

Dance Nation
 by Clare Barron
 FroShow
 Fall 2023/Spring 2024

***Note:** There is NO DANCE EXPERIENCE REQUIRED for any role in this show.*

Who?

Director: Katya Agrawal
 Producer: Robert Gao
 Stage Manager: Dhruv Bhalla
 Assistant Director/Dramaturg: Will Sussbauer
 Preferred Contact Email: froshow@yaledramat.org

What?

In the often brutal world of competitive dance, one group of teens from Ohio try to make it big. The only thing in their way? Puberty. Desires they don't understand. The innately feral energy of all young teenagers. With inventive formatting and wildly expressive characters, playwright Clare Barron asks the audience to remember their adolescent self with both nostalgia and some gleeful terror.

When?

Info session: Saturday, 28th Oct - 2:30 to 3:30pm in Phelps Hall 310 / Old Campus
 Date of First Rehearsal: November 6 (read-through)
 Tech Week Dates: February 17 to 21
 Performance Dates: February 22, 23, 24 (two shows on the 24th)
 Overall Dates (First Rehearsal to Last Performance): Nov 6, 2023 to Feb 24, 2024

Time Commitment

Estimated Time Commitments: 8-10 hours/week over 3-5 days
 This will increase closer to the performance date in Spring Semester
 We are all students and will keep reading period/finals week light! We also love the holidays, and won't be rehearsing over break!

Content Warnings

- Discussions of masturbation, sex, and circumcision
- The dance teacher touches two of the dancers in ways that allude to inappropriate sexual intentions.
- One dancer gets her period right before she steps on stage to perform. Later, she is shown putting on a tampon. These scenes will be abstracted.
- One dancer is shown biting her arm out of anxiety.
- One dancer is shown masturbating.
- Two characters kiss.

Audition Expectations

Auditioners should expect to read one of 3 audition sides provided at the bottom of this packet. Memorization is not required. Please sign up on our YCA page - [here](#)

Please fill out our required form [here](#) and optional form [here](#)

Audition Location

Sunday, 29th Oct - 3 to 5:30 pm in BM 013 (Bingham Hall)

Monday, 30th Oct - 6 to 9 pm in LC 203

Tuesday, 31st Oct - 6 to 9pm in LC 203

Callbacks - Thursday, 2nd Nov and/or Friday, 3rd Nov (Time and Location TBD)

Dance Nation by Clare Barron

The 2024 Dramat FroShow

Feb. 22-24

Audition Packet

Outline

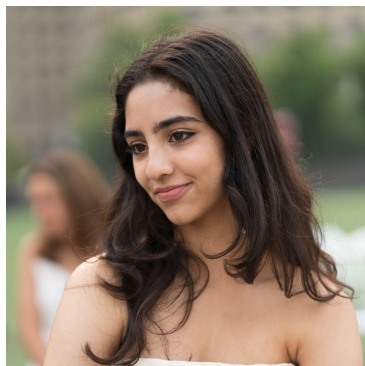
- **About the Show (page 3)**
- **Meet the Team (page 4)**
- **General Production Timeline (page 6)**
- **Cast Expectations (page 6)**
- **Character Descriptions (page 7)**
- **About the Audition (page 8)**
- **About Callbacks (page 8)**
- **Audition Monologues (page 9)**

About the Show

Dance Nation revolves around a group of young dancers as they navigate adolescence and prepare for a big competition. Dance Teacher Pat decides the dancers need to do something out-of-the-ordinary: they will perform a piece about Gandhi. Of course, the dancers, being teens, are all worried and excited and prone to gossip about who will be cast in the lead role. Throughout the show, the kids grapple with their relationship to talent alongside their burgeoning sexualities. In one scene, for example, Amina leads the dancers in a warm up; as the scene progresses, the kids create a steady, drumming, increasingly aggressive chant of the word “pussy,” fueled by both shame and exhilaration. When the competition arrives, nerves are high; and while there is extreme toxicity among these kids, the play also suggests that they have a deep emotional bond, which enables them to explore their understanding of sexuality alongside each other.

While the show does include moments with choreographed dance, we do not require (or even expect!) any actors to have prior dance experience.

The Team!



Katya Agrawal (Director, she/her) is a freshman in Pauli Murray and is super excited to be working on this show! She is a prospective art and English double major— though also loves acting and directing. Outside of theater and academics, Katya works as an artist for *The Record* and spends too much time in coffee shops listening to 70s music and drinking herbal tea.



Robert Gao (Producer, he/him) is a freshman in Benjamin Franklin, hoping to major in anthropology and film studies. He is currently involved in the *Hamlet* production as an assistant director. You can ask for a dirty chai from him at the Beanjamin on Monday afternoons. He also loves to ask directors questions at film festivals, stay in hostels around the world, and dance away in concerts.



