

# ***LISA PORTES***

## ***Curriculum Vitae***

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### **Academic Experience**

#### **Head of Directing, The Theatre School at DePaul University, 2005 - Current.**

Oversee and administer all aspects of a competitive MFA directing program. Upgraded a middling program with a 20% rate of continuation into a high-octane training ground for top-notch directors that boasts a 95% continuation rate in the profession. Evolved a program that was 80% white, male and abled to a program whose current and last seven graduating classes are 52% female, 40% of color and 30% disabled. Annually, vet and select eight MFA Directed productions as part of a twelve-show season in consultation with senior leadership. Collaborate with Production Staff, Acting, Design, Dramaturgy and Playwriting heads to provide a rigorous and integrated production program for training across all areas.

#### **Professor of Directing & Acting, The Theatre School at DePaul University, 2015 - Current**

Design and teach courses in MFA & BFA directing and acting. Provide dedicated, ongoing and consistent mentorship to MFA/BFA directors. Rigorously and continuously evaluate student Directors in class and production projects. Provide ongoing, thorough evaluation of BFA and MFA actors in scene study and performance. Direct one university production per year.

#### **Associate Professor of Directing and Acting, The Theatre School, DePaul University, 2007 - 2015**

#### **Assistant Professor of Directing and Acting, The Theatre School at DePaul University, 2000 - 2006.**

#### **Guest Lecturer, Practicum Supervisor, Duke University Department of Theatre, 1998 & 1999.**

Guest lectured in the Drama Department, and supervised three independent undergraduate directorial practicums on Directing in the Professional Theatre while directing at Theatre Previews at Duke in 1998 and 1999.

#### **Teacher's Assistant, University of California, San Diego, 1990-92. *Modern Theatre and History of Comedy.***

#### **Teacher's Assistant/Lecturer, Oberlin College, 1987-88. *History of Western Theatre.***

### **Education**

#### **Master of Fine Arts-Directing, University of California, San Diego, 1992.**

Directing with Athol Fugard, Des McAnuff, Andrei Serban, Theodore Shank, John Tillinger, Robert Woodruff. Dramaturgy with Robert Blacker, Jim Carmody, Frantisek Deak, Robert Egan.

#### **Bachelor of Arts in Theatre with Honors, Oberlin College, 1988.**

## Courses:

### Directing

#### **Directing I**

MFA I core directing seminar focuses on directorial, action-oriented text analysis. While the analytical tool is Aristotelean in origin directors learn to discern the action structure of any given text from Sophocles *Oedipus Rex* to Lorca's *Impossible Plays*. 2005-Current.

#### **Directing II\*\***

MFA II core directing practicum: directors work in collaboration with actors to explore new techniques with which to create dynamic, indelible work in space and time. Pieces are shown for critique and revision. 2000-Current.

#### **The Director and the New Play Development Process\*\***

MFA II and MFA III practicum: introduces the student to the specific role of the director in the new play development process. Each director works with a playwright on an as yet undeveloped text over the course of the quarter. Directors work on a number of developmental iterations that mimic those they might be asked to helm professionally. 2005-Current.

#### **Introduction to Directing**

BFA core directing course. Fall quarter focus on the directors' engagement with text, both analytically and imaginatively. Winter quarter focus on staging, composition and recognizing the theatrically dynamic. Spring quarter focus on mounting short scenes—working with actors, collaboration and dynamic, theatrical storytelling. 2000 – Current.

#### **Directing Theories\*\***

MFA 1 core seminar: explores the major Western directorial theorists from the mid-19th century onward. Graduate directors read, discuss and argue seminal texts by Wagner, Antoine, Stanislavski, Meyerhold, Craig, Artaud, Brecht, Grotowski, the Group Theatre, the Open Theatre, the Living Theatre, Peter Brook, Richard Schechner, Mabou Mines, Richard Foreman, Robert Wilson, the Wooster Group, Agosto Boal, Reza Abdoh, Ariane Mnouchkine, and Anne Bogart. The course culminates in a showing in which students direct a canonical scene in the style of one of the theories they've studied. 2000-2006.

