

Musical Theater Composer Grant Recipients

Ricky Ian Gordon

Ricky Ian Gordon's credits include *My Life With Albertine* (Playwrights Horizons, 2002 AT&T Award), *Dream True* (The Vineyard Theater, Richard Rodgers Production Award), *The Tibetan Book Of The Dead* (Houston Grand Opera and The American Music Theater Festival), *Only Heaven* (Encompass Opera), *Stonewall/ Night Variations* (En Garde Arts), *States Of Independence* (The American Music Theater Festival), *Autumn Valentine* (Opera Omaha's 1992 Signature Theatre & The Ted and Mary Jo Shen Charitable Gift Fund / Fall Festival), *Morning Star* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), *Art Song Dance* (a collaboration with choreographer Sean Curran at The Joyce Theater), *Orpheus and Euridice* (Lincoln Center's New Visions Series American Songbook and Great Performers Series). Current projects include an opera of *The Grapes Of Wrath* with Michael Korie for Minnesota and Utah, slated for a February 2007 premiere, and *For My Family*, for which he is also the book writer and lyricist, which has already had a developmental workshop at The Sundance Theater Lab. Previous awards include the National Institute For Music Theater Award, the Stephen Sondheim Award, The Gilman and Gonzalez-Falla Music Theater Foundation Award, the Jonathan Larson Foundation Award, the Constance Klinsky Award, and a National Institute For Music Theater Award. His work can be heard on numerous cast recordings as well as Audra McDonald's *Way Back To Paradise*, and *Bright Eyed Joy: The Songs Of Ricky Ian Gordon*.

Michael John LaChiusa

Michael John LaChiusa is a composer, lyricist and writer whose credits include *SEND (who are you? I love you)*, which premiered at the Houston Grand Opera as part of *An Evening With Audra McDonald; Bernarda Alba* (Lincoln Center Theater); *See What I Wanna See* (The Public Theater); *The Highest Yellow* (Signature Theatre); *Little Fish* (Second Stage); *The Nutcracker* (a new musical version in collaboration with Amon Miyamoto which premiered in 2002 in Tokyo); *Lovers and Friends* (Lyric Opera of Chicago); *The Wild Party* (The Public, Tony ® nominations for Best Musical, Book and Score), *Marie Christine* (LCT, Tony ® nominations for Best Score and Best Book of a Musical), *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (LCT, Tony ® nominations for Best Musical and Book), *The Petrified Prince* (The Public); *Hello Again* (LCT, Drama Desk nominations for Music, Lyrics and Book) and *First Lady Suite*, among others.

Jeanine Tesori

Jeanine Tesori has written four Tony-nominated scores for Broadway: *Twelfth Night* at Lincoln Center, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (lyrics, Dick Scanlan), *Caroline, or Change* (lyrics, Tony Kushner), and *Shrek the Musical* (lyrics, David Lindsay-Abaire). The production of *Caroline, or Change* at the National Theater in London received the Olivier Award for Best New Musical. Her first off-Broadway musical, *Violet*, written with Brian Crawley, received the New York Drama Critics Circle Award in 1997. She has been the recipient of many other honors including Drama Desk and Obie awards, and was cited by ASCAP as being the first woman composer to have "two new musicals running concurrently on Broadway." She composed the music for The New York Shakespeare Festival's production of Brecht's *Mother Courage*, as translated by Tony Kushner, starring Meryl Streep and Kevin Kline. She has written songs for the movie *Shrek The Third*. Her film scores include *Nights in Rodanthe*, *Winds of Change*, *Show Business*, and *Wrestling With Angels*. She has composed songs for Disney DVD releases *Mulan II*, *Lilo and Stitch II*, and *Little Mermaid III*. She has produced sixty CDs for Silver-Burdett Ginn's *Making Music* and the original cast albums for *Twelfth Night*, *Violet*, and *Caroline, or Change*. Tesori, a Barnard graduate, is on the council of the Dramatists Guild. Her next project is a new musical with the playwright Lisa Kron.

