

Jonathan Slaff - 55 Perry Street (1M) NYC 10014 - 212/924-0496 - Representing:

THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY

Crystal Field, Executive Artistic Director - 155 First Ave., NYC 10003 - (212) 254-1109
www.theaterforthenewcity.net - for immediate release

THEATER FOR THE NEW CITY SETS ITS FOURTEENTH DREAM UP FESTIVAL Annual buffet of daring live performances will play August 23 to September 13. All events at Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (at E. 10th Street).

WHERE AND WHEN:

August 23 to September 13, 2026

Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (at E. 10th Street)

Presented by Theater for the New City, Crystal Field, Executive Artistic Director

\$15-\$25, buy tickets: <http://dreamupfestival.org>

Photos of selected shows: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/wJv7XXocedHgabBPA>

Festival's website: <http://dreamupfestival.org>

NEW YORK, August 3 -- From **August 23 through September 13, 2026**, **Theater for the New City (TNC)**, under the direction of Crystal Field, will present the **14th Dream Up Festival**, an annual festival of new theatrical and performance works.

The festival is curated by TNC Literary Manager **Michael Scott-Price**. This year's lineup includes 23 productions comprising 18 world premieres, one special engagement, one workshop, and three shows with previous production histories.

The festival presents new work by emerging and established artists, with an emphasis on experimental and nontraditional performance. The festival seeks productions that explore unconventional approaches to theater and performance. Audiences will savor the excitement, awe, passion, challenge and intrigue of new plays from around the country.

Tickets for Dream Up Festival productions range from **\$15 to \$25**.

This year's festival will also contain, as associated events, two play readings from TNC's New City, New Blood Reading Series, a monthly staged reading program that showcases new plays in early development. It is curated by Michael Scott-Price and offers audiences a chance to share feedback with developing playwrights.

Michael Scott-Price, director of the festival, has directed productions at New York venues including Chashama, Dixon Place and Collective Unconscious. His original works have been presented throughout the United States as well as in Canada, Ireland and England. At Theater for the New City, he also curates the "New City, New Blood" reading series and "Scratch Night," a works-in-progress series. He is Artistic Director of Asteroid B612 Theatre Company, which debuted in the 17th Annual HERE American Living Room Series in 2006. His training includes study at the School of Physical Theatre in London; Odin Teatret in Holstebro, Denmark; and the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA) in Wrocław, Poland with Eugenio Barba and company. He is an alumnus of the Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab and serves on the Board of Directors of Theater for the New City.

Theater for the New City (TNC) maintains a distinctive commitment to high artistic values and community service. In an effort to make theater accessible to all, TNC presents an assortment of distinct, exceptional events each year, including the Lower East Side Festival of the Arts, which celebrates the artistic and cultural diversity of TNC's Lower East Side community; an annual Village Halloween Ball and an annual summer Street Theater tour that presents a free, live, original musical in thirteen neighborhoods in all five boroughs. Most of these are free to the public. (www.theaterforthenewcity.net)

Theater for the New City is located at **155 First Avenue at East 10th Street** in Manhattan. For Dream Up Festival tickets, visit **dreamupfestival.org**. For additional information, call the TNC box office at **212-254-1109**.

DREAMUP FESTIVAL 2026

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF PRODUCTIONS

All events at Theater for the New City, 155 First Avenue (at E. 10th Street).

BUY TICKETS: WWW.DREAMUPFESTIVAL.ORG - (212) 254-1109

INFO AS OF AUGUST 3, 2026 - SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

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"#OneInnocentWoman," written and directed by Matt Okin

Assistant Director/Dramaturg: Haia Bchiri

Production Stage Manager: Joseph Liberti

Company Manager: Mandy Decker

World Premiere, 100 minutes no intermission

Johnson Theater, \$20

8/31 @ 6:30 PM, 9/2 @ 6:30 PM, 9/3 @ 9:00 PM, 9/6 @ 2:00 PM, 9/7 @ 6:30 PM, 9/9 @ 9:00 PM

"#oneinnocentwoman" is a rhythmic burst of comedic, melodramatic, tragic, and highly theatrical energy featuring five actors portraying 40+ characters in the challenging life of one American female as she ages from seventeen into her forties. A modern-era "period" piece, moving from the late 1980's through the very early

2000's, the stylized nature of the play allows for an ultimately poignant reflection on what gender roles mean today. www.mattokin.com

"042: Failure to Furnish" by Jess Foley, directed by Oliver Conant

World Premiere, 25-35 min.

