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Postmodern Theatre in the United States (1950s–2010s)

A. Major American Events of the 1950s–70s, TIMELINE

- 1955 (March), Claudette Colvin, a pregnant black 15 year old, was arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama, as required by “Jim Crow” segregation laws (named after the minstrelsy dance)
- 1955 (November), the Vietnam War, also involving Cambodia and Laos, began and continued for two decades with Americans supporting the capitalist South Vietnamese against the communist North and its Viet Cong guerrillas, resulting in an estimated one to four million dead, including 58,000 US service members, and the unification of Vietnam under communist control
- 1955 (December), Rosa Parks repeated Colvin’s defiance of Jim Crow, leading to a one-year bus boycott, during which Martin Luther King was arrested and his house was bombed, yet the boycott resulted in an end to segregation on Montgomery public buses
- 1960, in Greensboro, North Carolina, four black college students sat at a “whites only” Woolworth’s lunch counter, starting protests that involved crowds of people (with that lunch counter desegregated in five months), repeated in many cities across the US
- 1962, the USSR challenged the US by placing nuclear missiles in Cuba, after the US put such missiles in Italy and Turkey, but an agreement to remove them was reached, as the early “Cold War” almost became a hot

- one, with the policy of “Mutually Assured Destruction” (MAD) creating over 60,000 nuclear weapons in the US and USSR
- 1963 (April), Martin Luther King led segregation protestors in Birmingham, Alabama, facing police with attack dogs and high-pressure water hoses, until he was arrested (the 13th of his 29 arrests), put in jail, and then penned a famous “Letter” calling for whites to join the black civil rights movement in the use of nonviolent disobedience to protest unjust laws
 - 1963 (August), King gave his “I have a dream” speech, while leading the “March on Washington”
 - 1963 (November), President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas
 - 1964, the US Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination based on race, religion, sex, or national origin—in voter registration, segregated schools, and employment situations
 - 1965 (February), Malcolm X, human rights activist and former leader of the Nation of Islam was assassinated by members of that militant group
 - 1965 (August), the Watts Riots occurred in Los Angeles, after alleged police brutality toward a black motorist stopped for drunk driving, which resulted in 6 days of looting and arson, 34 deaths, and \$40 million in damages
 - 1966 (August), the United Farm Workers was chartered in the AFL-CIO, through the leadership of César Chávez and Dolores Huerta, with subsequent strikes in Texas and California, protesting the low wages and unsafe working conditions of migrant, Latinx laborers
 - 1966 (October), the Black Panther Party, a militant group founded by Bobby Seale and Huey Newton, started armed citizens’ patrols in Oakland, California, to monitor and challenge police brutality, also creating community social programs, such as free breakfasts and health clinics—with chapters developing across the US and then in Britain and Algeria in the 1970s—but resulting in the gunfire deaths of police officers and party members in Oakland, triggering an extensive FBI program of surveillance, infiltration, and harassment
 - 1967, during the “Summer of Love,” young “hippies” gathered in San Francisco, London, and other cities to express their opposition to the government, consumerism, and Vietnam War
 - 1968 (April), Martin Luther King was assassinated, evoking riots in over 100 US cities
 - 1968 (June), Robert Kennedy, brother of John, was assassinated while running for president
 - 1969 (June), the Stonewall Riots occurred in New York when police raided a gay bar (the only one in that city where men could dance

together), abusing homosexuals who resisted arrest, and then thousands of people rioted for several days, with public displays of violence and effeminacy that were unusual at the time

- 1969 (July), Apollo 11 astronauts landed on the moon, in competition with the Soviet Union, but that led to later cooperation with Russia on an international space station
- 1969 (August), the Woodstock Festival created a three-day gathering of 400,000 young people who wanted rock music and peace in the Catskill Mountains near New York
- 1970, with college students protesting across the country against the Vietnam War and US bombings in Cambodia, nine were wounded and four killed at Kent State University, Ohio, by National Guard soldiers (including two students just walking by)
- 1972, President Nixon visited China and began normalizing relations with the Communist government there after 25 years of conflict
- 1973 (January), the Supreme Court decision on *Roe v. Wade* overturned state anti-abortion laws
- 1973 (March), the US pulled its forces out of Vietnam and the war ended two years later with the North beating the South, unifying the country under communism
- 1973 (May), Skylab was launched as the first US space station
- 1974, Richard Nixon resigned (avoiding impeachment) due to the Watergate scandal, with Vice-President Gerald Ford becoming President and pardoning Nixon
- 1975, President Ford survived two assassination attempts
- 1978, President Jimmy Carter began a peace accord process at Camp David (near Washington), meeting with the leaders of Israel and Egypt
- 1979 (March), a partial meltdown of the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Pennsylvania caused a release of radioactive gases and iodine, costing a billion dollars to clean up, but subsequent tests showed no significant increase of cancer in the area
- 1979 (November), after the change in Iran from monarchic to theocratic rule, from the Shah supported by the US to the Shia Muslim leader Ayatollah Khomeini, student revolutionaries took 52 Americans hostage in the US Embassy in Tehran for 444 days, triggering a conflict with the US government and an energy crisis in the US, with cars lining up at gas stations and the tripling of the cost of oil
- 1979 (December), facing bankruptcy, the car-maker Chrysler got a big government loan to survive

B. American Avant-Gardists

1. After World War II, *postmodern* experiments decentered the modernist authority of literary texts, theatre scripts, and historical meta-narratives (as bearing a transcendent wholeness of essential parts and universal truths). Instead, they valued audience collaboration with fragments and diverse truths, involving politics, philosophies, puppetry-animation, clowning, and anthropologies—often mixing high and popular art.
2. In 1947, Julian Beck (1925–85) and Judith Malina (1926–2015) founded the Living Theatre in New York, influenced by Artaud, Brecht, and Piscator (who taught “objective acting” at his Dramatic Workshop in the 1940s). “The Living” staged avant-garde European plays by Brecht, Pirandello, and Cocteau in the 1950s, starting the Off-Broadway movement.
3. In 1959, The Living staged a Pirandellian-naturalistic play by Jack Gelber (1932–2003), *The Connection*, directed by Malina. It showed a producer and writer staging a play with “real” addicts, i.e., jazz musicians waiting for drugs to arrive, as their payment for being in a play. Actors put needles in their arms to “shoot up,” causing legal concerns. They also begged the audience for drug money during intermission. A film adaptation of *The Connection* by Shirley Clarke, with many of the same actors, was censored due to its obscene language in 1961, but screened a year later.
4. In 1963, The Living staged *The Brig*, by ex-Marine Kenneth H. Brown (1936–), directed by Malina with an Artaudian depiction of a Marine Corps prison (through painful drills and punishments for the actors in rehearsals). When authorities threatened to evict the company for refusing to pay taxes during the Vietnam conflict, they staged an illegal performance of *The Brig* and were arrested, along with the audience.
5. For the rest of the 1960s and into the 1970s, The Living toured Europe, including Communist countries, and Brazil (where they were also arrested), creating collective adaptations of *Antigone* and *Frankenstein*. They also staged their most famous work, *Paradise Now*, which came to the US in 1969, occasioning arrests for “indecency,” with naked actors onstage inviting audience members to join and hug them, in what came to be known as a “group grope.”
6. The Living continued its pacifist-anarchist productions after Beck’s death in 1985 and Malina’s in 2015, with a *Know Your Rites* tour in 2016.
[Did the pacifist-anarchist theatre of The Living go too far—and what might be too much Artaudian pain or Brechtian collective action for actors and viewers today?]

7. Joseph Chaikin (1935–2003), former member of The Living, began the Open Theater with Megan Terry and other students of Israeli acting theorist Nola Chilton in 1963. They developed Chilton’s “post-Method,” post-absurdist, collective techniques most famously in Terry’s *Viet Rock* revue (1966), the first rock musical addressing the Vietnam War. They also staged Jean-Claude van Itallie’s *The Serpent* (1969), combining an autopsy, TS Eliot poem, biblical genesis figures, and King and Kennedy assassination scenes.
8. Megan Terry (1932–) used her experiences with the Open Theater to develop her own acting technique, “transformation,” improvising overheard dialog through playfulness. This resulted in sudden changes of mood and character that disrupted audience immersion with earthy language, political content, musical bits, and vaudevillian humor. Terry left the Open Theater after *Viet Rock* and wrote plays for the Firehouse Theater in Minneapolis and the Magic Theatre in Omaha, while also writing for radio and television.
9. Gerome Ragni (1935–91), a cast member in *Viet Rock*, developed its anti-war, countercultural themes and improvisation techniques into the rock musical revue, *Hair* (1967), co-written with James Rado, with music by Galt MacDermot. It was a hit off and on Broadway, with its depiction of illegal drug use, flag desecration, and nudity. It was made into a more narrative, musical film, without nudity, by Miloš Forman (1979).
[Are the “transformations” of collective improvisatory acting and rock musicals more appropriate for popular entertainment or political protest—then and now, onstage or onscreen?]
10. In 1952, Herbert Blau (1926–2013) and Jules Irving (1925–79) founded the Actor’s Workshop of San Francisco, which helped begin the “Regional Theatre Movement” of professional companies outside New York. Influenced by the social activism and ensemble structure of the Group Theatre, they brought European plays to the US west coast, especially those by Brecht, Beckett, Ionesco, Genet, Pinter, and Osborne, while also staging American writers O’Neill, Miller, and Williams.
11. In 1957, Blau and the Actor’s Workshop presented Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* in San Quentin Prison, an event made famous in Martin Esslin’s book, *The Theatre of the Absurd*, with evidence from the prison newspaper that the play was palpably real to the inmates, as they waited absurdly.
12. In 1971, Blau founded the KRAKEN group at Oberlin College in Ohio, staging experimental, collective, physically centered productions, such as *The Seeds of Atreus* (1973), *The Donner Party, Its Crossing* (1974), *Elsinore* (1975–76, developed in 6 months from *Hamlet* scenarios), and

Crooked Eclipses (1977, based on Shakespeare's sonnets). This ensemble included future theatre leaders Julie Taymor and Bill Irwin.

