

Press Contact:

Titi Oluwo, 212.560.4906, oluwo@wnet.org

Press Materials: allarts.org/pressroom

House Seats: Fire This Time Festival

ALL ARTS to stream 7 plays presented at this year's 11th season of The Fire This Time Festival (named in honor of James Baldwin), which annually premieres new works by select emerging Black playwrights.

*Premieres Sunday, August 2 on the ALL ARTS free [streaming app](#) & allarts.org, with daily releases on [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) at 10 a.m. ET
August 2 – August 8*



“Assumed Positions” by Natyna Bean. © Garlia Jones

House Seats: Fire This Time Festival premieres Sunday, August 2 on the birthday of James Baldwin, who inspired the name of the festival. All seven of the plays that presented during Season 11 of The Fire This Time Festival will be available to stream for free on the ALL ARTS streaming app and allarts.org. The plays will also be released daily on the ALL ARTS YouTube channel and Facebook page at 10 a.m. ET from Sunday, August 2 to August 8.

These world premiere 10-minute plays are the flagship of the Fire This Time Festival with works written by emerging playwrights of the African Diaspora. These selected playwrights of diverse works of theater have been deemed the best and brightest from a pool of national and international playwrights. The season 11 cohort includes Jay Mazyck (“If Men Were Flowers”), Deneen Reynolds-Knott (“Antepartum”), Mario (Mars) Wolfe (“Wish I Could P. (Pay It No Mind)”), Natyna Bean (“Assumed Positions”), Tyler English-Beckwith (“Maya and Rivers”), Cyrus Aaron (“Panopticon”) and Niccolo Aeed (“One Morning Soon”).

Featured 10-Minute Plays:

- 1. If Men Were Flowers***

Short Description: “If Men Were Flowers” is Jay Mazyck's meditation on a different, softer side masculinity.

Long Description: “If Men Were Flowers” is playwright Jay Mazyck's meditation on a different, softer side of masculinity. Three vibrant flowers notice their landscape is changing and look to Dalia, who tends to them, for answers to this threat to their livelihood. Filmed at the Fire This Time Festival at The Kraine Theater.

Playwright: Jay Mazyck

Director: Ebony Noelle Golden

Starring: James Edward Becton, Trevor Latez Hayes, Joshua W. Josey, Cary Hite & Mizz June

2. *Antepartum*

Short Description: Faced with broken expectations of their birth plans, two women find respite together.

Long Description: In this new work by Deneen Reynolds-Knott, two pregnant women find themselves paired together in the antepartum unit of a hospital. Faced with the broken expectations of their birth plans, the women find respite and understanding as they realize they are not alone in their experience. Filmed at the Fire This Time Festival at The Kraine Theater.

Playwright: Deneen Reynolds-Knott

Director: Ebony Noelle Golden

Starring: Antu Yacob, Paris Cymone & Cary Hite

3. *Wish I Could P. (Pay It No Mind)*

Short Description: Marsha P. Johnson shepherds the lost back home in this new play by Mario (Mars) Wolfe.

Long Description: Marsha P. Johnson shepherds the lost back home in this new work by playwright Mario (Mars) Wolfe. Under a streetlamp on a New York City night, Ariel and Jamil face difficult news about their future. Wolfe evokes the comforting language of fairy godmothers and Disney princesses as Ariel navigates her way. Filmed at the Fire This Time Festival at The Kraine Theater.

Playwright: Mario (Mars) Wolfe

Director: Ebony Noelle Golden

Starring: Mizz June, Linda LaBeija & Joshua W. Josey

4. *Assumed Positions*

Short Description: Playwright Natyna Bean invites us to question how well we really know the ones we love.

Long Description: Playwright Natyna Bean invites us to question how well we really know the ones we love in this new work. When Naya returns home from abroad after two years she is startled to discover new information about her partner that calls into question the very foundation of their relationship. Filmed at The Fire This Time Festival at the Kraine Theater.

Playwright: Natyna Bean

Director: Ebony Noelle Golden

Starring: Antu Yacob & Linda LaBeija

5. *Maya and Rivers*

Short Description: "Maya and Rivers" search for new life in this new play by Tyler English-Beckwith.

Long Description: Playwright Tyler English-Beckwith explores what people are willing to risk in the hopes of finding new life in her play, "Maya and Rivers." The two lovebirds escape from their dying home-planet for a final rendezvous on the moon. Filmed at the Fire This Time Festival at The Kraine Theater.