Community Space Theater, \$15

9/1 @ 9:00 PM, 9/3 @ 6:30 PM, 9/5 @ 2:00 PM, 9/6 5:00 PM, 9/7 @ 6:30 PM

Set in 1837 New Orleans during the Great Panic, "042: Failure to Furnish" is a trail of questions launched initially by a found object ---a barren silver charm bracelet. The title exposes a modern administrative cruelty, taken from code 042 Failure to Furnish--the Pennsylvania designation used to cut Medicaid, a 'bureaucratic mechanism' as a former Philly caseworker, Foley calls the kill code. From these twin sparks of physical and systemic restriction, the play balloons into a bleak Southern Gothic drama set in a New Orleans mansion during the Great Economic Cotton Crash of April 1837.

"Be A Man," written and directed by James Bastone

Associate Producer: Kevin Bocicaut

Technical Director: Caroline Armour

World Premiere, 85 min.

Cabaret Theater, \$18

9/4 @ 6:30 PM, 9/5 @ 8:00 PM, 9/6 5:00 PM, 9/7 @ 6:30 PM, 9/8 @ 6:30 PM, 9/9 @ 9:00 PM, 9/10 @ 9:00 PM, 9/11 @ 6:30 PM, 9/12 @ 2:00 PM

After being dumped by his girlfriend, Richard decides to attend the Be A Man seminar hosted by John Hancock. What begins as a simple seminar divulges into a reckoning of Richard's love life, masculinity, and future. Comedic, poignant, and timely "Be A Man" is a show for all audiences wrestling with what it means to live and love in the 21st century.

"The Box," written and directed by Patrick Hamilton

Produced by Patrick Hamilton and Terry Nguyen

World Premiere, 80 min.

Community Space Theater, \$20

8/23 @ 8:00 PM, 8/24 @ 9:00 PM, 8/25 @ 9:00 PM, 8/29 5:00 PM, 9/1 @ 6:30 PM, 9/3 @ 9:00 PM

A taut, darkly comedic psychological thriller about masculinity, fear, and the quiet violence of expectations. On the night Stephen plans to propose to his girlfriend Alice, her father arrives first with a shocking ultimatum that forces Stephen to confront the darkest truths about their relationship. As the night spirals out of control, Stephen must hide a devastating secret while fighting to save the future he thought he wanted.

"California's Fault," written by Michael Matasci, Directed by Karen Slade

Producers: Ian Slade and Will Potter

World Premiere, 90 min.

Cabaret Theater, \$15

8/28 @ 9:00 PM, 8/29 5:00 PM, 8/30 @ 8:00 PM, 8/31 @ 6:30 PM, 9/1 @ 9:00 PM

A conflicted young man in rural California predicts a devastating earthquake with consequential fallout from his friends.

"City of Ladies" by Lorraine Liscio, directed by Myriam Cyr

Cat Strammer: Costumes

Len Schabel: Lights

Set design: Len Schnabel, Cat Stramer and Myriam Cyr

World Premiere, 90 min.

Johnson Theater, \$20

9/5 @ 8:00 PM, 9/8 @ 6:30 PM, 9/10 @ 6:30 PM, 9/11 @ 9:00 PM, 9/12 5:00 PM, 9/13 @ 11:00 PM

One book, Two dukes. A kingdom on the brink. Christine de Pizan's City of Ladies--where feminist defiance meets the fires of history.

"The Book of the City of Ladies," written in 1405 by Christine de Pizan, is a pioneering feminist allegorical work. It defends women against medieval misogyny by constructing a metaphorical city populated by famous, moral, and intellectual female figures from history, religion, and mythology. <https://punctuate4.org/our-story>

"The Edge Motel" by Tom Rowan, directed by Ron Lasko

Producers: Marty Goldin @ TBD Capital, LLC and Spin Cycle

Workshop Production, 110 min.

Community Space Theater, \$18

9/4 @ 6:30 PM, 9/6 @ 2:00 PM, 9/8 @ 6:30 PM, 9/11 @ 6:30 PM, 9/12 @ 2:00 PM, 9/13 @ 2:00 PM

On a road trip through Colorado, two college students have picked up a charming if mysterious hitchhiker. When an unexpected blizzard forces them to stop at a motel in Denver, the two have to decide whether to invite their new friend to share their room for the night or let him fend for himself in the freezing cold with no money. When a shocking secret about the hitchhiker suddenly comes to light, the stage is set for a night of political debate, secret intimacies, and surprise plot twists. With: Beckett Fleet, Hannah Heil and Max Andrae.

"ENOUGH: The Agreement" by Jonathan G Galvez, Directed by Kristen Keim

Produced by Graeme Cohen

World Premiere, 75 min.

