

LAURA EKSTRAND

(c) 908-591-5856 laura.ekstrand@gmail.com www.lauraekstrand.com

WORK EXPERIENCE

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, (Co-Founder) Vivid Stage, Summit, NJ, 1995-present

Responsible for all aspects of producing a growing professional theatre company. Designs budget with staff and board, 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 Board of Trustees on all aspects of company administration and strategic planning.

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR, THEATRE, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Florham Park, NJ, 2021-2024

Created syllabus for and instructs Directing 1 and Advanced Acting 2 for undergraduate students in the Theatre Program. Courses consist of both academic reading and writing and practical applications of theatre technique. Students include both majors and non-majors in the Theatre Program.

EDUCATION DIRECTOR, Vivid Stage, Summit, NJ, 1998-present

Works with staff to design and oversee educational programs, including internship programs that serve high school and college students, as well as a full adult improv curriculum and a variety of other adult education programs. Hires teachers, enrolls students, and teaches in programs.

PUBLIC SPEAKING COACH, 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'*.

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: Director * Playwright * Filmmaker * Yoga Instructor * Basic French, Spanish

DIRECTOR (Theatre Representative Sample)

VIVID STAGE (FORMERLY DREAMCATCHER REPERTORY THEATRE):

THE MIGHTY FOUR (world premiere)
IN THE MIX (world premiere)
SOFT ANIMALS (world premiere)
TWIRL (world premiere)
HOLIDAY BITES
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 (world premiere)
THE LANGUAGE ARCHIVE
RX
BLOOD: A COMEDY
NEXT FALL
DISTRACTED
THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS
MELANCHOLY PLAY
PRIDE'S CROSSING

Not I: 50th Anniversary at Assumption University

Waiting for Godot (staged reading)

DIRECTOR (Other Media)

A RELATIVE COMEDY (feature film)
COLD CALL (short film, also screenplay)
CARING COMPANION (short film, also screenplay)

GEN Z MEDIA (Voice Directing - Podcasts)

THE WEIRDNESS
YOUNG BEN FRANKLIN

-Acting and Playwriting resumes upon request-