


# Virtual Show Program

Saginaw Valley State University Department of Theatre  
Malcolm Field Theatre for Performing Arts

Directed by  
Peggy Mead-Finizio



## The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds

Written by Paul Zindel

Saginaw Valley State University Department of Theatre

PRESENTS

# THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE MOON MARIGOLDS

Written by Paul Zindel

***Stage Manager***

Katelynn Bell

***Dramaturgy***

Isabel Losa\* & Dana Samalik\*

***House Manager***

Abbey Kuhns\*

***Scenic Designer***

Jerry Dennis

***Sound Designer***

Briellé Myles-Williams

***Lighting Designer***

Drea Brown\*

***Costume Designer***

Jen Lothian

***Props Designers***

Scout McCulloch\* & Dana Samalik\*

***Make-up & Hair Designer***

Rebecca Dubs

***Intimacy Director***

Tommy Wedge

***Media Designer***

Lucas Inman\*

***Director***

Peggy Mead-Finizio

***Mentor to Student  
Designers and Crew***

Peggy Mead-Finizio

***Mentor to Theatre  
Management***

Tommy Wedge

\*Denotes an SVSU Theatre Scholarship

***CONTENT WARNING:*** Please be advised that “The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds” has themes of physical and psychological abuse and depicts non-epileptic seizures onstage.

**No animals were harmed during rehearsals or performances for this production.**

Saginaw Valley State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution. It encourages diversity and inclusion and provides equal opportunity in education, employment, all of its programs, and the use of its facilities. It is committed to protecting the constitutional and statutory civil rights of persons connected with the University.

Saginaw Valley State University is committed to providing work and learning opportunities without regard to age, color, disability, gender identity, genetic information, height, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, veteran status, weight, or on any other basis protected by state, federal, or other applicable law, and to achieving its objectives in compliance with applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination.

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## Cast

**Beatrice**

**Tillie**

**Ruth**

**Nanny**

**Janice**

**Peter**

Lexie Schultz\*

Paige Tuckerman

Zoe Gilbert\*

Lila Duvendack\*

Daija Thornton

Salvador

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## Production Team

**Director**

**Assistant Director**

**Intimacy Director**

**Scenic Designer**

**Lighting Designer**

**Sound Designer**

**Props Designers**

**Costume Designer**

**Make-up and Hair Designer**

**Stage Manager**

**House Manager**

**Publicity**

**Dramaturgy**

**Production Manager**

Peggy Mead-Finizio

Abbey Kuhns\*

Tommy Wedge

Jerry Dennis

Drea Brown\*

Briellé Myles-Williams

Scout McCulloch\*

Dana Samalik\*

Jen Lothian

Becca Dubs

Katelynn Bell

Abbey Kuhns\*

Zoe Gilbert\*

Dana Samalik\*

Isabel Losa\*

Peggy Mead-Finizio



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## Production Staff

**Scene Shop Supervisor**  
**Scene Shop Assistant**  
**Assistant Production Manager**  
**Assistant Stage Manager**  
**Assistant Costume Designer**  
**Assistant Sound Designer**  
**Assistant Lighting Designer**  
**Lead Electrician**  
**Animal Handlers**

**Logo Designer**  
**Dept. of Theatre Office Worker**  
**Administrative Secretary**  
**Mentor to Student Designers and Crew**  
**Mentor to Student Theatre Management**

Jerry Dennis  
Lucas Inman\*  
Lucas Inman\*  
Emma Koch  
Cat Saylor  
Eric Durette\*  
Alex Dubowski\*  
Alex Dubowski\*  
Priscilla Nazarijchuk  
Jason Elliot  
Abbey Kuhns\*  
Abbey Kuhns\*  
Kelly Helmreich  
Peggy Mead-Finizio  
Tommy Wedge