Community Space Theater, \$18

8/23 @ 2:00 PM, 8/25 @ 6:30 PM, 8/26 @ 9:00 PM, 8/28 @ 6:30 PM, 9/5 @ 8:00 PM, 9/6 @ 8:00 PM

All they wanted to do was escape the overwhelming world and be left alone. But when you get help from the Organization, be careful what you wish for. www.EnoughTheAgreement.com

"Happy Anniversary Darling!" written and directed by Darcy Sternberg

30 min.

Cabaret Theater, \$15

8/23 @ 2:00 PM, 8/24 @ 6:30 PM, 8/25 @ 9:00 PM, 8/26 @ 6:30 PM 8/27 @ 9:00 PM

A collection of wacky spirits visits a bored couple celebrating their anniversary. Can they find love lost? Watch their transformation!

"Hear Me," a musical theater work in American Sign Language (ASL) and English

Anita Riggio - concept, book, lyrics

Sila Shaman – music

Monica H. Anderson – director

Katie Coleman – music supervisor/orchestrator,
staged reading, 120 min.

Johnson Theater, \$15

9/1 @ 6:30 PM, 9/3 @ 6:30 PM, 9/4 @ 6:30 PM 9/5 @ 2:00 PM, 9/6 5:00 PM

Will Champion, a notoriously single, hearing children's book illustrator, meets Claire Harper, an independent, Deaf single mom and former dancer whose sensual visual language is as lovely and compelling as she is. Will unwittingly summons Beast, his protector/tormentor, the embodiment of the demons that have kept Will from love itself. As Will's relationship with Claire grows more serious, so does Beast's interference. Will's attempt to banish Beast results in his creating pictures and ultimately, a book about a form-changer called "Brindlebeast," whose transformations metaphorically mirror the events in Will's life. When a tragedy occurs, and Beast's defenses fail Will, love forces him to make peace with the Beast and claim a life he'd only imagined. <https://www.hearmemusical.com>

"It's not the end of the world" by The Bank Street Players

Written by Gina Garcia and Yohana Parrado

Directed by Juanita Santafe Sabogal

World Premiere, 90 min.

Community Space Theater, \$18

8/26 @ 6:30 PM, 8/27 @ 9:00 PM, 8/29 @ 2:00 PM, 8/30 5:00 PM, 9/2 @ 9:00 PM, 9/9 @ 9:00 PM, 9/10 @ 9:00 PM

A work of fiction inspired by a dystopian scenario rooted in today's reality. In a world facing mounting crises on multiple fronts, a tech billionaire searches for his next major investment, convinced that chaos is inevitable. Five competing proposals are presented to him, but only one will prevail.

"Love Insurance" by Rita Mercury, directed by Brooke Tyler Benson

World Premiere 100 min.

Community Space Theater, \$20

9/2 @ 6:30 PM, 9/3 @ 9:00 PM, 9/4 @ 9:00 PM, 9/6 @ 2:00 PM, 9/7 @ 9:00 PM, 9/9 @ 6:30 PM, 9/12 @ 8:00 PM

What if love could be insured? What if heartbreak could be prevented before it ever happened? In a world where emotions are carefully managed and love is treated like the greatest financial risk, one unexpected encounter begins to crack a perfectly designed system. Blending sharp comedy, romance, magical realism and quiet philosophy, "Love Insurance" is a 100-minute journey through rain, tea, music, memories, impossible choices and the question we all eventually face: is a safe life worth living if it means never truly loving? Bring your favorite tea mug.

"Lullaby" by Nestor Guzman, directed by Rebecca Aparicio

1 hour 45 min.

Cabaret Theater, \$15

9/1 @ 6:30 PM, 9/2 @ 9:00 PM, 9/3 @ 6:30 PM, 9/5 @ 2:00 PM, 9/6 @ 8:00 PM

Blending magical realism with grounded family drama, "Lullaby" explores gender, identity, generational cycles, and the quiet ways love tries to survive inside broken systems. Moving between the spiritual and the deeply human, the play asks whether people are doomed to repeat the lives handed to them or if choosing to love differently is enough to change the story.

"Magnus," written and directed by Wendy Biller.

Movement director Wendy Biller.

World Premiere, 80-85 min.

Community Space Theater, \$15

8/27 @ 6:30 PM, 8/28 @ 9:00 PM, 8/29 @ 8:00 PM, 8/30 @ 2:00 PM 8/31 @ 6:30 PM

The Weimar Republic clashes with Hollywood in this raucous dance comedy. Two aging queer writers hope their project on sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld, whose sex institute was destroyed by the Nazis, will be the success story they are hoping for as they pitch it to a Hollywood producer. A tale narrated by Hirschfeld himself, told with an ensemble of dysfunctional characters played by Aaron Applebey, Tabitha Bradley, Taylor Brandon, Caroline Hawthorne, Louise Heller and S. Brian Jones.

