

Rachel Tuggle Whorton, Ph.D.

Performer, director, writer, and educator. Creator and facilitator of unique, dynamic, culturally responsive opportunities for established and emerging artists across the country. Advocate of the arts as tools for personal expression, cooperative storytelling, community dialogue, and social change. Enthusiastic collaborator and effective communicator. Creative problem solver and resourceful administrator. Empathetic listener. Relationship builder through humor, honesty, and action.

EDUCATION

Ph. D. in Educational Theatre (2018)

New York University

Study Abroad: Community-Engaged Theatre in Ireland; Global Research Fellowship in Italy

M.A. in Educational Theatre for Colleges and Communities (2011)

New York University

Study Abroad: Theatre Practices in Puerto Rico

M.Ed. in Instructional Leadership (2010)

Lipscomb University

Tennessee Teaching License: K-12 Theatre

B.A. in Theatre and Communication: Journalism (2006)

Lipscomb University

Piano Performance minor

Study Abroad: Music Management/PR Internship in London, England

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Faculty, New York University (2012-present)

- Course Instructor: Voice and Speech for the Actor, Acting Pedagogy, Dramatic Activities in the High School, Theatre as Art Form (Recitation), Problems in Play Production, Interdisciplinary New Student Seminar
- Music Director: *Meta*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Brief Encounter*, *Two Noble Kinsmen*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *The Winter's Tale*
- Curator: *Theatrix!* new works festivals in partnership with musical theatre composition students
- Student Teacher Supervisor: mentored pre-service elementary and secondary teachers through observation and feedback regarding facilitation, curriculum design, and assessment
- Gallatin Colloquium Panelist: Theatre and Technology
- Faculty Affiliate: Theatre Arts Community in Grammercy Green Residence Hall; planned and supervised experiential learning events related to the performing arts
- Planning Committee Member: international forums on teaching artistry, site-specific theatre, and ethnodrama

Teaching Artist, New York City Center (2015-present)

- Facilitate musical theatre, songwriting, and devising workshops in connection with the *Encores!* performance series
- Design specialized curriculum for each separate show in collaboration with fellow teaching artists

Master Teacher, National YoungArts Foundation—Miami, FL (January 2015)

- Designed and facilitated workshops on devising, Viewpoints, and musical improv for national drama finalists

Teaching Artist/Leadership Trainer, The Leadership Program (2011-2017)

- Facilitated after-school theatre and music programs with secondary students in Brooklyn and Manhattan
- Directed, music directed, and designed full-length musical productions with high school students
- Member of summer curriculum team; collaboratively designed multidisciplinary curriculum
- Facilitated professional development workshops for NYC DOE teachers and administrators
- Recognized with Core Value Award (2012) for fostering an inclusive community through communication, connection, and common purpose

Teaching Artist, Wingspan Arts (2011-2013)

- Planned and facilitated in-school and after-school performing arts programming with elementary and secondary students in Manhattan and the Bronx (musical theatre, devising, and playwriting)
- Designed and facilitated musical theatre courses for Wingspan Arts Summer Conservatory

Teaching Artist/Program Administrator, StudentsLive (2010-2011)

- Assisted with music, choreography, curriculum development, and administrative tasks for college students from Brazil and elementary students from South Korea
- Served as piano accompanist for vocal/dance workshops with Broadway cast members from *Chicago*, *Catch Me If You Can*, *The Book of Mormon*, and *The Lion King*

Director of Theatre/Assistant Choral Director, David Lipscomb High School—Nashville, TN (2008-2010)

- Directed fall plays, spring musicals, talent shows, and one-acts each year
- Accompanied and directed award-winning freshmen and concert choirs
- Taught daily theatre, speech, and choir classes; organized field trips to competitions, conferences, & performances

DIRECTING EXPERIENCE

***The Winter's Tale*, NYU Looking for Shakespeare Program (online), New York City (2020)**

- Music director for this digitally-produced musical adaptation of the classical text with K-12 neurodiverse actors
- Orchestrated original arrangements of over 20 songs, taught and conducted virtually

