

BIOGRAPHY

Shayna Toh is from Singapore and a Rhode Island-based student. She composed her very first song titled “My Very First Waltz” at age six. Her 15-minute, one-act play, *Where Your Dream Takes You*, a winning entry for a national playwriting competition, was showcased by the Singapore Repertory Theatre over five performances at the DBS Arts Centre in 2008, when she was 11.

Bringing together her love for intersectional music genres and her penchant for plays, she wrote and composed her first musical, *Firefly in the Light* in 2014. This 75-minute, 12-song pop-rock musical based on a pop song she had penned a few years earlier, premiered at The Arts House in Singapore, to a one-show-only, sold-out crowd in November 2014. *Firefly in the Light*, since expanded to a 2-hour, 22-song show was an Official Selection of the 2017 New York Musical Festival (July – August 2017) (nymf.org/fireflyinthelight; fireflyinthelight.com), with three presentations at Playwrights Horizons, Off-Broadway. She later directed a production of *Firefly in the Light* with Brown University’s Production Workshop in March 2019.

Her second musical *The Olive Trees* was staged at the Mini-Musical Festival in March 2017 by Brown University’s Musical Forum (youtu.be/N1QsO.JIS6GI).

Shayna is a winner of the 2019 New Voices Project for young musical theatre playwrights, composers and lyricists under the age of 26, hosted by New Musicals Inc. in Los Angeles with support from Walt Disney Imagineering Creative Entertainment (<https://www.broadwayworld.com/los-angeles/article/New-Voices-Project-2019-Winners-Announced-20190301>).

She music directed the full-length musicals *Pippin* staged by Brown University Gilbert and Sullivan in November 2017 and *Heathers the Musical* staged by Brown University’s Musical Forum in April 2018. Most recently, she music directed and arranged a new play, *kemps*, presented by Brown University’s Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies in November 2019.

Her songs, “We Own The World” and “When The World Turns” were Finalists in the Pop category of the Great American Song Contest 2013 (greatamericansong.com/honorary-2013.php) and the Open category of the UK Songwriting Contest 2011, respectively.

As a vocalist, she has performed Claude-Michel Schönberg’s “I’d Give My Life For You” at the American Protégé International Vocal Competition Winners’ Recital in Carnegie Hall, New York in 2014. She has acted in multiple productions at Brown University, including *Spring Awakening* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Shayna plays the piano, electone, cello and guitar.

Among the several literary work she has had published is a children’s book she authored in 2013, on urban nature deficit. The publication serves as a curriculum resource at Singapore’s national libraries and primary schools, and was featured literature for biodiversity festivals in Singapore and Earth Day celebrations in Australia, Korea and Japan.

Shayna has been awarded grants by Hong Leong Foundation and the National Arts Council, Singapore for *Firefly in the Light*. Her other staged-theatrical and published-literary work by various producers and publishers received grants from SPH Foundation, Jane Goodall Institute and Shaw Foundation.