Playwright: Tyler English-Beckwith

Director: Ebony Noelle Golden

Starring: Linda LaBeija, Paris Cymone & Trevor Lateg Hayes

6. *Panopticon*

Short Description: As the world changes around them, two Bed-Stuy residents try and keep some perspective.

Long Description: Outside a bodega in Bed-Stuy, two middle-aged men reflect on the changes they've witnessed in their neighborhood. How can they keep their perspective when everything seems to be changing around them? And whatever happened to those 25 cent bags of chips the bodega used to carry? Filmed at The Fire This Time Festival at the Kraine Theater.

Playwright: Cyrus Aaron

Director: Ebony Noelle Golden

Starring: James Edward Becton, Cary Hite & Paris Cymone

7. *One Morning Soon*

Short Description: Niccolo Aeed's new work follows a religion as it grows and changes.

Long Description: In "Epistles, One Morning Soon," playwright Niccolo Aeed uses the killing of a Messiah as a springboard to explore how a religion can twist and change from its roots. Told mostly through letters (inspired by the epistles in the New Testament) this work asks us to consider what it means to be saved. Filmed at The Fire This Time Festival at the Kraine Theater.

Playwright: Niccolo Aeed

Director: Ebony Noelle Golden

Starring: Paris Cymone, James Edward Becton, Mizz June, Trevor Lateg Hayes, Cary Hite, Antu Jacob, Joshua W. Josey & Linda LaBeija

Production Credits

House Seats: *Fire This Time Festival* is a ALL ARTS original WLIW LLC production for WNET.

For The Fire This Time Festival, A.J. Muhammad is Associate Producer. Julienne Hairston is Producer. Cezar Williams is Artistic Director. Kelley Nicole Girod is Executive Director & Founder. Presented in collaboration with Frigid New York. Filmed at The Kraine Theater.

For ALL ARTS, Annie Benjamin is Director. Jake King & Elizabeth Svokos are Producers. Mary Ann Toman is Editor. Kristy Geslain is Senior Producer. Joe Harrell is Senior Director. Diane Masciale and Neal Shapiro are Executives in Charge.

About ALL ARTS

ALL ARTS is breaking new ground as the premier destination for inspiration, creativity and art of all forms. This New York Emmy-winning arts and culture hub is created by WNET, the parent company of New York's PBS stations. With the aim of being accessible to viewers everywhere, ALL ARTS's Webby-nominated programming – from digital shorts to feature films – is available online nationwide through allarts.org, the free ALL ARTS app on all major streaming platforms, and @AllArtsTV on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com), and [Twitter](https://www.twitter.com). New York area TV viewers can also watch the 24/7 broadcast channel. For all the ways to watch, visit allarts.org/everywhere.

Leadership support for ALL ARTS is generously provided by Jody and John Arnhold, Sue and Edgar Wachenheim III, the Kate W. Cassidy Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Rosalind P. Walter, and The Agnes Varis Trust.

About WNET

WNET is America's flagship PBS station: parent company of New York's [THIRTEEN](#) and [WLIW21](#) and operator of [NJTV](#), the statewide public media network in New Jersey. Through its new [ALLARTS](#) multi-platform initiative, its broadcast channels, three cable services (THIRTEEN PBSKids, Create, and World), and online streaming sites, WNET brings quality arts, education, and public affairs programming to more than five million viewers each month. WNET produces and presents a wide range of acclaimed PBS series, including *Nature*, *Great Performances*, *American Masters*, *PBS NewsHour Weekend*, and the nightly interview program *Amanpour and Company*. In addition, WNET produces numerous documentaries, children's programs, and local news and cultural offerings, as well as multi-platform initiatives addressing poverty and climate. Through THIRTEEN Passport and WLIW Passport, station members can stream new and archival THIRTEEN, WLIW, and PBS programming anytime, anywhere.

About The Fire This Time Festival

The Fire This Time Festival was founded in 2009 by playwright Kelley Nicole Girod to provide a platform for early career playwrights of African and African American descent. Since its founding, the Festival has produced the plays of dozens of emerging writers whose works explore a wide range of themes and perspectives. The Festival also supports actors, directors, and technical personnel to help seed the pipeline with diverse talent and amplify underrepresented voices in theater in New York and beyond.

The Fire This Time playwrights have gone on to have their plays produced in cities across the United States and work as writers in film and television. The Fire This Time Festival has evolved into an annual January event and continues to grow, expanding upon its core short play presentations to offer panel discussions, staged readings, a playwright's lab and other programs. The Festival has become a destination for diverse audiences, producers, and artists seeking new possibilities and opportunities in contemporary theater.

###