### Acting

#### **Acting Lab**

BFA II acting practicum: exposes actors to different tools with which to attack a scene and to promote effective and stimulating actor/director collaboration. Fall quarter: Framing action on its feet. Spring quarter: Viewpoints and Composition. 2000 – Current.

#### **Graduate Showcase**

BFA IV & MFA II acting/audition practicum: focuses on the preparation, showing and critique of scenes and monologues for The Theatre School's graduate acting showcase. Showcase performs for agents, casting directors, etc. in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. 2006-Current.

### Theatre Studies

#### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Theatre – Ten Plays for a Multi-Cultural Nation – a course for the Honors College\*\***

Junior Honors Seminar – Students read and analyze 10 plays written in the last 15 years and use these texts as a lens through which to examine shifting perceptions of race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexual orientation in the twenty-first century.

#### **Latiné Theatre\*\***

BFA Seminar – Introduction to the history of Latinx Theatre concentrated survey of Chicana Theatre, Cuban-American, Puerto Rican/Nuyorican and Afro-Latinx plays from 1965 to the present.

**\*\*Indicates courses I created.**

## ***Professional Productions***

<b>Art</b> ( <i>upcoming</i> )	Yasmina Reza	Guthrie Theatre, 2023
<b>Quixote Nuevo</b> ( <i>upcoming</i> )	Octavio Solís	South Coast Rep, Seattle Rep Portland Center Stage, 2023-24
<b>Twelfth Night</b>	William Shakespeare	St. Louis Shakespeare, 2023
<b>Laughs in Spanish*</b>	Alexis Scheer	Denver Center, 2023
<b>Clean/Espejos*</b>	Christine Quintana	South Coast Rep, 2022
<b>Quixote Nuevo</b>	Octavio Solís	Denver Center, 2022 Round House Theatre, 2021
<b>Miss You Like Hell</b>	Quiara Alegria Hudes & Erin McKeown	Olney Theatre, 2020
<b>The Thanksgiving Play</b>	Larissa Fasthorse	Cincinnati Playhouse, 2019
<b>Rightlynd*</b>	Ike Holter	Victory Gardens, 2018
<b>I Come From Arizona*</b>	Carlos Murillo	Childrens Theatre Company, 2018
<b>Native Gardens</b>	Karen Zacarias	Denver Center, 2018
<b>Breach*</b>	Antoinette Nwandy	Victory Gardens, 2017
<b>The Glass Menagerie</b>	Tennessee Williams	California Shakespeare Theatre, 2017
<b>Disgraced</b>	Ayad Akhtar	Cincinnati Playhouse, 2016
<b>TRANSit*</b>	Darren Canady	American Blues Theatre, 2016
<b>This is Modern Art*</b>	Idris Goodwin & Kevin Coval	Steppenwolf Theatre, 2015
<b>Grounded</b>	George Brandt	American Blues Theater, 2014
<b>Concerning Strange Devices From the Distant West</b>	Naomi Iizuka	Timeline Theatre, 2013
<b>Highway 47</b>	KJ Sanchez	Collaboraction, 2012
<b>Night Over Erzanga *</b>	Adriana Sevahn-Nichols	Silk Road Rising, 2012
<b>The Piano Teacher</b>	Julia Cho	Next Theatre, 2010
<b>Ghostwritten*</b>	Naomi Iizuka	Goodman Theatre, 2009
<b>Ski Dubai*</b>	Laura Jacqmin	Steppenwolf Theatre, 2009
<b>After 100 Years*</b>	Naomi Iizuka	Guthrie Theatre, 2008
<b>Elliot, A Soldier's Fugue</b>	Quiara Alegria Hudes,	Steppenwolf Theatre w/Teatro Vista, 2006
<b>Permanent Collection</b>	Thomas Gibbons	Northlight Theatre, 2005
<b>Far Away</b>	Caryl Churchill	Next Theatre, 2004
<b>In the Blood</b>	Suzan-Lori Parks	Next Theatre, 2003
<b>Wilder*</b>	Erin Cressida Wilson, Jack Herrick & Mike Craver	Playwrights Horizons, NY, 2003
<b>Offspring of the Cold War*</b>	Carlos Murillo	Walkabout Theatre, Chicago, 2001
<b>How to Write While You Sleep*</b>	Madeleine Olnek	Soho Rep, NYC, 1999
<b>Fur</b>	Migdalia Cruz	Soho Rep, NYC, 1997
<b>How To Bake an Apple Pie and See the World*</b>	Wendy McLeod	Kennedy Center, D.C., 1998
<b>Kudzu: A Southern Musical*</b>	Doug Marlette, Jack Herrick, Bland Simpson	Ford's Theatre, D.C., 1997
<b>Carthage*</b>	Naomi Iizuka	Theater E, San Diego, 1993
<b>Cross Dressing in the Depression</b>	Erin Cressida Wilson	Theater E and Sledgehammer Theatre, 1993