Joseph Thalken

Joseph Thalken is an award-winning composer whose latest musical, *And the Curtain Rises*, with book by Michael Slade and lyrics by Mark Campbell, is based on a true story about the birth of the first American musical. Thalken gained notoriety in 2003 when he became the first (and, to this date, the only) composer to ever have two musicals showcased the same year at the prestigious National Alliance for Musical Theatre (NAMT) Festival in New York. The two shows were *Harold & Maude*, book/lyrics by *Fantasticks* co-creator Tom Jones (later produced at the Paper Mill Playhouse, Millburn, NJ;

TheatreWorks, Palo Alto; Human Race Theatre Company, Dayton; and other theaters from Cleveland to Tokyo); and *Was*, book/lyrics by Barry Kleinbort, based on Geoff Ryman's novel (workshopped at Lincoln Center Theatre, NYC; produced at Human Race Theatre Company, Dayton; and Northwestern University's American Music Theatre Project). Thalken has also written choral, concert and chamber music works, including *Tales of Music and Magic* (Skaneateles Festival); and contributed to Mark Campbell's *Songs from an Unmade Bed* (New York Theatre Workshop). His music and orchestrations can be heard on albums by Rebecca Luker, Howard McGillin, BJ Ward, opera star Nathan Gunn, and DC's Sally Martin, among others. On Broadway, Thalken conducted *Victor/Victoria* with Julie Andrews and Liza Minnelli, and *Gypsy* with Patti LuPone. He's also conducted the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra; New Jersey Symphony Orchestra; Aachen Stadttheater (Germany); and International Opera Studio (Zurich). As a pianist and musical director, he has toured extensively with LuPone, and worked with Bernadette Peters, Barry Manilow, Polly Bergen, Kristin Chenoweth, Marin Mazzie, Jason Danieley and many more. Previous honors include two Gilman & Gonzalez-Falla Foundation Musical Theater Commendations, the Constance Klinsky Award, Meet the Composer award, and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. He is a proud graduate of Northwestern University.

Adam Guettel

Adam Guettel is a composer/lyricist living in New York City. His newest musical, *The Light in the Piazza* (cast album on Nonesuch Records), with a book by Craig Lucas, premiered on Broadway at Lincoln Center Theater's Vivian Beaumont Theater in April 2005, following a world premiere at Seattle's Intiman Theater in the summer of 2003 and a second engagement at Chicago's Goodman Theater in early 2004 (where it received three Joseph Jefferson Awards including Best Musical). *The Light in the Piazza* received six Tony Awards in 2005 including two for Guettel – Best Original Score, and Best Orchestrations. *Piazza* also received five Drama Desk Awards, including two for Guettel – Best Music and Best Orchestrations. He wrote music and lyrics for *Floyd Collins* (cast album on Nonesuch Records), which received the 1996 Lucille Lortel Award for Best Musical and earned Guettel the Obie Award for Best Music. *Floyd Collins* has been presented at Playwrights Horizons, New York; Prince Theatre, Philadelphia; Goodman Theatre, Chicago; Old Globe, San Diego; Bridewell, London; and elsewhere. His other works include *Love's Fire*, collaboration with John Guare for The Acting Company, and *Saturn Returns*, a concert at Joseph Papp Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival. *Saturn Returns* was recorded by Nonesuch Records under the title *Myths and Hymns*. Four of Guettel's songs were featured on Audra McDonald's album, *Way Back to Paradise* (1998, Nonesuch Records), and Guettel himself performed a concert evening of his work at New York's Town Hall in 1999. Film scores include *Arguing the World*, a feature documentary by Joe Dorman and the score for *Jack*, a two-hour documentary for CBS by Peter Davis (1994). Accolades for Guettel include the Stephen Sondheim Award (from the American Music Theater Festival, 1990), the ASCAP New Horizons Award (1997), and the American Composers Orchestra Award (2005).

