

Next to Normal Audition Packet
Brian Yorkey
Spring 2025

Who?

Producer(s): Elizabeth Shvarts
Directors: Roy Kohavi and Abby Trejo
Stage Manager:
Preferred Contact Email:
abby.trejo@yale.edu or roy.kohavi@yale.edu

MEET THE TEAM

Directors: Hi! My name is Roy Kohavi (he/they) and I'm a junior in Saybrook majoring in political science! I'm SO excited to bring this production to life and cannot wait to welcome you all to the Next to Normal family! Before coming to Yale, I majored in theater at a performative arts high school and directed shows at an arts summer camp!! At Yale, I've acted in a few shows so far and directed a musical called *Newsies* in the spring! Feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

Hello! My name is Abby Trejo (she/her) and I'm a sophomore in Silliman (the best college!) majoring in MCDB on the pre-med track. I'm so excited to be co-directing my first show this year! I've AD, ASM, and stage managed a few productions last year including ADing *Fiddler on the Roof*. I'm so happy to welcome you to our team and I look forward to working with you all! Let me know if you have any questions throughout this process!

Hi loves! My name is Elizabeth (Liz) Shvarts (they/she), and I'm a second-semester in Murray (the REAL best college!) majoring in political science! I'm so excited to be bringing this show to Yale with the most incredible cast/crew! I've co-produced the 2023 Froshow *Bloodshot*, performed in the 2024 Spring Mainstage *Every Tongue Confess*, and acted/been on the prod team for a bunch of productions at Yale! Please reach out if you have any questions throughout the process <3

What?

The Goodmans are a typical American family, yet their lives are anything but normal. Traumatized by the death of her infant son, Diana Goodman has lived with bipolar depressive disorder and delusional episodes for the past seventeen years. The illness has affected everyone in her life, and has nearly torn her family apart on several occasions. Next to Normal takes audiences into the minds and hearts of each character, presenting their family's story with love, empathy and heart. This show digs deep into the three principal characters' mental health struggles as they strive to heal.

Creative Notes

Although all character descriptions are written with the original genders in mind, we are open to gender-bending all of the roles and **welcome anyone of any gender identity** to audition. Additionally, we are particularly excited about the possibility of having the leading women be *women of color*, we are open to auditioning **people of all races and ethnicities for all roles!!!** Everyone will be considered for all roles no matter their identity!

The mission of putting on *Next to Normal* is to promote mental health awareness on Yale's campus. *Next to Normal* is one of the only musicals to date that centers on mental illness and portrays in such a raw way how mental disorders are hidden disabilities that affect one's relationships, family dynamics, and everyday life. The show powerfully aims to destigmatize mental health as it boldly explores themes of grief, depression, anxiety, and trauma. To that end, feel free to share if this show touches you in any personal way, but there is no requirement at all that you relate to the themes of the show.

When?

Date of First Rehearsal: Around mid-October!

Current Tech Week Dates: February 22nd-February 26th

Performance Dates: February 27th-March 1st

Overall Dates (First Rehearsal to Last Performance): Week of October 13th-March 1st

Time Commitment

Weekly Estimated Time Commitments (in Hours):

The intention of this production team is to ensure that this is an enjoyable process for all those involved and that we create a space to allow for you to truly find a safe, joyous haven outside of the stresses of Yale. For that reason, we intend to hold around **3-6** hours of rehearsals a week (less in the fall!).

Before fall break: ~2-3 hours a week

After fall break until winter break: ~3-5 hours a week

After winter break: ~6-8 hours a week

Expect an **uptick in hours and general availability** during all of tech week + performance dates!

With that in mind, please keep in mind it is totally POSSIBLE to be involved in other shows this semester and into next semester!

Content Warnings

Content Warnings: Please note the show includes various depictions of mental health conditions and disorders including bipolar disorder, anxiety, and grief. This production also includes depictions and discussions of drug use, self-harm, death, and medical trauma. If you'd like to know more information, please contact our Producer, liz.shvarts@yale.edu.

Audition Expectations

Please prepare the following:

1. 32 bars (around 1:30 minutes) of a musical theater song of your choice.
2. A dramatic monologue (can be around 1-2 minutes).

Neither have to be memorized!!!!

Audition Location(s)

Sept. 26th: Saybrook Underbrook

Sept. 29th: Broadway Rehearsal Lofts Room 205

Sept. 30th: Saybrook Underbrook

Oct. 1st: Saybrook Underbrook

Oct. 2nd (callbacks): Saybrook Underbrook

Oct. 2nd (callbacks): Saybrook Underbrook

SCROLL BELOW FOR MORE DETAILED INFO

DETAILED PACKET- Next to Normal

Hello and thank you for your interest in *Next to Normal*! Below you will find information about the musical, our rehearsal timeline, the characters we're looking for, and how to audition.

SYNOPSIS

The Goodmans are a typical American family, yet their lives are anything but normal. Traumatized by the death of her infant son, Diana Goodman has lived with bipolar depressive disorder and delusional episodes for the past seventeen years. The illness has affected everyone in her life, and has nearly torn her family apart on several occasions. *Next to Normal* takes audiences into the minds and hearts of each character, presenting their family's story with love, empathy and heart. This show digs deep into the three principal characters' mental health struggles as they strive to heal.

