

Nicholas Orvis

Dramaturgy & Dramatic Criticism Department
 David Geffen School of Drama at Yale
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Education

David Geffen School of Drama at Yale, New Haven, CT

Doctor of Fine Arts, Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism, expected 2026

Title: *Contemporary Game-Based Dramaturgies*

Committee: Katherine Profeta (advisor), Michael Chemers, Mary Flanagan

Master of Fine Arts, Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism, 2023

Comprehensive Exams: The Commedia dell'Arte, Immersive Theatre and Performance

Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

Bachelor of Arts, Theater, Honors in Directing

Thesis: *"In This Last Tempest": Narratives of Dying Well on the English Stage from the Moralities to Shakespeare*

Academic and Artistic Work

Trinity College

2025—2026

Visiting Lecturer in Theater and Dance. Instructor, Modern and Postmodern Theater [Fall 2025],
 Critical Views/Critical Values [Spring 2026]

Yale University

2022—2025

Teaching Fellow. Survey of Theater and Drama, David Geffen School of Drama. [Fall 2023,
 Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025]

Teaching Assistant. The Body as Stage: Experiments in Performance Art, Theater &
 Performance Studies. [Fall 2022]

Theater Magazine

July 2020—February 2022

Managing Editor

Yale University

September—December 2019

Teaching Assistant. Research Methodologies, Department of Dramaturgy & Dramatic
 Criticism.

Premiere Stages at Kean University

January 2014—July 2019

Literary Associate and Resident Dramaturg.

Teaching Artist.

Young Playwrights, Inc.

February—May 2015

Script Reader and Award Selection Committee.

New Dramatists

September 2014—May 2015

Intern.

Premiere Stages at Kean University

June—August 2014

Artistic Intern.

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Portland Stage Company
Directing and Dramaturgy Intern.

September 2013—May 2014

Wesleyan University
Writing Tutor.

September 2012—May 2013

Honors

Connecticut Critics' Circle Award for Best Play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* at Yale Repertory Theater, 2023

John W. Gassner Memorial Prize for Critical Writing, Yale University, 2022

Phi Beta Kappa, Wesleyan University, 2013

Presentations

Roundtable, "The Magic Circle in Participatory Performance: Play Frames for Gameful Dramaturgies." Canadian Association for Theatre Research, Regina, June 25-28, 2025

"Unknowing Urgency: Frenetic Participation in *World Factory* and *The Twenty-Sided Tavern*." American Society for Theatre Research, Seattle, November 14-17, 2024

Panelist, "Choose Your Own Path: Revisioning Participatory and Interactive Theatre through Games," Association for Theatre in Higher Education, August 1-4, 2024

"Distance, Play, and Social Consciousness in Game-Based Performance" in Theatre and Social Change Debut Panel, Association for Theatre in Higher Education, August 1-4, 2024

"Playing at Vagrancy: Closed and Open Roleplaying Time in *Addressless* and *Wanderhome*," Generation Analog 2024: Home, July 24-25, 2024

Breakout Lunch Convener: "Actual Play and Performance," Worlds in Play Conference, January 3-7, 2024

Presenter/Workshop Leader, "Tabletop Roleplaying Games as Shared Dramaturgy," Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas, July 20-24, 2022

"Notes Toward a Playful Audience," in "Relational Interface(s): Refiguring the Spectator," Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas, July 20-24, 2022

"The Playful Theater: Competition, Virtuosity, and Performance," Hot Topics at Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas, July 20-24, 2022

"Echoes of Place: Repetition and Spectatorship in Site-Specific and Immersive Performance," American Society for Theatre Research 2020/21
 [attendance prevented due to COVID-19]

"Literary Management in Regional Theater." Premiere Stages Internship Program, July 2019.

Panelist, "ECD Event: Being the Change," LMDA Annual Conference, June 21-23, 2018

Workshop Leader, Healing Voices Art OnStage application workshop, 2017-2019

Invited Lecture, "Euripides's *Hecuba* and Athenian Tragedy." Tragedy Then & Now, Hamilton College, October 2016

Publications

Dungeons + Drama Nerds, 2020—Present [ongoing]. Publicly accessible podcast exploring the intersection of tabletop roleplaying games and theater, including actual play demonstrations with theater artists, dramaturgical analysis of game structures, and interviews with theater and game creators. Co-creator, producer, and frequent contributor with Todd Brian Backus and Percival Hornak.