Musical Theatre Leadership Award Recipients

Bruce Coughlin

Bruce Coughlin has created the orchestrations for many shows, including Adam Guettel's *The Light in the Piazza* (with Ted Sperling and Adam Guettel, for which they received Tony® and Drama Desk Awards), and *Floyd Collins* (Obie Award and Drama Desk nomination); Ricky Ian Gordon's upcoming *Grapes of Wrath* and *My Life With Albertine*; Michael John LaChiusa's *Giant* (at Signature), *SEND (who are you? I love you)*, *See What I Wanna See*, *Little Fish* and *The Wild Party*; as well as the current Off-Broadway hit *Grey Gardens*, *Urinetown* (Tony and Drama Desk nominations), the Tony® and Grammy Award-winning revival of *Annie Get Your Gun*, *On the Town*, *The Sound of Music*, *Triumph of Love*, *Once Upon a Mattress* and *The King & I*.

Audra McDonald

Audra McDonald is a four-time Tony® Award winner (for her roles in *Carousel*, *Master Class*, *Ragtime* and *A Raisin in the Sun*). Her other Broadway appearances include Roundabout Theatre's *110 in the Shade* (Tony nomination), Lincoln Center's acclaimed revival of *Henry IV* and *Marie*

Christine (Tony nomination). She appeared at the Houston Grand Opera in *An Evening With Audra McDonald*, featuring Michael John LaChiusa's *SEND (who are you? I love you)*. Among her numerous television credits, she is on ABC's "Private Practice", and is an Emmy nominee for "Wit," directed by Mike Nichols. She has released four solo albums: *Build a Bridge*, *Happy Songs*, *How Glory Goes* and *Way Back to Paradise* and her other recordings include a live concert of *Dreamgirls*, *Sweeney Todd: Live at the Philharmonic*, *Cradle Will Rock* (BMG) and *Wonderful Town* (EMI).

Adam Guettel

Composer Adam Guettel's work includes *The Light in the Piazza* (Tony and Drama Desk Awards for Music and Orchestrations); *Floyd Collins* (Playwrights Horizons), *Lydie Breeze* (New York Theatre Workshop), *Love's Fire* (collaboration with John Guare for The Acting Company); *Saturn Returns* (The Public Theater). Recordings: *The Light in the Piazza*, *Floyd Collins* and *Myths and Hymns*, in addition to the four songs featured on Audra McDonald's *Way Back to Paradise*. Mr. Guettel is the recipient of the Stephen Sondheim Award (1996), the Lucille Lortel Award (1996) and the ASCAP New Horizons Award (1997).

Ted Sperling

Ted Sperling directed Michael John LaChiusa's *See What I Wanna See* at The Public Theater. His work as a music director and orchestrator includes *Guys and Dolls*, *South Pacific*, *The Light in the Piazza* (Tony® and Drama Desk Awards with co-orchestrators Bruce Coughlin and Adam Guettel) and *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* as well as *A Man of No Importance*, *A New Brain* and *My Favorite Year* (for LCT); *The Full Monty*, *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, *How to Succeed ...*, *Saturn Returns* and *Floyd Collins*. *The American Musical Voices Project Partners*.

The Next Generation Composers Grant Recipients

Matt Conner

Matt Conner has been performing, composing, teaching, and music directing in the Washington, DC metropolitan area for the last eleven years. Mr. Conner's world premiere musical, *Nevermore*, was produced at Signature Theatre in 2006 (directed by Eric Schaeffer with orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick). He recently wrote the book/lyrics/music to *A Carol Christmas* for the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington DC, produced December 2007, as well as a new commissioned work for Signature Theatre entitled *Crossing*, which had its first reading in October 2007. Among Mr. Conner's stage credits are: Aurelio/Ensemble in *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Scotty in *Merrily We Roll Along*, Toby in *Witches of Eastwick*, Steward in *Into the Woods*, John Hinckley in *Assassins*, Tamate in *Pacific Overtures* (all for Signature Theatre); Riff in *West Side Story* (Olney Theatre Center); and The Page of Herodias in Oscar Wilde's *Salome* (Synetic Theatre). Mr. Conner received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music Theatre from Shenandoah Conservatory of Music and has Music Directed numerous shows including *Brigadoon*, *Grease*, *Crazy for You*, *Shenandoah*, and his original score, *A Christmas Carol*. Mr. Conner is currently writing *Senior Moments/Silver*, a Signature Theatre commissioned musical still in the pre-workshop phase, and *Partial Eclipse*, a world premier song cycle to be produced at Signature Theatre in June 2009. Mr. Conner is also working on a children's show called *The King of Pizza*, about diversity and working together, which will be produced in the fall of 2008. Mr. Conner is a proud voice on the Grammy Award®-winning recording of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, a teaching artist with Creative Cauldron, Inc., and a member of the Actors Equity Association. For more information on Matt Conner, visit www.mattconner.org.