13. Through his directing, teaching, and books, Blau developed performance theories of the "ideograph" (as a vortex of apprehended energy), "ghosting" (with uncanny, déjà vu moments), "blooded abstraction" (with spectators sharing the mortality of the actor onstage), and the "vanishing point" of theatre in its "thinking through of illusion." He drew on various postmodern theories from France, especially those of Jacques Lacan (French Freud), Julia Kristeva, (feminine *chora*), Jacques Derrida (deconstruction and *écriture*), Roland Barthes (photographic punctum), Guy Debord (society of the spectacle), Jean Baudrillard (simulations eclipsing the real), and Jean Francois Lyotard (little stories replacing meta-narratives).

[How do Blau's philosophical yet physical experiments relate to theatricality onstage, onscreen, and in everyday life, in previous decades and today?]

14. Founded in 1959 by RG Davis and continuing without him, from 1970 to today, the San Francisco Mime Troupe developed political satires focusing on capitalism, sexism, and war. They used commedia figures and jazz, with free performances in Golden Gate Park, sometimes in conflict with police.
15. In 1963, German-American Peter Schumann (1934–) organized the Bread and Puppet Theater in New York, which moved in 1970 to rural Vermont (where it continues today), with the collective creation of very large scale, puppet scenes focused on progressive politics, plus fresh-baked bread and aioli shared with the audience.
16. Mabou Mines, founded in 1970 by Lee Breuer (1937–), JoAnne Akalaitis (1937–), and others, created political theatre while drawing on pop-cultural images, including cartoons, as with Breuer's "animations" series. It continued into the twenty-first century with a new theatre building that opened in 2017.
17. As white artists, writer-director Breuer and composer Bob Telson (1949–) developed a black musical version of Sophocles's *Oedipus at Colonus*, called *The Gospel at Colonus*. It premiered at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1983 with Morgan Freeman as lead actor, accompanied by gospel and blues singers, including Clarence Fountain and the Five Blind Boys of Alabama.
18. Breuer was also famous for adapting Shakespeare's *King Lear* as *Lear* (1990) with Ruth Maleczek (1939–2013) playing a Southern matriarch (as king) who divides her land, demanding love tragically.

19. As a director, Akalaitis became famous for her postmodern, highly visual productions, such as setting Beckett's *Endgame* in a subway tunnel, at the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge in 1984. Beckett threatened legal action, but then agreed just to have his objection noted in the program: "My play requires an empty room and two small windows. ... [This production] is a complete parody of the play as conceived by me. Anybody who cares for the work couldn't fail to be disgusted by this" (qtd. in McCarthy).

[How closely should directors follow stage directions in Beckett's plays or others from various time periods and cultures?]

20. Julie Taymor (1952–) studied at Lecoq's mime school in 1969 (learning about bodily expressions and masks), apprenticed with Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theatre, and acted in Blau's KRAKEN group in the 1970s. She later developed his "ideograph" as an emblematic gesture, a minimal action or mask showing the essence of character, emotion, and moment. After working with Blau, Taymor studied traditional Javanese mask and movement theatre in Indonesia for four years. She directed works there with puppets she created and then in New York for several decades, most famously *The Lion King* musical (1998). She also directed various films, such as *Titus* and *The Tempest*, based on Shakespeare's plays, but giving the latter a female "Prospera."
21. Bill Irwin (1950–) worked with Blau's KRAKEN group at Oberlin in the 1970s, then attended Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Clown College and started the Pickle Family Circus in San Francisco. Later, he moved to New York as a "new vaudevillian" with thoughtfully reflective mime shows, such as *The Regard of Flight* (1982). It offered clown tricks and sketches parodying the avant-garde "new theatre." Irwin also worked as a serious and comic actor in theatre, film, and television (creating "Mr. Noodle" on *Sesame Street*).

[How does the postmodern puppetry and clowning of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, Mabou Mines, Taymor, and Irwin relate to earlier puppet and clown traditions in Asia and Europe—or to the inner theatricality of the brain and outer theatricality of popular culture and politics today?]

22. Richard Schechner (1934–) led the Performance Group in New York (1967–80), developing his theory of "environmental theatre" in the group's Performing Garage, influenced by Meyerhold and Artaud regarding "found space." With no designated seating area, spectators were allowed to choose which spaces to occupy, even parts of the set. In Schechner's *Dionysus in 69* (1968), loosely based on Euripides's *The Bacchae*, naked actors smeared

one another with blood, while moving one actor through a collective mass of moving bodies as a rebirth and death canal (for Dionysus at the start and Pentheus at the end). Wearing clothes again, they took the audience outside after the play for a public political protest, showing the influence of Artaud and Brecht. A documentary film by Brian de Palma (1970) used a split screen at times to capture more of the immersive experience.

23. In 1979, Schechner developed the Performance Studies program at New York University. With his anthropological research and sharing of performance practices, he encouraged the spread of that new academic field around the world, resulting in the Richard Schechner Center for Performance Studies at the Shanghai Theatre Academy in China in 2005. In 1992, Schechner started another theatre group in New York, East Coast Artists, leading them until 2009.
24. In 1979, members of the Performance Group formed the Wooster Group, led by Elizabeth LeCompte (1944–). Their “post-dramatic” productions mixed texts from different sources with deconstructed pieces of famous scripts, often read by actors at microphones or on video monitors, as an ironic collage of various media fragments. These sometimes involved cross-dressing and blackface, or life-recollections by actor Spalding Gray. For example, *L.S.D.* [... *Just the High Points*], in 1984, included pieces of *The Crucible*, but was forced to close due to a legal threat from Arthur Miller. *Route 1 and 9* included parts of Wilder’s *Our Town* in 1986 (Savran). The Wooster Group also staged a deconstructed version of O’Neill’s *The Emperor Jones* in 1992 with Kate Valk (1956–) wearing blackface and a kimono in the lead role (revived in 2006). Valk has performed in every Wooster Group show since 1981, with LeCompte also continuing to lead the company.
25. Ron Vawter (1948–94) was raised by a military family and worked as a US Army recruiting officer in New York City. He then acted with Schechner’s Performance Group and became a co-founder of the Wooster Group with LeCompte and Gray, performing with them until his death in 1994. He was featured in their show, *North Atlantic* (1984), a satire of the American military imagination, set on an aircraft carrier near the end of the Cold War.
26. Willem Dafoe (1955–) apprenticed with Schechner’s Performance Group and then joined the Wooster Group, acting with them until 2000, while also starting a film career in 1980. (He was married to LeCompte from 1977 to 2004.)

27. Spalding Gray (1941–2004) worked with Schechner and LeCompte, then left the Wooster Group in 1980 to develop solo monologs based on his life, including his psychoanalytic therapy, attempts to write novels, and experiences as a film actor. Films were also made of his monologs: *Swimming to Cambodia* (1987), *Monster in a Box* (1991), and *Gray's Anatomy* (1996).
- [How are Schechner's environmental theatre and performance studies related to earlier European practices and theorists—or to LeCompte's post-dramatic Wooster shows and Gray's monologs, or similar work today?]**
28. Artist Allan Kaprow (1927–2006) coined the term “happening” in 1957 and eventually organized 200 such performances. They were non-scripted, yet site specific, partly planned, partly improvised events, involving audience participation, often with interdisciplinary, multimedia elements. Happenings contributed to the broader category of “performance art,” which eventually included monologs like those of Spalding Gray.
29. Performance art also started with the “body art” of visual artists staging an event using their own bodies as material and documenting it for later display. Chris Burden (1946–2015) arranged to be shot in the arm with a rifle from 16 feet away (*Shoot*, 1971) and lay faceup on a Volkswagen Beetle with nails driven into his hands as if crucified (*Trans-Fixed*, 1974). Vito Acconci (1940–2017) walked behind random people in New York for as long as possible (*Following Piece*, 1969) and ostensibly masturbated for eight hours a day under a ramp in an art gallery, where visitors could hear and walk over him, while he spoke fantasies about them (*Seedbed*, 1972). Carolee Schneemann (1939–) read from a scroll that she pulled out of her vagina while naked, parodying critics' views of her films as having personal clutter (*Interior Scroll*, 1975).
30. Director-choreographer Martha Clarke (1944–) created performance art with multidisciplinary, plotless, dreamlike, moving tableaux of dance theatre, such as *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (1984, based on a painting by Hieronymus Bosch, c. 1500).
31. Jennifer Tipton (1937–) started as a ballerina and then, in the 1960s, became a designer, bringing dance techniques to theatre, with side and low-level lights evoking mystery.
32. Eric Bogosian (1953–), like Spalding Gray, presented his work as an autobiographical, writer-actor-character “monologist” and as a playwright with *Talk Radio* (1987, film 1988, based on a radio host who was assassinated in 1984) and *subUrbia* (1994, film 1996).

33. Richard Foreman (1937–) founded his Ontological-Hysteric Theater in 1968, defined as “total theatre” with a “disorientation message” (instead of a cathartic goal). It valued design, text, and live performers equally to refocus the relation between them and the audience, with video added in 2005. Foreman directed over 50 of his own scripts and various scripts by others.
34. After studying architecture and painting, director Robert Wilson (1941–) developed grand spectacles with his post-dramatic “operas,” such as the five-hour *Einstein on the Beach* (1976), in collaboration with minimalist composer Philip Glass (1937–). It involved huge formalist set pieces, actor-dancers repeating phrases or movements, and surreal images to show possible associations in the physicist’s mind.
[How do the postmodern disorientations of happenings, body art, monologists, Foreman’s Ontological-Hysterical Theater, or Wilson’s operas make demands on the audience as well as performers—reorienting their inner theatres?]
35. Helping to introduce European absurdist plays to the US, Alan Schneider (1917–84) directed over 100 shows, specializing in Beckett, Albee, and Pinter. He also directed Beckett’s only screenplay (*Film*, 1965, 24 minutes) with silent film star Buster Keaton (1895–1966) as the sole actor.
36. Edward Albee (1928–2016) wrote early absurdist plays, such as *Zoo Story* (1958) and *Sandbox* (1959). Later, he focused on volatile marriages, alternative identities, and perverse relationships, regarding his own homosexuality and family rejection. In *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1962), a professor and his wife pretend they have a son while tormenting their guests, a younger professor and his wife. In *Three Tall Women* (1991), a woman interacts with herself at different ages. In *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?* (2002), a man tells his wife and teenage son about his love affair with a goat.
37. Arthur Kopit (1937–) was known for absurdist plays in the 1960s–70s, especially *Indians* (1968) displaying Buffalo Bill’s “Wild West” show as a betrayal of Native Americans.
38. David Rabe (1940–), drafted into the US Army during the Vietnam War, wrote *Sticks and Bones* (1969) about a blinded veteran returning home to his family. *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel* (1971) depicts a soldier stumbling through basic training and battle with a chorus-like commentator beside him. *Streamers* (1976) shows soldiers with different race and class conflicts preparing for war. *Hurly Burly* (1984, film version 1998) displays competitive Hollywood filmmakers with drug and sex problems.