Dhruv Bhalla (Stage Manager, he/him) is in Morse, majoring in I-wish-I-knew (you wanted me). He is excited to be the Stage Manager for Dance Nation and cannot wait to work with other first-years on this amazingly creative project. He was previously Assistant Stage Manager on *Education* and *Fiddler*. Outside of classes and theater, he loves representing Morse at IMs and attending Board Games club (anyone want to play Catan and/or Ticket to Ride?). He also loves hugs and roses!



Will Sussbauer (Assistant Director/Dramaturg, they/he) is in JE, and a prospective English major with a huge interest in film as well. Will writes for both *The Record* and *The Herald*, and loves to read Virginia Woolf, Joan Didion, and anything weird! They are currently also dramaturg for both *Fun Home* and *Alice By Heart*, and are stoked to work on *Dance Nation* in all its feral, fanged glory :)

- **Choreographer: Nneka Moweta**
- **Costume Designer: Ellison Dunn**
- **Lighting Designer: Allison Calkins**
- **Assistant Lighting Designer: Tina Li**
- **Sound Designer: Owen Hannon**
- **Sound Engineer: Yoshimi Kamura**
- **Assistant Sound Designer: Ruoyu Zhou**

If you are interested in joining our creative team, we'd love to have you! Roles that we are actively looking for:

- Technical Director
- Master Electrician
- Assistant stage manager
- Set designer/team
- Props designer
- Costume team
- Sound team
- Lighting team

Contacts:

Producer, Robert Gao - froshow@yaledramat.org

Director, Katya Agrawal - katya.agrawal@yale.edu

Stage Manager, Dhruv Bhalla - dhruv.bhalla@yale.edu, 203-812-8659

Dramat Executive Board:

Vice President, Kali Jupiter - vp@yaledramat.org

Outreach Coordinator, Annabelle Hee - outreach@yaledramat.org

Policy Director, AJ Walker - policy@yaledramat.org

General Production Timeline:

Oct. 28th Audition Info Session 2:30-3:30pm Phelps Hall Room 310

Oct. 29th-31st Auditions- to see times and sign up for a slot go to our YCA page.

Nov. 2nd-3rd Callbacks - location and time TBD

Nov. 5th Casting Cycle

Nov. 6th (time TBD, approx 5-7pm evening) First Cast Read-through

Nov. 6th-Dec. 20th Rehearsals with breaks during October and Thanksgiving breaks

Jan 18th-Feb. 16th Rehearsals

Tech Week Dates: February 17 to 21

Performance Dates: February 22, 23, 24 (two shows on the 24th)

See our Yale College Arts page [here!](#)

Cast Expectations

The number one rule is to have fun! We believe that theater is and should be a creative process in which everyone involved is provided the space and grace to express themselves. Through the process of this production we hope to foster a creative community mirroring the theater community we hope to see on campus. Thus, this production will have a strong emphasis on the importance of creating together as a united company. We also want this to be a learning experience for first-years where we can come together and do what we love!

This will require the enthusiastic commitment of each member of the cast and production team. While our rehearsal schedule will be influenced by the availability of all company members, actors should expect around 8-10 hours of rehearsal a week, because of heavy reliance on the ensemble in this show. **Thus we are asking that you be mindful of your other time commitments and recommend that you do not work on another production with performances in the early spring semester (January and February).** Remember, sleep is important too! We believe in the efficient, effective use of rehearsal time and can assure you that your time will not be wasted in the rehearsal room. You will not be called for all rehearsals and we will be flexible in our scheduling.

Given the many breaks interrupting our production timeline (Thanksgiving and Winter break) it will be very important that all actors dedicate time to work on any material from rehearsals on their own time. Support such as line memorization office hours will be coordinated during these times.

On accessibility: The Dramat is committed to accommodating any access needs; please do not hesitate to reach out to froshow@yaledramat.org with anything. Rehearsals will be organized in accessible locations as far as possible, if needed.

Character Descriptions:

Below is the list of characters along with their brief descriptions and relevant content warnings. While the dancers are written as 13 years old, Barron prefers that these kids be played by adults or, in our case, college students. We hope to showcase the continued relevance of adolescent struggles to our audience. In the descriptions below, the quotations are taken from Barron's descriptions in the script. The estimated time commitment for each role is roughly the same at around 7-10 hours/week (more during tech, less during exams). You will not be called for all rehearsals if you are not in the scene.

All roles are open to actors of any gender/race identity, abilities and experience level.

