

Jeff Storer

Teaching Statement

Theater experiences for undergraduates can provide a unique opportunity for students to process and apply their liberal arts experience in a collaborative environment. An undergraduate student in the Department of Theater Studies should learn not only through the study of their art, but as well, through the practice of their art. We have an obligation to provide opportunities and focus on research, on instruction in a variety of approaches to the art and on providing a laboratory for practice. I provide my students with a strong working vocabulary for their craft and a safe but challenging environment for exploration.

As an acting, directing teacher, and production director I emphasize:

- 1. The importance of strong physical and vocal training.**
- 2. An actor's emotional and psychological work within the historical and cultural content of a text (through careful text analysis, research and practical application.)**
- 3. The value of disciplined working practices and the flexibility of actors to adapt to a variety of different directorial approaches.**
- 4. The value of disciplined working practices and the flexibility of directors to adapt to a variety of spaces, dramatic literary worlds and collaborators with a variety of experience.**
- 5. In the classroom I provide an environment that promotes physical and emotional safety that embraces the racial, gender and sexual identities of young artists.**
- 6. Engaging courageous and bold artistic exploration .**
- 7. Encouraging the development of each individual's skills, while giving young artists repeated opportunities to put theory into practice.**

The individual growth of each student is at the core of the work I do in the classroom. The work I do with my students happens in the classroom, in production and in private coaching. I also believe we have the responsibility to prepare students for the post-graduate options they face as they contemplate entering the field.

Many of our students do not go into theater professionally. But I support work which focuses on the acquisition of some extremely valuable tools applicable in many different fields:

- 1. Oral communications skills (including improvised expression of personal opinion and critique.) Quality of performance (on and off stage) and follow through.**
- 2. Motivation and commitment.**
- 3. Ability to work in collaboration with others. Team work.**
- 4. Time management skills.**
- 5. The ability to engage in constructive feedback with peers and colleagues.**
- 6. Constructive problem solving.**
- 7. Directly applicable research techniques.**
- 8. Not only respect for colleagues and peers, but respect for authority. (i.e. the director, the shop foreman, the tech director. Theater Studies teaches you to willingly accept authority.)**
- 9. Self-discipline.**
- 10. Creative thinking.**
- 11. Meeting deadlines.**
- 12. Adaptability and flexibility.**
- 13. Collegiality.**
- 14. Finding enjoyment in pursuing constructive creative expression.**

My teaching philosophy is based on over 40 years of teaching and professional experience in the theater. It is essential to my teaching that I stay integrally involved professionally with my craft. My work as a producer, director and artistic director has a national reputation and serves as an example of what I teach. I proudly stand by the quality and process of the theater I create as a consistent example to my students. My work as Artistic Director/Producer/Director of Manbites Dog Theater provides me with experience as a director, playwright and as a creative partner with artists from a variety of fields in the development and sharing of new work.

2018-19 is a major transitional year for me. After 31 seasons of producing and directing the company I founded we will be restructuring our board and transitioning into an agency fund with the Triangle Community Foundation. With over a half a million dollars we will sunset our assets over the next five years to seed, support and produce a burgeoning theater community in the Triangle area, becoming the largest granting agency for professional, contemporary theater in our region. I will remain as artistic director and on the board of Manbites Dog Theater and return to free-lance professional directing as the focus of my research.