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**MusiCOLAB**

**SUPPORTING NEW MUSICALS IN PHILADELPHIA!**

# CURTAIN UP *Philly!*

A CELEBRATION OF NEW MUSICALS  
[curtainupphilly.com](http://curtainupphilly.com)

## **Philly loves new musicals**

**Curtain Up Philly!** is a celebration of new musicals that runs March 7 - April 21, 2024. Share the excitement as the curtain rises for the first time on 20+ new musicals presented by four local companies - **Pier**

**Players, Theatre on the Verge, MusiCoLab and Polyphone (UArts).**

**[Click here to read our press release!](#)**

Enjoy concert-style readings in a variety of venues throughout the region. Details below!

“It is fitting that Philadelphia, a city of firsts, is curating first-seen musicals. Seeing musicals in the very beginning of the process is very exciting and reminds us of the myriad of talented artists and innovators born of this city. *Curtain Up Philly! A Celebration of New Musicals* is another reason to take great pride in the creative talent in Philadelphia.”

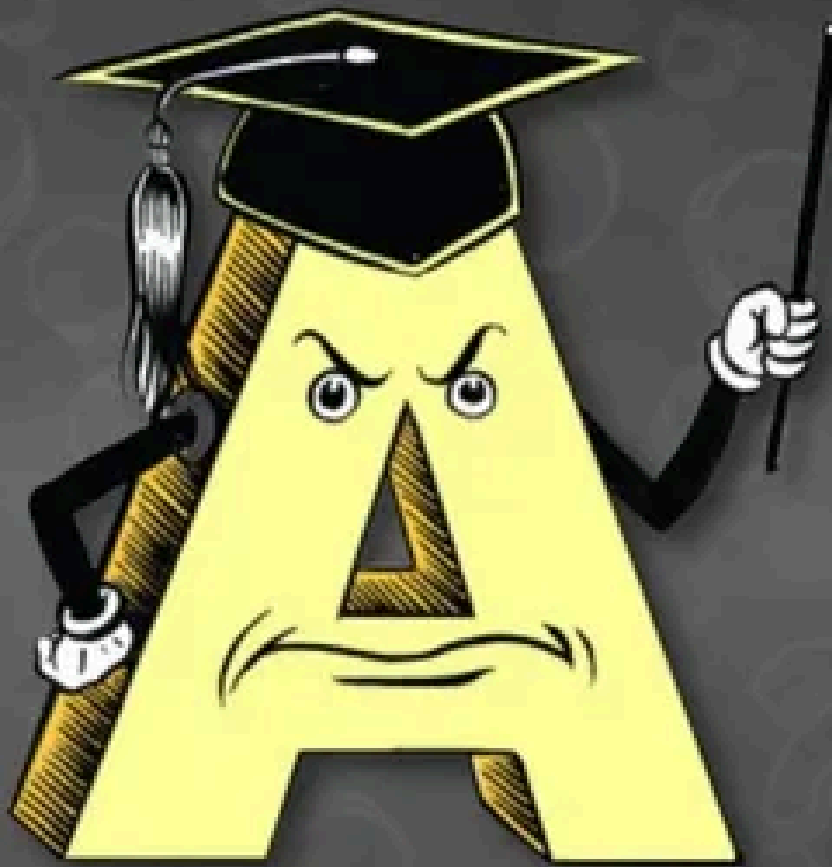
*Kelly Lee, Chief Cultural Officer, City of Philadelphia*

**March 7 - 16 at Theatre Exile**

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# The Angry Grammarian

A New Musical by Jeffrey Barg and David Lee White



Produced by Chelsea Cylinder

Presented by Pier Players Theatre Company

Directed by Dawn Navarro

Music Directed by Pat D'Amato





# The Angry Grammarian

Music and lyrics by Jeffrey Barg

Book by David Lee White

Original story by Jeffrey Barg and David Lee White

Presented by Pier Players Theatre Company

Greg is "The Angry Grammarian" — a newspaper columnist who's passionate about predicates, consumed by commas and seduced by subjunctives. Lisa is a more pragmatic grammarian who loves language just as much as he does. What starts as attraction quickly evolves into a darker rivalry. Will grammatical gusto be enough to keep them together? THE ANGRY GRAMMARIAN is a new musical for anyone who's ever been pissed off that someone used quotation marks "for emphasis."

Visit [@pierplayers](#) and [@angrygrammarian](#) on Instagram, [Pier Players Theatre Company on Facebook](#), and [the Angry Grammarian website](#).