***Peter and the Starcatcher*, New York University, New York City (2018)**

- Music director/conductor of this playful work, featuring an ensemble of developmentally diverse performers

***Two Noble Kinsmen*, NYU Looking for Shakespeare Program, New York City (2018)**

- Music director of this original adaptation incorporating contemporary music with classical text
- Orchestrated original arrangements based on unique instrumental and vocal needs

***Cinderella*, Harlem Prep High School, New York City (2018)**

- Music director and piano conductor of this classic Rodgers & Hammerstein musical

***It Shoulda Been You*, Gallery Players, Brooklyn (2017)**

- Music director and piano conductor of this contemporary musical comedy

NYSUMMERFEST, Hudson Guild Theater, New York City (2017)

- Director of *My Other Job*, an ethnodrama telling the true stories of 5 working New York actors
- Awarded "Best Director" out of over 80 participants

***Hall Pass*, Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing Arts, New York City (2017)**

- Director and music director for this site-specific traveling play cycle; utilized school building as set

***Brief Encounter*, Provincetown Playhouse, New York City (2016)**

- Music director for this production of Emma Rice's theatrical adaptation of the classic Noël Coward film

***Dreamgirls*, Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing Arts, New York City (2016)**

- Director and music director for this school-wide production; also set and video designer, set builder, and costumer
- Arranged for *Dreamgirls* composer Henry Krieger to visit and speak with the cast

Radioactive Festival, TRG Productions, New York City (2016)

- Director of the short play *Bottleneck*, presented at 4th Street Theater at New York Theater Workshop

***Underground: The Ben Folds Project*, Soho loft, Fontana's, & Spike Hill, New York City (2012/2015)**

- Co-creator and music director of this interactive theatrical song-cycle
- Recipient of Lincoln City Fellowship grant for further artistic development

***Little Shop of Horrors*, New York University, New York City (2014)**

- Music director for this mainstage production

***META*, a new play by Deborah Zoe Laufer, New York City (2013)**

- Music director and onstage band leader for the world premiere of this new work

David Lipscomb High School, Nashville, TN (2008-2010)

- Director/Music Director: *Dearly Departed*, *Hello Dolly*, *Hush Little Celia*, *Paper or Plastic*, *Wait Until Dark*, *Crazy for You*
- Managed and organized rehearsal schedule for up to 60 cast and crew members and 6-piece professional band
- Designed and built sets for all productions

PERFORMING EXPERIENCE (Proud member: AEA)

***Mamma Mia!*, Royal Caribbean International, Allure of the Seas (2019)**

- Appeared as "Rosie", one of the Dynamos, on an eight-month contract with this full-scale production

Verbatim Performance Lab, New York City (2018-present)

- Core ensemble member of this innovative ethnodrama company
- Performed verbatim, gender-reversed versions of the Access Hollywood tapes, the Kavanaugh hearing, and LBJ

***Her Opponent*, The Theater Center, New York City (2017)**

- Performed off-Broadway in this re-staging of the 2016 presidential debates with gender-reversed casting
- Featured in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, & *MSNBC*

***Last Night in Town*, San Diego Musical Theater/Blindspot Collective, San Diego, CA (2016)**

- Co-created this site-specific, immersive theatrical song cycle based on the music of Ben Folds
- Originated the role of "Annie"

***The Christians*, Playwrights Horizons, New York City (2015)**

- Performed as a choir member in this critically acclaimed play by Lucas Hnath, directed by Les Waters

***Micro*, Halleloo Productions, New York City (2015)**

- Lead actor in this short film about negotiating space and relationships
- Premiered as an official selection at Cinewest's *Women in Media Arts and Film Festival* (2016) and 8th *Shire International Film Festival* (2017) in Sydney, Australia

***Sapien Sapien Sapien*, The New School for Drama/NY Theatre Barn, New York City (2015/2016)**

- Cast member in this new musical about a human zoo exhibit
- Originated roles of "Zookeeper" and "Rachel"

***One Night Only* with Aretha Franklin, Havas Luxe Events, New York City (2015)**

-Featured vocalist/dancer in this private event performance starring Aretha Franklin