Peter Foley

Peter Foley wrote music and lyrics for *The Hidden Sky*, which earned him an NEA grant, the Richard Rodgers Award (from the American Academy of Arts and Letters), the Stephen Sondheim Award (from the American Music Theater Festival), and a Jonathan Larson Foundation grant. *The Hidden Sky* premiered at the Prince Music Theater in Philadelphia, where it received a Barrymore Awards nomination for Outstanding Original Score; it was subsequently produced at the Spirit of Broadway Theater in Norwich, Connecticut, earning a Spirit Award for Best Original Score. Concert versions have

been performed at Ars Nova and Joe's Pub in NYC. His other stage works include *The Bear* (Golden Fleece, Triangle Theater Co., Opera Unlimited), music for "To Sing" in *Songs From An Unmade Bed* (New York Theatre Workshop) and scores for several plays, including *Newton's Universe* (St. Ann's Warehouse), and *Henry V* (New Jersey Shakespeare Festival). His songs have been performed at Lincoln Center's American Songbook, Town Hall, Symphony Space, and LaMaMa, among other venues. In addition to a new work for Signature Theatre, Foley's upcoming theater projects include an untitled collaboration with playwright Ellen McLaughlin and director Michael Greif, an original musical comedy, *Bloom*, and a new production of *The Hidden Sky* at Prospect Theater Company in NYC. Foley served as musical director/keyboardist for the premieres of Rinde Eckert's *Highway Ulysses* (American Repertory Theater, dir. Robert Woodruff), Kenneth Vega's *Heartfield* (Baltimore Theater Project), and for several concerts by actor/singer-songwriter Manoel Felciano. He has also composed scores and themes for numerous television documentaries, including "Listening To America with Bill Moyers" and the Emmy-nominated PBS series, "Art:21." He has received fellowships and residencies from the MacDowell and Millay colonies, the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Music Theater Conference, and the Sundance Playwrights Retreat at Ucross. A member of ASCAP, alumnus of the BMI and New Dramatists workshops and resident artist in the American Lyric Theater's Composer/Librettist lab, he lives outside New York City with his wife, writer/director Kate Chisholm, and their daughter. For more information on Peter Foley visit hellagoodmusic.com.

Adam Gwon

Adam Gwon is a composer and lyricist recently named one of "50 to Watch" by The Dramatist magazine. His latest musical *Ordinary Days* will receive its world premiere at Pennsylvania Centre Stage in summer 2008, and its UK premiere at the Finborough Theatre in London in fall 2008. His other musicals include the upcoming *Bernice Bobs Her Hair* with librettist Julia Jordan and director Joe Calarco, *Ethan Frome* with bookwriter Michael Ruby, and *Lulu*. His work has been seen at Primary Stages, the York Theatre, New Dramatists, NYMF, NAMT, American Music Theatre Project, the ASCAP/Disney Musical Theatre Workshop, HERE, the Flea Theater, Tribeca Performing Arts Center, and many others. He has scored more than 25 productions across the country, and also writes for film and advertising. Adam is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, was a 2006-07 musical theater fellow at the Dramatists Guild, and is currently a teaching artist with Roundabout Theatre Company, where he helps 8th graders write musicals about paintings, presidents, and pajamas. Visit www.adamgwon.com.

