

# DRAKE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE

"Celebrating Women's History Month "



## MISSION STATEMENT

The Drake University Theatre Department Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee includes faculty and student representatives. This committee aims to promote and develop a culture of collaboration and inclusion in the department, college and university. The committee interprets diversity as embracing and respecting all races, nationalities, colors, creeds, religions, ages, disabilities, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preference. The committee works towards greater representation of those currently underrepresented in the department and in the theatre community.

## VISION

We strive to cultivate a safe and supportive environment that celebrates the diverse, unique and multifaceted group of students and faculty in our department. We actively work to understand the complex and rich identities of self and those around us, and lean into difficult conversations related to equity, diversity and inclusion. We envision a department and university where equity, diversity and inclusion are recognized as core values that drive the development of all policies and practices. We believe in creating learning environments where hate, discrimination and microaggressions are not tolerated.

# FEMALE LIGHTING DESIGNERS TO KNOW

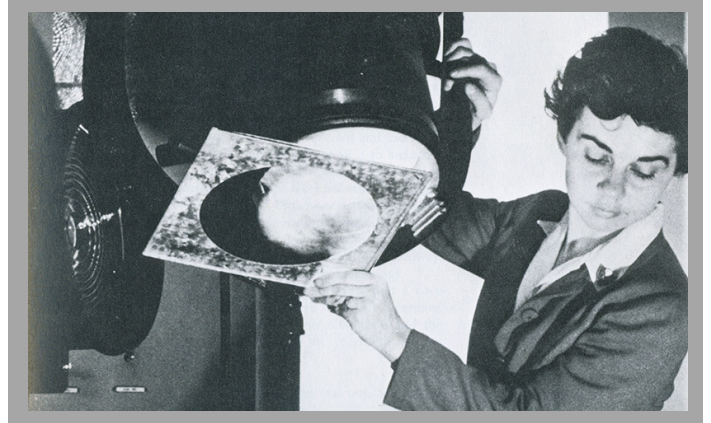
From an article by [StoneX](#)

Many might not know the history of lighting design has its roots on the work of a single woman: **Jean Rosenthal**. She was in charge of establishing on 1942 the general lines of what is considered as stage lighting design.

Previously the lighting job on a play was up to the theatre director or the stage designer. Rosenthal had worked on over 85 lighting designs for great Broadway's musicals.

After her, **Tharon Musser** would make an appearance, and many other women, setting down their role in the industry. Thanks to the pioneers, today lighting design is a high reputation artistic discipline. They were the first, but not the last.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, from Stonex, a national reference company in professional lighting and stage engineering, we share the names of some great lighting companies that continue to make history in the sector.



Jean Rosenthal



Tharon Musser

## Paloma Parra

Designer and lighting technician from 1998, received the MAX Award to the Best Lighting Design for her work on the job *The Dark Stone* in 2016. She designs for numerous productions and currently holds the position of Technical Director at the Pilar Bardem Auditorium.



Illuminator Paloma Parra. Source: [rivasciudad.es](#)

# FEMALE LIGHTING DESIGNERS TO KNOW

## Lola Barroso

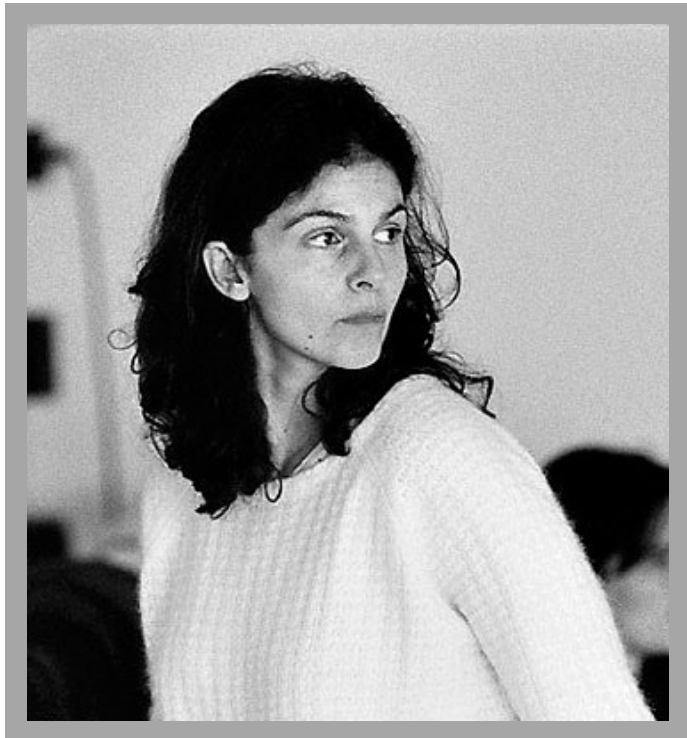
She started in the stage world as a dancer and soon was captivated by the work of lighting. Now, with more than 18 years of experience in the sector, he has done lighting works for theater, dance, opera and musicals, among others. Your design for *Furious Scandinavia* received the MAX Award for the Best Lighting Design in 2018.