39. Neil Simon (1927–2018) became one of the most successful writers of comedy on Broadway, with zany characters and hints of pain, as in *The Odd Couple* (1965), about mismatched male roommates. It became a film in 1968 and a hit television sitcom in 1970–75, revived in 1982–83 and 2015–17.
40. Lanford Wilson (1937–2011) wrote a widely produced trilogy about the Talley family in rural Missouri, showing American disillusionment after the Vietnam War: *Fifth of July* (1978), *Talley's Folly* (1979), and *Talley and Son* (1985).
41. Horton Foote (1916–2009) became known for writing about his Southern heritage, especially in *The Orphans' Home Cycle* (1978–80), about a Texas family, with nine one-act plays in sets of three. *The Young Man from Atlanta* (1995) continues that story. Foote contributed as a screenwriter during the “Golden Age” of television dramas in the 1950s–60s and with his screenplays for *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962) and *Tender Mercies* (1983).
42. Sam Shepard (1943–2017) wrote early absurdist plays, such as *The Tooth of Crime* (1972) with a sci-fi setting, rock music, and violence (given an environmental staging by Schechner in 1973). Later, he wrote realistic, myth-deconstructing plays. *Buried Child* (1978) shows a fragmenting farm-family in Illinois. *True West* (1980) depicts a vagrant criminal, switching places with his screenwriting brother in their mother's Los Angeles home. *Fool for Love* (1983) presents a cowboy, his half-sister, and the ghost of their father in a rural motel. Shepard was also a popular actor, playing the cowboy in Robert Altman's film of *Fool for Love* (1985) and starring as the pilot Chuck Yeager in the blockbuster movie, *The Right Stuff* (1983).
43. David Mamet (1947–) exposed the competitive insecurity and eruptive violence of male egos, speaking expletives in various settings, from lower to upper classes. *American Buffalo* (1975) involves petty crooks. *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1983) focuses on realtors. *Oleanna* (1992) shows a female student accusing her male professor of sexual harassment. Mamet wrote, directed, and produced films and television shows as well.
44. Since the 1970s, New York playwright Mac Wellman (1945–) has rebelled against traditional plot, character, and dialog, showing instead a moving collage of events.

[How do European realist and absurdist innovations combine with homoerotic, historical, comic, regional, masculine, and imagistic concerns in the plays of Albee, Kopit, Rabe, Simon, Wilson, Foote, Shepard, Mamet, or Wellman?]

45. Founded in 1925, the Goodman Theatre is Chicago's oldest active nonprofit. Steppenwolf Theatre in Chicago, starting in 1974, produced many leading stage and screen actors, including Gary Sinise, John Malkovich, and Laurie Metcalf.
46. Arena Stage in Washington, DC, founded by Zelda Fichandler in 1950, was also a pioneer in the nonprofit Regional Theatre Movement, with a resident company serving the nation's capital.
47. After the Actor's Workshop (1952–65), the American Conservatory Theater, founded in 1965 with an acting school, and the Magic Theatre, founded in 1967, became the leading regional theatres in San Francisco.
48. Other regional leaders in the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) include the Pasadena Playhouse (starting in 1924 as part of the Little Theatre Movement), San Diego's Old Globe Theatre (1947) and La Jolla Playhouse (founded 1947, revived 1983), Milwaukee Repertory Theater (1954), Dallas Theater Center (1959), Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis (1963), Seattle Repertory Theatre (1963), South Coast Repertory near Los Angeles (1964), Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven (1965), Berkeley Repertory Theatre (1968), Philadelphia's Wilma Theater (1973) and Philadelphia Theatre Company (1974), and American Repertory Theater near Boston (1980).
49. Since the 1950s, New York's Off-Broadway and then Off-Off-Broadway areas continued to grow in significance with intimate theatres and innovative works, especially in the East Village with Joe Cino's Caffe Cino (1958–68), Ellen Stewart's La MaMa (since 1961), Performance Space New York (since 1980), and Joseph Papp's Public Theater (since 1967). Papp also produced free productions of the Shakespeare Festival in Central Park, starting in 1957.
[What do regional playwrights, regional theatres, or Off-Off-Broadway theatres offer as specific developments in relation to the many varieties of screen theatricality today?]
50. Among the great American designers, Greek-born Theoni Aldredge (1922–2011) created costumes for half a century, on and off Broadway, and for movies. She was also resident designer at Papp's Shakespeare Festival.
51. Ming Cho Lee (1930–), originally from China, influenced American theatre as head of the design program at Yale's School of Drama for 45 years. He increased the potential for spatial abstractions with numerous designs, such as his set for *Electra* (1964, Shakespeare Festival) with scaffolding and relief foam combining ancient Greek and postmodern contexts.

52. Santo Loquasto (1944–) designed scenery and costumes for theatre, dance, opera, and film, including over 60 Broadway shows.
53. Low-pressure, sodium lamps were used for monochromatic effects in the 1960s–90s, in the US and abroad, turning everything onstage into shades of gray. On Broadway, “piano board” resistance dimmers were used to control lighting, involving two to three operators, until 1975 (*A Chorus Line*) when computer-controlled lighting began, with one operator. Computerized flying scenery also revolutionized theatre spectacle, along with air casters under large set pieces for movability and computer-controlled video projections for quick-changing, complex imagery.

C. Musical Innovations

1. In the mid-1950s, a revival of Brecht’s *Threepenny Opera* ran for 2707 performances, showing the potential of avant-garde, small orchestra, Off-Broadway, musical theatre.
2. The 1960 production of *The Fantastics*, by Harvey Schmidt and Tom Jones, loosely based on *The Romancers*, an Edmond Rostand play, ran for 42 years Off-Broadway.
3. *Fiddler on the Roof* (1964), *Hello, Dolly!* (1964, based on Wilder’s *The Merchant of Yonkers*), and *Man of La Mancha* (1965), each ran for thousands of performances and was made into a major movie.
4. Stephen Sondheim (1930–) put postmodern, tragicomic twists in musicals, offering ironic plots and lyrics in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962), based on ancient comedies by Plautus; *Sweeney Todd* (1979), about a “demon barber” and his cannibal pie making partner; *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984), showing the pointillist painting passions of Georges Seurat; *Into the Woods* (1987), with fairy-tale characters; and *Assassins* (1990), about president killers.
5. Director-choreographer Bob Fosse (1927–87) added playful sexuality to the musicals *Sweet Charity* (1968), *Pippin* (1972), and *Chicago* (1975).
6. Homosexuality appeared in the popular musicals *La Cage aux Folles* (1983) and *Falsettos* (1992), plus the rock musicals *Rent* (1996) and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (1998).

7. Rock musicals became increasingly popular with *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1970, starting as a concert album by Andrew Lloyd Weber and lyricist Tim Rice), *Godspell* (1971), *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1971, adapted from Shakespeare with lyrics by John Guare), *The Rocky Horror Show* (1973), and *Evita* (1978).
8. African-Americans were featured in the mainstream musicals *Purlie* (1970, based on Ossie Davis's 1961 play), *Raisin* (1973, based on Lorraine Hansberry's 1959 play), *The Wiz* (1975, adapted from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* novel), and *Dreamgirls* (1981).
9. *A Chorus Line* (1975) ran for 6137 performances with soliloquies by dancers at an audition. It was based on group therapy sessions with "gypsy" dancers performing minor roles in musical choruses.
10. Mega-musicals became popular on Broadway in the 1980s with large casts, spectacular stage-effects, and nationwide tours. These included *Les Misérables* (1980) with revolutionaries storming a barricade, *Cats* (1981) with cat people and a giant rising tire, *Starlight Express* (1984) on roller skates, *The Phantom of the Opera* (1986) with a falling chandelier, and *Miss Saigon* (1989) with a helicopter landing onstage.
[What do postmodern, gay-oriented, rock, African-American, audition, or mega-musicals offer to the inner theatres of spectators, originally and now?]

D. Major American Events of the 1980s–2010s, TIMELINE

- 1980 (July), the US boycotted the Summer Olympics in Moscow to protest the USSR's invasion of Afghanistan
- 1980 (November), Ronald Reagan was elected president, promising to make America, in the biblical sense, "a shining city on a hill," quoting Puritan minister John Winthrop's vision of Boston in 1630
- 1980 (December), John Lennon was killed in New York a few hours after giving the assassin his autograph
- 1981, President Reagan was shot in an assassination attempt by John Hinckley Jr., who was motivated by the movie *Taxi Driver* (1976) and his attraction to its young female star, Jodie Foster, but Reagan survived
- 1983, the US invaded the Caribbean island nation of Grenada, in "Operation Urgent Fury," to depose a hard line Stalinist regime that had taken power

