

Intimate Apparel

By Lynn Nottage, April 2nd-5th, 2025

The Audition Packet

Meet our team!

Producer: Angelica Peruzzi (she/her) SY 27

Director: Chesray Dolpha

Stage Manager: Alex Shadman (he/him) TC 27

Show Synopsis

In 1905 New York City, Esther, a Black seamstress, is in great demand for the intimate apparel she creates for clients who range from wealthy white patrons to prostitutes. Though leading a life that provides joy to so many, she remains lonely and longing for a husband and a future. Through a mutual acquaintance, she begins a correspondence with a lonesome Caribbean man named George and soon he persuades her that they should marry, sight unseen. However, Esther's heart is drawn to the Hasidic shopkeeper from whom she buys cloth, and his heart with her. When George arrives in the city, Esther is hit with the reality of the situation and she is forced to face a future that she is truly unprepared for.

About the Playwright

Lynn Nottage is a playwright, a screenwriter and installation artist. She is the first, and remains the only, woman to have won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama twice. Her plays have been produced widely in the United States and throughout the world.

When?

Audition Workshop: November 4th, 5-6 PM (zoom)

Auditions: November 5th, 5-9 PM -November 6th, 5-10 PM

Callbacks: November 7th, 5-10 PM, November 8th, 5-10 PM

Tech Residency: March 23rd- April 1st, 2025

Show Dates: April 2nd-April 5th, 2025

Auditions Expectations:

For Initial Auditions: actors will be expected to select [one of the sides](#) from the options provided in the [YCA page](#) and perform it in the audition room. No memorization is required. Prior to auditions, the auditionee will need to fill out the [audition form](#) and book a slot from the available slots on the [YCA page](#). On the [YCA page](#) you will also find an [optional demographics form](#) that you can fill out alongside the audition form. This form has no bearing on casting.

Auditionees that cannot make it to auditions will be able to submit a **self-tape on the audition form, which will be due by Wednesday, November 6th at 9 PM.**

For Callbacks: **Callback announcements will be sent the night of November 6th and callbacks will happen on November 7th and November 8th from 5-10 PM.** You will find details about what time you are called and the [sides](#) you will read in your callbacks email. Not getting a callback does not mean you will not be cast!

Auditions Locations:

Initial Auditions will be held in **LC 206 on November 5th and LC 210 on November 6th. Callbacks will be held in LC 205 on both days. All auditionees are required to fill out the audition form, found on our [YCA page](#), prior to the audition.** Expect an email from our Stage Manager confirming audition time and location the day of your slot.

Content Warnings

This play contains mature themes that may be triggering for some audience members. The play addresses sensitive subjects including racial discrimination, sexism, classism, and intimate partner violence. It also explores themes of emotional manipulation, betrayal, and the challenges faced by women in oppressive social and economic systems. Additionally,

there are moments of implied sexual content and references to prostitution.

We encourage actors to care for themselves as needed and be mindful of the emotional impact these themes may evoke.

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Meet Our Team!

Angelica Peruzzi (Producer, she/her) hates it when you call her by her full name so please call her Angi! She is a sophomore in Saybrook College studying English with a Creative writing concentration and an Italian Studies certificate. Her work on campus has primarily concerned Stage Management, working on productions such as *Legally Blonde*, *The Effect*, and *Honesty Hour*, but she is so excited to dive into the job of the Producer! She is passionate about stories that discuss the space that women inhabit in the world over the course of history. She is so excited to see the show take on life!

Chesray Dolpha (Director, she/her) Chesray Dolpha is a South African-born theater artist, director, and storyteller whose work seamlessly integrates creative expression with social impact. Her recent credits include *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical*, *Push Party*, *Bricks the*

Musical, Fabulation, Voices of Gen Z, Homecoming, and Spirit Songs. She made her Broadway debut as the Resident Director of *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical, and she continues to champion storytelling as a transformative tool in her current role as a Stage Director and Storytelling Strategist at Columbia University's Center for Justice, where she amplifies the voices of formerly incarcerated women through restorative narratives.

Chesray's prior leadership roles include Director of Education at the Classical Theatre of Harlem and Artistic Director at the Broadway Advocacy Coalition, where she pioneered advocacy through storytelling. She has held influential teaching and leadership positions with organizations such as the Theatre Development Fund, Urban Arts Partnership, Harlem School of the Arts, and the International Theatre Project, which brought her back to Cape Town. A distinguished Oprah Winfrey African Women Public Service Fellow, she holds a Master's in International Development and Non-Profit Management from New York University, in addition to a BA with distinction and an Honors degree from the University of the Western Cape. As founder of StoryBridge Consultancy, Chesray is dedicated to cultivating communities and connections through the power of storytelling.

