

Laura Ekstrand

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WORK EXPERIENCE

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, (Co-Founder) Dreamcatcher Repertory Theatre, Summit, NJ, 1995-present

Responsible for all aspects of producing a growing professional theatre company. Designs budget with Treasurer and Business Manager, selects season of new and recently produced plays, hires artistic and technical staffs, casts actors, plans and carries out fundraising initiatives, writes grants and develops press and public relations materials. Works with 10-member Board of Trustees on all aspects of company administration and strategic planning. Implements educational/internship component, giving high school and college students hands-on experience in professional production.

EDUCATION DIRECTOR, Summer Theatre Conservatory, Dreamcatcher Repertory Theatre, Summit, NJ, 1998-present

Designs and oversees summer theatre training program for young performers that includes classes in scene study, voice, dance, Shakespeare, commercial technique, improvisational comedy, playwriting, filmmaking, and stage combat. Hires teachers, enrolls students, and teaches in program.

PUBLIC SPEAKING COACH, Princeton Alumni Corps; Private Coaching, 2019-present

Creates and provides public speaking training and coaching to professionals of all ages and at all career stages. Through in-person or online sessions, improves focus and clarity, personalizing subject matter and connecting with an audience of any size.

MONOLOGUE AND AUDITION COACH, 1998 – present

Works privately with students ranging in age from child through adult, preparing material for school auditions, college admission auditions, and professional auditions. Assists in finding appropriate audition pieces, directs actors, and advises on personal presentation and supporting materials.

DRAMA DIRECTOR, Summit High School: Summit, NJ, 1997-2000

Directed and choreographed students in dramatic and musical productions, and supervised student production of one-acts. Responsible for coordinating publicity, design staff, and student crews. Created workshop program with professional master teachers in subjects such as directing, improv, on-camera performance and audition skills. Researched and drafted curriculum for full-time drama program, which was subsequently implemented.

ACTING INSTRUCTOR, Montclair State University - Gifted and Talented Youth Program, Montclair, NJ, 1996-1997

Taught acting to academically gifted and talented teenage students. Curriculum included the Atlantic Theatre Company's methods of scene analysis and actor preparation, student-written scenes and monologues, and visits to professional play rehearsal and production. Class culminated in showing of scenes to members of program.

DIRECTOR/ACTING INSTRUCTOR, Performers Theatre Workshop: Livingston, NJ, 1995-1997

Directed productions of *Godspell* and *Sondheim Tonight!* with advanced student group. Taught Acting and Song Interpretation to children and teenagers in pre-professional program. Covered acting skills and scene analysis, improvisation and vocal production. Consulted on production of *Ain't Misbehavin'*.

ACTING INSTRUCTOR, Acting Management: New York, NY, 1993

Led seminar on auditioning for film for professional adult actors. Curriculum included cold and prepared readings, audition etiquette, and on-camera technique.

CASTING ASSISTANT/ASSOCIATE, Billy Hopkins Casting: New York, NY, 1992-1994

Consulted with directors/producers on ideas for roles and production concepts. Scheduled and ran auditions for feature films, television commercials, and music videos. Negotiated contracts with agents, acted as reader and video camera operator. Performed administrative tasks such as billing and organizing casting files.

EDUCATION: Yale University, B.A. in Theatre Studies; Sarah Lawrence College, M.F.A. in Theatre

SKILLS AND INTERESTS: Playwriting * Singing * Dance * Yoga Instructor * Basic French, Spanish

DIRECTOR (Representative Sample)

DREAMCATCHER REPERTORY THEATRE:

DEAD AND BURIED
CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION
EVERY BRILLIANT THING
THINGS BEING WHAT THEY ARE
THE HOW AND THE WHY
THE ELECTRIC BABY
THE MOST DESERVING
100 YEARS
THE LANGUAGE ARCHIVE
RX
BLOOD: A COMEDY
NEXT FALL
DISTRACTED
THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS
MELANCHOLY PLAY
PRIDE'S CROSSING

GEN Z MEDIA (Voice Directing - Podcasts)

THE WEIRDNESS
YOUNG BEN FRANKLIN

PLAYWRIGHT

MOMENT OF TRUTH (10-min. play)	COLLIDE FESTIVAL, NJ
CATCHING SOME AIR (1-min. play)	MILE SQUARE THEATER, NJ
NOT READY (1-min. play)	MILE SQUARE THEATER, NJ
STUNG (10-min. play)	LUNA STAGE, NEW MOON FESTIVAL, NJ
WHAT STAYS (w/Jason Szamreta)	DREAMCATCHER REPERTORY THEATRE, NJ
THE NEIGHBORHOOD (book and lyrics)	DREAMCATCHER REPERTORY THEATRE, NJ
BRINK OF LIFE (book)	DREAMCATCHER REPERTORY THEATRE, NJ
ASTONISHMENT AT 93 HOW TO BE OLD: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE	SENIOR OUTREACH, TOURING
WHATEVER WILL BE	DREAMCATCHER REPERTORY THEATRE, NJ INNISFREE FESTIVAL OF NEW PLAYS, NYC* FRANKLIN VILLAGERS BARN, NJ* SUNFLOWER HILL PRODUCTIONS, PA*
PLAYING TO THE GALLERY	DREAMCATCHER REPERTORY THEATRE, NJ CREATIVE PLACE THEATRE, NYC
JUNE ASSERTS HERSELF	NEW GEORGES, NYC* DREAMCATCHER REPERTORY THEATRE, NJ
MOJO	NEW GEORGES, NYC*

**DENOTES READING OR STAGED READING*