

# Introducing

## New Faculty HIROKO SAEKI

Can you tell me how you first started getting involved with the Drama Institute?

HS: I started classes in 2009, but wasn't sure what I was going to do with it. Then in 2014 I served as Drama Therapy Abroad Coordinator for the program in Italy sponsored by DTILA. By 2015-2017 I started seeing clients through Creative Therapies Center and became an RDT in 2017. I received my LMFT license in 2020.

How did you find out about the practice of Drama Therapy?

HS: I googled "drama" and "therapy" and found Pam. I used to work in television and video production; I have my BA in theater but I was feeling burnt out on living gig to gig. I knew that through my own experience I found drama and theater and expressive arts can be so healing so I thought I could do something with that. I searched some keywords and found The Drama Therapy Institute.

What made you want to become a Drama Therapist?

HS: I just kept taking one class a semester at DTILA, and then Pam being Pam, she really encouraged me to get registered as an RDT, and I thought ok well I am taking all these classes . . . but at that time I didn't have my masters, so what to do? Pam and other students encouraged me to go back to get my masters in Clinical Psychology. It has been a long process, but I'm so glad I went through it.

As a faculty member at DTILA, what are you hoping to specialize in and bring to the community?

HS: I haven't quite figured out my specialty with Pam yet . . . she wanted me to develop a class in working with drama therapy and children because I have worked with youth a lot. But I've worked with clients aged 5-101. What I'm really passionate about is childhood trauma and serving that community.

What unique skills and perspectives do you bring to DTILA?

HS: Because I specialized in Spiritual and Depth Psychology I tend to see things through union, through drama therapy and use our active imagination it can help us integrate different parts of ourselves and that's the work I'm passionate about. I think it's very useful to trauma survivors. I am from Japan. Mindfulness is kind of an "in" thing right now, but the Japanese culture has a Buddhist influence and the everyday mindfulness is part of that culture. They focus on everyday mindfulness. It's less of a sitting practice and more in everyday tasks such as making tea, and enjoying every moment. I bring this to my practice a lot.

How has the pandemic affected your work?



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HS: Not so much, some clients decided to take a break, but as soon we started realizing that this is lasting longer, clients started coming back. So nothing much changed except the format of the zoom screen. We can find a playful way to integrate it though: different virtual backgrounds and such . . .

For Zoom I really didn't like the idea and I felt like the screen would be a barrier to connecting, before I even tried it I had this idea of it. But once I tried it I was like, "ok, this is just another way of connecting" and yes there are frustrating moments with the distractions and interference, but without this what would we be doing right now? So rather than seeing this screen as a barrier I started seeing it as a window. And that helps me connect. Of course being in the same space with a client is ideal, but this is the next best thing and I'm grateful for this option.

What message can you give to encourage everyone in these difficult times?

HS: Finding small joys in everyday things in life, as well as practicing gratitude and self compassion is so important in a time like this. It is so easy to think about the things we have no control over, but by shifting our focus on the small joys then you can have an enjoyable experience.

What classes do you have coming up?

HS: This coming Winter Semester I'm facilitating Drama Therapy with Children and Adolescents, on Sunday March 25th. It is a one day workshop and you can get CE credit through CAMFT, APA or NADTA.

What would be your final message to us all?

I can say that drama therapy and other therapeutic work I do with my clients are my "Ikigai"—"Ikigai" is a Japanese word that roughly translates to something that makes our everyday life meaningful and valuable. I just know that the experience of drama therapy is so powerful, more than talk therapy, you get to use imagery and embodiment, and that definitely helps us connect to a deeper level of our consciousness.

**About:** Hiroko Saeki, MA, LMFT, RDT is a faculty member at CTC/DTLA. Hiroko is a licensed marriage & family therapist with a specialization in Spiritual and Depth Psychology, a drama therapist, and certified in CBT. She is originally from Japan and is fluent in Japanese. You can find out more at her website: <https://www.hirokotherapy.com>

## Class Registration Update



Winter schedule is [here](#). Fill it out, click what classes you are registering and confirm your payment method. If you want to add more classes, just fill out the form again with the classes you want to add. Don't send class payment without registering or we will not know you are in the class. Questions about registration, please email [dtilareg@gmail.com](mailto:dtilareg@gmail.com). For questions about classes and payment, email Pam Dunne. See you on Zoom!