**March 17, 23 and 24 at Abington Arts Center**

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## New Musicals Festival

**Theatre on the Verge's *New Musicals Festival*** is a developmental program intended to highlight original stories told by early and mid-career musical theatre writers. This year's festival will feature three in-person days of concert readings at Abington Art Center in Jenkintown PA on March 17th, 23rd, and 24th, as well as a day of streaming virtual readings of new works on March 22nd. In total, this inaugural festival will feature 19 new shows in various stages of development. The readings are open to all members of the public as well as industry professionals and potential collaborators.

*On Instagram: @theatreontheverge*

Tickets are pay-what-you-can. We suggest a contribution of \$15 per person per show, 2 shows for \$25 a person, or 4 shows for \$40 a person. However there is no required minimum, and we will not turn anyone away. All proceeds will go towards supporting the artists who worked on the festival.

**[Purchase tickets here.](#)**

## Featured in Theatre on the Verge's New Musicals Festival:

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### Heartbreak the Musical, by Peter Eksell

A tragicomic tale of a depressed nurse falling in love with a man in need of a heart transplant.  
*March 17 at 11:00*

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### Clock-Maker, by Alexi Ralston

Wishing she could go back in time to change her tragic fate, former child prodigy Lucy finds herself on a journey of actual time travel through a grandfather clock in her uncle's clock store, journeying to the future with an unexpected companion. As Lucy meets a new cast of characters that live in the year 2041 and eventually finds herself stuck in the future, she uncovers hidden secrets about her family's past, which have been kept by her uncle, the eponymous Clock-Maker.  
*March 17 at 2:00*

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### FAVOR, by Greg Bachman

Wordtopia is where Words work in the Dictionary to provide meaning to the thoughts and culture of the Human Domain, and things aren't going well. Money is going on strike. And Love and Freedom are about to be conned into getting married as Hate and Tyranny. In the meantime, Favor, the daughter of Wordtopia's Grand Alpha, is graduating from college to become her father's special assistant. She soon discovers she has to confront the machinations of her father's chief of staff, Zero, and her own father's fear of change to rise to becoming the Grand Alpha she is destined to be. *March 17 at 5:00*

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### Turnover: a New Leaf, by David Quang Pham

A plant-based musical about how two business-owning families, who are rooted in prejudice, overturn their views when their queer kids start rooting for each other. *March 17 at 8:00*

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### Across the Divide, by Gabriel Flores

This show is about three couples during the first year of the COVID-19 Pandemic. One couple is meeting, one is falling apart, and one is finding a way to hold on when they shouldn't. *March 22 at 5pm, online*

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## Love Defined, by Matthew Jordan

A pop concept musical exploring the nature of different relationships and what love means to each of us. *March 22 at 7:00, online*

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## TURING, by Timothy L Michuda and Benjamin Ward

The story of Alan Turing, the gay mathematician who cracked the Enigma code during World War II, in turn saving western civilization from the Nazis. TURING approaches its main character through three parallel timelines— his boyhood, collegiate, and young adult life. *March 23 at 1:00*

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## Unwound: Beyond the Labyrinth, by Amanda Gulla

Ariadne is a princess looking to unravel her past. Dionysus is a god who is afraid to confront their future. Both of them are trapped in the mysterious and deadly maze known as The Labyrinth. Does the red thread around Ariadne's finger hold the answer? Or will it leave them wandering endlessly, chased by the monster of their own minds? This original story draws from figures of Greek myth to sing of identity, isolation, and healing. *March 23 at 4:00*

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## Olivia O, the Musical, by Diane Currie Sam, Jessica Carmona, and Gil Yaron

Facing the loss of her mother, and the cruelty of the system she's caught in, 14 year old undocumented migrant Olivia Ortiz must maintain her hope, kindness and strength of will as she tries to find a home again, and unite with her American aunt she's never met. As Olivia struggles to adjust to a foster home that isn't what it seems to be, and faces an immigration raid, her aunt Isabel builds a radical new network of support and activism as she fights against a system that is more powerful than she realized. The Musical confronts the emotionally and rhetorically charged issue of migration, immigration policies and the movement of people across borders. *March 23 at 6:30*

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## Café con Leche, by Maiga Vidal



A queer rom-com musical about a failing coffee shop, meddling Latino parents, crippling student loan debt, and two women falling in love despite it all. *March 23 at 8:30*

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## Songs and Scenes Cabaret



### **FEATURING 15 MINUTE EXCERPTS FROM:**

*Captain Blood* by Jordan Pearson

Enslaved under false accusation of treason, a bachelor English doctor, Peter Blood, escapes his enemies through the pursuit of piracy. But when he reencounters Miss Arabella Bishop, the woman who once showed him compassion and whom he secretly loves, Peter Blood must choose between his quest for vengeance and freedom, or a chance for redemption and love before his enemies hunt him down.