Illuminator Lola Barroso. Source: ADADI.org

## Fabiana Piccioli

Your lighting work for the work Aakash Odedra Company's *Echoes* it was worth the ETC Award Knight of Illumination Award in the Dance category. Fabiana has harvested the majority of her experience with the company Akram Khan of which she was technical director and lighting designer for 8 years. In his career as a Freelance he has worked in designs for important dance companies, theaters and operas.



Fabiana Piccioli. Source: akramkhancompany.net

## Jennifer tipton

She began her career in the world of lighting at XNUMX with her design for the Broadway play *Our Town*. Eight years later, at XNUMX, she won her first Tony Award Best Lighting Design for her job on the play *The Cherry Orchard*. Ever since then she has gained success and various awards such as Drama Desk Award Outstanding Lighting, which she has won in four occasions.



Jennifer Tipton. Source: Bolshoi.ru



# FEMALE LIGHTING DESIGNERS TO KNOW

## Natasha Katz

The successful lighting designer has XNUMX Tony Award Best Lighting Design on her behalf, three musicals and three plays, and has been nominated XNUMX times. Her career began during XNUMX when she lit the play *Pack of Lies*. From that moment she has worked in about XNUMX Broadway musicals, as well as theater plays, dance, film and television.



Natasha Katz. Source: IBDB Broadway Database



Illuminator Paule Constable. Source: Playbill.com

## Suzan Tillotson

Her specialty is the lighting of architectural spaces: auditoriums, museums, schools, offices ... With over XNUMX years of experience, in XNUMX she founded Tillotson Design Associates and has won several awards since then by matching lighting design with architecture and the study of different materials. In XNUMX she was named Lighting Designer of the Year.

## Paule Constable

On of the most well known female lighting designers with a very prolific career. Her work has earned her several awards such as the Tony, the Drama Desk , the New York Critics Circle , and two Knights of Illumination. Her work has been developed mainly in the fields of theater, dance and opera.



Suzan Tillotson. Source: tillotsondesign.com

# FEMALE LIGHTING DESIGNERS TO KNOW

## Peggy Eisenhauer

She began her career in XNUMX with Broadway's musical *Song and Dance*, where she collaborated with Jules Fisher. Thence she has worked profusely as a lighting designer in theater and film with a total of XNUMX designs for Broadway spectacles. She owns three Tony awards and two Drama Desk.



Peggy Eisenhauer. Source: IBDB

## Pat collins

She made her debut in the world of lighting with the work *Threepenny Opera* in 1976 and only 10 years later she picked up her first Tony Award Best Lighting Design with *I'm Not Rappaportand* Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lighting Design by Execution of Justice. In her curriculum we find more than 30 works for Broadway.



Illuminator Pat Collins. Source: Playbill.com

## Ziggy Jacobs

A multidisciplinary illuminator whose work ranges from theater and opera to corporate events, puppet and children's shows with a long etcetera in between. She completes her professional work teaching courses and lectures on lighting and as a consultant. Your work in *Remembrant of Things Past* was awarded the Prize Michael Northen Bursary.



Source: Light Sound Journal

# FACTS ABOUT WOMEN IN THEATRE IN 2021

## "FEWER WOMEN IN HIGHEST PAYING JOBS"

An article by Women Arts

- **Women playwrights** got between 3 and 4 out of 10 productions at the two lower levels, and then slid down to fewer than one quarter of shows at the highest level.
- **Women directors** got about half or better of the jobs at the two lower levels, but only 37% of jobs at the highest level.
- **Women union actors** got more than half of the union roles at the lowest level, but only 39% of the union roles at the highest level.