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# Student Voices

## From the Committed Students' of DTILA: Reay Kaplan Maxwell, Jack Fleisher, and Rabia Khara



What drew you to drama therapy?

Reay Maxwell: I've been making my living as a performer for the past 25 years. I've always had it in the back of my mind that I should figure out a "retirement" plan when acting and puppeteering ceased to be enough. Over the past few years, I've been fortunate enough to be teaching Creative Expression classes to incarcerated adults at a local county jail. As I've been figuring out my way, I've witnessed the healing power of art, first hand. In doing a bit of research, I found that what I was doing was an established field: Drama Therapy.

Jack Fleisher: I came to drama therapy because of a workshop I had taken with the playwright John Patrick Shanley which featured several techniques from the field. I found it a very powerful experience that changed me. Later on I was considering getting a degree in psychology and happened to bump into an old friend who was an RDT and we got chatting and she referred me to DTILA where she had studied with Pam.

Rabia Khara: I grew up in a family that was heavily involved in arts and music. I acted as a child and loved theatre (I still do) but standing on the shoulders of giants meant I had to try harder to get noticed. I stumbled upon a few career choices before I decided to pursue a field that I felt resonated with the core of what makes me

unique, drama or arts with healing. With a background in clinical psychology, I chose to study drama therapy because I have a passion for it. I have found, historically speaking, that creative therapy or expressive arts has been universally used as a healing modality and intervention for many years across all cultures and boundaries. The benefits are far reaching and impactful; and that is the additional layer that drew me to it.

What are some special skills that you bring to drama therapy?

RM: My background in puppetry has been a benefit to some of the work I've been doing with DT. I was reintroduced to the power of the puppet during Zoom classes with my fellow DT students. I also feel as if my lack of any kind of experience in the Psych or Counseling fields has been a kind of a benefit. Every class is a kind of a new revelation to me, as I piece art and the ability to heal together.

JF: I am a skilled communicator with 6 years of actor training at some of the best studios in Los Angeles. I have taught acting to teenagers in several contexts, most recently at Hollywood High School. I've trained at length as a director as well and have production experience in film and theatre. I love music, dance, poetry, clowning and treasure the absurdity, magic, and life force in all things.

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RK: I have a flair for drama. I think it helps to understand yourself before you can be that ray of light for others. I'm a vocalist, photographer, abstract painter, writer, actor and dancer. I think those are some of the skills that help me in drama therapy.

How has your experience been with classes on Zoom? What have been challenges or advantages for you?

RM: As far as DT goes, I have no other experience beyond Zoom. I began classes in April, just after the shut down. One thing I appreciate is the opportunity to be on equal footing with my classmates. I live in Atlanta, so will continue to be a virtual student of DTLA, even after in-person classes resume. My puppet background has been an advantage, for sure. I love playing with the Zoom Square, much like Jim Henson first experimented using the actual TV screen as the Puppet Stage. There are so many ways to create the illusion of life through Zoom. I do miss the ability to work in direct contact with others and know that my DT education will be that much more impactful when we can all meet face to face. I feel as if I'm receiving about 90% of my education at this time, due to the inability to reside in the same space as classmates, as well as potential internship opportunities that are unavailable for the same reason.

JF: I'm not a big fan of working digitally but because we've had no other choice Zoom has proven adequate. I think it's challenging to do the group movement exercises on zoom but scene work can often be better for the audience as you really get a window into people's eyes like you would in a film.

RK: It was a learning curve but once I got the hang of sitting through all day workshops and classes, I was smitten. I wanted to learn more and continue assimilating as much knowledge as humanly possible. My overall experience has been wonderful. It's a great feeling to be part of a loving, supportive, encouraging and positive community at DTLA and it's such an honor to be under Pam's tutelage. She is amazing! I'm also deeply grateful for the rest of the instructors who have made this an enriching, fun and positive learning experience. I think of resourcefulness, creativity and flexibility as advantages and the challenges being occasional Zoom exhaustion and tech issues. But I have experience working in the tech industry, so minor setbacks do not bother me. Zoom has made this training accessible to so many across the world, so it's all good.