- 1985, professional wrestling became mainstream entertainment with the World Wrestling Federation's first *WrestleMania*, as a closed-circuit television event, staged in New York's Madison Square Garden, with the stars Hulk Hogan and Mr. T, seen by over a million people
- 1986, the Space Shuttle *Challenger* exploded during takeoff on its tenth mission, killing all seven crew members, including 37-year-old Christa McAuliffe, a school teacher
- 1987, the US Stock Market (Dow Jones Industrial Average) fell 22.6% in one day
- 1989, the Exxon Valdez tanker hit a reef off the coast of Alaska and spilled over 10 million gallons of crude oil into the ocean
- 1990–1991, the US and a coalition of 35 countries waged war against Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait
- 1992, after the acquittal of four cops in the video-recorded beating of Rodney King, riots in Los Angeles resulted in 60 deaths and a billion dollars in damage
- 1995 (April), former army friends who then became anti-government, domestic terrorists, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, exploded a truck bomb near a federal building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people, including 19 children, and wounding over 600
- 1995 (October), former football star OJ Simpson was acquitted of murder charges in a televised trial about the slaying of his ex-wife and her friend the year before—when he was also shown on television in a car pursued by police
- 1996, during the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Robert Rudolph exploded a pipe bomb, killing one person and injuring 111, and then exploded three more bombs the next year, as protests against the government sanctioning of abortion
- 1998–99, President Bill Clinton was impeached for lying and obstructing justice in a sexual harassment investigation, but then was acquitted
- 1999 (April), two teenagers murdered 12 students and a teacher, wounding 24 others, at Columbine High School, while committing suicide—after they played violent video games, wrote about getting “godlike” revenge against cops, and made a video of themselves for a school project, as “Hitmen for Hire,” rehearsing the shooting of students
- 1999 (December), anxiety spread at the end of the millennium, through apocalyptic stories and a mass media focus on the potential “Y2K” problem of computers malfunctioning, which did not occur
- 2001 (September), 19 foreign terrorists hijacked four airplanes, crashing two of them into the World Trade Center and one into the Pentagon,

killing almost 3000 people and injuring over 6000—with the biological weapon anthrax also sent one week later through the US mail, killing 5 and infecting 17 others

- 2001 (October), the US and its allies invaded Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban leadership for supporting 9/11 al-Qaeda terrorists, whose leader, Osama bin Laden, had protested the presence of the US military in Saudi Arabia, as sacred territory to Muslims
- 2003, the US, with allies UK, Australia, and Poland, invaded Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein, with the mistaken rationale that he had “Weapons of Mass Destruction”—and then captured him, but continued to fight insurgents there for decades
- 2005, hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma caused 81, 10, and 20 billion dollars in damages
- 2007, a South Korean student, who made videos likening himself to Jesus Christ and expressing hatred toward the wealthy, killed 32 fellow students and professors, injuring 17 more, before committing suicide, at Virginia Tech University
- 2008–09, the subprime mortgage crisis in the USA led to a global “Great Recession”
- 2009, President Barack Obama was inaugurated, the first African-American in that job, and later obtained 831 billion dollars from Congress to save big banks from bankruptcy and remedy the American economic crisis
- 2010, the oil drilling platform, Deepwater Horizon, exploded in the Gulf of Mexico, killing 11 workers and spilling 210 million gallons of oil
- 2011 (May), US Navy SEALs found and killed al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in Pakistan, causing many Americans to celebrate this performance of justice or revenge
- 2011 (September), demonstrators marched and camped in New York’s Zuccotti Park, with “Occupy Wall Street” then spreading to many other cities for the next four years, in a movement protesting class inequities and government bailouts of banks during the financial crises, plus the failure to prosecute executives who were responsible
- 2012 (June), President Obama created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, which allowed adults, brought to the US illegally as children, to be eligible for a work permit and be protected from deportation for a two-year, renewable period
- 2012 (July), a gunman entered a shopping mall movie theatre in Aurora, Colorado, during a midnight screening of a Batman movie, dressed in military clothing—and some in the audience thought it was a

promotional stunt for the movie, but he set off tear gas canisters and shot into the audience, killing 12 people and injuring 70 others

- 2012 (December), a 20-year-old gunman killed his mother at home, killed 20 children and 6 adults at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, and then committed suicide (after being obsessed with guns, wars, and the earlier Columbine massacre)
- 2013 (April), two Chechen-American brothers in their twenties set off homemade bombs at the Boston Marathon, killing three and injuring several hundred, later killing two police officers also, with the surviving brother, who was eventually caught, stating that they had learned to make the bombs from an online al-Qaeda magazine, were self-radicalized, and motivated by the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq
- 2013 (July), protests began through social media reactions (#BlackLivesMatter) to the acquittal of a white Hispanic man, George Zimmerman, in the “self defense” shooting death of a black teenager, Trayvon Martin—and the protests continued with further incidents, in various cities, of police killing blacks
- 2015, two Pakistani-Americans recently married and both immigrants, with a 6-month-old daughter at home, killed 14 fellow county employees and wounded 24 at a community center holiday event in southern California—with the FBI finding that they had private, online communications about jihad martyrdom before they physically met, with such Web sites influencing them
- 2016 (June), a man who identified himself as an “Islamic Soldier of God” killed 49 people and then himself in a gay nightclub in Florida, saying that his act of violence was triggered by a US airstrike in Iraq that killed an ISIL commander
- 2016 (November), billionaire real-estate tycoon and reality-television host, Donald Trump, was elected President of the US, but with Russian interference through the prior release of hacked e-mails and fake news in social media, as an “influence campaign,” according to US Intelligence Community investigations
- 2017, a real-estate investor and repeated, high-stakes gambler in Las Vegas (specializing in video poker), the son of a bank robber who had been on the FBI’s “Ten Most Wanted Fugitives” list, started shooting from his 32nd-floor hotel room at the audience of a country music concert below (many of whom thought it was a fireworks show), killing 58 people and injuring 546—and then killed himself
- 2018, the #MeToo Movement (with victims accusing people in power of sexually abusing them years before) turned the Senate Hearing on the

nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the US Supreme Court into political theatre, with dramatic testimony from Dr. Christine Blasey Ford, and Kavanaugh's denial, yet he was still confirmed as Justice

E. American Millennial Theatre

1. Christopher Durang (1949–) wrote satirical, absurdist plays about popular culture (*A History of the American Film*, 1978), Roman Catholicism (*Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You*, 1979), psychotherapy (*Beyond Therapy*, 1981), theatricality (*The Actor's Nightmare*, 1981), marriage and parenthood (*Baby and the Bathwater*, 1983, and *The Marriage of Bette and Boo*, 1985), and Chekhov plays (*Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, 2012).
2. John Guare (1938–) developed absurd comedies that explore the painful failures and grandiose lies of sympathetic characters. In *House of Blue Leaves* (1971), a zookeeper in New York dreams of being a Hollywood songwriter, but is trapped between a schizophrenic wife, manic girlfriend, and AWOL son. In *Six Degrees of Separation* (1990, film 1993), a young black man appears at the house of an art dealer and his wife, pretending to be a friend of their son at Harvard.
3. Eric Overmyer (1951–) wrote the highly imaginative and witty *On the Verge; or, the Geography of Yearning* (1985). It shows three female explorers from the late 1800s traveling through time toward the mid-1900s, awed by new territories, scientific inventions, commercial products, and eight mythical creatures (played by one actor). Overmyer also became a television writer and producer in later decades.
4. Actor-writer Wallace Shawn (1943–) explored political and theatrical structures with his plays. In *Aunt Dan and Lemon* (1985), a young woman with a chronic illness talks to her aunt who believes in the realpolitik of dominance. In *The Designated Mourner* (1996, film 1997), intellectuals in an oppressive country speak memory-monologues to the audience and brief dialogs to each other.
5. John Patrick Shanley (1950–) explored his Roman Catholic heritage in his playwriting. In *Savage in Limbo* (1984), several 32-year-old, former parochial schoolmates discuss their dead-end lives in a Bronx bar. In *Doubt: A Parable* (2004), a nun accuses a priest of pedophilia. Shanley also gained fame as the screenwriter for *Moonstruck* (1987) and *Doubt* (2008, which he directed, adapting his play).

6. Director George Coates (1952–) founded his Performance Works in San Francisco in 1977 and in the 1990s developed computer-generated images that interacted with live performers.
7. Peter Sellars (1957–) became famous for creating spectacular settings of classic plays and operas, starting with a techno-industrial staging of Shakespeare’s *King Lear* while he was an undergraduate at Harvard, with a Lincoln Continental onstage. His 1980 staging of Mozart’s opera, *Don Giovanni*, was cast and costumed as a blaxploitation film, with the lead baritone dressed in underwear and shooting heroin. Sellars’s 1980 production of Handel’s opera, *Orlando*, was set in outer space and his 1988 staging of Mozart’s *Marriage of Figaro* was set in a luxury apartment in New York’s Trump Tower. In 1993, Sellars staged Aeschylus’s *The Persians* at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival as a response to the US-led war against Iraq.
8. Director Anne Bogart (1951–) created the Saratoga International Theater Institute (SITI) in 1992, with Japanese director Tadashi Suzuki (1939–), in Saratoga Springs, New York. She sometimes staged plays in a new play-within-play framework, while also writing about her anti-Stanislavskian “Viewpoints” method, developed with Steppenwolf Theatre member Tina Landau (1962–) from the Six Viewpoints improvisation technique of choreographer Mary Overlie (1946–). Their method explores these six elements independently: Space, Shape, Time, Emotion, Movement, and Story (abbreviated as “SSTEMS” with Story decentralized in a postmodern sense)—adding also the vocal viewpoints of Pitch, Volume, and Timbre.
9. Collaborating with Bogart and Landau, through SITI and En Garde Arts, playwright Charles L. Mee (1938–) created radical de- and re-constructions of found texts, including internet pieces, from the 1990s into the 2000s. He put many of his plays online, in the “public domain,” to be used piecemeal by others.
10. Chicago writer-director Mary Zimmerman (1960–) has adapted many classic works with stunning visual imagery, such as *Arabian Nights* (1994), *Journey to the West* (1995, based on an old Chinese novel), *Metamorphoses* (2001, based on Ovid’s poem and showing transformations through a pool of water onstage), *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci* (2003), *Argonautika* (2006), and *The Odyssey* (2017).
11. David Auburn (1969–) wrote the tragicomedy, *Proof* (2001), with ghostly twists and memory flashbacks in an otherwise realistic plot about a female mathematics genius who tries to prove her worth to a

new boyfriend and others, after the death of her father, a famous mathematics professor with a mental illness.

12. Adam Rapp (1968–) mixed naturalism and surrealism in his tragicomedies, *Nocturne* (2000) and *Red Light Winter* (2005), about a young writer struggling for success in New York, after conflicts with family and friends, at home and abroad.
13. JT Rogers (1968–) explored harsh political realities in *The Overwhelming* (2006) about an American family visiting Rwanda during the 1994 genocide. His *Blood and Gifts* (2010) offers various views on the Afghanistan war in the 1980s. *Oslo* (2016) shows back-channel discussions during the 1990s peace treaty negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians.
14. Lucas Hnath became known for his comic realism with *The Christians* (2015) about megachurch politics when a pastor learns from God that everyone goes to heaven and *A Doll's House, Part 2* (2017) about Ibsen's characters when Nora returns home after 15 years as a feminist novelist.
15. The Signature Theatre, founded in New York in 1991 to focus on a single playwright each season, starting with Romulus Linney, has helped to promote new plays by leading writers.