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- “Queer Utopian Time in Gameful Theatre.” In revision, *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*. Essay analyzing models from queer theory and gaming as applied to gameful performance.
- “Between Theater and LARP: Dialectical Dramaturgy in César Alvarez’s *The Universe is a Small Hat*.” Under review (abstract accepted), *TDR*. Essay discussing the LARP-informed structure of Alvarez’s participatory musical.
- “3-in-1: Dungeons and Dragons and Bells and Whistles.” With Ran Xia. *3Views on Theater*, May 21, 2024. Dual-perspective review/essay on the off-Broadway performance of *Dungeons and Dragons: The Twenty-Sided Tavern* at the Stage 42 Theater.
- “Three Theatrical Games.” *Theater* 52.3. Essay review examining three performances from 2021-22 that incorporate playful/game structures into their dramaturgy and discussing the importance of game studies to such performance.
- “Up Front: The Fallow Year.” *Theater* 51.3. A short artistic reflection on a year spent quasi-deliberately without traditional theatre work during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the benefits of being removed from the constant production cycle of American theater.
- “Time Capsule: Artists Reflect on a Pandemic.” Co-editor with Lily Haje and Ashley M. Thomas. *Theater* 51.3. Special section collecting reflections, artwork, and provocations dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic from a wide array of theater and performance artists, including Ernesto Pujol, Fake Friends, and Diana Oh.
- “Theatre of the Mind: A Dramaturgical Perspective on Tabletop Role-Playing Games.” With Todd Brian Backus, Percival Hornak. *Howlround*, September 29, 2020. Essay exploring initial findings from *Dungeons + Drama Nerds* podcast and their implications for theatrical practice.
- Various as Resident Dramaturg for Premiere Stages. 2014-2019. Authored and designed a variety of lobby displays, program notes, playwright interviews, etc. surrounding Premiere Stages productions.
- PlayNotes*, 40.01-40.07. Contributor and Editorial Staff. Portland, ME: Portland Stage Company, 2013-2014. Authored various articles and edited multiple volumes of educational magazine.
- “‘Foster Mom,’ A New Play About Foster Parenting.” *Foster Focus* 07.04 (September, 2017). An interview with playwright Chris Cragin-Day about her new play *Foster Mom*.

Book Reviews

- Playing Real: Mimesis, Media, and Mischief*. Lindsay Brandon Hunter, Northwestern University Press (2021). In *Journal of American Drama and Theatre* 37.1.

Theater Work Publicly Reviewed

- Raiders of the Local Adventure* by Andrew Agress [Dramaturg/Consultant]. Reviewed in FringeReview, Theatre Weekly, and Starburst Magazine.
- Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles* by Luis Alfaro [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in the Hartford Courant, Middletown Press, New Haven Review, Connecticut Examiner, and Talkin’ Broadway.
- Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* by Edward Albee [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in the Hartford Courant, New Haven Independent, Middletown Press, Stratford Crier, 2 on the Aisle, Plays International, and BroadwayWorld.
- The People Before the Park* by Keith Josef Adkins [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in The New York Times, CurtainUp, NJArts.net, and The Westfield Leader. Featured in American Theatre magazine and on NPR’s All Things Considered.

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The Wake by Tammy Ryan [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in BroadwayWorld, New Jersey Stage, Out in Jersey, The Theatre Times, and The Westfield Leader.

Black Tom Island by Martin Casella [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in BroadwayWorld, Let's Go to the Theatre, and NJ.com.

Brick City by Nicole Pandolfo [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in BroadwayWorld, CurtainUp, NJArts.net, Out in Jersey, The Theatre Times, and The Westfield Leader.

Linger by Craig Garcia [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in BroadwayWorld, New Jersey Stage, NJArts.net, NJ.com, The Theatre Times, and The Westfield Leader.

Foster Mom by Chris Cragin-Day [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in BroadwayWorld, NJArts.net, Out in Jersey, and The Westfield Leader.

Skeleton Crew by Dominique Morisseau [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in BroadwayWorld, CurtainUp, New Jersey Stage, NJArts.net, Out in Jersey, and The Westfield Leader.

My Lord, What a Night by Deborah Brevoort [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in NJArts.net.