Alex Shadman (Stage Manager, he/him) is a sophomore in Trumbull, majoring in Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies. He recently completed stage managing the Dramat Fall Ex *Stupid Fucking Bird* and is determined to tackle another evocative production. His work as both an actor and head electrician in other productions will allow him to approach this role from many different angles. Outside of stage managing, you might find him performing with his improv group, the Viola Question or playing saxophone in the Davenport Pops Orchestra.

Character Breakdown

Below you can find brief descriptions of the characters of *Intimate Apparel*. Please take your time to read through each of them and reflect on which roles fit what you are looking for the most. Whether this is your first time dabbling in acting or if you have acted extensively in the past, we welcome and encourage you to audition regardless of your level of experience!

Esther: African American, 30s – A skilled, reserved African-American seamstress in her 30s who crafts exquisite lingerie for women across New York City in 1905. Esther has saved for

years, dreaming of opening her own beauty parlor, but her journey shifts when she begins a vulnerable correspondence with George. Esther's arc follows her pursuit of love and independence, navigating the tension between her aspirations and the harsh realities she faces. **(Line: "If I can dream it, I can stitch it together.")** The actor that plays Esther kisses the actor that plays Mrs. Van Buren and the actor that plays George. **The character of Esther sings in the show. The actor should feel comfortable singing live. Auditioning for Esther will add a musical component to the audition- for more details, [click here](#).** The actor that plays Esther shares moments of staged intimacy with the actor that plays George. This character also sings in the play.

Mrs. Dickson: African American, 50s– Esther's landlady, a pragmatic and protective woman in her 50s who sees herself in Esther's struggles. She pushes Esther to take risks while reminding her of the consequences. Mrs. Dickson's arc shows the wisdom and regrets of experience as she guides Esther through life's trials. **(Line: "I know what it is to dream with both feet on the ground.")**

Mrs. Van Buren: Caucasian, American, 30s – A wealthy, unhappily married white woman in her 30s who commissions Esther to make lingerie, yearning for freedom and intimacy in her loveless life. She is drawn to Esther's resilience and warmth, seeking comfort in their unlikely friendship. Mrs. Van Buren's arc reveals her struggle between societal expectations and her desires. **(Line: "In lace, I am transformed, if only for a moment.")**. The actor that plays Mrs. Van Buren shares a kiss with the actor that plays Esther.

Mr. Marks: Romanian Orthodox Jewish, 30s – An Orthodox Jewish fabric seller in his 30s who cherishes textiles with a spiritual reverence. Though bound by cultural and religious constraints, he develops a deep, unspoken affection for Esther, whom he admires profoundly. Mr. Marks's arc is one of longing, as he reconciles his love for Esther with the boundaries of his faith. **(Line: "To touch is forbidden, but in silk, I feel...something sacred.")**.

Mayme: African American, 30s– A spirited, African-American prostitute in her 20s, Mayme uses humor and sensuality as a shield against her difficult life. She becomes Esther's confidante, yet also her rival in unexpected ways. Mayme's arc explores resilience and self-worth, as she confronts her dreams and disappointments. (Line: "When I sing, even the

darkness listens.”) **The character of Mayme sings in the show. The actor should feel comfortable singing live. Auditioning for Maymee will add a musical component to the audition- for more details, [click here](#).** The actor that plays Mayme has moments of staged intimacy with the actor that plays George. This character also sings in the play.

George Armstrong: Barbadian immigrant, 30s– A laborer from Barbados, in his 30s, seeking a better life in America. Charismatic but distant, he writes to Esther from the Panama Canal with grand promises of a future together, though he harbors a more complicated agenda. George’s arc explores the allure of ambition and the compromises that accompany it. (Line: “This life I toil for...it is so I can be more than just a man with dirt on his hands.”) The actor that plays George shares a kiss with the actor that plays Esther. The actor that plays George has moments of staged intimacy with the actor that plays Esther and the actor that plays Mayme.

Audition Timeline

Initial Auditions will begin on Tuesday, November 5th with slots from 5PM-9PM and Wednesday, November 6th with slots from 5PM to 10PM. Additionally, we will be offering a **self-tape option** for those who are unable to make it to in-person auditions. Auditions will be held in LC 206 on the 5th and LC 210 on the 6th.

Callback notification will occur the evening of **Wednesday, November 6th. Callbacks will be held on Thursday, November 7th and Friday, November 8th:** actors will be called sometime between 5-10 PM on both days. Callbacks will be held in LC 205.