Gabriel Kahane

Composer/performer Gabriel Kahane defies classification through his sonically challenging, emotionally resonant, and deeply accessible work. Kahane's most well-known work is his *Craigslistlieder*, an eight movement song cycle which comprises settings of anonymous classified ads from craigslist.org. In addition to its many performances throughout the US by the composer, *Craigslistlieder* was heard in excerpt at Carnegie Hall this season, in a recital by critically-acclaimed baritone Thomas Meglitoranza. The summer of 2008 will witness the premiere of Kahane's *For The Union Dead*, a new song cycle on poems by Robert Lowell for small ensemble, at the Verbier Festival in Switzerland. Among his varied credits as a performer, Gabriel has appeared in recital with Grammy winning bass-baritone Thomas Quasthoff throughout Europe, toured the Schumann Piano Quintet with the Mark Morris Dance Group, and accompanied violinist Hilary Hahn in the slow movement of the Sibelius Violin Concerto in a dirty bar. He has shared the stage with indie-rock luminaries My Brightest Diamond and Luke Temple, and has recorded with Sufjan Stevens and former Nickel Creek front-man Chris Thile. Kahane's sprawling self-titled debut LP, to be released in October 2008, features twenty-odd musicians while deftly marrying dense harmony and counterpoint to tasty melodic hooks. Much in demand as a composer of chamber music, Gabriel is currently completing solo piano commissions for pianists Natasha Paremski as well as for his father, Jeffrey Kahane. An evening-length work exploring his family's genealogy and journey from Germany to the United States will premiere in the fall of 2009. An avid theater artist, Kahane has collaborated extensively with the Obie-winning New York City-based downtown theater company Les Frères Corbusier, serving as musical director for a number of their productions including *Hell House*, *A Very Merry Unauthorized Scientology Pageant*, and the Los Angeles production of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. Visit www.gabrielkahane.com for more information.

Marisa Michelson

Marisa Michelson's work is inspired by the limitless possibilities singing offers to express the authenticity of the human experience. *Still Life With Toe Shoes*, her original musical written with Joshua H. Cohen, had its world premiere last summer at Deerfield Academy. Michelson has been commissioned by NYC'S Prospect Theatre Company, first to write a short piece based on Rene Magritte's painting, *The Lovers*, and in 2008, as composer and co-lyricist with playwright Rinne Groff, for the "Hey Baby" storyline in *The Dome*. Michelson's full-length musical, *Hotel Sarajevo*, which she co-conceived with Stephanie Johnstone and for which she wrote book, music and lyrics, has received readings at CAP 21/NYU and Smith College. She has collaborated with playwright Jason Grote (also for *The Dome*), and with Nautilus Theatre Company in Minnesota. Michelson was an American Musical Voices Honoree in 2008, and the winner of the St. Botolph Award for composition in 2006. She participated in the New Dramatist Composer-Librettist Studio, won a fellowship to study Indian Hindustani Singing in 2007, and is currently in Vienna studying singing and teaching with the Libero Canto School. She graduated with a B.F.A in Musical Theater from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, participated in the Young Artist's Vocal Program at Tanglewood, and studied composition with Adam Guettel. Michelson currently lives in NYC where she teaches singing and piano to children and adults both privately and through Soyulla artists. www.MarisaMichelson.com.

Chris Miller

Chris Miller studied piano and voice at Elon University and Musical Theater Writing at New York University. With Nathan Tysen, he wrote the musical *The Burnt Part Boys* (Mariana Elder, book), which had an extended, sold out run at Barrington Stage Company in the summer of 2006. *The Burnt Part Boys* had a lab production at the Vineyard Theatre in May 2009), a production at New York Stage & Film (summer 2009), and an upcoming full co-production at Playwrights Horizons (spring 2010). Their musical *The Mysteries of Harris Burdick*, based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg (Joe Calarco, book), has had readings at Lincoln Center Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, Mercury Musical Developments in London, a workshop with TheatreMasters in Aspen, Colorado, and a critically acclaimed full production at Barrington Stage Company in the summer of 2008.

