



Kendeda Graduate Playwriting Competition at the Alliance Theatre

Now in its sixth year, the **Kendeda Graduate Playwriting Competition** furthers the Alliance Theatre's commitment to new work. This national program introduces student playwrights to professional networks while producing the world premiere of the winning student's work.

Each year, approximately 20 graduate playwriting programs across the country are invited to have their final-year students submit a play to the competition. An in-house panel of readers at the Alliance Theatre reads and evaluates the scripts, and selects a slate of finalists to be advanced in the competition. Those scripts are sent to a national panel of three theatre artists for judging. In conjunction with Alliance Theatre leadership, the judges select the winner.

The Alliance Theatre produces the winning play on the 200-seat Hertz Stage. In preparation for that production, the playwright has access to developmental workshop time at the theatre, which provides an opportunity to work with a nationally-recognized director and a cast of professional actors.

Once the play moves into its production phase, the winning playwright is in residence throughout the remainder of the process. The other four finalists also come to Atlanta for a celebration of their work that includes readings of their plays for Atlanta and Southeast regional artistic directors.

Concurrent with the winning play's Opening Night, the panel of national judges and the program chair from the winning playwright's university are invited to Atlanta. During the year following the competition, the Alliance Theatre will actively connect the winning playwright and other finalists with a national community of agents, producers and directors via invitations to the production, a mass mail out of the script, and a sponsored trip to New York where New Dramatists will host the writers and enable them to forge new relationships in the New York City theatre community.

2009 Competition Information:

Plays received: October-November 2008 (49 total)

Judging: December 2008-January 2009

Announcement of Winner: March 2009

Winner: Ismail Khalidi, NYU-Tisch Dramatic Writing

Play: *Tennis in Nablus* (will be produced on the Hertz Stage, Jan. 29 – Feb. 21, 2010)

Other Finalists Schools: California Institute of Arts, The Juilliard School, The New School for Social Research, Ohio University

Judges: Pearl Cleage, Playwright; Peter Schneider, Director and Producer: Jim Steinberg, Steinberg Charitable Trust

Invited Programs: Arizona State University; Boston University; Brooklyn College; Brown University/Trinity Repertory Consortium; California Institute for the Arts; Carnegie-Mellon University; Catholic University; Columbia University; Goddard College; Hollins University; Indiana University; The Juilliard School; Northwestern University; NYU Tisch School of the Arts; Ohio University; Rutgers University; San Francisco State University; The School of the Art Institute; Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; The New School; The University of Texas at Austin; University of Arkansas; University of California – Los Angeles; University of California – San Diego; University of Hawai'i at Manoa; University of California; University of Houston; University of Iowa; University of New Mexico; University of Southern California; and Yale School of Drama

Prior Competition Winners:

1st year: **2004** – Daphne Greaves (The Juilliard School), *Day of the Kings*

2nd year: **2005** – Kenneth Lin (Yale School of Drama), *...," said Said*

3rd Year: **2006** – Darren Canady (New York University Musical Theatre), *False Creeds*

4th Year: **2007** – Tarell Alvin McCraney (Yale School of Drama), *In the Red and Brown Water*

5th Year: **2008** – Julia Brownwell (NYU-Tisch Dramatic Writing), *Smart Cookie*