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## Production Crew

### Electricians

**Light Board Operator**  
**Sound Board Operator**  
**Costume Crew**

**Prop Run Crew**  
**Stagehands**

**Department Intern**  
**Department Intern Support**

Thomas Kittle  
Paige Tuckerman  
Brooke  
Alex Vanderhyde  
Alex Vanderhyde  
Eric Durette\*  
CC O'Brian  
Lydia Bolzman  
Isabel Losa\*  
Trinity Caldwell  
Hailee Austin  
Senia Brown  
Jay Hill  
Brooke Schroeder  
Angela Drzewski



# A Note from the Director

The Effects of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds is a play I have wanted to work on since I was in 8th grade. When reading the script as an 8th grader, I was excited because I was a similar age to Tillie and could see myself in her insecurities and her drive to persevere. Through the years, I have revisited the script and imagined what might have happened to Tillie after the events in the play. Our version of the play places her in 9th grade and I hope younger audience members can relate to the story of our protagonist. I still relate to her in some ways. Maybe you will too.

I have had several interviews with SVSU publications as part of getting the word out about our production. Each interview has asked different questions, but the two questions have been the same - “Why this play? Why now?”. These are very good questions.

These characters and their circumstances make me stop, pause, and think. They are each shaped by past events and this manifests in so many different ways during their interactions. The playwright, Paul Zindel, has placed them in certain circumstances with their defined pasts, and their “present” continues to shape them. Each of them is resilient in their own way and I find this inspiring. They are certainly in a place of trauma, but each have moments where they shine and their humanity boils to the surface. There is much to learn and reflect on from their experiences in the play.

Coming out of the pandemic and back to live theatre has been exciting and challenging all at once. I wanted to choose a script that had some connection for me, and one where the preparations would be fueled by looking forward to a live audience. The story in the play is not an easy one and each character has their own personal issues. This fact did not deter me from wanting it to be the story to tell right now. The challenges we have all been through with COVID somewhat mirror the challenges these characters go through. In some ways, I am able to relate to them more having experienced the pandemic and am now trying to find a “new normal”.

The “whys” can also be answered by me wanting to explore a family dynamic. Everyone’s family looks different. I grew up in a fairly untraditional household and have found those circumstances have shaped the person I am today. You may find this to be true yourself. The ways I interact with family members, friends, colleagues, and general public can all point back to my own personal family dynamic. Telling this story now allows all of us to go on the “journey” with these characters to explore their family dynamic as well as reflect on who we are and how we got to where we are now. How does your family dynamic shape who you are becoming and are as you walk through the world? This story is a good place to start in answering these questions.

As we sit in the theatre together for this live performance, I hope we can all take a moment to reflect on two things: being together after being apart for so long and thinking about where we have been and where we are going, just like Tillie.

- Peggy Mead-Finizio





# A Note from the Dramaturgs

It is important to note that *Gamma Rays* exploration of emotional trauma is based on fact. The story is a reflection of Paul Zindel's own life. Born on May 15, 1936, Zindel described his childhood home as a "house of fear." His father, also named Paul, left his mother Betty for another woman when he was just two years old. His mother was unable to keep a steady job and moved from town to town, so Zindel and his older sister (also named Betty) found themselves the target of their mother's vengeance and resentment. Their mother frequently threatened suicide and constantly berated him and his sister. Domestic abuse continues to be a prevalent issue in American society, with over 20,000 calls placed to the National Domestic Hotline daily.

Understandably eager to leave home, Zindel enrolled at Wagner College in Staten Island and became a high school chemistry teacher at Tottenville High School. One of his female high school students did a science experiment titled "The Effects of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds and Celestial Cabbage," giving him the inspiration for this show. His female student's academic success highlighted the difference between her educational opportunities in the 1970s vs that of his mother Betty in the decades prior. In 1950 only 1.2% of women in America would attend college, while now women surpass men in higher education with 50.7%. This revolution was fueled by the *Equal Opportunity in Education Act of 1972*, that stated "the policy of the United States that all children enrolled in public schools are entitled to equal educational opportunity without regard to race, color, sex, or national origin." In this production the characters of Beatrice and Tillie embody that generational difference, with the daughter Tillie passionate about science and learning and her mother Beatrice dismissive of school and focused solely on working.