At the highest level, union and non-union women actors combined represented 43% of the total actors. At the highest level, union and non-union women worked in almost equal amounts (482 actors vs. 487 actors). However, at that same level, union men outnumbered non-union men by nearly 200 artists (744 actors vs. 549 actors). This suggests that union contracts were biased towards male actors.



"Theatres at every level, but particularly those that offer Equity contracts with health weeks, must look for opportunities to employ more women.

- WOMEN ARTS

TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE [CLICK HERE.](#)

## SPOTLIGHTING WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS

### "PLAYSCRIPTS.COM SPOTLIGHTS FEMALE PLAYWRIGHTS"

Around the world, only 30% of plays are written by women. Playscripts is dedicated to empowering women playwrights.

VISIT THEIR WEBSITE [HERE.](#)



# SPOTLIGHTING WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS

**Chisa Hutchinson** (B.A. Vassar College; M.F.A. NYU - Tisch School of the Arts) has happily presented her plays *Dirt Rich*, *She Like Girls*, *This Is Not the Play*, *Sex on Sunday*, *Tunde's Trumpet*, *The Subject*, *Mama's Gonna Buy You* and *Somebody's Daughter* and many more.



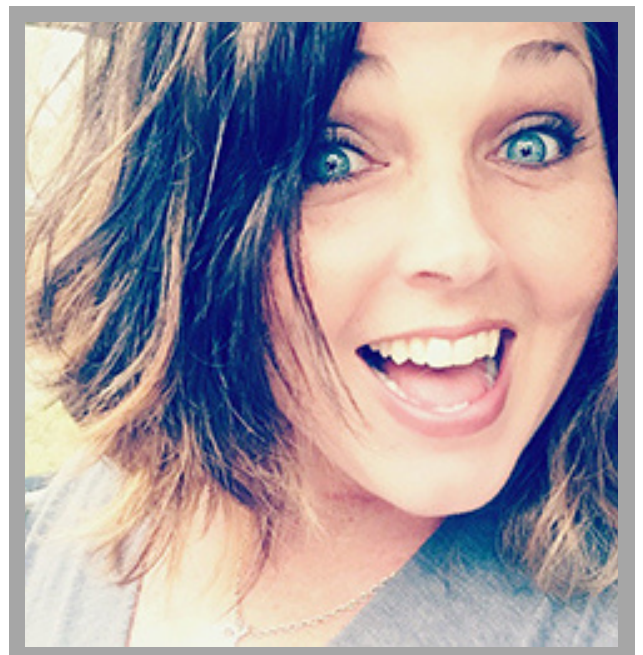
Chisa Hutchinson



Kirsten Greenidge

**Kirsten Greenidge** is a recent NEA/TCG Theatre Residency Grant recipient, during which she wrote *The Curious Walk of the Salamander* at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. She is the author of *Bossa Nova*, *103 Within The Veil*, *Rust*, *Sans-Culottes in the Promised Land*, and many more.

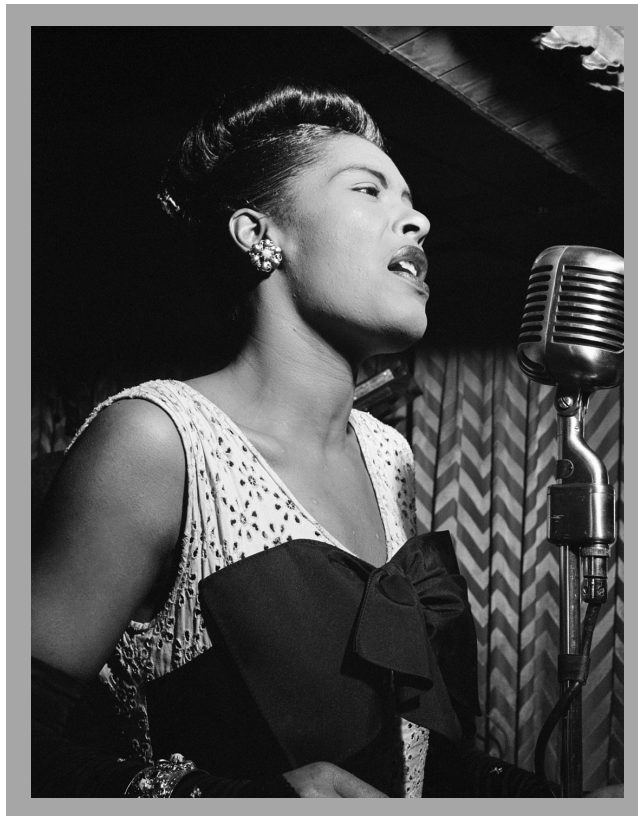
**Mandy Conner** has been teaching at Connally High School in Waco, Texas for over 20 years. She has earned 10 trips to the Regional UIL One Act Play Meet, including her original production *Ago*, and has had six appearances at the UIL State One Act Play Meet, including her original production of *Lafayette No. 1*, earning First Runner-Up in 2010.



