The New York Public Library
New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Guide to the
New York Shakespeare Festival records, additions
1968-2010
*T-Mss 1993-028

Compiled by Diana Bertolini, July 2011

Summary

Creator: New York Shakespeare Festival

Title: New York Shakespeare Festival records, additions, 1968-2010

Size: 170.97 linear feet (416 boxes, 4 other items)

Source: Donated by New York Shakespeare Festival via Billy Rose Theatre Division, 2011

Abstract: Since its inception in 1954, the New York Shakespeare Festival/the Public Theater has been a highly acclaimed theater company, dedicated to achieving artistic excellence while developing an American theater that is accessible and relevant to all people through productions of challenging new plays, musicals and innovative stagings of the classics. The additions to the New York Shakespeare Festival Records document the Festival’s activities from 1968-2010. The collection contains scripts, scores, correspondence, publicity materials and other production files from Public Theater Productions.

Access: Collection is open to the public. Library policy on photocopying will apply. Advance notice may be required.

Preferred citation: New York Shakespeare Festival records, additions, Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library

Custodial history
Donated to the New York Public Library by the New York Shakespeare Festival in 2010.

Processing note
The collection naturally divided into chronological series. The first contained records from 1968-1992 which overlapped with the original New York Shakespeare Festival records. This incomplete sequence of files was left in its original order as much as possible, with some files arranged by season, others by play title and others by subject. The later records were more uniformly organized by season, so that Series II: 1992-2010 is strictly arranged according to that chronology.

Related collections
Guide to the
New York Shakespeare Festival records, additions

Creator history
Joseph Papp’s theater company was originally called the New York Shakespeare Workshop, though the name was later changed to the New York Shakespeare Festival. In 1967, the company built their physical theater, The Public Theater, and the company also became known as The Public Theater. By 1993, after Papp’s death the company was officially called The Joseph Papp New York Shakespeare Festival/The Public Theater and for many years the two names were used interchangeably. Though this collection is called the New York Shakespeare Festival Records, the company is now both widely known as and officially named The Public Theater.

Since its inception in 1954, the New York Shakespeare Festival/the Public Theater is a highly acclaimed theater company, dedicated to achieving artistic excellence while developing an American theater that is accessible and relevant to all people through productions of challenging new plays, musicals and innovative stagings of the classics.

The Public Theater produces new plays, musicals, productions of Shakespeare, and other classics in its headquarters on Lafayette Street (the former Astor library, which opened as The Public Theater in 1967 with the world premiere of the musical Hair) and at the Delacorte Theater, its permanent summertime home of free Shakespeare in the Park each summer. The Public’s newest performance space, Joe’s Pub, has become an important venue for new work and intimate performances by musicians, spoken-word artists, and solo performers.

In addition to its theatrical programming, The Public trains the next generation of classical actors through the Shakespeare Lab, an annual summer acting intensive. It also presents New Work Now!, a play reading series for emerging writers and established artists.

Each year, more than 250,000 people attend Public Theater-related productions and events at six downtown stages, including Joe’s Pub, and Shakespeare in the Park. The Public Theater’s productions have won 42 Tony Awards, 151 Obies, 41 Drama Desk Awards and four Pulitzer Prizes. Fifty-four Public Theater productions have moved to Broadway, including Sticks and Bones; That Championship Season; A Chorus Line; For Colored Girls...; The Pirates of Penzance; The Tempest; Bring in ‘da Noise, Bring in ‘da Funk; The Ride Down Mt. Morgan; Topdog/Underdog; Take Me Out; Caroline, or Change; Passing Strange; the revival of HAIR; Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson and The Merchant of Venice. In 2005, The Public Theater received a special Drama Desk Award in celebration of its 50th anniversary.* For a full list of the Public’s productions, see http://www.publictheater.org/content/view/84/145/.

