

Teaching Philosophy

By Mark Krawczyk

In my work, particularly with young people, my purpose is clear: to train, educate, and mentor a group of smart, successful, confident, and joyful artists, scholars, and citizens. My focus in performing arts education is centered on fostering the development of young adults with character, intellect, and curiosity. I believe in creating a foundation that acknowledges and respects students' identities without judgment or denigration, as this act of recognition can be transformative for those who have been marginalized. In an era where acknowledging identity has become controversial, it is crucial to maintain a practice of equity, inclusivity, and belonging by stating what we will not do.

My teaching philosophy is rooted in a deep passion for the process-oriented journey and the pursuit of a unified culture of self-discovery. I encourage similar questions and treat the journey of a theatre practitioner as a scientific inquiry, a passionate offering to an audience, and an action-driven emotional experience. I draw inspiration from various Stanislavski-based practices, which engage both intellect and instinct. This methodology allows actors to develop their own approaches, honing their personal intuition on stage through the mastery of vocal and physical techniques. It enables them to communicate a text with grand gestures or nuanced choices, bringing the entirety of a character's truth to life.

I convey to my students, "My goal is to help you become an artistic and professional peer." I view them as "causers" rather than simply actors, directors, or devisers. A "causer" seeks to create onstage moments that have consequential impact beyond mere lines or actions. The foundational skills I prioritize to support my students' success include:

- Script analysis techniques, theatre history, stage direction techniques, and performance theories to comprehend and interpret a playwright's true intentions.
- The ability to respond authentically and spontaneously in the moment during rehearsals and performances.
- Proficiency in integrated voice and movement techniques, enabling the embodiment of a character's full physical and psychological life, both for the actor's individual experience and the director's aesthetic guidance of the narrative's physical dynamism.
- Testing the truthfulness of actions by recognizing clear cause-and-effect relationships.
- Embracing the evolving field of theatre, with its changing theories of form, evolving practices of performance, and a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusivity.
- Willingness to challenge traditional theatrical orthodoxies, exploring, investigating, and inventing new forms of engagement for actors and audiences.

These skills form the foundation upon which my students build their own artistic compasses to navigate studio work, production rehearsals, and their careers beyond our time together.

By nurturing a love for the craft, fostering intellectual and creative growth, and encouraging an open-minded approach to the ever-changing world of theatre, I aim to empower my students to become resilient and accomplished artists, equipped to make meaningful contributions to the artistic community and society at large.