

Performing Arts (Theatre) – Franchelle Stewart Dorn

Let me begin by saying this exercise was much more difficult than I anticipated. There were at least 25 of the 70 applicants that I thought worthy of consideration. Quite honestly, I looked for anything that might make my list of finalists shorter. Therefore, my list is composed of the applicants whose aspirations, and/or talent, and/or artistic statement/intent, and/or sense of self, stayed with me long after I'd read the other applications. I will also say that including a video or reviews of work gave those applicants a leg up...although not everyone on my list had those.

Sarah Shippobotham

Sarah struck me as someone in transition. A self-admitted “late bloomer” in acting and playwriting, she has spent her entire professional life as an actor and dialect coach, along with some directing and intimacy coaching. However, it appears she has come into her own with her one-woman show *Can I Say Yes to That Dress?* I am eager to see it! With glowing reviews for several different roles at various Utah locales, she strikes me as someone who has a wealth of projects ahead of her that this fellowship could aid her in accomplishing. She also has the maturity and life experience to make her dreams a reality.

Janine Sobeck Knighton

Janine approaches theater from a deeply personal place. She found that books helped her escape from feelings of disconnectedness and being misunderstood. It was that escapism that eventually led her to writing about misunderstood or ignored women in plays for young audiences. She has an imagination that incorporates some historical figures with fanciful ones. Her plays have been produced at several theaters, and with their success, she hopes to transition from full-time professor to full-time playwright. I very much enjoyed reading her plays. She writes in a way that engages young and old alike and hopefully will produce lifelong theatergoers in the process. This fellowship should help her accomplish her goal.

Eric Sciotto

Eric is perhaps the most professionally accomplished applicant of the bunch. He is an actor/singer/dancer who has performed in twelve Broadway shows, numerous regional theaters, and educational institutions. He is now settled in Utah with his family, where he continues to perform, direct, choreograph, and teach. After all his success, he still describes himself as a “gig performer” like so many of us. This fellowship would give him a respite and reward for continuing in his rather stellar career.

Judy Mansfield

Judy is a Yakama/Shoshoni Native artisan. Having spent most of her professional life as a craftsperson designing and producing fully beaded buckskin dresses, men's regalia, and corn husk basketry, she has also long included storytelling as part of her vocation/career. It is this latter inclusion that she wishes to expand as a theatrical event, including dance, music, and technical support. I believe she has stories to tell that will benefit/educate/enlighten/entertain the community at large, aside from honoring her heritage.

Lynnette Owens

Lynnette is doing something that never even occurred to me: producing full orchestral tracks for complete operas. This seems an exceptional service to small opera companies and could help expand audiences worldwide. As a musician and singer, she understands the value of allowing more performers the opportunity to perform in front of live audiences when the cost of mounting professional operas becomes more and more prohibitive. This fellowship would help her continue this worthwhile pursuit.