What has worked best and what could be improved?

JF: I think Pam and the other faculty have done a great job incorporating break out rooms, and facilitating the group activities in the best way they could given the nature of the format. I don't really see how else they could improve it.

RK: I think of improvements as a process, adopting what works for everyone as a collective. We all have different learning styles and breakout sessions during class with like minded peers is one idea. I also am in favor of capping class size, opting for multiple offerings of the same course—especially on Zoom—to optimize the learning environment. In terms of what has worked best for me, again, I like small class sizes (even though I've been part of large ones also) because they are intimate and students get a chance to know each other, but if we were in person, to me, more is merrier. I'm aware of the paradoxical nature of my thoughts. :)

What are your hopes for the future as we are in the midst of this pandemic and an unsettled world?

RM: The past month, despite dismal COVID numbers and new shutdowns, I've had a real surge of hope, the first since the Spring, I think. With the tides turning politically and vaccines on the horizon, I believe we have MUCH to look forward to in the very near future. I also know that resuming our "normal" might never be in cards. This is the time to investigate what a new "normal" may look like, for us individually and globally. If we tread with care and awareness, in a mindful, thoughtful manner, we just may have a chance to beat the odds.

JF: I'm praying that people can find empathy for one another and value the diversity of life experiences we've all had in a way that brings us together instead of tearing us apart. I'm very concerned about climate change as well and would love to see a global community act with more force to try to bring the situation under control. In my personal life I continue to look forward to making art and being in nature with friends. I'd love to make a contribution to human progress in whatever way I can.

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RK: I hope for a world that's united and brimming with peace, love and kindness, not just here at home, but globally. I would love to and be honored to continue my work in healing through drama therapy and other interventions that I use in my therapeutic work with clients to build a better, stronger, kinder and more resilient world than ever before. One that believes in the goodness that we all inherently possess and exudes honesty, integrity, sense of community, universal love and passion.

# Community Voices

## Combating Toxic Masculinity in the Workplace Using Drama Therapy and Cinematherapy

By Jennifer Bailey, LCSW



Work is an environment where we spend most of our time outside of our homes. At home we try to create a sense of peace and calm as a way to decompress after a long day or work week. Recently society has been able to take a closer look at the work environment as it has a strong influence on an individual's sense of self, identity and overall mental health. One of the issues arising when looking at workplace environments is toxic masculinity. Toxic masculinity is a subset of masculinity, specifically referring to negative behaviors that are typically attributed as masculine. These negative behaviors glorify the use of dominance, destruction and stoicism. Toxic masculinity views expressing emotions as a sign of weakness, choosing aggression as the only form of communication and problem solving, harassment, sexism and violent outbursts are also behaviors that fall in this category.

Toxic masculinity negatively impacts work-life balance and creates counterproductive management. It creates an atmosphere that focuses on using power as a way to dominate others, a lack of care for employees and creates an environment where leadership shows no accountability for their actions. This can lead to instances of sexual harassment and discrimination. The focus goes away from improving in a business or agency's field or service the company provides as a whole, but focuses on internal competition and ruthlessness. It's important to remember that not just men participate in these toxic masculine behaviors but women can as well, such as being aggressive, forceful, overly competitive, and dismissive.

Jennifer Berdahl wrote an article on her research about the presence of toxic masculinity (or as she refers to it, masculinity contest culture) and its impact. "Much of our own work has exposed how masculine pressures on men [employees] motivate them to engage in "bad but bold" behavior—including sexual harassment, physical aggression, and extreme work hours and cut-throat competition." Berdahl comments on how these type of behaviors in the workplace negatively impacts an organization and employees, "such cultures create cascading negative consequences that flow from top down: from the organizational and leadership level to the frequency of negative behaviors in the work environment to undermining individuals' relation to the organization and (more distally) to the general well-being of individual organization members." The research found that workplaces that had a high rating of masculinity contest norms associated with organizational dysfunction, bad coworker behavior, and poor individual outcomes.