- AMINA: 13; female; competitive; “the star dancer”
Note: Pat inappropriately touches Amina's butt & Amina masturbates on stage. This character will be dancing on stage and will have dance rehearsals.
- ZUZU: 13; female; insecure; “always second best”
Note: Zuzu bites herself and slams herself against a wall, and Pat inappropriately touches Zuzu's shoulder.
- CONNIE: 13; female; forming a romantic relationship with Ashlee; “a talented dancer who thinks she should play the role of Gandhi.” Connie identifies as South Asian.
Note: Ashley kisses Connie
- LUKE: 13; male; has a crush on Zuzu; “the only male dancer on the competition team”
- ASHLEE: 13; female; low self-confidence; forming a romantic relationship with Connie; prone to feral outbursts; “future president of post-apocalyptic USA”
Note: Ashlee kisses Connie.
- SOFIA: 13; female; “knows what's up”
Note: Sofia gets her first period onstage and puts on a tampon.
- MAEVE: 13; female; Zuzu's companion; empathetic—a dreamer; “the oldest and least talented dancer on the team”
- VANESSA: 13; female; injures herself in the first scene of the play and does not reappear
- DANCER TEACHER PAT: middle aged; male; strict and demanding dance instructor
Note: Pat inappropriately touches Anina's butt and Zuzu's shoulder.
- ZUZU'S MOM: middle aged; female; invested in her child's wellbeing
- LUKE'S MOM: middle aged; female; a loving figure for Luke
- SOFIA'S MOM: middle aged; female; help's Sofia deal with getting her first period

About the Audition

Sign up for a 15-minute audition slot on our [YCA Page](#). Please plan to arrive 5-10 minutes before your slot in order to fill out an audition sheet.

Who will be in the room?

The director, assistant director, stage manager, and producer (Katya, Will, Dhruv, Robert) will be in the audition room with you. Additionally, a member of the Dramat Exec board (VP, Outreach Coordinator, or Policy Director) will be present. Their role is to advocate for people who have been historically overlooked in the audition room; to make sure that the process is fun, safe, equitable, and accessible for everyone involved.

What do you need to do?

The first round of auditions will entail a monologue, chosen from the three options at the bottom of this document, need not be memorized; however, it may be helpful to familiarize yourself with your piece. We'll give you more context and any other information you may have questions about before you start.

Video/remote submissions:

Self-tapes are welcome as an alternative to the in-person audition for those who cannot attend any of the scheduled audition slots. If you would like to send in a self-tape, please submit a recording of yourself reading one of the audition monologues.

The deadline for video submissions is Wednesday, November 1st at 5:00 pm.

Send it to froshow@yaledramat.org

Callbacks

Callbacks will take place Nov. 2nd 3:30-6:30pm and Nov. 3rd 3-6pm location to be determined. We will let you know the day after your audition if we would like to see you at one of these callbacks and you will be provided character specific material to prepare. Callbacks may consist of a warm-up, a monologue, and/or partner scene work.

We are super excited to work with you!!

~ The *Dance Nation* Team

Link to the script:
 **Dance Nation.pdf**
Monologues:

**Note: All formatting choices below are reproductions of what appears in the script.*

LUKE:

*All I want
Is for someone to drive me
Driving in cars
Driving in cars at night...
Driving in cars at night in the rain
spraying the dashboard and a seat warmer
that makes my butt hot. Hot like when I used
to sit my naked ass on the radiator at home
growing up. A hot butt makes me sleepy. And
I'd get so sleepy. Riding in cars at night. But
it's the delicious kind of sleepy. Where you
wish you could stay in that liminal state
forever watching the raindrops on the
windshield and the world blurring
by... ..and my Mom...listening to my
Mom...remembering listening to my Mom...
all I want is to be in a car at night, sleepy
and listening to my Mom*

...

...

...

MAEVE:

...

...

...

It sort of washes over me. Like sleep. Like all of sudden I notice my leg is falling asleep. And I feel it crawling up from the bottom of my feet and I'm like: Uh-oh. I'm about to fly again.

...

...

And then I hold my breath and let my eyes go soft focus and I try to concentrate on it but also I can't concentrate on it too hard or else it goes away. I have to sort of concentrate on it sideways, you know?

...

...

And then I just sort of float away. And I'm constantly in danger of crashing to the ground if I don't keep my mind in the right place. But if I *do*, if I do keep my mind in the right place then I just sort of float to the top of the room and sit there.

AMINA (*to Dance Teacher Pat*)

Sometimes I think I want to lose

Like I actually think I want to lose

Like I close my eyes and I say:

God. It's okay, if I lose

I don't mind this time

Like i feel like I hurt people

Just by existing

Like just by me, just I—*living*

It hurts everyone else

And I think: Okay, *pleassse*, just let me lose.....

But then I get up on that stage

And they take the trophies out

And when they take the trophies out

It's like I get the taste of metal in my mouth

And all of a sudden, all I want is to win

I want to win so bad

I just like, *pray for it*