Another detail from Zindel's personal life that informed *Gamma Rays* was his experience with mental health. At age 15 he was diagnosed with tuberculosis and isolated in a sanatorium for 18 months. There was little information about this disease, so his doctors believed he was just in hysteria. Being quarantined for so long allowed him to witness the treatment of fellow patients with other poorly researched conditions. He nods to this through the character of Ruth, who is mentioned to have spent time in the sanatorium due to her non-epileptic seizures. In the 1970s, research regarding non-epileptic seizures was inconsistent and widely incorrectly seen as a mental disorder, and would remain so until the 1990s when more effective pharmaceuticals became available.

These threads of abuse, denied opportunities, and isolation clearly affected the mental health of the characters in *Gamma Rays*. Although in Zindel's time mental health was widely dismissed and seen as a private matter, today society better recognizes the importance of both physical and mental wellness. Resources are much more accessible, including our own Mental Health and Wellness Center located here in Curtiss Hall ([linked here](#)). While traumatic stories like Zindel's happen every day, his play serves as a reminder that no one is alone, there is help; we just have to reach.

- Isabel Losa & Dana Samalik



# Production Spotlights



Lexie Schultz\*

**Beatrice:** (she/her/hers) Lexie is a fourth year double major in Music and Theatre here at SVSU. She is so excited to return to the Malcolm Field Theatre stage for *The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds*! She was recently seen in the Open Jar Institute's College Showcase in New York City, *Tiny Beautiful Things*, *Top Girls*, *Silent Sky*, as well as many others here at SVSU. She would like to thank the entire cast, crew, production team as well as her friends and (most importantly) her family for their unconditional, earth-shattering love and support.

"let us live like flowers; wild and beautiful and drenched in sun." — Ellen Everett



Paige Tuckerman

**Tillie:** Paige is a first-year Theatre major with a minor in Legal Philosophy. This is her first time acting at Saginaw Valley State University, but could previously be found behind the scenes of *Tiny Beautiful Things* as an electrician and light board operator. She would like to thank her amazing family for supporting her through anything and everything, and her friends for always being a shoulder to lean on. Paige would also like to thank the cast and crew for their incredible job on this production.

Enjoy the show!



Zoe Gilbert\*

**Ruth/Publicity Coordinator:** Zoe Gilbert is a second year Theatre Major, with a minor in Communications. She most recently worked on SVSU Theatre's production of *Tiny Beautiful Things* on Publicity and House Management. She serves on the executive boards of Alpha Sigma Alpha and Alpha Psi Omega. She would like to thank Peggy for giving her the chance to fall in love with Ruth and this story, and Lexie and Paige for being on this journey with her!



Lila Duvendack\*

**Nanny:** Lila is a freshman with a double major in Theatre and Psychology. This is her first time acting at SVSU and she is thrilled to be playing the role of Nanny in this production. Previously they were a prop designer for *Tiny Beautiful Things*. They are so thankful to be a part of an amazing theatre company with so many great people, and would like to thank her fellow cast and crew for being so great to work with.



Daija Thornton

**Janice:** Daija is a second year Pre-Health student from Lansing, MI. This is her first time acting in a Saginaw Valley production and she is very excited to bring the character of Janice to life. She has had a great time getting to see her fellow co-stars work and grow with the help of the directing team. She is very thankful for her family's continued support in everything that she does, and she hopes everyone enjoys the show!





Salvador

**Peter:** Salvador is a small town bunny with big dreams. Abandoned by his family, Salvador had a difficult past. His love of theatre was inspired by his adoptive mom, Priscilla, who is a performance artist and dancer. She noticed immediately his natural talent for the dramatics which is why she named him after the artist Salvador Dalí. Salvador is so excited to be playing the part of Peter as his very first role! He always knew he was born to be on stage! Salvador would like to give a special thank you to his sister Belle for all her love and support. He dedicates this performance to her.