"Mahogany Hall," book and lyrics by Katharine McNair; music and score by Michael Gallant

World Premiere, 65-75 min.

Community Space Theater, \$15

9/8 @ 9:00 PM, 9/9 @ 6:30 PM, 9/10 @ 6:30 PM, 9/11 @ 9:00 PM, 9/12 5:00 PM

A dramatic musical about the women living and working in the Mahogany Hall brothel in New Orleans' Storyville District in 1929. The piece takes its audience to where magic meets the banal and difficult circumstances that women, both past and present, have faced – and continue to. While the musical acknowledges harsh realities, it's full of lively music and hope, as Mahogany Hall's characters are determined to set a new course for themselves and gain their economic freedom.

"Queensbridge" by Marlin Thomas, directed by DeMone Seraphin

World Premiere, 75 min.

Cabaret Theater, \$15

8/29 @ 8:00 PM, 8/30 @ 2:00 PM, 8/30 5:00 PM, 9/5 @ 5:00 PM, 9/8 @ 9:00 PM, 9/10 @ 6:30 PM, 9/11 @ 9:00 PM, 9/12 5:00 PM, 9/13 @ 2:00 PM

Queensbridge is the largest public housing project in North America. This production renders it through an oral history project that became a play.

During an oral history interview, a decades-long resident of the nation's largest housing project recounts the trauma of living there, his complicity in it, and his attempt at redemption. A man called Pharaoh holds court for an interviewer recording the history of his home. Around him, the neighbors of six decades return. Each interview is a record of how a person arrives in a place like this and what the place makes of them. The play is political but not partisan. Threaded through every memory is the Voice of NYCHA -- the smooth, official

account of the development, contradicted line-by-line by the people who actually lived there.

<https://QueensbridgeStagePlay.US>

"Shangri-La-La," music and lyrics by Mike Meier, directed by Mike Meier, book by Mike Meier and Peter Giambalvo

Special Engagement, 60 min.

Johnson Theater, \$25

8/29 @ 2:00 PM

Las Vegas has always sold dreams by the room. When hotel mogul Steve Wynn needs a spectacular headliner to fill the 3,044 rooms of his new Mirage Hotel, a devilish dealmaker helps transform two ambitious German magicians into "Siegfried & Roy" - tiger royalty and the glittering face of a newly family-friendly Vegas. Narrated by the ghost of Bugsy Siegel, "Shangri-La-La" is a fast, irreverent comedy musical about celebrity, illusion, power, and the machinery that manufactures myth. Inspired by the writer's own surreal legal collision with Siegfried & Roy, the show pulls back the curtain on the business of fame - then lets the tiger collect the bill.

"Somewhere, Virginia, a play" by John Harney, directed by Anna Rebek

World Premiere, 90 min.

Johnson Theater, \$18

9/8 @ 9:00 PM, 9/9 @ 6:30 PM, 9/10 @ 9:00 PM, 9/11 @ 6:30 PM, 9/12 @ 2:00 PM

Clare, an ambitious congressional chief of staff who abruptly quit and ghosted everyone shortly after the 2024 election, summons three former colleagues to an old house in the Virginia countryside. As the guests, whose lives and careers have been upended by that election, try to figure out the reason for this odd reunion, Clare's bedridden mother upstairs is a constant, if unseen, presence. And outside, the fields and meadows, which armies fought over long ago, seem to be taking on a life of their own.

"Syzygy" by Candice Lynne Fox, directed by Peter Marinaro

World Premiere, 60 min.

Johnson Theater, \$20

9/4 @ 9:00 PM, 9/5 @ 5:00 PM, 9/6 @ 8:00 PM, 9/7 @ 9:00 PM, 9/12 @ 8:00 PM

When a mother dies, she leaves behind more than just furniture. She leaves the architecture of everything her children became, and everything they couldn't. In one hour, in one house, two siblings who share blood and almost nothing else must sort through the wreckage of a life of conflicting memories. A darkly comic excavation of the gravity that pulls opposites into perfect alignment. Inspired by Jungian psychology, "Syzygy" explores the idea that some forces only reveal themselves in opposition and that you cannot fully exist until you reckon with the one person who reflects everything you are not. One act. Sixty minutes. A lifetime of debris.

Syzygytheplay.com

"The Theft" by Sofia Dao, directed by Sofia Figueroa

Vick Liu Productions

World Premiere, 75-90 min.