Although having conversations about toxic masculinity and how to combat it in the workplace is important, it can be helpful to utilize other modalities to evoke, promote and practice change. For employees to openly share their thoughts and feelings about the toxic behaviors that exist in their workplace could be deemed as too vulnerable, but with the use of drama therapy and cinema therapy, employees can do this through the use of commercials, videos and movie clips. "Drama therapy is an embodied practice that is active and experiential. This approach can provide the context for participants to tell their stories, set goals and solve problems, express feelings, or achieve catharsis. Through drama, the depth and breadth of inner experience can be actively explored and interpersonal relationship skills can be enhanced" (NADTA). Cinematherapy is the viewing of movies and videos for therapeutic purposes such as, to evoke feelings in viewers to allow for opportunities of personal reflection and exploring new perspectives on external events.

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Large group seminars and small group workshops could be utilized to create the desired change in a given workplace. The large group could consist of all employees, department heads or managerial positions. The seminars main focus will be reviewing content that brings awareness about toxic masculinity as well as behaviors or qualities that can exist in the workplace, using various video clips that help individuals learn concepts and language that provide a better understanding of toxic masculinity and the toxic behaviors that come with it. For example, Joe Eherman talks about Toxic Masculinity in the world of sports and how it could be altered. Gillette made a commercial recognizing toxic masculinity in present day society and encouraging their patrons to change the mindset of “boys will be boys” because they planned to do that as a company.

The purpose of the workshops are to build professional interpersonal relationships among employees. By using drama therapy, it will allow participants to explore various roles or enact workplace scenarios or scenes that were viewed in the video clips. Drama therapy allows individuals to also share their personal experiences (once comfortable within the group) thus allowing for an experience of catharsis. It provides the aesthetic distance to engage with any emotions that may arise from these activities without internalizing those emotions or feeling exposed to the other group members. Drama therapy will also be utilized to build awareness and practice ways to implement the type of constructive and healthy work environment that is the desired goal. Cinematherapy is incorporated by using popular film clips to discuss and reflect on. Using the film as a point of reference in discussing aspects of toxic masculinity observed in the film, in their place of work and creating strategies on ways to combat these behaviors and ways of thinking. Movies like Boiler Room, Working Girl, 9 to 5 are just some examples of movies that could be utilized, explored, and enacted. They would be able to choose scenes that would be enacted and could explore altering a scene’s resolution. This allows for the exploration of trying new roles or behaviors while dispelling the worry of taking a risk of doing or saying something that wouldn’t typically be done. Groups would also be able to explore hypothetical situations that could or have happened in the workplace, practicing ways to resolve situations that foster a collaborative and supportive work environment.

The atmosphere of one’s work place directly impacts the individual’s life at and outside of work. Currently, due to the global pandemic, many people are now working from home which means there is more overlap between one’s work and home environment. It’s important that employees are aware of the types of behaviors and mindsets that fall into the realm of Toxic Masculinity. With psychoeducation of toxic masculinity, utilizing the modalities of drama therapy and cinematherapy allows for an opportunity to create a workplace that fosters support, accountability, and collaboration. In turn positively contributing to an individual’s overall well-being, mental health and fostering a healthy work/life balance.

## Congratulations!

**NADTA DIVERSITY AWARD** Our own **Kamran Afray** (Ph.D, RDT) won for his achievement in diversity!

### RDT AWARDS

DTILA sends our congratulations to **Renda Dionne Madrigal, David Tucker, Lillian Ribeiro, Elizabeth Scott,** and **Monica Vladoi** on the completion of their RDT from the North American Drama Therapy Association.

### BCT AWARD

We are also happy to announce that DTILA graduate **Stephen Breithaupt** has received his BCT (Board Certified Trainer) from NADTA. Congratulations Stephen!!!

### NADTA CONFERENCE CHAIRS

Congratulations to **Alexis Maron,** and **Rachel Brousseau** who co-chaired the NADTA Conference, 2020 with over 400 participants on line.

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## Published

**Renda Dionne Madrigal's** book is out, [Circle Up: a Mindful Family Guidebook](#)


**Pam Dunne, Kamran Afary** and **Pam Paulson** have authored, "Narradrama: a Narrative Approach to Drama Therapy" in the new Current Approaches to Drama Therapy: Third Edition ( just released), edited by David Read Johnson and Renee Emunah



## Open Call for Community Voices Series

Would you like an essay or an editorial-style article you have written to be featured in Creative Approaches? If it is related to the Creative Therapies please email [dtilareg@gmail.com](mailto:dtilareg@gmail.com). We are actively looking for more voices from our community to feature in the newsletter!