[How do experiments since the 1980s, by American playwrights or directors listed here, show inner-theatre identity needs and changing cultural values, especially with Self/Other performances?]

F. Millennial Musicals

1. Disney musicals became popular in the 1990s and beyond, including *Beauty and the Beast* (1994), *The Lion King* (1997), *Aida* (2000), and *The Little Mermaid* (2008).
2. Small-scale musicals were successful Off-Broadway, such as *Little Shop of Horrors* (1982) and *Bat Boy* (2001).
3. Challenging stories were also offered in the new millennium. *Urinetown* (2001) depicted a corporation charging people to urinate during a water shortage. *Avenue Q* (2003) parodied children's puppets with adult situations. *Spring Awakening* (2006) showed teen sex and suicide in a rock musical based on Wedekind's play. *The Book of Mormon* (2011) presented comical Mormon missionaries meeting their match in Africa. *Fun Home* (2013) became the first Broadway musical with a lesbian protagonist in 2015, exploring her memories of a deceased,

closeted-gay father who had affairs with underage boys. *Hamilton* (2015) staged historical conflicts among the white founding fathers of the US, with a multicultural cast, involving jazz, rap, and hip-hop.

4. But most major musicals in the early 2000s were based on familiar stories, from movies and literature, or revivals of earlier hits.

[What have recent musicals added to the theatre scene, reflecting bio-cultural identity changes?]

G. African-American Theatre Since Mid-Century

1. Alice Childress (1912–94) wrote plays from the 1950s to 1980s that were widely produced, such as *Trouble in Mind* (1955) about white and black actors working together. Her comedy with music, *Moms* (1987), about the comedienne Jackie (Moms) Mabley, became controversial due to a plagiarism charge from Childress against the actress Clarice Taylor who commissioned it and then staged a new version six months later without involving her.
2. Lorraine Hansberry (1930–65) became the first black dramatist with a play on Broadway, *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959). This realistic domestic drama focuses on a strong matriarch (Lena) after her husband's death, living with her daughter (Beneatha who has two suitors, an assimilated black American and a black African), her son (Walter Lee who wants to improve his life by owning a bar), his wife (Ruth who struggles with an abortion decision), and their young son. They live together in a two-bedroom apartment and want to buy a house in a white neighborhood. Told they will not be welcomed, they are offered a bribe not to move there, reflecting Hansberry's own family experience of housing discrimination in Chicago (in a case taken to the Supreme Court). Her drama led to various film versions, an award-winning musical, *Raisin* (1973), and two plays continuing the story, Bruce Norris's *Clybourne Park* (2010) and Kwame Kwei-Armah's *Beneatha's Place* (2013).
3. Actor and playwright Ossie Davis (1917–2005) wrote *Purlie Victorious* (1961) about a black preacher in the Jim Crow South, which was made into a musical in 1970.
4. Amiri Baraka (1934–2014) wrote *Dutchman* (1964, as LeRoi Jones, with film version in 1967), about an assimilated black man seduced into violence by a white woman on a subway car. Baraka also founded

the Black Arts Repertory Theatre and School in 1965. He changed his name then, advocating violent poetry and civil rights militancy, after the assassination of Malcolm X. He became controversial for his anti-Jewish writings as a Muslim, although in 1974 he distanced himself from Black Nationalism and became a Marxist-Leninist supporter of liberation movements in developing nations. Baraka was briefly Poet-Laureate of New Jersey (2002–03), but the position was abolished in reaction to his poem, “Somebody Blew Up America,” which claimed that Israel gave advance knowledge to Jews about the 9/11 Twin Towers attack.

5. Adrienne Kennedy (1931–) wrote *Funnyhouse of a Negro* (1964), a surrealist play within the mind of Sarah, who worships her white mother and despises her black father. Historical figures appear, such as Queen Victoria, Jesus Christ, and Patrice Lumumba (the first elected Prime Minister of the Congo, who was widely seen as a Pan-African martyr after being executed by political rivals). Kennedy continued writing plays for over 50 years, including *He Brought Her Heart Back in a Box* (2018), a memory play about a mixed race romance and segregationist father in Georgia in the 1940s.
6. Ed Bullins (1935–) emerged from Baraka’s Black Arts Movement, served as Minister of Culture for the Black Panthers, and wrote plays for the New Lafayette Players in the 1960s–70s and then for the American Place Theatre.
7. Ntozake Shange (1948–2018) became famous as a black feminist with her Obie-Award-winning “choreopoems” of monologs, dance, and music. These included *for colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf* (1975), about the sufferings of seven black women in a racist, sexist society, and *spell #7* (1979), about the struggle of black artists emerging from the history of blackface through the magic of theatre.
8. Charles Fuller (1939–) received the Pulitzer Prize for *A Soldier’s Play* in 1982, which explores the resentment of blacks toward one another, with racist attitudes, during the investigation of the murder of a black sergeant in an army camp in Louisiana in 1944.
9. August Wilson (1945–2005) was the son of a black cleaning woman and German immigrant baker, but rarely saw his father while being raised by his mother and maternal grandmother. He created a 10-play Pittsburgh cycle with poetic realist portrayals of black life in each decade of the twentieth century, including *Joe Turner’s Come and Gone*

- (1984, set in the 1910s), *Fences* (1985, set in 1950), and *The Piano Lesson* (1987, set in 1938). A film version of *Fences* was a hit in 2016 and its director, Denzel Washington, promised to make a film of each play in the rest of the Pittsburgh cycle.
10. Wilson co-founded the Black Horizon Theater in Pittsburgh in 1968 and then moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1978, where he had a long association with the Playwrights' Center (in Minneapolis) and Penumbra Theatre (the largest African-American theatre in the US, founded by Lou Bellamy in 1976).
 11. Current African-American theatres also include: Karamu House in Cleveland (since 1915), New Freedom Theatre in Philadelphia (1966), National Black Theatre in the Harlem area of New York (1968), New Federal Theatre in New York (1970), Ensemble Theatre in Houston (1976), Crossroads Theatre in New Brunswick, New Jersey (1978), Lorraine Hansberry Theatre in San Francisco (1981), Harlem Repertory Theatre in New York (2004), and Black Improv, an all-black company that has performed since 2015 at Mixed Blood, a multi-racial theatre in Minneapolis (1976).
 12. August Wilson caused a controversy in 1996 at a convention of LORT regional theatre artists when he argued for more black theatres that would perform black plays by black writers and be run completely by black people, with black actors given new roles instead of "color-blind" casting in classics. He called such casting "an aberrant idea that has never had any validity other than as a tool of the cultural imperialists" (referring also to an all-black production of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*). But a white director, Robert Brustein, founder of the Yale Repertory Theatre in New Haven and the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, called this attitude "self-segregation," referring to Martin Luther King's famous statement about judging people on the content of their character, not the color of their skin. A further debate was then staged between Wilson and Brustein in New York in 1997 (Butler).
 13. George C. Wolfe (1954–) mixed satire and realism with his revue of black history, stereotypes, and cultural achievements in *The Colored Museum* (1986). He also adapted three stories by Zora Neale Hurston in *Spunk* (1989). He created musicals about the jazz pianist Jelly Roll Morton in *Jelly's Last Jam* (1991) and black history through tap and rap in *Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk* (1995). He was also Artistic Director of the Public Theatre (1993–2004).

14. Anna Deavere Smith (1950–) became best known onstage for her solo docudramas, as verbatim theatre, embodying the statements, accents, and gestures of people she interviewed on various sides of racial conflicts. *Fires in the Mirror* (1991) presented the Crown Heights riots by blacks against Jewish neighbors in Brooklyn, New York. *Twilight: Los Angeles* (1992) investigated the riots there after the acquittal of four police officers caught on video beating Rodney King during his arrest.
15. Pearl Cleage (1948–) wrote *Flyin' West* (1995) about pioneers in an all-black town in Kansas in the 1890s, *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (1999) about a struggling blues singer and four people she meets in a Harlem apartment building in the 1930s, and *Song for Coretta* (2008) about a college student creating a radio piece about the widow of Martin Luther King.
16. Suzan-Lori Parks (1963–) was the first black woman awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Drama with *Top Dog/Underdog* (2001), a realistic tragedy about fratricide involving a black Lincoln impersonator whom others pay to pretend to shoot. She also wrote *The America Play* (1994), a surrealist, absurd, yet historically aware tragicomedy about the wife and son of a black Lincoln impersonator and *Father Comes Home from the Wars, Parts 1, 2, and 3* (2014) about a slave during the Civil War.
17. Katori Hall (1981–) wrote *The Mountaintop* (2009) about Martin Luther King being visited by an angel of death on the night he was assassinated, *Hurt Village* (2011) about a Memphis housing project, and *Our Lady of Kibeho* (2014) about Rwandan schoolgirls who claimed to see the Virgin Mary in the 1980s.
18. Lynn Nottage (1964–) explored the plight of Congolese women in a bar in a small tin mining town, suffering rape and abuse from miners and soldiers in *Ruined* (2009) and the job loss and racial strife of American steelworkers in Reading, Pennsylvania, in *Sweat* (2017).
19. Dominique Morisseau (1978–) wrote several plays about Detroit, her hometown, and *Pipeline* (2017) about an inner-city public school teacher who sends her son to a private school, where he gets in trouble, through his anger, and faces potential expulsion.
20. Branden Jacobs-Jenkins (1984–), named a MacArthur Fellowship “genius” in 2016, used historical parallels to satirize modern culture, regarding race and class in private and public settings. *An Octoroon* (2014) adapts Dion Boucicault’s nineteenth-century melodrama with characters in whiteface, redface, and blackface, shown as social constructs. *Everybody* (2017) revises the fifteenth-century morality play, *Everyman*, with the lead character chosen by lottery and Love (instead of Good Deeds) helping Everybody at life’s end.

