

NY SCREENWRITING FELLOWS

2025



ADITYA JOSHI & SID GOPINATH



Aditya Joshi and Sid Gopinath are Brooklyn-based filmmakers. They make highly watchable, deeply specific, and slightly weird stuff, including SHIKAAR, a series about a doomed tiger hunt in colonial India that they sold to FX in 2021. They were most recently story editors on Amazon/UTV's WE WERE LIARS, which premieres in June of 2025, and their short doc FINDING OUR WILD, produced with REI Co-Op Studios, received a theatrical release in partnership with AMC Theatres and Mountainfilm. On the directing front, Sid has helmed music videos for various indie artists including Mayyadda, bluesoul, and NOAMZ, and Aditya's new short film A WEST SIDE STORY STORY will premiere at Tribeca 2025.

Film to be written during fellowship: "THE TREE BED"

Logline: A Brooklyn stay-at-home dad descends into madness as he feuds with a young new neighbor over control of their brownstone's tree bed.

ALEXANDRA JOYCE



Alexandra Joyce is a writer, actor, and educator raised in Chicago and based in New York City. She holds degrees from the University of Notre Dame—where she studied Film, Television, and Theatre as well as Spanish—and an MFA in Writing for the Screen and Stage from Northwestern University. She spent two years in Chile collaborating with a theater group and teaching at Universidad Católica and an all-girls bilingual school. These experiences continue to influence her storytelling. Alexandra is driven by a fascination with how women’s leadership transforms communities, how the past shapes our future, and how institutions often value profit over humanity. Her writing centers on emotionally rich, complex women placed in roles and spaces where we don’t typically see them—stories that challenge conventional narratives and spark deeper reflection. Alexandra has been recognized as a finalist for the Stowe Story Labs Fellowship, placed in the top 10% for the Academy Nicholl Fellowships, and was a finalist for the 15th Annual MFA Playwrights’ Workshop at the Kennedy Center. Alexandra is currently developing *A Cabin in the Woods*, a short film she wrote and stars in. The story follows a veteran father grappling with PTSD whose daughter—his emotional anchor—reveals she’s leaving for school, prompting a quiet reckoning between unspoken fears, love, and letting go.

Film to be written during fellowship: “THE ANGEL OF PLOIEȘTI”

Logline: During the height of World War II, American prisoners of war discover an unlikely ally in Catherine Caradja, the Princess of Romania, who facilitates their escape to Italy. Inspired by true events.

EMILY EVERHARD



Emily Everhard is a queer filmmaker who tells stories about femme underdogs and outsiders. Emily was a 2024 Sundance Fellow and Enderby Entertainment Filmmaking Fellow. Her films have played and won awards at festivals including Aspen ShortsFest, Palm Springs ShortFest, Austin Film Festival, SeriesFest and more. Raised in Colorado and Los Angeles, Emily starred in a CBS series and in various film and television productions on ABC, NBC and FOX as a preteen. After studying History at Dartmouth College, Emily worked on documentaries for Netflix, Sundance/AMC Channel, and PBS before earning her MFA in Screenwriting & Directing from Columbia University. Now, Emily pulls from her documentary fieldwork to craft unique narratives set within subcultures and niche communities. Emily's stories unfold in heightened realities and use humor to explore complicated familial relationships, self-discovery, and love. Emily's created content for the Stonewall Inn Gives Back Initiative. Her work has been supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, Sundance Institute, Catwalk Institute, and more.

Film to be written during fellowship: "SPECIAL DELIVERY"

Logline: A foley artist for pornography and an aspiring porn star solve an adult film actress's disappearance using only auditory clues... uncovering the dark underbelly of Atlantic City and their own romance along the way.

FEDNA JACQUET



Fedna Jacquet is a full-time actor, writer, director, and mother, born to Haitian parents. An award-winning playwright, actor, and screenwriter, she is recognized for centering nuanced, powerful, and often humorous Black narratives that explore identity, systemic challenges, and radical hope. Fedna starred as Passenger 1 in the Tony-nominated Broadway production *Ain't No Mo* and as Lovelie in Dominique Morisseau's *Bad Kreyòl*. She is a 2025 New York Screenwriting Fellow with FilmNation, a 2023/2024 Primary Stages fellow (DSNAWG), a CRNY Artist, and the 2020–2024 National Black Theatre Playwright in Residence. Her honors also include the Inaugural Still I Rise Documentary Fellowship, the Huntington Theatre Playwriting Fellowship, and the NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship in Playwriting/Screenwriting. Fedna's screenwriting credits include *Isaiah* (ABFF/TVOne Screenplay Competition Finalist), *Inheritance* (Tribeca/Chanel Through Her Lens Finalist, Urbanworld Film Festival), *Circus* (HollyShorts Quarterfinalist), and *Going Home*. Her pilots include *Model Minority*, a dramedy about an Asian American male lead, and *Pefeksyon*, a comedy about a Haitian American family.