* From http://www.publictheater.org, retrieved 7/22/11

Scope and content note
The additions to the New York Shakespeare Festival Records document the Festival’s activities from 1968-2010. These records illuminate all aspects of the inner workings of prominent New York theatre company. They document major and minor productions produced by the New York Shakespeare Festival/The Public Theater at their off-Broadway theatre complex in the East Village, at the Delacorte Theater in Central Park and occasionally, on Broadway. Special projects, festivals and performances at Joe’s Pub are also represented. The collection includes administrative files, playwright files and director files. Types of materials are scripts, correspondence, research materials, publicity materials, rehearsal and performance reports, photographs, interviews and sheet music.
The bulk of the material from the years covered in Series I: 1968-1990 was previously donated to the New York Public Library by the New York Shakespeare Festival. The majority of the files on the Public’s activities from this period can be found in The New York Shakespeare Festival Records, 1954-1991, *T-Mss 1993-028. This series consists of additional materials covering some of that period. Some of these materials were in an alphabetical range, others in subject headings and others arranged by season. Most production files are listed alphabetically by show titles. Series II: 1992-2010 is arranged chronologically, by season, and alphabetically within each season by show title or subject. The season files cover specific productions, festivals and other special events as well as literary files kept on contributing playwrights.

The additions to the New York Shakespeare Festival Records include a large collection of audio/visual items, such as recordings of rehearsals and live performances of Public Productions, demos for shows (usually musicals) being submitted to the Public for consideration. There are also recordings here maintained as background research for the Public’s dramaturgy department. Inquiries regarding audio and video materials in the collection may be directed to the Billy Rose Theatre Division at theatrediv@nypl.org. Audio/visual materials may be subject to preservation and migration prior to access.

**Arrangement**
The New York Shakespeare Festival records, additions are organized into the following series:

Series I: 1968-1992
Series II: 1992-2010

**Key terms**

*Subjects*
Ethnic theater.
Experimental theater.
Homosexuality and theater.
Musical theater.
Off-Broadway theater -- History.
Playwriting.
Race in the theater.
Shakespeare, William -- 1564-1616
Shakespeare, William -- 1564-1616 -- Dramatic production
Theater -- Reviews
Theater -- Production and direction -- United States
Theater -- 20th century.
Theater -- New York (State) -- New York
Theater -- Open-air
Theater -- Political aspects -- United States
War and theater.
Names
Akalaitis, JoAnne
Eustis, Oskar, 1958-
New York Shakespeare Festival, 1954-
Papp, Joseph
The Public Theater, 1954-
Wolfe, George C.

Special formats
Artifacts
Correspondence
Ephemera
Handbills
Oral histories
Programs
Scores
Scripts
Sound recordings
Video recordings
**Series I: 1968-1992**

This series covers the Public’s activities between 1968 and 1992, including alphabetical show files, season files, playwright files, director files and subject files. Production files consist of such materials as audition and rehearsal notes, scripts, publicity materials, programs and background research materials. While there are some productions in the season files, the majority of these consist of special projects and readings, pertaining to music, poetry and theater, such as Jazz at the Public, New Music, Poets at the Public, and the annual Festival Latino. These additional materials include production files, files on television versions of Public productions, administrative files. This series includes director and playwright files, which document the Public’s relationships with the artists who worked there. There are various architectural files and documents, detailing plans for the construction of the Public’s theaters.