[How do the works of these black playwrights relate to current identity struggles and changing social values in the US—or those in postcolonial Africa? How do they reflect the inner actor/character performing for a minority or majority Other?]

H. Arab-American Theatre Artists

1. S. K. Hershewe (1918–2005) became the first professionally produced Arab-American playwright with *An Oasis in Manhattan* (1965) about his large, highly spirited, Lebanese family.
2. Najee Mondalek founded the AJYAL (Generations) Theatrical Group in 1988. He wrote and produced 12 comedies in 25 years, involving his alter ego, Im Hussein, a Lebanese matriarch, played by Mondalek in drag, plus her husband and friends. The dialog was in Arabic, sometimes also in a hybrid of Arabic and English, which the writer-actor called “Arabeezi.”
3. Responding to 9/11, a New York ensemble of actors, Nibras, first met online, then used audio-recorders to ask a wide cross section of people, “What comes to your mind when you hear the word ‘Arab?’” They staged *Sajjil (Record)* as a “theatrical testimonial,” drawing from over 30 interviews—in the Fringe Festival of 2002 (Sacre).
4. Also in response to 9/11, Malik Gillani, an Ismaili Muslim, and Jamil Khoury, a “white Arab Slovak Pole,” raised as an Antiochian Orthodox Christian, founded Silk Road Rising in Chicago in 2002, as a theatre focusing on Middle Eastern and Asian cultures (Najjar).
5. In Khoury’s *Precious Stones* (2003), a Jewish-American daughter of Holocaust survivors and a Palestinian-American daughter of refugees create a women’s dialog group in Chicago in 1989 (during the first intifada in Palestine). They debate the tragic history of both cultures, which ironically overlap, as the two women fall in love. Two actresses play three roles each in this first Arab-American play to explore homosexuality explicitly.
6. Egyptian-American Yusef El Guindi wrote *Back of the Throat* (2006) about a Muslim-American writer who is questioned and has his apartment searched, after the 9/11 attacks, because his former girlfriend implicates him.
7. Betty Shemieh’s *The Black Eyed* (2007) involves a chorus of past and present Palestinian women searching for the souls of martyred family members, trapped in the afterlife, including the biblical Delilah, a victim of the Crusades, a suicide bomber, and a doomed female architect on a 9/11 airplane.

8. Ismail Khalidi (1982–) wrote *Tennis in Nablus* (2010), showing tragic prejudices with comic twists involving a Palestinian rebel and Irish, Indian, and British soldiers in the British Army during the Palestinian revolts against Jewish immigrants and the British Mandate in 1939. The play also acknowledges the persecution of Jews in Europe.
9. Mona Mansour's *Urge for Going* (2012) shows a Palestinian girl growing up in a Lebanese refugee camp, mixing pop-culture references with Palestinian history and Lebanese politics.
[How do Arab-American theatre artists express different historical experiences and yet common cultural issues, regarding identity needs and simulations onstage? Which inner theatre elements are involved, such as the audience of memories?]

I. Asian-American Theatre

1. Since the 1960s, a new wave of Asian immigration occurred, including war brides, skilled laborers, and college students in high-tech fields (after the first wave in the 1850s–1910s). From 1970 to 2010, the percentage of Asian Americans increased from 1.5 to 17.3 million, totaling 5.6% of the US population, with Chinese, Filipinos, and Indians leading (over three million each).
2. East West Players started in Los Angeles in 1965 to give more roles to and express the experiences of Asian-Pacific Americans. Likewise, Frank Chin founded the Asian American Theater Company in San Francisco in 1973. The Northwest Asian American Theatre was created in Seattle (1972–2004); the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre was founded by Tisa Chang in New York in 1977; and the Ma-Yi Theater Company started in New York in 1989, focusing on new plays. Mu Performing Arts (Theater Mu) started in Minneapolis in 1992, blending Asian and Western styles.
3. In 1972, *The Chickencoop Chinaman*, Frank Chin's play about a documentary filmmaker, became the first Asian-American play with a major production in New York.
4. In 1990–91, when the musical *Miss Saigon* moved from London to New York, the American stage actors' union, Actors Equity Association, protested that a white British actor, Jonathan Pryce, rather than an Asian actor, was playing a lead Eurasian character (with eye prosthetics and bronzing cream). But Equity withdrew its protest when the producer, Cameron Mackintosh, decided to cancel the \$10 million

show and prominent white American actors, such as John Malkovich, threatened to leave the union.

5. Wakako Yamauchi (1924–2018) was interned as a teenager in an Arizona camp in 1942 with her Japanese parents. Later, she wrote a play about it, *12-1-A* (1982), and another about her earlier life, *And the Soul Shall Dance* (1977), with two Japanese-American girls and their families on southern California farms during the Great Depression.
6. Japanese-Latina playwright Naomi Iizuka (1965–) adapted various classics, such as *Polaroid Stories* (1997) about the ancient Greek myth of Eurydice and Orpheus, *Skin: An Adaptation of Buchner's Woyzeck* (1998), and *Hamlet: Blood on the Brain* (2006).
7. Chinese-American playwright David Henry Hwang (1957–) reached success with his first play, *FOB* (1980), about conflicts between established immigrants and those “Fresh of the Boat.” He then became the first Asian American to win Broadway’s Tony Award with *M. Butterfly* (1988). It deconstructed the orientalist stereotype of “playing the butterfly,” with references to Giacomo Puccini’s 1904 opera, *Madama Butterfly*. It was also inspired by the 20-year relationship between Chinese opera actor Shi Pei Pu and French diplomat Bernard Boursicot, who believed the male actor was a woman who bore him a child, while involving him in espionage. Hwang revised the play in 2017 when it was revived on Broadway and directed by Julie Taymor.
8. Canadian-born, Chinese-American, writer-director Ping Chong (1946–) has explored East–West intersections, often involving documentary materials, witty images, and movement theatre techniques, since 1975 when he founded his own company. His works included *Nosferatu* (1985, about a vampire who is like us, except for his eating habits) and *Kind Ness* (1986, with an actor in a gorilla suit). He created several productions with large-scale puppets, *Kwaidan* and *Obon* (1998 and 2002, about Japanese ghost stories) and *Cathay* (2005, about three eras in Chinese history)—plus *Collidescope* (2014, about racial violence in America).
9. Philip Kan Gotanda (1951–) wrote about crossing cultural borders. In *Yankee Dog You Die* (1988), two Asian-American actors, younger and older, meet in Hollywood. In *The Ballad of Yachiyo* (1995), a 16-year-old girl leaves her poor parents to live with sophisticated Japanese relatives in Hawaii in the early 1900s. In *After the War Blues* (2014), Japanese- and African-American communities meet in post-World War II San Francisco.

10. Chinese-American Elizabeth Wong (1958–) wrote *Letters to a Student Revolutionary* (1991) about the Tiananmen Massacre in 1989 and *China Doll* (1996) about the struggles of early movie star Anna May Wong in her career and interracial dating.
11. Filipino-American Han Ong (1968–) went from being a high-school dropout to a 1997 MacArthur Fellowship “genius” at age 29. He wrote *The L.A. Plays* (1993), *Middle Finger* (2000), and *Watcher* (2001), exploring immigrant struggles and non-stereotypical, alienated, Asian Americans. He also performed solo performance-art pieces.
12. Filipina-American Jessica Hagedorn (1949–) adopted her novel, *Dogeaters*, to the stage in 1998, showing life in Manila under Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos.
13. Korean-American Diana Son became known for her plays and for her television writing and producing. Her play, *R.A.W. 'Cause I'm a Woman* (1996), explores stereotypes of Asian women. *Stop Kiss* (1998) features two women who are physically attacked for kissing on the street. *Satellites* (2006) is a realistic play about an African-American husband, Korean-American wife, and their baby, in an inner-city home.
14. Indian-American Rajiv Joseph (1974–) wrote *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* (2009), about a tiger's ghost on the streets of Baghdad encountering the absurdities of war, a gold toilet seat, and the humans involved, including Saddam Hussein's son, Uday.

[How do these Asian-American artists show distinctive styles and concerns that relate to current theatricality in art, politics, and war? How do their works reflect the inner aspects of Self performing for personal and collective Others?]

J. Latinx Theatre

1. From 1970 to 2010, the population of Latinos in the US increased from 8.9 to 50.5 million, from 4.4 to 16.3% of the US population, according to census numbers.
2. Puerto Rico, which became a territory of the US in 1898, was the homeland of René Marqués (1919–79). His play, *The Oxcart (La Carreta)*, was staged in the Church of San Sebastian in New York in 1953, and then in San Juan in 1954, about a rural Puerto Rican family of *jibaros* moving to the slums of San Juan and then to New York, seeking a better life, only to become disillusioned, wanting to return to the island.

3. With the success of *The Oxcart*, director Roberto Rodríguez and actress Míriam Colón created the first Latinx company in New York, in a 60-seat theatre, El Nuevo Círculo Dramático (The New Drama Circle), which later became the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater and inspired many others.
4. The 1957 musical hit, *West Side Story*, by Arthur Laurents, Stephen Sondheim, and Leonard Bernstein, depicted a Puerto Rican gang and female lead in stereotyped ways, yet opened doors for Latinx writers and actors.
5. The Nuyorican (New York-Puerto Rican) Movement started in the late 1960s and continued through the 1970s, promoted by the Nuyorican Poets Café, co-founded in 1973 by Miguel Piñero (1946–88). He also wrote *Short Eyes* (1974), a realistic play about a white pedophile in prison with non-whites, based on his own experiences serving a year in Sing Sing prison for armed robbery (1972–73). The play went from his prison troupe, The Family, to a Broadway production the next year.
6. Luis Valdez (1940–), who worked briefly with the San Francisco Mime Troupe, became a leader in the Chicano (Mexican-American) civil rights movement, as founder of El Teatro Campesino (the Farmworkers Theatre) in 1965. It was connected with the United Farm Workers, during their five-year, Delano (California), grape-pickers strike. Valdez's political plays, such as *The Two Faces of the Boss* (*Las dos caras del Patroncito*), *The Fifth Season* (*La quinta temporada*), and *The Sell-Outs/Sold Ones* (*Los Vendidos*), were performed on flatbed trucks for agricultural workers in the fields. After 1971, they were also shown, along with his mythic and musical plays, in the company's theatre in San Juan Bautista, California.
7. Valdez became most famous for his musical *Zoot Suit* (1978), about Chicano gang members in the 1940s wrongly charged for murder. Its mythic trickster, El Pachuco, narrates and controls the action in a Brechtian way, reminding the audience that they are watching actors playing characters, while showing the Aztec origins of the main characters' ethnicity. It was staged in Los Angeles and New York, and then made into a film by Valdez (1981), who also directed the Hollywood film, *La Bamba* (1987).
8. Culture Clash, a San Francisco and Los Angeles-based Chicano troupe, was founded in 1984 by José Antonio Burciaga, Marga Gómez, Monica Palacios, Richard Montoya, Ric Salinas, and Herbert Sigüenza—and continues today, led by the latter three writer-performers, who create sketch comedies, full-length satires, and videos.