Peggy Mead-Finizio

**Director/Production Manager:** Peggy is an active director, theatre designer, technical theatre instructor, choreographer, dance instructor, and arts administrator. She holds MFA degrees in Theatre Arts and Choreography from the University of Iowa and is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre at Saginaw Valley State University. When she is not directing, she is one of the designers for lights and sound for the SVSU main stage productions and is a mentor to student designers and technicians. She was recently the director for *Silent Sky* by Lauren Gunderson at SVSU. Her most recent lighting design was for SVSU's production of *Tiny Beautiful Things* directed by Dave Rzeszutek.



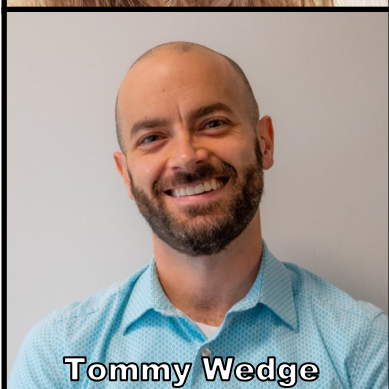
Abbey Kuhns\*

**Assistant Director/House Manager:** Abbey is a senior Theatre major with a focus in media design and direction. Her previous direction work includes *No.6*, *A Doll House*, and *Top Girls*. Her media experience ranges from working as the projections designer for *Silent Sky* and *Tiny Beautiful Things*, assisting with the Theatre department publicity, and creating the season's show posters.



Katelynn Bell

**Stage Manager:** Katelynn Bell is looking forward to her first experience as a Stage Manager for this show. She is a Creative Writing Major and a Music Minor, but has been involved in the theatre department for a year now out of sheer love of the craft and the people she gets to see every day. She is hoping you all enjoy the show!



Tommy Wedge

**Intimacy Director:** Tommy is an Assistant Professor of Theatre at SVSU and has been active in teaching, directing, stage management, and stage combat. Tommy holds an MFA in Directing from The University of South Dakota and a BS in Theatre from South Dakota State University. Professional memberships include Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and The Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD) where Tommy holds the rank of Advanced Actor Combatant. Tommy will be directing SVSU's upcoming production of *Urinetown: The Musical*.





**Assistant Production Manager:** Lucas is a fifth-year Theatre major and multidisciplinary designer from Saginaw. He has been a sound designer (*Proof*, *Roustabout*, *Lonely Planet*, *Silent Sky*), lighting designer (*A Doll's House*, *Animal Farm*), and media designer (*Joan of Arc*, *Top Girls*) at SVSU. He has also worked at venues all over Michigan including Bay City Players (*Cabaret*), Pit & Balcony (*I and You*), Midland Center for the Arts (*Mamma Mia!*), Lebowsky Center for the Arts (*Holiday at Lebowsky*), and Interlochen Center for the Arts.



**Costume Designer:** Jennifer is an Adjunct Professor of Theatre, Costume Designer, Milliner, Collage Artist, and Costume Crafts Artisan from Linwood, MI. Jennifer holds an MFA in Production Design and Technology with an emphasis in Costume Design from Ohio University, and a BA in Theatre and Communication Education from SVSU. Some of Jennifer's favorite theatrical pieces she has worked on include *Summer and Smoke*, *People, Places, and Things* (Ohio University), *The Rocky Horror Show* (Rebel Theatre Company), *Top Girls*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Assassins*, and *The Cripple of Inishmaan* (SVSU).



**Lighting Designer:** Drea is a second-year Theatre major with a focus in design and tech. She is so excited to be making her lighting design debut with this show! She has worked with Santa Cruz Shakespeare and Pit & Balcony as a sound designer, engineer, and technician. At SVSU, she most recently worked as the stage manager for *Tiny Beautiful Things*, as well as previous shows as an electrician. She would like to extend her gratitude to the department for their wonderful support, especially all of the people that have helped to mentor her throughout this new process.