**Alphabetical Show Files**

- b.1 f.1-10 *Alice in Wonderland*, 1975
- b.2 f.1-20 *Alice in Wonderland*, 1975
- b.10 f.2-3 *La Boheme*, 1984-1985
  - b.3 f.1 General, undated
  - b.5 f.3 *Fans*, undated
- b.11 f.8-9 *Les Femmes Noires*, 1973-1974
  - b.3 f.2 Film at the Public, 1979-1980
  - b.3 f.3 *Fishing*, 1975
  - b.6 f.3 *The First Warning*, 1986
  - b.3 f.4 *Flux*, 1977
  - b.3 f.5 *FOB*, undated
  - b.3 f.6-8 *For Colored Girls...*, 1975-1978
  - b.4 f.1-3 *For Colored Girls...*, 1975-1978
  - b.5 f.1-2 *For Colored Girls...*, 1975-1978
  - b.6 f.4 *For Dear Life*, 1989
  - b.5 f.4-8 *The Forbidden City*, 1989
  - b.6 f.1 *For Whom the Southern Bell Tolls*, 1989
  - b.6 f.2 *Found a Peanut*, 1984
  - b.6 f.7-8 *Four Hours in Shatila*, 1991
  - b.6 f.5 *From the Desk of Marilyn Susanne Miller*, 1977 (Gilda Radner project)
  - b.6 f.9 *From Hair to Dispatches*, 1979
  - b.6 f.6 *The Futurist*, 1987
  - b.6 f.10 *Gallery*, 1981
  - b.6 f.11 Galt MacDermot-Music, undated
  - b.6 f.12 *Garden of Earthly Delights*, 1984
  - b.6 f.13 *Genesis*, 1988
  - b.10 f.4 *La Gente*, 1972
  - b.7 f.1-2 *Gogol*, 1976
  - b.7 f.3 *The Golem*, 1984
  - b.7 f.4 *Good times Are Here Again*, 1977
Series I: 1968-1992 (cont.)
Alphabetical Show Files (cont.)

b.7 f.5 Goose and Tom-Tom, 1980-1982
b.7 f.6 Griffin, Annie, 1989
b.7 f.7 The Guardsman, 1973
b.7 f.8 Haggard’s Children, 1977
b.8 f.1-4 Haggadah, 1980-1981
b.8 f.5-8 Jonah, 1990
b.8 f.9-10 Joinin’, 1985
b.9 f.1 June & Avos, 1988
b.9 f.2-6 Kate’s Diary, 1989
b.9 f.7 Kid Champion, 1975
b.9 f.8-11 Kingfish, 1989
b.9 f.12-14 King Lear, 1973
b.9 f.15 The Knife, 1986-1987
b.10 f.1 Kool Jazz Festival, 1983
b.10 f.6 Landscape of the Body, 1977
b.10 f.7-8 Lang, Pearl, 1980-1983
b.10 f.9 Largo Desolato, 1986
b.10 f.10 The Last American Dixieland Band, 1979-1980
b.11 f.1 The Laundry Hour, 1981
b.11 f.2 Leaf People, 1975
b.11 f.3 Leave it to Beaver is Dead, 1978-1979
b.11 f.4-7 Lenny and the Heart-Breakers, 1982-1986
b.11 f.10 Lighthouse/Magic Flute, undated
b.11 f.11-12 Lincoln Center Theatre, 1973-1977
b.12 f.1 The Local Stigmatic, 1976
b.12 f.2 Long Day’s Journey into Night, 1981
b.12 f.3-4 Lotta, 1973
b.12 f.5 Lulu, 1976-1977
b.12 f.6-7 Lullabye and Goodnight, 1980-1982
b.12 f.8 Lunch-Time Theater, 1978
b.12 f.9-14 Mabou Mines, 1979-1990
b.12 f.15 Macbeth, 1990
b.12 f.16 Mad Forrest, 1990
b.13 f.10 The Magic Flute, 1986
b.13 f.1-2 The Mandrake, 1978
b.13 f.3 Mango Tango, 1978
b.13 f.4 Man-Woman, 1978
b.13 f.5-6 Marco Polo, 1976
b.13 f.7 Marie and Bruce, 1976
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### Series I: 1968-1992 (cont.)