9. Chicago's Teatro Vista (founded in 1989) and Teatro Luna (in 2000) promoted the staging of Latinx plays. The latter was created as a feminist company by ten Latinas of various backgrounds.
10. Cuban-American, lesbian playwright and director María Irene Fornés (1930–) has had a wide influence since the 1960s, through her mentoring of young artists and through her innovative, feminist plays. For example, *Fefu and Her Friends* (1977) has four parts taking place simultaneously in different rooms that spectators visit in small groups, while focusing on a woman paralyzed in a wheelchair, haunted by judgmental male voices. *The Conduct of Life* (1985) presents a military officer who keeps a torture victim at home, as discovered by his wife and maidservant.
11. Eduardo Machado (1953–) was influenced by Fornés in mining his Cuban-American heritage. He wrote the *Floating Islands* trilogy about a formerly wealthy family in Cuba during the 1920s–30s, in Cuba during the 1950s–60s, and in California in 1979. In 2004, Machado became Artistic Director of INTAR (International Arts Relations) in New York, one of the oldest Latinx theatres, founded in 1966.
12. Cuban-American journalist Dolores Prida (1943–2013) wrote eight plays, including several award winners, from *Beautiful Señoritas* (1977) to *Four Guys Named José* and *Una Mujer Named Maria* (2000).
13. Cuban-American Luis Santeiro (1947–) became known for his television screenwriting and for various stageplays, such as *Our Lady of the Tortilla* (1987), *The Lady from Havana* (1990), *The Rooster and the Egg* (1994), and *A Royal Affair* (1995).
14. Puerto Rican playwright José Rivera (1955–) put “magical realism” onstage, especially in *Marisol* (1992), an apocalyptic fantasy, and *Cloud Tectonics* (1995), about a female hitchhiker.
15. Monologist John Leguizamo (1964–), better known as a Latino screen actor, started his New York career with an Off-Broadway solo show, *Mambo Mouth* (1990), and recently returned to solo form with *Latin History for Morons* (2017 on Broadway).
16. Argentinian-American Susana Cook became a butch-lesbian performing artist in New York, starting in 1993.
17. For three decades, Mexican-born performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña (1955–) mixed experimental styles, different media, political activism, and audience participation in various works—focusing especially on Mexican-US border culture—while also serving as Artistic Director of the international troupe La Pocha Nostra since 1993.
18. Cuban-American performance artist Coco Fusco (1960–) also challenged audiences across several decades. In *Rights of Passage* (1997), she

- dressed as a South African policewoman in Johannesburg to explore race, identity, and apartheid. In *Bare Life Study #1* and *A Room of One's Own* (2005), she examined the role of women in the military, including torture, during the “War on Terror.” *Observations of Predation in Humans* (2013) was a lecture presented by Fusco as Dr. Zira from the original *Planet of the Apes* film.
19. Gómez-Peña and Fusco worked together for two years, 1992–93, traveling internationally. *The Couple in the Cage: Two Undiscovered Amerindians Visit the West* presented them in a cage as a satire of colonial human zoos of a century or more before—at the 500th anniversary of Columbus “discovering” the New World.
 20. As a Chicana lesbian feminist, Cherríe Moraga (1952–) explored gender, race, and sexuality in her plays. *The Hungry Woman* (1995) combines the mythical Greek Medea with the Aztec goddess Coatlicue and folklore figure La Llorona (Crying Woman) in a post-apocalyptic future. *Watsonville* (1996) shows a cannery strike, earthquake, and visionary appearance of the Virgin Mary (Our Lady of Guadalupe) in central California a decade before. *The Mathematics of Love* (2017) presents an elderly Chicana with Alzheimer’s disease, her Anglo husband, and their daughter, who is mourning the death of her lesbian partner.
 21. Mexican-born, Chicana playwright Karen Zacarías (1969–), whose grandfather, Miguel Zacarías, was a film director during the golden age of Mexican cinema, became best known for *The Sins of Sor Juana* (2000), *Mariela in the Desert* (2005), and her satiric look at *telenovelas* (Mexican soap operas), *Destiny of Desire* (2017). She also founded the Young Playwrights’ Theater in Washington, DC, in 1995.
 22. Cuban-American Nilo Cruz (1960–) became the first Latinx playwright to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Drama with *Anna in the Tropics* (2003), set at the center of the cigar-making industry in Tampa, Florida, with a “lector” reading Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* to cigar rollers in 1929.
 23. Anne García-Romero (an American with a father from Spain) explored connections between white and Latinidad communities, becoming best known for *Juanita’s Statue* and *Earthquake Chica* (published in 2004). She also documented the influence of María Irene Fornés on other Latina playwrights in her book, *The Fornes Frame* (2016).
 24. Caridad Svich (1963–), who has Cuban-Argentine-Spanish-Croatian heritage, has written over 40 neo-romantic plays, often adapting prior works, and 15 translations, winning the New York Obie Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2012. In *Twelve Ophelias* (2004), a play with “broken songs,” characters from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* appear in

Appalachia, including Gertrude as a brothel manager. In *The Breath of Stars* (2016), two Ariels from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* seek a lost Prospero in cyberspace.

25. Chicano performance artist and director Luis Alfaro (1963–) has also written plays, often set in Los Angeles barrios with gay, lesbian, and working-class themes, such as *Oedipus El Rey* (2010), a retelling of the ancient Sophoclean drama, *Mojada: A Medea in Los Angeles* (2012), and *St. Jude* (2013) about his relationship with his father.
26. Quiara Alegría Hudes (1977–), who has a Puerto Rican mother and Jewish father, wrote the book for the musical, *In the Heights* (2005). She won the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for *Water by the Spoonful*, about a veteran of the Iraq War working in a sandwich shop in his hometown of Philadelphia, along with four characters connecting online in a chat room for recovering addicts.
27. Mainland-born, Puerto Rican Lin-Manuel Miranda (1980–) created the musical *In the Heights* about the Latinx neighborhood of Washington Heights in New York—and then the even more successful musical *Hamilton* (2015) about the US founding fathers, with a multi-cultural cast.

[Recognizing the distinct traditions of various Latinx cultures, which concerns do they have in common and how do those relate to the brain's inner theatre and history's external political theatres? How do the works mentioned here reflect inner and outer theatre tensions, involving bio-cultural drives, emotions, images, or ideas?]

K. Native American Theatre

1. A crucial development in Native American Theatre occurred in 1978, when the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA) legalized traditional rituals, such as the Plains Indians' Sun Dance. That ritual involved a central post as World Tree, with men fasting and dancing around it for many hours, some attached to it by thongs with skewers through their chest or back, and then experiencing transcendent visions.
2. Christopher Sergel (1918–93) adapted the 1932 novel, *Black Elk Speaks*, to the stage in the 1970s as *John G. Neihardt's Black Elk Speaks*, acknowledging its non-Native authorship. The play offers the words of an Oglala Lakota shaman who participated as a teen in the 1876 Battle of Little Big Horn and survived the 1890 Wounded Knee Massacre. He speaks about the Ghost Dance movement, which tried to bring

- back the spirits of ancestors to fight against white colonists in 1889, and his own spiritual visions, as translated by his son to Neihardt.
3. Playwright Hanay Geiogamah (1945–), from the Kiowa and Delaware peoples, started the Native American Theatre Ensemble in New York in 1972 to focus on indigenous people's concerns and the American Indian Dance Theatre in 1987 with 18 Native nations represented. Geiogamah became a television and film producer in later decades.
 4. Spiderwoman Theater, established in 1976, became the longest running Native American theatre, as well as the oldest feminist theatre in the US. It was founded by three sisters, Muriel Miguel, Gloria Miguel, and Lisa Mayo, plus Lois Weaver, and named after a Hopi goddess.
 5. E. Donald Two-Rivers (1945–2008), from the Anishinaabe Tribe, was a Native Rights activist since the 1970s and scripted 14 plays. He stated that non-indigenous actors performing them must undergo "sensitivity training" first.
- [How can non-indigenous actors perform Native plays well, from inner theatre imagination to outer theatre display, with various types of spectators? How might this involve various aspects of Self and Other: social, historical, or metaphysical?]**
6. Novelist and poet Diane Glancy (1941–), of Cherokee descent, wrote plays from 1995 to 2006, publishing six of them in 2002.
 7. William S. Yellow Robe (1950–), a member of the Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes, and Artistic Director of the Wakiknabe Theater Company, published five of his plays in 2000.
 8. Mary Kathryn Nagle, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, works as a lawyer specializing in Native sovereignty issues. She wrote *Sliver of a Full Moon* (2013) about survivors of domestic violence on reservations and *Miss Lead* (2013) about a young Native American woman with lead poisoning.

L. Feminist Theatre Artists

1. After First-Wave Feminism (late 1800s to early 1900s) focused on the right to vote, Second-Wave Feminism (early 1960s to 1980s) expanded the movement to domestic violence, workplace equality, and reproductive rights issues. Third-Wave Feminism (since the early 1990s) embraced more diversity of views regarding pornography, prostitution, sadomasochism, transsexual lesbianism, and queer theories.

Fourth-Wave Feminism (since 2005) considered social media and spiritual dimensions.

