

**School of Drama**  
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# Carnegie Mellon DRAMA

## ALUMNI: DIRECTORS

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Our distinguished alumni are working directors in all major cities of the United States. Here is what some of our recent grads have worked on:

**Jared Stein** ('95) – MFA-Playwriting, UCLA) - Founder and Artistic Director of The Fourth World Laboratory for International Theatre Research and Co-Director of the Rhodopi International Theatre Collective.

**Daniella Topol** ('96) – Currently Artistic Program Director at the Lark Play Development Center. Directing work primarily focused on working with new writers and new plays. New York production includes *Dead City* (Public-New Works Now), *Snow Queen* (Urban Stages), *Dreams This Way* (TADA), *Unreal City* (Epiphany Theatre). Regionally has directed at City Theatre, Connecticut Rep, Goodspeed Musicals, Mill Mountain Theatre, North Shore Music Theatre, Playwrights Center in Minneapolis and Village Theatre.

**Leigh Silverman** ('96) – Directing Credits include Lisa Kron's *Well* (Youngest woman to ever direct a show on Broadway.) *Wit Off Broadway: YellowFace* (New York Public Theatre), *Hunting and Gathering* (Primary Stages); *Well* (Public Theatre); *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* (Second Stage Theatre); *Blue Door* (Playwrights Horizons) and many others. Regional productions include Seattle Repertory Theater, the Huntington Theater, ACT, Cleveland Playhouse and Actors Theatre of Louisville

**Stephanie Palmer** ('97) – Founder of *Good in a Room*, a company working with writers, directors and producers who want to sell their projects to movie studios and networks, and author of the best selling book of the same title. Formerly Director of Creative Affairs at MGM pictures, her projects included *Legally Blonde*, *Be Cool*, *Sleepover*, *A Guy Thing*, *Agent Cody Banks* and *Agent Cody Banks2: Destination London*. Random The Hollywood Reporter named her one of the "Top 35 Executives Under 35" and she has been featured in the Los Angeles Times, Variety and on National Public Radio.

**PJ Paperelli** ('97) –Artistic Director – Perseverance Theatre in Alaska. Formerly Associate Director 1998-2004 Shakespeare Theatre Company-Washington DC: *Much Ado*, *The Oedipus Plays* (at Athens Festival), *Hamlet*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Folger), *Twelfth Night* (Shakespeare Santa Cruz) *Corpus Christi* (Source), *the Diaries* (Signature) NYC: *Action* (Circle Rep). International: *True West* (Moscow Art Theatre School) Three 2006 Helen Hayes Nominations

**Jasmine Jaisinghani** ('98) –In 2006 Jasmine participated in the Producers Network at Marche du Film Cannes and was one of nine producers invited to Film Independent's Producers Lab with director/writer Aldo Velasco's *SuperMacho*. *SuperMacho* was one of ten projects accepted into Fast Track, a joint program of the Los Angeles Film Festival and Filmmaker magazine. Jasmine also curates special events for the Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles, including a tribute to sitar virtuoso Ravi Shankar co-presented by the Los Angeles Philharmonic. In this capacity she brought to the festival artists such as the Bombay Dub Orchestra, Cheb i Sabbah, L and Ginger Shankar (*Passion of Christ*, *Born Into Brothels*).

**Amy Kaissar** ('99) – Founder and Managing Director, Epiphany Theater Company. Epiphany Theater Company was founded in 1999 to support the work of early career theater artists. These artists hail from some of the country's most prestigious training programs and represent the visionary leaders of tomorrow's American

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Theater. Over the years Epiphany has worked with over 150 early career theater artists, presented four world premieres and two New York Premieres, developed over 40 new plays through readings and workshops, had nine artists go on to Broadway productions, and a host of artists move on to major regional theaters, and received the support of the New York State Council on the Arts, New York State Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, The Dramatists Guild Fund, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, The Katherine Dalglish Foundation, and The Nancy Quinn Fund.

**Kathryn Moroney** ('99) - Currently serves as Associate Director of Education at Geva Theatre Center. Kathryn has contributed to the arts-in-education programs at Lincoln Center Institute, the Women's Project, Theatre for a New Audience's Shakespeare Fellows and The Long Wharf Theatre. Formerly, Literary manager for Primary Stages for four years. Member: Lincoln Center Theatre Directors Lab, The Women's Project Directors Forum, Western New York's Regional Learning and Leadership Network. Past President of CMU New York Drama Alumni Clan.

**Zach Morris** ('99) - directed or choreographed at: Lincoln Center, South Street Seaport (LMCC's Sitalines Series) Dance Theater Workshop, La Mama etc, Dance New Amsterdam, Williamsburg Arts Nexus and The Merce Cunningham Studio. Received the Henry Boettcher Award for Excellence in Directing, NYC Fringe Fest Award for Excellence in Choreography and has been granted residencies or commissions from Danspace Project, Dance Theater Workshop, Topaz Arts, La Mama, LMCC, the Swarthmore Project, the Great Neck House, Epiphany Theatre Company and others. Co-Director of Third Rail Projects, a NYC based arts organization dedicated to bringing art to the public through an array of media and is organizer and moderator of the Dance Film Lab.