Underground: The Ben Folds Project, Soho loft, Fontana's, & Spike Hill, New York City (2012/2015)

-Co-created this site-specific interactive theatrical song-cycle; originated the roles of "Judy" and "Love Master Z"

PLAYWRITING/SCREENWRITING EXPERIENCE

Konstantin

-Audio drama about a mother and daughter finding humor and healing during quarantine

-Produced by Blindspot Collective's *Walks of Life*, part of La Jolla Playhouse's 2020 Digital WOW programming

My Other Job

-Ethnodramatic work telling the true stories of 5 working New York actors; co-written with Cali Moore

-Produced at NYSUMMERFEST 2017 in NYC; nominated for "Best Play" and "Most Creative Play"

-Published in *ArtsPraxis* (2019)

Bottleneck

-One-act about gendered assumptions and relationships

-Produced at New York Theater Workshop's 4th Street Theater and Act 1 Nashville's One-Act Wednesday series

Micro

-Short film about negotiating space and relationships

-Official selection at Cinewest's *Women in Media Arts and Film Festival* (2016) and 8th *Shire International Film Festival*

(2017) in Sydney, Australia

Through the Glade

-Full-length satirical comedy; co-written with Cali Moore

-Produced at Emerging Artists Festival in Manhattan and UnFringed Festival in Queens

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

***My Other Job, ArtsPraxis* (2019)**

-An ethnodrama about life as an actor in New York City

***The Phenomenon of the Acting Bug: Interrogations of Self-Identification and Career Decision-Making Processes of Professional Actors, ProQuest* (2018)**

-A phenomenological arts-based dissertation about professional actors, identity, and vocational choice

***Responsible Inspiration: The Role of Arts Educators in Career Choice, Teaching Artist Journal* (2017)**

-An article reflecting upon expectations and realities regarding the arts in both educational and professional settings

***"I don't sing!": Teaching Music in After-School Settings with Untrained High School Male Voices, Teaching Artist Journal* (2016)**

-An article offering reflections on, observations of, and pedagogical approaches to musical theatre teaching artist work with high school boys

***Site-specific Theatre: New Perspectives on Pedagogy and Performance, RiDE: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* (2015)**

-A co-written article on site-specific theatrical considerations as a performer, creator, and educator

Harding University, Study in Theatre Arts Course, New York City (2012-present)

- Guest lecturer for this experiential course for students from Harding University in Searcy, AR
- Created and implemented *Bright Lights/Big City*, a downtown theatre walking tour and devising workshop

SCHOLARSHIPS, GRANTS, & MEMBERSHIPS

- Actors' Equity Association
- Global Research Fellowship – NYU research fellowship for dissertation work in Florence, Italy (2016)
- Speranza Foundation – Lincoln City Fellowship grant for artistic development of *Underground* (2014)
- The Myoung-Cheul Chung Scholarship in Educational Theatre (2012)

ADDITIONAL INTERESTS/EXPERIENCE

- Classically trained pianist with +25 years of experience including theory, pedagogy, and performance
- Actor training with Jen Waldman Studio online (2020)
- On-camera training with Anthony Arkin and Amelia Campbell (2018)
- Linklater voice training with Liz Eckert (2017)
- Voiceover Masterclasses with Andy Roth and Marla Weber-Greene (2016/2017)
- Viewpoints Masterclass with Anne Bogart and SITI Company (2015)
- Sketch Comedy Writing with People's Improv Theatre (2014) and Magnet Theater (2015)
- Screenwriting with Kate Cortesi/ESPA at Primary Stages (2015)
- Musical Improvisation at Magnet Theatre (2014)
- Accompanist and cabaret performer with CO/LAB Theater, a non-profit working with individuals with developmental disabilities (2014-2018)
- Finisher, New York City Marathon (2014)
- Volunteer and supporter: Good Call—free legal help for anyone in NYC regardless of race, income, or sex
- Lead vocalist in Durant, award-winning a cappella group based in Nashville, TN (2006-2010)
- Vanderbilt dance program: hip hop, tap, swing