2. Marsha Norman (1947–) had early success with her realistic domestic tragedies about common women. *Getting Out* (1979) shows a young woman at home, paroled after eight years in prison for robbery, kidnapping, and manslaughter. *'night, Mother* (1983, film 1986) presents a young woman with epilepsy who decides to commit suicide and tries to prepare her mother for life without her.
3. Beth Henley (1952–) created the absurdly cheerful, yet realistic tragicomedy, *Crimes of the Heart* (1979, film 1986), about three adult sisters reuniting in their small-town Mississippi home because the youngest is in trouble for shooting her abusive husband, after he discovered her affair with a “black boy.”
4. Tina Howe (1937–) became known for her absurdist, impressionistic plays, such as *The Art of Dining* (1979), about the strange relations that three groups have with food, *Painting Churches* (1983), about a female artist painting a portrait of her parents, and *Pride's Crossing* (1997), about a 90-year-old woman who swam the English Channel.
5. Wendy Wasserstein (1950–2006) was most famous for her comedy, *The Heidi Chronicles* (1988, TV film 1995), showing changes in the main character from her high school enthusiasm in the 1960s to her earnest feminism in the 1970s to her sense of betrayal in the 1980s—and her decision to adopt a child as a single mother.
6. Paula Vogel (1951–), a political, magical-realist playwright since the 1970s, wrote *And Baby Makes Seven* (1984), a comedy about raising children in the LGBT community. Her tragicomic farce, *The Baltimore Waltz* (1992), shows a woman with a terminal illness, “Acquired Toilet Disease,” seeking a cure and having sex with many men while traveling with her gay brother in Europe, through ties to the classic film, *The Third Man*. Vogel became best known, perhaps, for *How I Learned to Drive* (1997). It uses the metaphor of driving lessons to show the sexual seduction and control of a young woman, from preteen to college age, by her uncle, while her family seems oblivious to the problem and the play jumps through various memories, with a chorus reflecting inner conflicts and individuals also speaking directly to the audience.
7. Margaret Edson (1961–) wrote one play, *Wit* (1995, HBO movie 2001), which won many awards and received hundreds of productions. It focuses on an English professor who thinks she knows about death through the poetry of John Donne, but discovers more through her hospital experiences with terminal cancer, keeping her wit with the audience as long as possible.

8. Eve Ensler (1953–) interviewed over 200 women about romance, sexuality, and violence—then scripted *The Vagina Monologues*, performing it Off-Broadway in 1996 as a celebration of vaginas. This turned into the “V-Day Movement,” protesting violence against women, with productions worldwide, a changing script, annual benefit readings on college campuses and elsewhere, and an all-transgender performance in 2004 (with a documentary film about it, *Beautiful Daughters*, 2006).
9. Theresa Rebeck (1958–) was a Pulitzer Finalist for *Omnium Gatherum* (2003, co-written with Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros) about a Manhattan dinner party with a variety of cultural icons and a possible terrorist, in the shadow of 9/11. She also reached Broadway with *Mauritius* (2007) about two sisters who inherit a stamp collection, possibly with a rare item, and several men who compete for their affections to get it from them. Her Broadway play, *Bernhardt/Hamlet* (2018), explores the history of Sarah Bernhardt playing a cross-dressed, prose Hamlet in 1899, adding a revision of the play and sexual affair with Edmond Rostand, author of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Rebeck also wrote comedy, crime, and musical dramas for television.
10. Sarah Ruhl (1974–) explored feminist concerns in various historical, yet fantastic modes. Her *Eurydice* (2004) is based on an ancient Greek myth about a woman almost returning from the dead. *Dead Man’s Cell Phone* (2007) shows a woman’s attempt to connect with the dead man whose cell she found, while drawn into the suffering he caused. *In the Next Room (or The Vibrator Play)* (2009) depicts a Victorian doctor’s use of a sex tool to treat his female patients’ and his wife’s “hysteria.”
11. Annie Baker (1981–) wrote naturalistic plays that use overheard conversations and pregnant pauses. *The Aliens* (2010) depicts three young men meeting behind a restaurant. One of them works, coming out on breaks, one takes drugs, and one fails to lead them to something better. *The Flick* (2013) shows three underpaid movie ushers with comically mundane conversations—and won the Pulitzer Prize.
12. Anne Washburn became known for *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* (2012) about people acting out an episode of *The Simpsons* animated TV show, in a dystopian future. She also created two “transadaptations” of Euripides’s plays, *Orestes* (2010) and *Iphigenia in Aulis* (2015).
13. Lauren Gunderson (1982–) became America’s most produced living playwright in 2016–17, with her Shakespeare-influenced comedies and historical plays, such as *Leap* (2004) about the young Isaac Newton and *Bauer* (2014) about a German artists who loses ownership of his paintings, but is helped by his wife to meet with his ex-lover.

14. Laurie Anderson (1947–), a violinist and sculptor, became popular in the 1970s as a feminist performance artist, using technology to manipulate her voice and violin-playing, while inventing new devices for this and a masculine, digitally altered “Clone” of herself, through stage and screen works, plus concert albums and CDs. She continued to give witty, postmodern critiques of American culture, patriarchy, and science through the 2010s.
15. Karen Finley (1956–) became notorious as a solo performance artist, using words, props, costume changes, and her body, often with profanity and nudity, to challenge patriarchy and capitalism. She and three other performance artists (the “NEA Four”) appealed to the US Supreme Court, but lost, when the National Endowment for the Arts withdrew their funding in 1990, under pressure from conservatives in Congress who found their work indecent, after which the NEA stopped funding individual artists.

[How have feminist writers and performance artists changed the scene since the 1960s, onstage and onscreen, reflecting inner-theatre identity needs and new social values, with a gendered Self appearing in different situations?]

M. Queer (LGBT+) Theatres and Artists

1. In 1969–70, the Stonewall Riots and the first Gay Liberation Day occurred in New York. In 1978, an openly gay, elected official, Harvey Milk, was assassinated in San Francisco by fellow politician Dan White. In 1980, the Democratic Party endorsed homosexual rights. In 1987, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT-UP) was founded, and in 1990, Queer Nation. In 1993, there was the first “Dyke March” in Washington, DC. Starting in 1999 in California and 2004 in Massachusetts, same-sex “civil union” and then “marriage” laws were passed, spreading across the US.
2. Jane Chambers (1937–83) wrote *A Late Snow* (1974), one of the earliest dramas with positive lesbian characters. In *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove* (1980), she shows a woman leaving her husband and meeting seven lesbians on a beach, where she falls in love with one, not knowing she is dying of cancer.
3. After traveling in Europe with Spiderwoman Theater and seeing women’s theatre festivals there, Lois Weaver (1949–) and Peggy Shaw (1946–) created the Women’s One World (WOW) Café in New York’s

- East Village, starting in 1980, along with Jordi Mark and Pamela Camhe, as a multimedia environment with social café, films, and dancing, as well as theatre. It continues today as the oldest, collectively run, performance space for women and trans artists in the world (although it has moved to various locations in its history).
4. Butch-performer Peggy Shaw, along with director/performer Lois Weaver and writer Deb Margolin, also established the lesbian company Split Britches in 1980, which continues today, highlighting butch/femme identities with deconstructive critiques of classism, sexual oppression, and gender binaries. One of their shows, *Belle Reprieve*, created with the gay/drag performers Bette Bourne and Paul Shaw of London-based Bloodlips in 1990, parodied Williams's *Streetcar Named Desire*, reexamining gay and lesbian sex in the 1940s. Yet some critics have argued that the transvestism of Split Britches reconfirms binary, male-dominant stereotypes.
 5. Holly Hughes (1955–), a lesbian performance artist and one of the NEA Four, often appeared at the WOW Café. She is also known for her plays. *The Well of Horniness* (1983) is a campy murder-mystery play with lusty lesbians, set on the sound stage of a 1940s radio soap opera, with 5 women performing more than 30 characters. *Dress Suits to Hire* (1987) is a lesbian love story framed as film noir, with pulp fiction images.
 6. Performance artist Tim Miller (1958–), also one of the NEA Four, developed solo shows based on his personal life and political activism from the 1980s into the 2000s.
 7. Charles Ludlam (1943–87) founded the Ridiculous Theatrical Company in 1967 and became best known for his play, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (1984), with 2 men playing 8 roles, male and female, with 35 costume changes, in a campy satire of Victorian melodramas and gothic horror novels and films, both deconstructing and celebrating them.
 8. Terrence McNally (1938–) wrote plays and musicals about straight and gay characters with romantic longings, such as *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* (1981, film 1991) and *Kiss of the Spider Woman* (1992 book for the musical adapted from Manuel Puig's novel). McNally's play, *Corpus Christi* (1997), evoked thousands of protestors and several death threats for showing Jesus and his followers as homosexuals.
 9. Larry Kramer (1935–) wrote *The Normal Heart* (1985) about the rise of the HIV-AIDS crisis in the 1980s in New York, stirring activist passions to address the medical and social issues.
 10. Tony Kushner (1956–) wrote many Brechtian epic plays, but became most known for his two-part *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes* (1991–93), which helped straight spectators

appreciate the struggle of gay men during the AIDS crisis. It also shows a Mormon lawyer alienated from his agoraphobic wife, as he realizes his homosexuality—plus ghosts and angels, as messengers and cosmic spectators—with double and cross-gender casting. In 1996, the Pulitzer-winning play was almost banned in Charlotte, North Carolina, for seven seconds of male frontal nudity (showing AIDS lesions to a nurse) as “indecent exposure.” An opening-day court injunction *prevented* the arrest of the actor and the rented theatre’s closing of its doors, yet pro- and anti-play protestors marched outside the theatre. In 2003, the play was made into a six-hour Home Box Office movie with major stars, Al Pacino (playing the historical lawyer, Roy Cohn) and Meryl Streep (playing the ghost of Ethel Rosenberg, who was executed as a spy in 1953, and other roles).

11. *The Laramie Project*, by Moisés Kaufman (1963–) and members of the Tectonic Theater Project, was a devised (collectively scripted) docu-drama, created from interviews, news reports, and actors’ journals in 2000, about the brutal murder of a gay, University of Wyoming student, Matthew Shepard, in a hate crime two years before. It involves 8 actors portraying more than 60 characters in a series of short scenes. **[How did LGBT+ performance artists and playwrights change the scene since the 1970s, onstage and onscreen, reflecting inner-theatre identity needs and new social values, regarding potential selves and Others, as actors, characters, and audiences?]**

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