## Upcoming Classes

You can go to the [Drama Therapy Institute of Los Angeles website](#) to view all upcoming classes. Please note: CE's can be earned for CAMFT, APA or NADTA. All classes will be held on Zoom until further notice. Click the green button to register 

**REGISTER NOW**

**Principles of Drama Therapy** (3 units/ \$699)

Fridays, January 8-March 5

12-4p PST

Pam Dunne, Ph.D, RDT/BCT, NT

**Research Assessment and Treatment in Drama Therapy** (3 units/ \$699)

Saturdays, January 9-March 6

9:30a-1:30p PST

Pam Dunne, Ph.D, RDT/BCT, NT

**Personality Theory** (3 units/ \$699)

Sundays, January 17-March 7: 2p-4p PST

Thursdays, January 21-March 4: 5p-7p PST

Pam Dunne, Ph.D, RDT/BCT, NT & Kamran Afary, PH.D, RDT, NT

**Clinical Use of Embodied Narradrama for Trauma in Childhood & Adolescents: Expanding Treatment and Techniques-B** (7 hrs/ .5 unit/ \$169)

Sunday, January 24

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10:30a-6p PST  
Renda Dionne Madrigal, Ph. D, RDT

**Clinical Uses of Narradrama: Innovative Techniques** (\$336)

Sundays, February 7, 21, 28 and March 1  
1p-4:30p PST  
Pam Dunne, Ph.D, RDT/BCT, NT

**Healing & Rebuilding: Grief Work w/ Children and Teens** (7 hrs/ .5 unit/ \$169)

Sunday, February 21  
10:30a-6p PST  
Trisha Jauchler, MS, MA, RDT/BCT, CBF, CT, CDP

**Narradrama and Mindfulness-A** (6.5 hrs/ .4 unit/ \$169)

Sunday, February 28  
10:30a-6p PST  
Renda Dionne Madrigal, Ph. D, RDT

**Music Therapy for Drama and Creative Arts Therapists** (6.5 hrs/ .4 unit/ \$169)

Sundays, March 7 and 14  
1p-4:15p PST  
Laura Kanofsky, MT-BC, LCSW

**The Use of Drama Therapy in Treatment of Children & Adolescents** (7 hrs/ .5 unit/ \$169)

Sunday, March 21  
10:30a-6p PST  
Hiroko Saeki, MA, LMFT, RDT

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**Psychotherapy Groups**  
Sign Up [here](#)

**DTLA Drama Therapy Psychotherapy Group (\$244)**

With the stress and anxiety around both the unknown and inevitable changes due to the Covid-19, creatively process our array of emotions through embodiment, distancing and roles

Fridays, January 8-February 12 ( 6 Weeks)

9:30am-11:30am (PST)  
Alexis Maron, MA, RDT-BCT, RADT,

**Look to the Mountain: A Journey of Self Discovery:—Finding Heart** (\$244)

Embark on lifelong learning as a way of moving toward completeness  
Through mindfulness practice, writing and Narradrama



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Mondays, January 25-March 1 ( 6 Weeks)

4:00pm-6:00pm (PST)

Renda Dionne Madrigal, Ph.D, RDT,

## Community Voices Resources

**From Jennifer Bailey’s article, see above** This article was originally a final presentation for a graduate class at the Drama Therapy Institute of Los Angeles in Creative Arts Therapy. This has yet to be implemented in any setting. The original presenters of the presentation were Sara McWilliams (MA), Lauren Seale Fischbacher (MA, NF) and Jennifer Bailey LCSW, who all are applying to become Registered Drama Therapists (RDT’s).

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Kosko, William. The Good Men Project. How to get rid of Toxic Masculinity in the Workplace.

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Editor: Lauren Seale Fischbacher

Contributing Authors: Jennifer Bailey, LCSW

Guest Editor: Leah Kercheville

***Want to be featured or a contributing author? Email Pam Dunne or dtilareg@gmail.com!***