#### Alphabetical Show Files (cont.)

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<td>Rat in the Skull, 1985</td>
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<td>Ratcliff, Carl, 1980</td>
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<td>Reader, 1989</td>
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<td>Rebel Women, 1976</td>
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<td>Red and Blue, 1982</td>
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<td>The Red Snake, 1981</td>
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<td>Remembrance, 1979</td>
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<td>Rich and Famous, 1976</td>
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<td>Richard II, 1987</td>
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<td>Richard III, 1983</td>
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<td>Riverside Shakespeare, 1982-1987</td>
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<td>Robeson, Paul, 1978</td>
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<td>Romance in Hard Times, 1989</td>
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<td>Roosters, 1987</td>
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<td>Royal Court Exchange, 1984-1985</td>
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<td>Rum and Coke, 1985</td>
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<td>b.245 f.1-2</td>
<td>Runaways, 1978</td>
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<td>b.244 f.11</td>
<td>Runaways, 1978</td>
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<td>Rally: Save the Theaters, 1982</td>
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<td>Seasons of Discontent, 1972</td>
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<td>b.254 f.3-4</td>
<td>El Senor Presidente, 1987</td>
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<td>St. Mark's Benefit, 1980</td>
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<td>b.254 f.5-9</td>
<td>Talking to Mother, 1987</td>
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<td>Tharp, Twyla, 1980-1983</td>
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<td>Top Girls, 1982-1983</td>
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<td>b.21 f.9-10</td>
<td>Tracers, 1985</td>
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<td>b.22 f.1-6</td>
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<td>b.22 f.7</td>
<td>Trelawny, 1975</td>
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<td>b.22 f.8</td>
<td>True West, 1980</td>
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<td>b.22 f.9</td>
<td>Twelfth Night, 1986</td>
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<td>b.22 f.10</td>
<td>Twelve Dreams, 1982</td>
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<td>b.23 f.1</td>
<td>Twin Bit Garden, 1975</td>
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<td>b.23 f.2</td>
<td>Two Gentlemen of Verona, 1987</td>
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<td>b.23 f.3-4</td>
<td>The Umbrellas of Cherbourg, 1978</td>
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**Series I: 1968-1992 (cont.)**

**Alphabetical Show Files (cont.)**

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<td><em>Understatement</em>, 1984</td>
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<td><em>Unfinished Women</em>, 1977-1978</td>
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<td>f.8</td>
<td>United Farm Workers, AFL-CIO, 1976</td>
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<td>b.23</td>
<td>f.12-18</td>
<td><em>Up Against It</em>, 1989</td>
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<td>b.24</td>
<td>f.3</td>
<td><em>Wake Up, It’s Time to Go to Bed!</em>, 1979</td>
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<td>b.24</td>
<td>f.4</td>
<td><em>Wenceslas Square</em>, 1988</td>
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<td>f.5-8</td>
<td><em>Vienna: Lusthaus</em>, 1986-1987</td>
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<td>b.24</td>
<td>f.9</td>
<td><em>Virginia</em>, 1985</td>
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**Television Projects**

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<td>f.1-13</td>
<td>General Files, 1981-1987</td>
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<td>b.28</td>
<td>f.19-20</td>
<td>General Files</td>
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<td>b.27</td>
<td>f.1</td>
<td><em>The Box Opera</em>, 1982</td>
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<td>f.2-26</td>
<td><em>Dance and the Railroad</em>, 1981-1985</td>
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<td>f.1-18</td>
<td><em>The Hagaddah</em>, 1981</td>
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<td>f.1-30</td>
<td><em>A Midsummer Night’s Dream</em>, 1982-1983</td>
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<td>b.30</td>
<td>f.1-16</td>
<td><em>Much Ado About Nothing</em>, 1972-1973</td>
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<td>f.4</td>
<td><em>Runaways</em>, 1979-1980</td>
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<td><em>Sticks and Bones</em>, 1972-1973</td>
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<td><em>Swan Lake, Minnesota</em>, 1982</td>
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<td>b.35</td>
<td>f.1-23</td>
<td><em>The Wedding Band</em>, 1982</td>
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<td>b.36</td>
<td>f.1</td>
<td>Architecture/Theatres, 1966-1969</td>
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<td>b.38</td>
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**Director Files, 1984-1990**

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<td>Akalaitis, Joanne</td>
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<td>b.245</td>
<td>f.6</td>
<td>Aprill, Arnold</td>
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New York Shakespeare Festival records, additions
Series descriptions and container list

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Director Files (cont.)

