

## TEACHING STATEMENT

My teaching, creative and service work includes a variety of theatre disciplines—acting, directing, devising and new work—unified by the concepts of connection and taking risks. In my own creative career, I, too, seek connection and risk: performing in daring solo shows, developing and directing new work with emerging artists, helping students to take risks in developing their own personal creative process and connecting them to artists and employers in the professional world.

Before coming to Colorado State University, I worked professionally on the West Coast for over a decade. I performed in the resident company of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in a variety of classical and contemporary roles, and was a resident actor and Artistic Associate at the Sacramento Theatre Company. While there, I became the Director of STC-2, a training program for young actors, and developed all curriculum and directed a full season of plays. In Los Angeles, I was the lead undergraduate movement teacher at University of Southern California and appeared in web series, commercials and film. I returned to the Midwest and created and administered all aspects of the newly formed Grant Wood Art Colony at the University of Iowa, all the while maintaining an active and diverse performance and directing career. Throughout, I sought to find new forms of expression and forge new challenges for myself in both topic and style. These projects allowed me to take new risks, challenging myself as well as the audience. I brought these interests to Miami University, where I first began full time academic teaching and the tenure track promotion process. I continue to bring this focus to my teaching, scholarship and service work at Colorado State University:

**TEACHING:** As one of the acting teachers at CSU, I interact with students from a beginning freshman level and take them through a cumulative experience as seniors ready to enter the profession. The arc of my methodology is first based in connection (ensemble), and continues to grow with increasing levels of challenge and experimentation (specialties such as voice and movement) to full autonomy as a creative theatre artist. Students graduate with a perspective and independent creative process that allows them to move into the world and job market with confidence and the ability to begin a career. I include elements of experimentation and risk-taking in all classes, helping students to develop comfort with independent process and risk. The arc culminates in professional preparation and self-generated devised work. Finally, I unite this teaching philosophy with my service efforts, creating connections between our community and the professional world.

**CREATIVE/ARTISTIC WORK:** I believe it is crucial to remain active in my field as a performer, director and member of larger professional communities. I maintain professional connections and membership in vital organizations, including the Actor's Equity Association, ATHE (Association for Theatre in Higher Education) and VASTA (Voice and Speech Trainer's Association). Nationally, I have taught and presented as a guest artist in academic and professional programs.

I continue my professional career as an actor and director. In 2014, I played a lead role in a feature film version of Chekhov's play *The Seagull* (@theseagullfilm), for released in 2020. In Spring semester 2017, I was granted a faculty leave (at Miami University) to continue my professional creative, research and presenting work. I directed the new touring production of *Lady Macbeth and Her Pal, Megan* with solo performer Megan Gogerty, developed two new pieces with emerging artists, and acted in three productions at Riverside Theatre (Iowa City, IA) and Richmond Shakespeare Festival (Richmond, IN). Since joining the faculty at CSU, I spent October 2020 directing another world premiere by Megan Gogerty, *FEAST*. Throughout 2020, as COVID-19 has raged on, I continue to create: for CSU, I directed a filmed version of the stage play *Concord Floral*, and I am developing a solo show written for me by award winning playwright, Ben Jolivet, *Mary Magdalene Smokes a Joint*, which we hope will be both a streaming and live production.

**SERVICE:** The service portion of my work is the connective tissue between my teaching and creative work, and of central importance in my life. A project that epitomized my commitment to uniting creative, teaching, and service work was my last production at Miami University. *Echoes of Miami* was a project that spanned four years from inception through production. Including over fifty artists - from students, to faculty, to professional playwrights and designers, we created a seven play, walking tour of short plays about the legends and ghost stories of Miami and Oxford. With guidance, students wrote, directed and designed these plays, and the MUT faculty and I produced it. It drew many members of the community, some who said they'd never been to a Miami Theatre production. The play was a critical and academic

success, giving students the opportunity of a unique creative challenge, while celebrating and uniting both the Miami University and Oxford communities.

Additionally, I founded The Brink Theatre Company while at Miami to facilitate my own creative development and to generate professional models and experiences for students. The Brink explores themes of contemporary perspectives and voices of “otherness,” mounting readings in site-specific environments for small audiences. Since its inception, we’ve produced readings, a playwright’s residency, and two fully mounted productions. These efforts have included undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, alumni and professionals in the field. This model provides unusual opportunities in an academic environment, uniting academic and creative work. The plan is to employ this model at CSU in the spring to produce the ON THE BRINK reading series exploring crucial themes and underrepresented voices. With excellent support from the department, I am able to weave together my own creative interests, student development and opportunities with service to the community, the craft, and our current moment.

Finding connection and exploring risk and creative process is both my philosophy and practice. Through these elements, I am able to help students grow creatively over time, using a vocabulary that engages them artistically and encourages them to be healthy, conscientious human beings with a sense of community, identity, and creative autonomy.