Kirsten Greenidge

# FEMALE ARTIST SPOTLIGHTS

**Billie Holiday** is one of the best & most known Jazz vocalists in history. She was born on April 7th 1915 in Philadelphia. Her birth name was Eleanora Fagan. She spent most of her childhood in Baltimore, Maryland. At a very early age Holiday realized that she had a gifted voice and began singing in jazz clubs where at age 18 she was discovered by a music producer and was eventually signed to many different records labels. Holiday experienced amazing success in the music industry at a very young age. Holiday went on tour with Count Basie Orchestra becoming one of the first African American vocalists to perform alongside an all white orchestra. She faced many hardships due to the fact that she was a black woman. She was told time after time that because of her race she was unmarketable and unbookable. She branched out on her own performing in even more clubs. Billie Holiday started to become well known for her unique voice, performance style, and fashion sense. She began to debut & release music that was new. Music telling the stories of those who were silenced. Billie Holiday used her music, voice and influence to spread a message. In 1972 Billie Holiday's autobiography was adapted into a film titled Lady Sings The Blues. In the year 2000, Holiday was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame. Holiday is looked at as the pioneer of politically driven artists who weren't afraid to be outspoken and use their art for what they are passionate about.



*"No two people on earth are alike, and it's got to be that way. In music or it isn't music."*

- Billie Holiday



## FEMALE ARTIST SPOTLIGHTS

**Hattie McDaniel** is considered the first ever mainstream African American actress in Hollywood. Hattie McDaniel was born June 10th of 1895 in Wichita, Kansas and grew up in Denver, Colorado. McDaniel exhibited her dramatic and musical skills quite early in her childhood. Those in her family and those who grew up around her acknowledge early on that she had a gift. She started her career as a singing performer and actually became one of the first Black women to be broadcast over American radio. Through her success as a singer, McDaniel decided to open more doors for herself going for her dream to become an actress. Through lots of hardship, discrimination and blatant racism, Hattie McDaniel became the first ever African American person to win an Academy Award for her performance in *Gone With The Wind* in 1939. Hattie McDaniel went on to continue to open doors in Hollywood not only for herself but also for the generations of Black actors and actresses that came after her. She is a pioneer and legend.



## FEMALE ARTIST SPOTLIGHTS



**Brenda Russell** is an American-Canadian composer, singer, and keyboardist best known in the theatrical world for her co-composition of the Tony-award-winning Broadway musical, *The Color Purple*. She began singing at an early age and started performing in local bands as a teenager, eventually joining the Toronto production of *Hair* in her late teens. Russell has composed and produced eight solo albums and has composed and produced songs for artists such as Earth, Wind, and Fire,

Donna Summers, Patrice Rushen, Aretha Franklin, and Diana Ross. Her songs have been covered by artists such as Babyface, Chaka Khan, Patti LaBelle, Stevie Wonder, and more. She has also been sampled by Mary J. Blige, Flo Rida, Janet Jackson, Ariana Grande, Jay-Z, and Kanye West. Russell has received five Grammy nominations, the most recent being the 2016 nomination for *The Color Purple* in the category of Best Musical Theater Album.