b.247 f.3  G
b.247 f.4  Galati, Frank
b.247 f.5  H
b.248 f.1  J
b.248 f.2  K
b.248 f.3  L
b.248 f.4  M
b.248 f.5  MacGuire, Matthew
b.248 f.6  Maggio, Michael
b.248 f.7  Medrano, Maria-Alicia
b.249 f.1  N
b.249 f.2  O

Season files
Cabaret, "New Music: "New Jazz" jazz at the Public, NEA grants, poetry readings, (Poets at the Public), Festival Latino and other special projects

b.416 f.1  1973-1974
Mobile Theater, Two Gentlemen of Verona
b.38 f.4  1975
b.38 f.5-6  1977-1978
b.38 f.7-8  1978-1979
b.38 f.9-12  1979-1980
b.39 f.1-4  1980-1981
b.39 f.5  1981-1982
b.39 f.6-15  1982-1983
b.39 f.16-27  1983-1984
1984-1985
Productions in the 1984-1985 season included The Taming of the Shrew, Much Ado About Nothing, Measure for Measure, Tom and Viv, Rat in the Skull, The Marriage of Bette and Boo, Coming of Age in Soho.

b.39 f.28-33  Season Files
b.40 f.1-13  Season Files
b.50 f.1-27  Season Files
b.416 f.2  Tom and Viv
b.40 f.14-17  1985-1986
b.41 f.1-8  1985-1986
b.58 f.1-16  1985-1986
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Series II: 1992-2010
This series contains the institutional records of the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater from 1992-2010, arranged in season files which cover specific productions, festivals and other special events as well as literary files kept on contributing playwrights.

The productions files, listed alphabetically within each season, contain copious research conducted and maintained by the Public’s thorough dramaturgy department. These research files were kept on many major productions, especially new works with period settings or historical backgrounds. The department also did extensive research on the Shakespeare plays. Even though the Public had produced some of them many times before, the department approached each production afresh. Materials include articles, notes, timelines, photographs and in the case of Anna Deveare Smith’s *Let Me Down Easy*, which was developed at the Public, but eventually produced at the Second Stage Theatre, transcribed interviews with victims of recent wars and natural disasters.

There are drafts of scripts and in many cases, multiple revisions illustrating the level of the Public’s involvement in the creative process and commitment to nurturing the talents of playwrights, whether a new author seeing their first professional production or one of the many established playwrights who returned to the Public many times throughout their careers. Playwright files, maintained over many years, will be listed in the season in which they were archived by the Public’s administrative staff and taken out of active use. These include files, by author or by play title, documenting works in development through annotated scripts, notes and correspondence. The Public was a pioneer in its commitment to nurturing playwrights from minority groups which had previously been under-represented in the American theatre, focusing on African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latinos and Native Americans.

Administrative files; such as correspondence, agreements, cast lists, contact sheets, rehearsal notes and schedules and performance reports; for many productions are also here. Occasionally there are scores for musicals or plays with incidental music, including new musical settings of songs from the Shakespeare plays. The technical aspects of production, including costume, lighting and scenic design are only occasionally represented. There are publicity materials, such as flyers, mailers, articles, press releases and programs. Files on some programming for Joe’s Pub, the Public’s Cabaret are held in this series.

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b.183 f.6  A New Brain
b.184 f.1-4  Romance in Hard Times (Alternate title: Topsy-Turvy)
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   African-American Playwrights
   Playwrights include Dom Magwili, Charles Christopher Mark, Aaron Iverson, Onukaba
   Adinoyi Ojo and Dennis Watlington

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Asian-American Playwrights
Playwrights include Cherylene Lee, Aurorae Khoo, Eugenie Chan, Christina Kokubo, Issac Ho and Joanna Chan.

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Native American Playwrights
Playwrights include M. Cochise Anderson, E. Claude Richards, William S. Yellow Robe Jr., Carlyle Brown, Christopher Sergel and the Institute of American Indian Arts.

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This show was produced at the Second Stage Theatre in 2010.

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