to see student works on stage for the first time.

Fifty local theatre companies join us annually for the Boston Theater Marathon, a showcase of new ten-minute plays by New England playwrights chosen each year from hundreds of entrants. Each play is produced by a different New England theatre company in a single ten-hour event with all proceeds going to charity.

When we are not producing plays, we continue our mission to support new works by renting theatre space to other New England theatre companies at below-market rates. Our Black Box Fellowships provide support for the development and production of new plays.

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Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,300 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.



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