Miller is a contributing composer (Mark Campbell, lyrics) to the song cycle *Songs From an Unmade Bed* produced at the New York Theatre Workshop in the spring of 2005 (cast album on Sh-K-Boom Records). His string quartet *Moment of Weakness* premiered at Symphony Space in May 2007. He recently wrote incidental music for the Two River Theatre Co.'s production of *Mary's Wedding*, directed by Daniel Goldstein. His song cycle with Tysen, *Fugitive Songs*, premiered off-Broadway in March 2008 at the 45th Street Theatre, and was subsequently nominated for a Drama Desk Award (Outstanding Revue). Currently he is collaborating with Tysen on a commission for Lincoln Center Theatre, a Playwrights Horizons/TheatreWorks Palo Alto co-commission with playwright Craig Wright (creator and executive producer of ABC's *Dirty Sexy Money*, as well as writer/producer of *Lost*, and *Six Feet Under*), a musical of *Tuck Everlasting* for Broadway Across America/Barry Brown, and an original musical. Miller's awards include the 2003 Jonathan Larson Performing Arts Foundation Grant, the 2003 Frederick Lowe Foundation Grant, the 2004 Daryl Roth Creative Spirit Award, the 2006 Richard Rodgers Award, the 2007 Kitty Carlisle Hart Musical Theatre Award from the Vineyard Theatre, and the ASCAP PLUS Awards 2005-08. In 2007 the Dramatists Guild Magazine's (*The Dramatist*, July/August issue) named him one of the "50 To Watch."

Scott Davenport Richards

Working in many capacities at the intersection of music and drama, Scott Davenport Richards often tries to bridge disparate genres and forms. Last season, *Charlie Crosses the Nation an opera in a Jazz idiom* (music, libretto, orchestrations) was performed by the New York City Opera as part of the VOX festival of new opera. *A Thousand Words Come to Mind*, written with playwright Michele Lowe was commissioned by Paulette Haupt and opened last May at The Zipper Theatre and starred Tony® nominee Barbara Walsh. *A Star Across the Ocean*, a work for four voices and symphony orchestra, was premiered by the Montclair State University Symphony and featured Tony Award-winner Chuck Cooper. Current projects include a musical adaptation of the classic Jean Shepherd film *A Christmas Story*, with

a book by Joe Robinette, which is scheduled to open at Kansas City Rep this November. The musical will be directed by Artistic Director and produced by Eric Rosen in partnership with Gerald Goehring and Michael Jenkins. *Dance of the Holy Ghosts*, a play with music by Marcus Gardley, premiered in 2006 at the Yale Repertory Theatre.

Richard's other musical theater works include music for *Coyote Goes Salmon Fishing* (with Deborah Brevoort), directed by Molly Smith at Perseverance Theatre and produced by Stuart Ostrow in Houston; and *Sanctuary D.C.*, a rap musical about the homeless in Washington (Helen Hayes Award nomination). His works for children include a number of commissions from Theatreworks U.S.A.: *Corduroy* (music, lyrics, orchestrations), *Sundiata! The Lion King of Mali* (music, lyrics, orchestrations), *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (orchestrations) and *Junie B. Jones* (orchestrations). Richard's play-scores have been heard at resident theaters around the country including The Public, The Old Globe, The Alliance, and Madison Repertory Theatre. Highlights include the world premiere of Lee Blessing's *Cobb*, featuring Oscar winner Chris Cooper and Delroy Lindo at The Yale Repertory, and the U.S. premiere of Nikos Kazantzakis's *Christopher Columbus* at the New Federal Theater.

As an actor, Richards originated the role of Sylvester in the original Broadway production of August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. Frank Rich's review of that production was recently included in Ben Brantley's compilation of *The New York Times* reviews of 25 productions which defined the 20th century. Mr. Richards also assisted his father, Lloyd Richards, in the origination of three other Wilson works. Richards is Assistant Professor of Musical Theatre/Composition at Montclair State University's Cali School of Music and has been a member of the faculty at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Graduate Musical Theater Writing Program since 1997. From 1995-2005, he was a teaching artist with Lincoln Center Institute, where he also authored publications for the Heckscher Foundation Research Center on such various subjects as *The Blues*, *Margaret Leng Tan (The Art of the Toy Piano)*, and the tangos of Astor Piazzolla. Richards earned a B.A. from Yale University and M.F.A. from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Graduate Musical Theater Writing Program. He is a recipient of the Jonathan Larson and the Frederick Loewe awards.