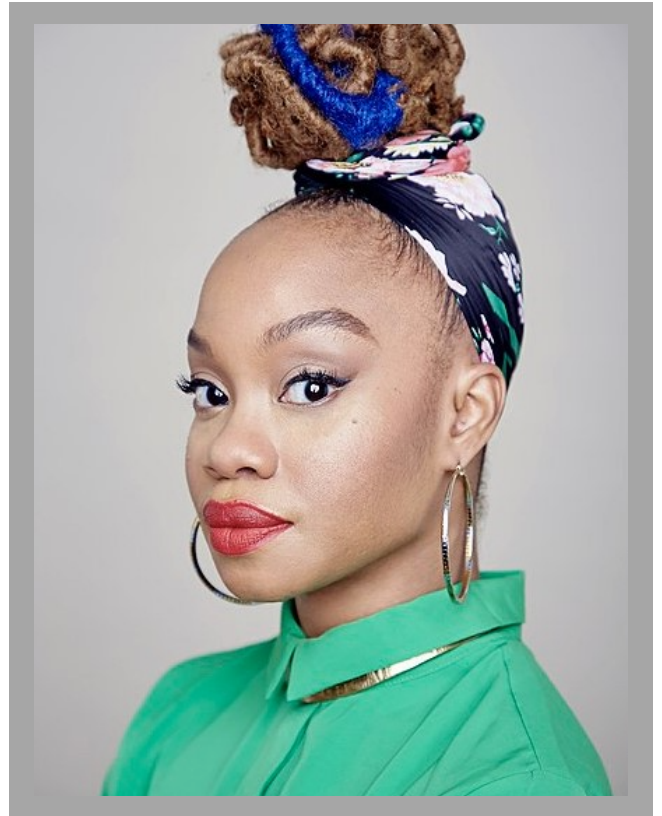
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## FEMALE PRODUCER SPOTLIGHTS

**Linda Perry** is an American singer, songwriter, and producer. She's well known for writing pop star hits like "Beautiful" by Christina Aguilera and "Get the Party Started" by P!nk. Perry grew up in a very musical household so it was almost natural for her to pursue a career that involved music. At age 21, Perry moved to San Francisco and started her musical journey. She got her breakthrough when she joined the band 4 Non Blondes. This gave her the edge she needed to go through doors that were previously closed. She spends most of her time now producing for big music names. Some of them are Alicia Keys, Adam Lambert, and Enrique Iglesias.

# FEMALE CHOREOGRAPHER SPOTLIGHTS

**Camille A. Brown** is a phenomenal choreographer from Jamaican Queens, New York. She has won many awards through her career but Brown's most recent achievement was at the 2019 Tony Awards. Because she was the first black woman in over 20 years to be nominated for Best Choreography at the Tony Awards for *Choir Boy*. The last Black female nominated for a Best Choreography Tony Award was Marlies Yearby for *Rent* in 1996. Brown has really made a name for herself as an amazing choreographer. She went to create works including choreography for the 2018 televised staging of John Legend's *Jesus Christ Superstar: Live on NBC*. She also choreographed the Tony award winning show *Once on This Island* revival. Brown even has her own dance company Camille A. Brown & Dancers that is currently touring the country. Brown continues to expand her talents, pressing up against the confines of the male-dominated world of choreography as a black woman



"Social Dance for Social Change is reclaiming Black narratives for Black, Indigenous and People of Color, giving African Diaspora culture its rightful place in American culture, fostering learning & creativity, and spreading the joy of dance.

-Camille A. Brown



# DRAKE THEATRE EDI COMMITTEE REMINDERS!

- The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee has set up an anonymous submission link in an effort to allow students, staff, and faculty to share comments and questions about these issues. The committee will do our best to address your concerns and answer your questions. Additionally, if you have any ideas for events or topics you would like us to include in the EDI Newsletter submit them via the same link. You can find that submission link [here](#).
- Don't forget to visit our page on the Drake Theatre Department's website. You can find that link [here](#)!
- Do you have interest in serving on the EDI committee next year? Watch for information on elections.

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## SAVE THE DATE - EDI OPEN FORUMS!

**Friday, April 9th at 12:30** - Hosted by The National Theatre Institute

- Look for the Zoom link via email.

"Women belong in all places where decisions are being made."

-RUTH BADER GINSBURG