Content Warnings: mental illness, drug usage(medications)

TIMELINE

Casting:

- Auditions will be September 26th-October 1st in the Saybrook Underbrook. You will **hear from us by October 1st** regarding your callback status. You do **NOT** need to be called back in order to be offered a role in the show.
- Callbacks will be October 2nd and October 3rd.
- Casting decisions will be issued on October 6th. You are at liberty to accept or decline a role if it is offered to you.

Rehearsal:

- Rehearsals will begin in mid October and be scheduled around actors' availability.
- Tech week is February 22nd-February 26th
- Performances will be February 27th-March 1st

CHARACTERS

All characters can be played by any race, ethnicity, and gender, and might also be gender-bent!

The role of Gabe is pre-cast and will be played by Roy Kohavi.

LEAD ROLES:

Diana Goodman: Mid 30s-mid 40s. Diana is a wife and mother dealing with the aftermath of having lost her son many years ago. Throughout the musical, the ups and downs of Diana's mental health are explored in relation to how they affect the relationship that she has with those around her. Diana wrestles with her desire to be present with her family while also being stuck in the past.

Dan Goodman: Mid 30s-mid 40s. Dan is a husband and father attempting to keep his family together while also acting as a supportive and stabilizing presence for his wife, Diana. Due to Dan's attempts to heal his family and move beyond the past, he has bottled up his own internal battle.

Natalie Goodman: Teenager. Natalie is the daughter of Diana and Dan Goodman. She is an incredibly talented and overachieving student but she feels ignored by her parents, especially her mother. She has always felt overshadowed by the memory of her brother, which has led to feelings of resentment and isolation.

BIG SUPPORTING ROLES:

Gabe Goodman (PRE-CAST): Teenager. Gabe is the son of Diana and Dan Goodman. He is the most charming, athletic, and intelligent son anyone could ask for. However, Gabe is the physical representation for the child Diana and Dan lost many years ago. He appears as a hallucination to Diana and embodies the grief that she has held on to for all these years.

Henry: Teenager. Henry, who is laid-back and funny, is Natalie Goodman's boyfriend and acts a loving, supportive presence in Natalie's life. Henry is a person Natalie can turn to to escape her dysfunctional family and find comfort.

Dr. Madden: Mid 30s-mid 40s. Dr. Madden is Diana's psychiatrist, who provides both medication management and therapy. Diana undergoes several treatment options under his supervision, including medication and electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). He is a professional yet compassionate individual who helps Diana to confront her mental illness and her past. At times, he appears in Diana's hallucinations as a rock star-like figure, symbolizing her idealization of mental health care.

AUDITION PREPARATION

Sign up for an audition slot on the Yale College Arts page.

Please prepare 32 bars (around 1:30 minutes) of a dramatic/rock/ballad musical theater song of your choice.

Please bring the sheet music to the audition and bring 2 copies if you do not have the song memorized. If you have trouble accessing sheet music or have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact one of our music directors- Jaden (jaden.nicita@yale.edu) & Hanson (hanson.qin@yale.edu)

At your audition, there will first be a quick warm-up before you perform your song. You might get asked to sing the song a second time following notes by the music director.

Finally, you will be asked to prepare a quick short dramatic monologue of your choice (1-2 minutes). This also does NOT have to be memorized.

Please note: If you are sick, or cannot attend the audition slots for any reason, please contact roy.kohavi@yale.edu and abby.trejo@yale.edu so we can arrange for a possible alternative video submission. All audition tapes would be due at 11:59 PM on September 30th.

Please find examples of songs and dramatic monologues below. You may use these options should you wish but there is no obligation to and you can absolutely bring your own song and monologue.

SONG EXAMPLES :

“Fight for Me”- Heathers

“See I’m Smiling”- The Last Five Years

“Freeze your Brain”- Heathers

“Words Fail”- Dear Evan Hansen

“A Quiet Night at Home”- Bare

“Safer”- First Date

“You Don’t Need to Love Me”- If/Then

“Oh, Sherry” - Rock of Ages

“I Don’t Need a Roof”- Big Fish

“And Eve was Weak”- Carrie

DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE EXAMPLES:

Check out these websites!!

<https://monologueblogger.com/62-drama-monologues-for-college-auditions/>

<https://www.tameddaugh.com/dramatic-monologues>

CALLBACKS

Callbacks are a fantastic opportunity for us to get to know you better as a performer and for you to showcase any other skills you have! We will call you back for a specific role (or multiple roles) that we think would be a great fit for you!

All the callback materials will be sent to you ahead of time. Just like the audition, sides will not need to be memorized, but the hope is that people could review them ahead of time and think about how they can embody the character.

That being said, not everyone is needed for a callback and it does NOT mean you are not considered for the show. It simply means that we have seen what we believe we need from you to make the best decision!

AUDITION PROCESS

We hope to prioritize your health and well-being throughout the entire process! The goal of the team is to make theater as accessible, equitable, and enjoyable as possible! Please feel free to reach out if you experience anything that makes you uncomfortable about the process or if you think we or anyone else violated these important values we set aside to prioritize AUDITIONEES and ACTORS.

CONTACT

Please reach out to us with any questions!

Directors- roy.kohavi@yale.edu and abby.trejo@yale.edu

Producer- liz.shvarts@yale.edu

Thank you so much for auditioning for Next to Normal! We are incredibly excited to see you!