Community Space Theater, \$20

8/30 @ 8:00 PM, 8/31 @ 9:00 PM, 9/2 @ 6:30 PM, 9/4 @ 9:00 PM, 9/5 @ 5:00 PM

Somewhere in an office space inside a shopping mall, a support group for kleptomaniacs gathers to heal, confess, and survive temptation.

"This Memory doesn't Taste like a Birthday Cake," written and directed by Andi Cui

World Premiere, 70-90 min.

Performed by Athena Yin.

Cabaret Theater, \$15

8/23 @ 8:00 PM, 8/24 @ 9:00 PM, 8/25 @ 6:30 PM

In an emotional breakdown on her 18th birthday, L meets her 28-year-old self in her imagination. As the 28-year-old cooks herself a birthday meal, memories of her childhood and her incarcerated parents resurface from the dishes. For the first time, L tries to tell those unnarratable experiences and make sense of her past. Andi Cui, born and raised in China, actively interrogates culturally specific themes that are significant to her. She often experiments with the body, puppets, projection, and “rituals”, creating diverse embodiments and layered narrative strategies.

"Vatican Missteps" by A.N. Suleiman, directed by Barbara Schofield Suleiman

Designer: Janet Webb

World Premiere, 60 min.

Cabaret Theater, \$20

8/23 @ 5:00 PM, 8/26 @ 9:00 PM, 8/27 @ 6:30 PM, 8/28 @ 6:30 PM, 8/29 @ 2:00 PM

The play is set in Vatican City 1958, just 12 years after World War Two. Pope Pius the Twelve was silent during the conflict. We follow the consequences of this silence through three young women who have come to Rome to start a new life.

"Wilhelm Reich Unleashed: a Comedy about Cosmic Orgone Energy, Flying Saucers, and Magic Sex Boxes," written and directed by William Cane

Stage Manager: Rudy Estremera

Wardrobe Designer: Tingyu Hu

Lighting and Sound Designer: Jim DeLois

World Premiere, 115 min includes 10 min intermission

Johnson Theater, \$20

8/23 @ 5:00 PM, 8/24 @ 6:30 PM, 8/25 @ 6:30 PM, 8/26 @ 6:30 PM, 8/27 @ 6:30 PM, 8/28 @ 6:30 PM, 8/29 @ 8:00 PM, 8/30 @ 5:00 PM

Inspired by the legend of Don Juan, the play recasts Wilhelm Reich as the Don Juan of psychiatry--a brilliant, reckless seducer whose obsessions with orgone energy, flying saucers, and magic sex boxes lead him toward comic disaster. <https://newluxtheater.com/reich.html>

ASSOCIATED READINGS

As part of this year's Dream Up Festival, there will be two installments of TNC's The New City, New Blood Reading Series, a monthly staged reading program that showcases new plays in early development. Curated by Michael Scott-Price, it offers audiences a chance to share feedback with developing playwrights.

"Pleasant Dreams," written and performed by Robin Hirsch

Reading

Community Theater, FREE, optional \$5 donation

8/4 @ 6:30 PM

Robin Hirsch writes: "Thirty years ago, the director of a Jewish Festival in Berlin uses my café (The Cornelia Street Café in the West Village) to scout talent for his Eleventh Annual Jewish Days of Culture. He buys a copy of my book (Last Dance at the Hotel Kempinski . . .) and invites me to come to Berlin to perform and give a lecture. On the way, I stop in Amsterdam with my sister from London to unveil a stone at the grave of our uncle Georg, philanthropist, refugee advocate, Auschwitz survivor. In Berlin, we discover the graves of our grandparents, whom we had never known: both our parents had managed to escape; both our grandfathers had died before Hitler; both our grandmothers had lived to die in concentration camps. On my last night I perform in the ruins of the synagogue at which my parents worshiped, in front of a backdrop of the Brooklyn Bridge, and invite the audience to follow me over the bridge for a nightcap at the Cornelia Street Café.

"A Dream Beyond This Pain" by Jonathon Ward, directed by Lori Kee

Reading

Cabaret Theater, FREE, optional \$5 donation

9/13 @ 11:00 AM

A drama of three generations of a middle-class family living the American Dream on Long Island taking care of life's pains with prescribed medications and recreational substances. When the grandson's dream falls apart as a result of opioid addiction and the grandfather has to leave his home because he's mixing up his medications, and the father refuses to take his prescribed SSRI, each generation's aspirations for the family come unraveled. They must find a way to rediscover a shared dream that will sustain them as a family and as individuals living in a new American Reality.

#

All shows (except the readings) are available for review on all performance dates except where noted.

Photos of selected shows: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/wJv7XXocedHgabBPA>