**Sound Designer:** Briellé is a senior Theatre and Spanish double major and is excited to be making her sound design debut! She is normally seen acting or stage managing but decided to try something new and step out of her comfort zone. She has recently been seen in SVSU's production of *Tiny Beautiful Things* and *Top Girls* and has recently stage managed SVSU's production of *Silent Sky*. She would like to thank her friends, family and anyone else who has supported her on this new adventure!





Rebecca Dubs

**Make-up & Hair Designer:** Rebecca is a graduate student in SVSU's Master of Public Administration Program and is happy to be back in theatre! Previously, Becca attended SVSU while obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in English Education, with Minors in Theatre/Communications Education and Sociology. This will be the eighth show she has been a designer for at SVSU, with her favorites being *Roustabout*, *Animal Farm*, *A Doll House*, and *Joan of Arc*. Becca would like to give a special thanks to Jerry for all he has taught her throughout this show!



Scout McCulloch\*

**Props Designer:** Scout is a second-year Theatre and Secondary Education major. She is so excited to be one of the prop designers for this show! She has previously been seen in SVSU's production of *Tiny Beautiful Things*, *Top Girls*, and *Animal Farm*, as well as working backstage for other shows. She would like to thank her family and friends for always being an endless source of encouragement throughout this show!



Dana Samalik\*

**Dramaturg/Props Designer:** Dana is a first year Communication and Theatre Education major. This is her first production as Co-Dramaturg and Co-Prop Designer. She was previously a part of SVSU's production of *Tiny Beautiful Things* as Letter Writer #3. She has loved being a part of the theatre program at SVSU and has been delighted to work with such an amazing cast. She would like to thank her friends and family for their endless support throughout her career. She wouldn't be here without them! Enjoy the show!



Isabel Losa\*

**Dramaturg:** Isabel Losa is a freshman at SVSU and she is majoring in theatre. This is her first time being a dramaturg. She was part of the props crew for *Tiny Beautiful Things*. She has greatly appreciated the theater program given her the chance to explore what she can do backstage and hopefully onstage. She has loved working with the amazing cast and crew of the SVSU theater department. She wants to thank her family and friends for always believing in her and given her shot to follow her dreams. Enjoy the show!!

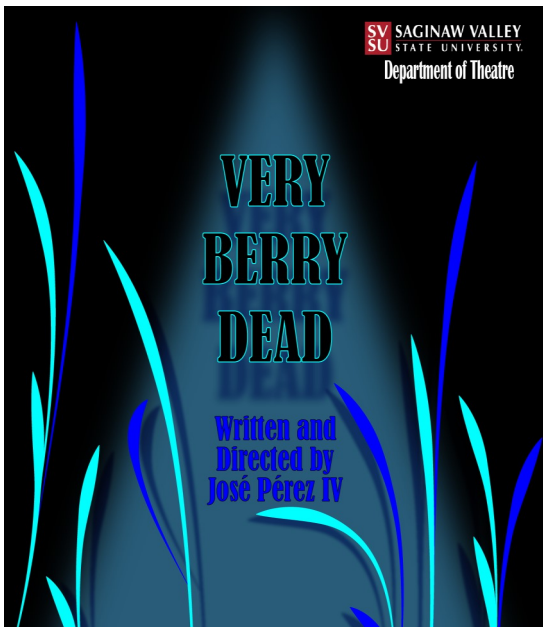




# Upcoming Productions

Tickets—\$15

**Note:** You do not have to be a Theatre major or minor to audition or be involved in production process. All are encouraged and welcomed!