Las Cruces by Vincent Delaney [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in BroadwayWorld, CurtainUp, New Jersey Stage, NJ.com, NJArts.net, and The Westfield Leader.

Water by the Spoonful by Quiara Alegría Hudes [Dramaturg]. Reviewed in BroadwayWorld, CurtainUp, NJ.com, NJArts.net, and The Westfield Leader.

Echo by Ran Xia [Director]. Reviewed in Theatre is Easy.

Professional Services

Dramaturgy Artistic Associate, The Yale Cabaret, 2021-2022

COVID Communications Ambassador, DGSD at Yale, 2022-23

Guest Teacher, New Voices in Theater, 2020, 2022

Script Reader, Theatre for a New Audience literary office, 2024-25

Script Reader, Van Lier New Voices Fellowship at Rattlestick Theater, 2024-25

Script Reader, Terrence McNally New Works Incubator at Rattlestick Theater, 2023-25

Script Reader, Yale Repertory Theatre, 2019-2023

Script Reader, Playwrights Center awards, 2019-2020

Script Reader, Princess Grace Award, 2016-2019

Script Reader, City Theater Young Playwrights Competition, 2016-2018

Professional Training

Devised Theater in the Assembly Method

The Assembly, JACK, Brooklyn, NY, January 2017.

A 4-day workshop in the devising method of The Assembly, a theater company basing their work in wide-ranging theatrical vocabularies including the work of Jerzy Grotowski and Chuck Mee.

Summer Professional Training Program (Directing Track)

Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Madison, NJ, June-Aug. 2012

Professional development program for young artists in classical theater; for directors, includes serving as assistant to the director on two professional productions, associate director on acting apprentice final project, and directing multiple workshops with acting apprentices. Also includes auditing actor-track workshops and classes including Shakespeare performance, script analysis, stage combat, and more.

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Physical Theatre Program

Accademia dell'Arte, Arezzo, Italy, Jan.-May 2012

Four-month intensive, conservatory-style training in physical theatre and traditional *commedia dell'arte* techniques. Training includes intensive voice, movement (Feldenkrais), *commedia*, and philosophy coursework, as well as master classes in music, clown, mime, mask-making, juggling, contact improvisation, and more.

Professional Affiliations

Member, Canadian Association for Theatre Research (CATR/ACRT)	2025—Present
Member, Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE)	2024—Present
Member, American Society for Theatre Research (ASTR)	2020—Present
Member, Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas	2014—Present
Member, Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab	2015

Languages

Spanish (intermediate spoken, advanced reading, writing)
 Italian (beginning spoken, reading, writing)

Other Skills

Microsoft Office suite
 Adobe InDesign
 Adobe Photoshop
 Musically literate
 Valid driver's license (New York State)

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ARTISTIC RESUME

*=Honors Thesis, +=Scene Study, ^=New Play, R=Reading

Creator

Dungeons + Drama Nerds

With Todd Brian Backus,
Percival Hornak

May 2020—Current

Dramaturg

Sinnerman^

By Matthew Elijah Webb
By Ran Xia

In development

Pluto Playing Piano in a Faraway Place^

In development

Raiders of the Local Adventure

By Andrew Agress

AfA @ Edinburgh Fringe, 2025

Raiders of the Local Adventure^

By Andrew Agress

Agency for Absurd Agency,
2024

VOY^

By Mónica Sanchez

Lortel Alcove Initiative, 2024

Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles

By Luis Alfaro

Yale Repertory Theater, 2023

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

By Edward Albee

Yale Repertory Theater, 2022

the father, the son, and the holy spirit^

By Matthew Elijah Webb

Yale Summer Cabaret, 2022

Almost (nearly) Fucking Finally

By Christopher Bayes & Co.