Her plays include *Queen* [formerly *Black Mother Lost Daughter*] (developed as a National Black Theatre fellow, O'Neill Finalist, Atlantic Theatre Caribbean Mixfest), *Pefeksyon* (Playwright's Realm Finalist, DVRP Finalist, Studio Tisch), *Inheritance* (Classical Theatre of Harlem Playwright's Playground, Studio Tisch), *Civic Duty* (commissioned by SUNY Purchase), *Girlfriend* (The Fire This Time Festival, O'Neill Semifinalist), and *Heroes* (developed as a Huntington Fellow). Fedna holds a BA from Brown University and an MFA from NYU/Tisch. Her short films *Chante Maman Mwen* and *Murika* premiered at major festivals including Martha's Vineyard, Urbanworld, and Brooklyn.

Film to be written during fellowship: "OWE"

Logline: Three brilliant and broke Black women friends devise an audacious plan to hack and eliminate student loan debt records, transforming from struggling professionals into unexpected rebel heroes.

NAYA JAMES SONNAD



Naya James Sonnad is a writer of plays and films, actor and producer in New York City. The child of an Indian immigrant father and Midwestern-raised mother, she was the only brown, pagan, weirdly-named vegetarian kid at the Catholic school in a rural Michigan hunting town. Although it felt unique at the time, after seeing more of the world it became clear that this experience of isolation was way more common than she thought—what a relief! To that end, a primary focus of Naya’s work has always been to question what it means to belong, what it means to be other, and what it means to be an American, grappling especially with the topic of how we can help each other stay intact as human beings in the modern era. Writing credits include the world premiere of 60/40 at the Hudson Guild Theater; Abdication! at Theater for the New City, also produced at Silver Spring Stage in Washington DC; Tipping Point produced by Naked Angels at the Kraine Theater; over a dozen original one-acts, and several short films. She is thrilled to be part of this year’s WGA East/Film Nation Fellowship cohort. Additional honors include 2024 Finalist, Austin Film Festival and Nominee for the 2024 Susan Smith Blackburn Prize for playwriting.

Film to be written during fellowship: “BUZZ”

Logline: When everyday nobody Jen Smith is transformed into a literal fly on the wall to get closer to her celebrity heroes, she discovers their glamorous world is much more sinister than ever imagined.

THADDEUS MCCANTS



Thaddeus McCants (he/him) is a Brooklyn-based Writer, Director, and generally fun dude to hang out with from Madison, Wisconsin. A creator in many mediums, Thaddeus was most recently a Staff Writer on HBO Max's delicious bio-comedy 'JULIA'. In addition, he is currently developing his own series, 'LIT LOUNGE', with BET+ and Tracy Oliver about the racial hypocrisy of the legal cannabis industry. He's also the co-writer of multiple AUDIBLE Originals with Best Selling Author James Patterson and VICE Media. Also on the small screen, Thaddeus is an up-and-coming, Webby Award-winning Commercial Director repped by O Positive Films. There, his keen eye for comedy breathes life into campaigns for brands like Progressive, Uber Eats, State Farm, Chime, and more...even a Super Bowl commercial for Avocados from Mexico. As a Writer/Director, his Short Films have screened and won festivals across the country... he's been to NY, LA, Buffalo, Portland, St. Louis, and more...it's tiring. He also brings his voice to the stage as a Playwright, where he's been a New York Theatre Workshop 2050 Fellow, Theater Masters Visionary Playwright, KCACTF Regional Winner & National Finalist, and a Semi-Finalist for both the Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference & American Blues Theatre Blue Ink Award.

He proudly holds his MFA from NYU & BFA from Ithaca College. Which is a lot of FA's...hope that was worth it.

Film to be written during fellowship: "IN SAM'S WAKE..."

Logline: It all started when SAM COOKE was shot and killed at a seedy motel in 1964. Some say he was killed because he was becoming too powerful as a civil rights icon...others say he was killed for being drunk, high on cocaine, and cheating on his wife BARBARA COOKE. Some even say Barbara shot him herself. Any way you want to tell it, Sam's death set off a chain reaction that would shatter more than one family, create multiple, and become a story almost too crazy to believe...if the shit wasn't 100% true.

ZURI RICE



Zuri Rice (she/her) is a features and episodic writer obsessed with societal roles, female rage and Real Housewife feuds. NY born and southern raised, she bounced around six neighborhoods from Brooklyn, New York (pre-gentrification) to the suburbs of Georgia and five elementary schools. Zuri's held second and third jobs getting cursed out by toddlers in West Philly daycares, wrangling B-listers at Hip Hop award shows, and ignoring misdemeanors at Applebee's before becoming a media executive. As a creative lead, Zuri has calmed hysterical talent and finessed disastrous rough cuts from Utah to the Netherlands in print, video, social media, marketing, and digital. She pens dark, twisty crime dramas about scrappy, dangerous women. Her writing has earned her places in IFT's Creative Corridor Program, Moonshot Initiative's Pilot Accelerator, and The Writer's Lab. She's repped by Bellevue.

Film to be written during fellowship:
"WOMAN TROUBLES"

Logline: After being cut off from her estranged husband, a distressed wife is forced to confront her husband's mistress and her own choices in her search for 15 million dollars worth of crypto in a remote cabin.