*\*Indicates World Premiere*

## **Creative Activities: Theatre Director (cont)**

### **Academic/Educational**

<b>Blood Wedding (Virtual)</b>	Federico Garcia Lorca	The Theatre School, DePaul University, 2020
<b>In the Heights</b>	Quiara Hudes & Lin Manuel-Miranda	The Theatre School, DePaul University, 2014
<b>The Last Days of Judas Iscariot</b>	Stephen Adly Guirgis	The Theatre School, DePaul University, 2014
<b>Electricidad</b>	Luis Alfaro	The Theatre School, DePaul University, 2010
<b>Hamlet</b>	William Shakespeare	The Theatre School, DePaul University, 2007

### **Theatre for Young Audiences**

<b>Night Runner*</b>	Ike Holter	Chicago Playworks, 2017
<b>Esperanza Rising</b>	Lynn Alvarez / Pam Munoz Ryan	Chicago Playworks, 2015
<b>Barrio Grrrr! A Musical</b>	Quiara Alegria Hudes	Chicago Playworks, 2013
<b>Pinkalicious the Musical</b>	Elizabeth & Victoria Kahn	Chicago Playworks, 2012
<b>Cinderella Eats Rice and Beans:</b>	Karen Zacarias & Debbie Wicks La Puma	Chicago Playworks, 2005
<b>Highest Heaven</b>	José Cruz González	Chicago Playworks, 2004

### **New Play Development (selected)**

<b>Clean/Espejos</b>	Christine Quintana	South Coast Rep, 2021
<b>Slingshot</b>	Kia Korthron	Ignition @ Victory Gardens Theatre, 2014
<b>Seven Spots on the Sun</b>	Martin Zimmerman	Ignition @ Victory Gardens Theatre, 2012
<b>Undone</b>	Andrea Thome	Ignition @ Victory Gardens Theatre, 2010
<b>When Last We Flew</b>	Harrison David Rivers	About Face Theater, 2013
<b>Tennis in Nablus</b>	Ismail Khalidi	Goodman Theatre, 2009
<b>Ghostwritten</b>	Naomi Iizuka	Sundance Theatre Lab, 2007
<b>Anon(ymous)</b>	Naomi Iizuka	The Public Theatre, 2006
<b>Sweaty Palms</b>	Alejandro Morales	South Coast Rep, 2001
<b>The End of It All</b>	Cusi Cram	South Coast Rep, 2000
<b>Illuminating Veronica</b>	Rogelio Martinez	South Coast Rep, 1999
<b>The Sins of Sor Juana</b>	Karen Zacarias	South Coast Rep, 1998

### **Associate Directorships**

<b>The Who's Tommy</b>	Director: Des McAnuff	Broadway, London, Toronto, Frankfurt U.S., UK and Canadian Tours, 1993 – 97
<b>The Who's Tommy 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary</b>	Director Des McAnuff	Stratford Festival, Canada, 2013
<b>Titanic</b>	Director: Richard Jones	U.S. National Tour, 1998

### **Professional Leadership**

**People's Light Theatre**, Associate Producer & Director of New Work, Current

**Chicago Playworks for Families & Young Audiences**, Artistic Director, 2002 - 2015

**Soho Rep**, Associate Artistic Director, 1997-1999

**Theater E**, Artistic Director, 1992 - 1995

### **Professional Affiliations**

**Theatre Communications Group**, Secretary and Board Member, Current

**Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers**, Executive Board Member, Current

**Drama League**, Directors Circle, Current

**Latinx Theatre Commons**, Founding Member, Advisory Board Member, Current

**New York Theatre Workshop**, Usual Suspect, Alum

### **Professional Service:**

**Theatre Communications Group Board (TCG), Current.** Secretary of the Board, Co-chair the Nominating & Governance committee. Previously ED&I Committee, TCG Regional Ambassadors Committee. TCG is the national service organization for the not-for-profit theatre in the United States.

**Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers Executive Board (SDC) Current.** Chair, Chicago Negotiating Committee, Co-chair, Political Engagement Committee, member, SDC rep to the AEMI, SDC/LORT Labor Management Task Force & Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force. SDC is the national labor union for stage directors and choreographers.

**Latinx Theatre Commons, Current.** Founding Member, Advisory Committee Member. The Latinx Theater Commons is a national network, think tank and advocate for Latinx theater artists in the American Theatre.

**Drama League Directors Circle, Current.** One of fifteen artistic advisors to the Drama League, a service organization that provides a life-long home for US-based stage directors.

**McKnight Fellowship Grant Panelist, 2019.** One of six panelists charged with reading, reviewing and providing recommendations for applications to the McKnight Artist Fellowship.

**TCG Young Leaders of Color Panelist, 2019.** One of six panelists charged with reading, reviewing and providing recommendations for applications to the TCG Young Leaders of Color Fellowship.

**TCG Global Connections Grant Panel, 2016.** One of six panelists charged with reading, reviewing and providing recommendations for applicants to the TCG Global Connections Grant program.

**NEA/TCG Music Theatre Panel, 2016, 2003.** One of ten panelists charged with reading, reviewing and providing recommendations for applicants to the NEA/TCG Music Theatre granting program.

**Horton Foote Prize in Playwrighting Selection Committee, 2014, 2010.** One of three committee members charged with reading and evaluating play submissions for the the Horton Foote Prize in Playwrighting and making a recommendation to the Horton Foote Prize jury.

**Fox Foundation/TCG Actor Fellowship Panel, 2010.** One of four panelists charged with reading, reviewing and selecting fellows for the Fox Foundation's Actor Fellowship.

**Pulitzer Drama Jury, 2007.** One of five jurors charged with reading and evaluating play submissions for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Drama and making a recommendation to the Pulitzer Prize Board.

**AT&T Onstage/TCG Panel, Fall, 2004.** One of five panelists charged with reading, reviewing and providing recommendations for applicants to AT&T's Onstage theatre granting program.

### **University Service**

**Head, MFA Directing Program, 2005 – Present** – Administer all aspects of a high-octane training MFA Directing program that graduates top-notch directors and boasts a 95% rate of continuance in the professional field. Annually, vet and select eight MFA Directed productions as part of a twelve-show season in consultation with the Season Selection Committee. Collaborate with Production Staff, Acting, Design, Dramaturgy and Playwriting heads to provide a rigorous and integrated production program for training across all areas. Train directors across a wide spectrum of racial, ethnic, gender and ability identities.

**Promotion, Retention & Tenure Committee (PRT), 2015 – Present.** Steer the PRT process for the Theatre School at DePaul University.

**Production Committee, 2020 – Present.** Develop and implement strategies, policies and procedures for production during the Covid crisis, as well as in relation to TTS anti-racism work

**Season Selection Committee, 2020 – Present.** Work with students, faculty and staff from all areas to create a season that speaks to the entire Theatre School community.