## *Very Berry Dead* by José Pérez IV

### Audition Information:

Monday, November 28, 2022 @ 7:00pm

Tuesday, November 29, 2022 @ 7:00pm

### Performance Information:

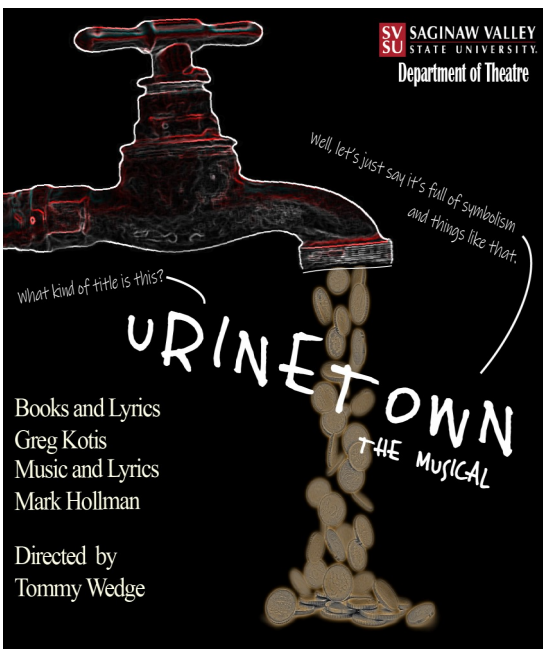
Wednesday, February 15, 2023 @ 7:30pm

Thursday, February 16, 2023 @ 7:30pm

Friday, February 17, 2023 @ 7:30pm

Saturday, February 18, 2023 @ 7:30pm

The tragic loss of multiple family members brings those remaining back to the farm to bury the dead in the ancestral cemetery. However, Vermont state burial laws turn out to be a bit more strict than imagined, and space is getting tight in the old family graveyard. Who gets in, and who gets ditched? That's left up to the head of the family, the two feuding grown children, a rancher, a pagan, a visitor, and the town health officer who was not prepared for this kind of circus.



## *Urinetown, the Musical* by Greg Kotis and Mark Hollman

### Audition Information:

Monday, January 23, 2023 @ 7:00pm

Tuesday, January 24, 2023 @ 7:00pm

### Performance Information:

Wednesday, April 12, 2023 @ 7:30pm

Thursday, April 13, 2023 @ 7:30pm

Friday, April 14, 2023 @ 7:30pm

Saturday, April 15, 2023 @ 7:30pm

Sunday, April 16, 2023 @ 3:00pm

A 20-year drought has led to a government-enforced ban on private toilets. The citizens must use public amenities, regulated by a single company that profits by charging admission for one of humanity's most basic needs. Amid the people, a hero decides that he's had enough and plans a revolution to lead them all to freedom!

Inspired by the works of Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill, *Urinetown* is a hilarious musical satire of the legal system, capitalism, social irresponsibility, populism, bureaucracy, corporate mismanagement, municipal politics and musical theatre itself!

For updates on our upcoming season or information on how to get involved, check out our social media pages!

[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [SVSU's Theatre Page](#)

## ———— Acknowledgements ————

### **Full Time Faculty**

Peggy Mead-Finizio, MFA  
David Rzeszutek, MFA  
Tommy Wedge, MFA

The Office of President Dr. Donald Bachand

The Office of Dr. Deborah Huntley,  
Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs

### **Adjunct Faculty**

Sherri Angelloti, MSE  
Dan Gerics, MA  
Caleb Knutson, MA  
Jennifer Lothian, MFA  
Dakotah Myers, MA

The Office of Dr. Marc Peretz,  
Dean College of Arts and Behavioral Sciences

The Office of University Communications

### **Departments of RPW & Theatre**

Administrative Secretary Kelly J. Helmreich

## — Special Thanks —

### **Office of University Communications**

Tim Inman, Director of Marketing Support

Michael Randolph, Marketing Specialist for Videography and Photography

**Kathy Pelkki and the Biology Department** - for “Buttercup” the cat skeleton

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**Jerry Dennis** - for assistance with SFX makeup

**Tommy Wedge** - for assistance with management and direction

**Vectorworks** - for the donation of software to support SVSU productions and classrooms

**Campus Facilities** - for technical support

**SVSU IT Department** - for technical support and resources

**Mike Holiday and Information Technology Services**

**Andy Sharrow and The Conference and Event Center**

**Facility Operations** - for assistance with the HVAC



**VECTORWORKS®**  
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**THE  
CONFERENCE CENTER  
AT SVSU**







*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by*  
**David M. Rubenstein.**

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*Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.*

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.