**Stephanie Riggs** (Gaultney) ('00) - Directed and produced theatre and film productions in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Hong Kong and New York. Her producing credits range from television pilots and independent films to the critically acclaimed live action comedy show "The Ian Bigg Show" In independent film she has directed the feature documentary "Some Assembly Required" and the narrative short "Bystander". As a freelance entertainment consultant she has developed content for Disney Creative Entertainment, HBO and Louis Anderson's 33 Productions. She is currently directing a documentary budgeted at one million dollars for her production company, Sunchaser Entertainment.

**Ken Kaissar** ('00) – Currently pursuing MFA in Playwriting at Columbia University. Assistant director at Florida Studio Theatre. Produced world premiere of *A Ritual of Faith* at the City Theater, Pittsburgh PA and remounted it in Chicago. He has directed for Epiphany Theater Company, The Turnip Theatre, The Culture Project, Columbia University (Arts Uptown Program) and The Immediate Theatre Company.

**Russell Kaplan** ('01) – Artistic Director – New Sounds theatre. Worked on development of new plays with Assembly Productions, Milk Can theatre, Soho Rep, Arena Stage, The workshop Theatre CO. and Pulse Theatre/OPAL and has directed work for Untitled Theatre Company#61, the NY International Fringe Festival, Where Eagles Dare and The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's late-nite series. His musical compositions have been featured at the NY International Fringe Festival, Merkin Hall, Columbia University, Wings Theatre, The Duplex Cabaret Theatre, third Rail Dance and Williamsburg Arts Nexus.

**Habib Azar** ('02)—Daytime Emmy Award in 2007 for Directing for *As the World Turns*.

**Anya Martin** ('03) Anya went on to receive her MFA in Theatre from Sarah Lawrence College. As a director, actor, dramaturg, or educator Anya has worked at such regional theatres as Arena Stage in D.C., and City Theatre in Pittsburgh, as well as numerous theatres in New York, such as the Vineyard Theatre, the West End Theatre, Epiphany Theater Company, and International Wow. As a playwright Anya's *Anthropological Data: with actual human footage!* an original ensemble satire based on immigration issues, was featured in the Carnegie Mellon University's International Festival. Her play *Teatro Latino de Pittsburgh* was commissioned

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by the Unseam'd Shakespeare Company and presented at Open Stage Theatre as a part of Pittsburgh 250 celebrations. Anya has taught at SUNY Westchester Community College, and from 2006-2007, she was the Head of Theatre at Lancaster Country Day School a private co-ed college preparatory school.

**Renee Blinkwolt** ('04) –Currently majoring in producing at Columbia, Renne is Co-Producing Director of the Ostara Group. A company dedicated to finding and fostering work of talented early-career theatre artists. She was Season Producer in 2006 for Ensemble Studio Theatre's five full-scale productions and their 2007 Marathon of One Act Plays. Her Stage Management credits included (Off bway): *Black and White Blues* and *Who is Floyd Stearn*.

**Coral Compagnoni** ('04) Management training with Modus Entertainment – Lisa Blume and the Wayans Brothers.

**Crystal Manich** ('04) Directed *Orpheus and Eurydice* at Pittsburgh Opera and *The Coronation of Poppea* at Opera Omnia in New York. *The Coronation of Poppea* was praised in reviews by The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, and Musical America among others.

**Mathew Gardiner** ('05) – resident Assistant Director at Signature Theatre in Wash. DC., Choreographer/co-director "Reefer Madness" at Studio Theatre, DC. Soon will direct "Tick Tick Boom" at MetroStage in DC. Recently directed and choreographed "Candide" at Catholic University of America.

**Michael Patranek** ('05) – Currently resident director of Tip My Cup Productions. Presently working on a production of one act plays by Jason Williamson (former grad playwright) at Roy Arias Studios. Producing a live action and video piece for "Grassy Knoll Productions. Recently directed "The Jazz Messenger for the New York Fringe Festival.

**Evan Cummings** ('06) - Recently directed "Love Letters" for Epiphany Theater Company to critical acclaim.

**Alexander Orbovich** ('06) - Completed season at Cherry Lane Theatre as resident Assistant Director. The final play of the season, he assisted Danellia Topal (undergraduate '96).

## ALUMNI NETWORK

The School of Drama has the most active theatre alumni organization in the country, with large chapters in Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago:

- West Coast Drama Alumni Clan: [www.wcdac.org](http://www.wcdac.org)
- New York Drama Alumni Clan: [www.nydac.org](http://www.nydac.org)
- Third Coast Network: <http://thirdcoast.alumni.cmu.edu/>

For further information, see the Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama website at [www.drama.cmu.edu](http://www.drama.cmu.edu).