Casting day begins on Sunday, November 10th at noon. Actors are asked to keep their phone on and in their proximity to be able to pick up in case a casting call were to be made.

Audition Workshop

We will be hosting an audition workshop over zoom from 5-6 PM on Monday, November 4th. The purpose of the audition workshop is for auditionees to have an opportunity to have an informal conversation with the IA team, ask any questions that they may have about the show,

the auditions, or anything pertaining to their interest in *Intimate Apparel*! You will find a link to the zoom on the YCA page the day of the workshop! **Attending the workshop is completely optional and will not affect any casting decisions.**

Esther and Maymee- 20-bar cut audition piece

The characters of Esther and Maymee have moments of singing in the show over an original score for *Intimate Apparel*. The auditionees interested in the role of Esther or Maymee will be expected to prepare a [20-bar cut found on this link](#) for their audition and perform it while accompanied by music. For any questions regarding the musical component of the audition, please don't hesitate to reach out!

Accessibility

The Yale Dramatic Association is committed to meeting all accessibility needs expressed by an auditionee. Please email us at ms2@yaledramat.org if you have any questions or concerns regarding accessibility.

Time Commitment

Acting in the Mainstage is a significant time commitment. It's important that the expectations regarding how much time you will be spending in the rehearsal room are clearly outlined before you commit to the role. The Dramat schedules rehearsals following guidelines for actor safety, which are briefly outlined below:

- A total rehearsal week does not exceed 20 hours, no more than 4 hours any one weekday or six hours on any one weekend day for any actor. They also must have at least two days off per week, and no actor can be called before 5 P.M. on weekdays and 10 A.M. on weekends. During tech, these guidelines shift

Below you can find the expected time commitment for each role in the show **per week**.

Esther (lead): High Commitment

Mrs. Dickson (supporting): Medium Commitment

Mrs. Van Buren (supporting): Medium-High Commitment

Mayme (supporting): Medium-High Commitment

Mr. Marks (supporting): Medium-High Commitment

George Armstrong (supporting): Medium-High Commitment

In the Audition Room

To audition, please sign up for a 10 minute slot on our [YCA page](#) and fill out the [audition form](#), linked here and also found on our [YCA page](#). You also have the opportunity to fill out an optional Dramat demographics form found [here](#) as well as on the [YCA page](#). Make sure to do this ahead of time! At auditions you will be asked to [select a side from the ones included below](#) and on the [YCA page](#) and to read it for us. You are not required to memorize your side, although you can if that works best for you! We may ask you to read the side again with director notes.

Who will be in the audition room?

The Dramat is committed to creating a safe, comfortable space for auditionees, which includes ensuring that the expectations of what will happen during auditions and who will be in attendance is clearly delineated. You can find a list of who will be in attendance below!

- Angelica Peruzzi (Producer, she/her)

- Chesray Dolpha (Director, she/her)
- Alex Shadman (Stage Manager, he/him)
- Dramat Board Representatives (Meridian Monthly- Vice President / Maya Evans- Policy Director / Robert Gao- Outreach Coordinator) : one of three members of the policy team will be present at auditions as an advocate for all auditionees and to ensure an equitable process that follows Dramat guidelines and goals. They will not be making any creative decisions.

Rehearsal Expectations

Acting in the Spring Mainstage is a serious and considerable time commitment. We urge you to think about how much time you will be able to devote to rehearsals and the role in the Spring Semester, and to express any firm commitments in the [audition form](#) for the team to be aware of any possible scheduling conflicts.

That being said, we understand schedules can be unpredictable. Furthermore, the actor's mental and physical health will always be a priority over any scheduled commitment. Please stay in touch with stage management throughout the process to express any changes in scheduling / availability conflicts. More generally, please always reach out to our Stage Manager if you have any concerns during the production process as they will always be willing to provide support and ensure their comfortability.

As a team, we want to see you succeed and create a fun and comfortable space for our actors while also upholding a serious commitment to the story and to the artistic practice of acting.

Contact Us!

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions! Find our emails below:

Producer, Angelica Peruzzi: ms2@yaledramat.org

Director, Chesray Dolpha: chesraydolpha@gmail.com

Stage Manager, Alex Shadman: alex.shadman@yale.edu

Policy Team:

- Maya Evans, **Policy Director**: policy@yaledramat.org

- Meridian Monthly, **Vice President:** vp@yaledramat.org
- Robert Gao, **Outreach Coordinator,** @outreach@yaledramat.org

SIDES:

Esther: [Link](#)

Mrs. Dickson: [Link](#)

Mrs. Van Buren: [Link](#)

Mr. Marks: [Link](#)

Mayme: [Link](#)

George: [Link](#)