*Joan's* by Adian Chapman and Katie Horner

When a young woman named Joan is facing an obstacle in her life that seems far too large to defeat. An unlikely friend in the form of Joan of Arc enters her life along with a homeless man named Marty. Will Joan find her courage?

*Mary Cassatt* by Mina Grabove

Based on the life of the Pennsylvania-born painter, this show explores Mary's journey from childhood to training at PAFA (Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts), to her eventual arrival in Paris where she befriends fellow Impressionists such as Degas, Renoir, Sisley, and Monet. Eventually her creative spirit and efforts for equality lead to a lifetime of fighting for women's rights in art and politics.

*QUILL-adelphia* by Chris Purcell and Cindy Dlugolecki

It's the summer of 1787 in Philadelphia. White and wealthy delegates from 12 states have gathered to revise the Articles of Confederation. Instead, they have established a "democracy" to serve all people. The Constitution's calligrapher, Jacob Shallus, has some doubts; so does Philadelphia minister (and free African) Absalom Jones. And there's an entire chorus of women (the "Liberty Belles"--wives and a daughter of the delegates) who wonder if they are included in "we the people."

### *Spirit of the Game: the Ultimate Musical* by Philip Vlahakis

High school football star Johnny Diskakis, a tiny wide receiver with a big chip on his shoulder and even bigger dreams of athletic triumphs, tests positive for steroids and is kicked off the team. He and his dad are forced to move back to their native village on the island of Crete in Greece. As they grapple with a new life working at the grandfather's family farm and inn, Thina, a local athletic phenom, introduces Johnny to the mixed-gender Olympic sport of Ultimate Frisbee.

### *Wolf Ballad* by Lindsay "Fiskars" Cutting

This musical explores human relationships with the wild through the story of Yellowstone's famous alpha wolf, the 06 Female, and the people whose lives she touched. Told through folk, bluegrass, and country music, we follow a young woman's journey of redemption as her story entwines with the rise of the 06 Female and her pack.

*March 24 @ 11am*

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## Red & Black, by Nick Hatcher, Sheridan Merrick, and David B Thomas ^

A contemporary musical exploring the ever-increasing struggles facing young people in present-day America. Using a collage structure, Red & Black juxtaposes work created in ensemble explorations with the journey of Julian, a Black boy whose mother was murdered by the police. He navigates the world around him, which is the world around us; his story in orbit with all of ours. *March 24 at 2:00*

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**April 14 and 15 at the Louis Bluver Theater at the Drake**

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# MUSICOLAB

Spotlight Series:

## A Closer Look

new musicals by  
Philly creators



Sunday April 14 @ 3      Monday April 15 @ 7

Sunday April 14 @ 5 - Monday April 15 @ 7  
Louis Bluver Theater at the Drake, 302 S. Hicks St.  
[musicolab.org/closerlook](http://musicolab.org/closerlook)    [curtainupphilly.com](http://curtainupphilly.com)

## MusiCoLab presents "A Closer Look"

On **Sunday April 14 and Monday April 15** (during Philly Theatre Week), MusiCoLab will present "A Closer Look," the first presentation in its new **Spotlight Series**. In this program, we will present substantial excerpts (about a half hour) from three new musicals by Philly creators.

Take "a closer look" at the exciting and innovative work being created by hometown writers and composers. Learn more about the works selected for this program below!

**Get tickets now!**

Far From the Tree - Book by Justin Warner, Lyrics by Kristin Maloney, Music by Robert Maggio

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Finding Madame Curie - Book by Melissa Bell, Music and Lyrics by David Kurkowski

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Red & Black - Book by Sheridan Merrick and Nick Hatcher, Music by David Thomas and Sheridan Merrick

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**April 18 - 21 at the Philadelphia Arts Bank**

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# POLYPHONE FESTIVAL

UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

## Polyphone 2024

Now in its tenth year, Polyphone is a festival of new and emerging musicals at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia.

Polyphone represents an institutional effort by UArts to change how musicals are born and how young theater makers are trained. Each spring we bring cutting-edge creators of new musical theater to Philadelphia to collaborate with student casts and production teams on new musicals in process. Over the course of seven weeks, guest artists engage in targeted exploration of their work and make changes while seeing their musicals on their feet for the first time. In the final week, we share our process with audiences in the form of off-book staged concert productions with a small band and elements of theatrical design. The result is not a final product, but an epic sharing of process.

Polyphone has made a transformative impact on hundreds of young artists, audiences and the field of new musicals.

**Polyphone selections for April 2024 and ticketing information will be available soon!**

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