DGSD at Yale, 2022

The Hedgehog's Dilemma^

By Harry Davis

Yale Cabaret, 2022

Green Suga Bloos^

By Rudi Goblen

DGSD at Yale, 2021

The Wake^

By Tammy Ryan

Premiere Stages, 2019

Walden^R

By Amy Berryman

Premiere Stages, 2019

Black Tom Island^

By Martin Casella

Premiere Stages, 2018

Brick City^

By Nicole Pandolfo

Premiere Stages, 2018

Linger^

By Craig Garcia

Premiere Stages, 2018

Foster Mom^

By Chris Cragin-Day

Premiere Stages, 2017

Skeleton Crew

By Dominique Morisseau

Premiere Stages, 2017

1980 (Or Why I'm Voting for John Anderson)^R

By Patricia Cotter

Premiere Stages, 2017

Macbeth/ A Midsummer Night's Dream

By William Shakespeare

Barefoot Shakespeare, 2017

My Lord, What a Night^

By Deborah Brevoort

Premiere Stages, 2016

Las Cruces^

By Vincent Delaney

Premiere Stages, 2016

Water by the Spoonful

By Quiara Alegría Hudes

Premiere Stages, 2016

Three Rules for the Dragon^R

By Jeff Talbott

Premiere Stages, 2016

My Lord, What a Night^R

By Deborah Brevoort

Premiere Stages, 2015

The People Before the Park^

By Keith Josef Adkins

Premiere Stages, 2015

Great Kills^R

By Kate Cortesi

Premiere Stages, 2015

The Savannah Disputation

By Evan Smith

Portland Stage, 2014

Vigil

By Morris Panych

Portland Stage, 2013

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Director

<i>Found Objects</i> [^]	By Holly Provance	The Theatrical Spooktacular, 2018
<i>Chair</i> [^]	By Manuel Igrejas	Luna Stage New Moon Festival, 2018
<i>Echo</i> [^]	By Ran Xia	The Arctic Group/The Tank, 2018
<i>The Blue Years</i> [^]	By Elia Chuaqui	The Theatrical Spooktacular, 2017
<i>Sick and Tired</i>	By Diane L. Parker	Strawberry One-Act Festival, 2017
<i>The Waiting Room</i> [^]	By Steven Doloff	The Gallery Players, 2017
<i>Sick and Tired</i>	By Diane L. Parker	Luna Stage New Moon Festival, 2017
<i>Peter and the Wolf</i>	By Sergei Prokofiev	Jersey City Ballet Theater, 2016
<i>King Lear</i> ^R	By William Shakespeare	The Gallery Players, 2016
<i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i> ^R	By William Shakespeare	The Gallery Players, 2016
KULA MS Showcase ^R	By students of KULA	Premiere Stages Play Factory, 2016
Hubbard MS Showcase ^R	By students of Hubbard MS	Premiere Stages Play Factory, 2016
<i>The Stories We Tell</i> ^R	By Prevention Links	Premiere Stages Play Factory, 2015
<i>Santacon</i> ^{^R}	By Haley Chin	Haley Chin, 2015
<i>Peach, or Pig Land</i> [^]	By Georgia Zildjian	Tandem Theatre/PortFringe, 2014
<i>Out of Step</i> ^{^R}	By William Steidl	PSC Young Writers Project, 2014
<i>Peach, or Pig Land</i> [^]	By Georgia Zildjian	Tandem Theatre Collective, 2014
<i>The Cardioluthier</i> [^]	By S. Dylan Zwickel	The Kirkland Art Center, 2013
<i>Under Milk Wood</i>	By Dylan Thomas	Wesleyan U. Second Stage, 2013
<i>The Tempest</i> [*]	By William Shakespeare	Wesleyan U. Theater Dept., 2012
<i>"Why Then You Are in Love"</i> ⁺	By various	STNJ Next Stage Ensemble, 2012
<i>Love, Loss, and Lament</i> ⁺	By various	STNJ Apprentice Co., 2012
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	By William Shakespeare	Hartford Players Youth Theater, 2011
<i>Twelve Angry Men</i>	By Reginald Rose, adapted by Sherman L. Sergel	Wesleyan University Second Stage, 2011

Awards

Winner: Connecticut Critics' Circle Award, Best Play, 2023: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Winner: Best Play, Strawberry One-Act Festival: *Sick and Tired*

Nominated: Best Director, Strawberry One-Act Festival: *Sick and Tired*

Special Skills

Linklater and Roy Hart vocal training (Dennis-Carlo Patella and Kevin Crawford). Mask and commedia training (Yuri Kordonsky and Michele Bottini). Feldenkrais/acrobatic training (Claudia Schnürer). Basic clowning. Basics of mime (T Valada-Viars). Comprehensive and clear research and dramaturgy. Extensive technical experience in lighting and rigging; strong carpentry experience. Competent programmer, ETC Express/Expression and Eon/Ios lighting consoles. Basic martial arts (Tae Kwon Do, Kendo).