- Season Selection Core, 2005 – 2019.** Part of the Dean’s team charged with wrangling proposals for and putting together The Theatre School Production season
- Chair, MFA Directing Program Curriculum Revision Committee, 2007-09 and 2016-18.** Revised the MFA Directing Curriculum towards creating a rigorous production practice program, strengthening directors’ collaborative skills in working with designers, deepening directors experience working with actors, and providing greater opportunity for imaginative, conceptual risk-taking.
- Artistic Director, Chicago Playworks For Families and Young Audiences, 2002 – 2017.** Charged with seeking out new work for young audiences and selecting the season for Chicago Playworks, a semi-professional children’s theatre series produced by The Theatre School at DePaul University. Chicago Playworks produces three productions per season in the historic, 1300-seat Merle Reskin Theatre, each running for six-weeks. Chicago Playworks serves over 50,000 Chicago schoolchildren per season.
- Academic Integrity Board, 2013 - 2018.** Theatre School representative to University Council charged with adjudicating cases of Academic Integrity Violations.
- Faculty Grievance Council, 2008 – 2015.** Theatre School representative to University Council charged with hearing and facilitating DePaul faculty grievances.
- Public Service Council, 2003 - 2010.** A DePaul University council that administers, reviews and grants funding for DePaul faculty working with the Department of Service Learning to create and maintain DePaul’s service contribution to the greater Chicago area.
- Faculty Council, 2002-08.** Theatre School representative to DePaul University Faculty Council. Three year appointment by nomination and election.
- Committee on Committees, 2005-07.** Theatre School representative. A Faculty Council appointed committee charged with providing faculty representation to all DePaul University committees.
- Co-Chair, MFA Acting Program Revision Committee, 2001-04.** A Theatre School committee charged with creating an innovative new MFA Acting Program curriculum that will include a Resident Company in the third year and work with professional guest artists throughout the training.
- Chair, Student Affairs Committee, 2012 – 2015 (Chair), 2002-12 (Member).** A Theatre School committee charged with reviewing and granting student leaves of absence, and facilitating the student grievance process.
- Chair, Multi-Cultural Visiting Faculty Search Committee, 2012**
- Chair, Directing Faculty Search Committee, 2010**
- Project Leader, SITI Company Suzuki & Viewpoints Intensive, 2004.** Applied for, received and administered a DePaul University Quality of Instruction grant to organize and host Chicago’s first SITI Company Suzuki/Viewpoints Intensive. Participants included students and faculty of The Theatre School, as well as members of the greater Chicago theatre community.
- Project Leader, “Viewpoints Workshop, 2001 ”.** Applied for, received and administered a DePaul University Quality of Instruction grant to bring SITI Company members to DePaul to conduct a Viewpoints workshop with BFA and MFA acting and directing students.
- Project Leader, University Symposium “Creating New Mythologies: Colliding Ancient Myth with Contemporary Cultures in the American Theatre. 2001”** Applied for, received and administered a DePaul University Quality of Instruction grant to organize and moderate this event. Participants included Rachel Shteir, Head of Dramaturgy at DePaul University, Celise Kalke, Dramaturg for Court Theatre, Morgan Jenness, Dramaturg and Creative Director for Helen Merrill, Ltd., Naomi Iizuka, playwright, and Cheryl Lynn Bruce, Artistic Associate at the Goodman Theatre.

## **Publications**

“Skin of the Wolf: Contemporary Latin American Theatre Through the Lens of Three Countries in Transition,” Theatre Forum.

“Cultivating Artistic Curiosity,” Café Onda/Howlround, 2014. [Cultivating Artistic Curiosity | HowlRound](#)

“Towards a Hub for Latina/o Theater.” Howlround. 2013. [Towards a Hub -- HowlRound](#)

Review “*Contemporary European Theatre Directors* eds. Maria Delgado and Dan Rebellato”, Text and Presentation, 2012, McFarland & Company, Inc.

## **Conferences & Workshops**

**Session Leader:** Boards and Change: How Governance Helps or Hinders the Change We Seek to Make, Theatre Communications Group (TCG) National Conference, 2020

**Session Leader:** Next Year’s Model: Economics and Innovation, TCG National Conference, 2019

**Producer, Latinx Theatre Commons Carnaval 2018**

**Session Leader:** Women in Leadership, Latinx Affinity Space, TCG National Conference 2018

**Plenary Speaker,** ATHE, 2016

**Latinx Theatre Commons,** Northeast Regional Convening, 2016

**Producer, Latinx Theatre Commons Carnaval 2015**

**Session Leader,** Exploring Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, TCG National Conference, 2015

**Panelist** “El Movimiento Will Be Digitized,” TCG National Conference, 2014

**New Visions/New Voices Festival of New Plays for Young Audiences,** Kennedy Center, 2014, 2012, 2010, 2004

**Panelist** “Introducing the Latina/o Theater Commons,” Goodman Theatre, New Stages, 2013

**Panelist** “Festivals & Initiatives Towards the Promotion of New Latina/o Work”, Latina/o Theater Commons National Convening, 2013

**Latino Theatre Commons Founding. Arena Stage. 2012**

**Keynote Speaker,**“Chicago--Theatre Capital of America: Past. Present. Future.” 2010

**TCG Conference,** 2010, 2005

**Panelist,** “Latino/a Theatre in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” UC-Santa Barbara Summer Theatre Lab, Summer, 2005

**SITI Company Suzuki/Viewpoints Intensive, August, 2004**

**SITI Company Viewpoints Workshop, October, 2002**

**Moderator, Panel Discussion** “Creating New Mythologies: Colliding Ancient Myth with Contemporary Cultures in the American Theatre”, November, 2001

## **Equity, Diversity, Access, Inclusion & Belonging Trainings**

**Nicole Brewer Anti-Racist Theatre, 2020**

**Radio Caña Negra, Anti-Blackness in the Latine Community, 2020**

**TCG Diversity & Inclusion Institute, 2014 – 2016**

## **Grants and Awards**

- SDC Zelda Fichandler Award, 2016.** “The Zelda Fichandler Award recognizes directors and choreographers who are in the center of their creative lives; who demonstrate great accomplishment to-date and promise for the future; and who have made prominent achievements in the field with singular creativity and artistry, and deep investment in a particular place outside of the New York arena” (SDC website)
- Department of Cultural Affairs Grant, 2016.** Grant to create The Eva Perón Project, an multi-room, immersive theatre piece that follows the unlikely journey of the corpse of Eva Perón
- Theatre Communications Group (TCG) SPARK Fellowship, 2014.** This fellowship provides ten nationally recognized leaders-of-color the opportunity to participate in a year-long professional development program funded by American Express, the Joyce Foundation and the Andrew Mellon Foundation and administered by the Theatre Communications Group.
- DePaul University Research Grant, 2016.** Research grant awarded to attend three Latin American Theatre Festivals as research for “Skin of the Wolf: Contemporary Latin American Theatre Through the Lens of Three Countries in Transition” for Theatre Forum Magazine.
- DePaul University University Research Grant, 2012.** A grant awarded to conduct research within the Armenian community in Glendale, CA in preparation for directing the world premiere production of *Night Over Erzinga* by Adriana Sevahn-Nichols at Silk Road Rising in Chicago.
- DePaul University University Research Grant, 2005.** A grant awarded to participate in the Santa Barbara Summer Theatre Lab, in which I rehearsed and developed three new plays by contemporary Latino/a playwrights Anne Garcia Romero, Ricardo Bracho and Carlos Murillo.
- DePaul University Quality of Instruction Grant, 2003.** A grant awarded to organize and host Chicago’s first SITI Company Suzuki/Viewpoints Intensive.
- DePaul University Public Service Council Grant, 2003.** A grant awarded to provide support for a Chicago Playworks! high school tour of Laurie Brooks’, *The Wrestling Season*.
- Illinois Theatre Association Outstanding Contribution Award, 2003.** Awarded for my work as Artistic Director of Chicago Playworks, specifically my dedication to producing theatre for young audiences that reflects the unique urban, contemporary and multi-ethnic makeup of Chicago’s young audience.
- DePaul University Quality of Instruction Grant, 2002.** A grant awarded to create a university symposium titled “Creating New Mythologies: Colliding Ancient Myth with Contemporary Cultures in the American Theatre.”
- DePaul University Quality of Instruction Grant, 2001.** A grant awarded to sponsor a Viewpoints Workshop at the Theatre School with Karenjune Sanchez, former member of SITI company.
- NEA/TCG Directors Fellowship, 1997-99.** An observer fellowship given to early career directors. Observed directors Lee Breuer of Mabou Mines; Carey Perloff, Artistic Director of ACT in San Francisco; Emily Mann, Artistic Director of McCarter Theatre, and producer, Anne Hamburger of En Garde Arts. .
- Drama League Directors Fellowship, 1992.** A debut fellowship given to early career directors. It allowed me to assist Des McAnuff on *Tommy*, intern with Ensemble Studio Theatre in New York, and direct a showcase production of an unfinished play by Oscar Wilde titled *Le Sainte Courtisane*.
- Fulbright/Hays Fellowship, 1989.** A fellowship to observe director, Enrique Buenaventura, at El Teatro Experimental de Cali.