

JESSICA BURR

educator

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The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival
Region 7: 2016, 2017, 2019 and Region 2: 2019

Led workshops in physical and devised theatre, adjudicated productions and the Irene Ryan Awards, and hosted roundtables. **Received the 2019 Kennedy Center Commendation for Distinguished Leadership.**

Texas Tech University's WildWind Performance Laboratory, Lubbock, TX, 2013-15
Co-developed curriculum with permanent faculty and led week-long intensives in physical and devised theatre.

Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA, 2018

Led a three-week intensive in physical and devised theatre culminating in a fully realized production with text, choreography, music composition and design by the students.

Stephens College Summer Theatre Institute, Columbia, MO, 2015-18

Led two-week intensives in physical and devised theatre culminating in four fully realized productions with text, choreography, and design by the students.

Eastern New Mexico University, Portales, NM, 2014

Led a three-week intensive in physical and devised theatre culminating in a fully realized production of *Burn, Crave, Hold*, a partially-devised work.

Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC, 2018

Led four-day intensive in physical and devised theatre.

UNICEF at New York University, NY, 2017

Led a workshop in team building and communication across language and cultural barriers to students from NYU's College of Global Public Health.

University of Seoul, South Korea in New York, NY, 2016

Led a workshop in physical and devised theatre to visiting students from the University of Seoul.

Centenary University, Hackettstown, NJ, 2013-2017

Led workshops in physical and devised theatre.

Prishtina University, Prishtina, Kosovo, 2006, 2009, 2012

Led workshops in physical and devised theatre.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Co-Founder and Artistic Director of Blessed Unrest Theatre, including creation and leadership of the company's physical and devised theatre training program (1999-present)

Honored with the 2019 Kennedy Center ACTF Commendation for Distinguished Leadership

MY PROCESS FOR THEATRE ARTISTS AND STUDENTS

Grounded in breath and the body, my work strives to empower students, and ranges from the sensorial experiential to the rigorously physical. I challenge and inspire students to be proactive theatre makers, and to find their voices as individuals while also cultivating a heightened awareness of the ensemble. I give them creative tools, including the Viewpoints technique, applicable to every process, from the traditional to the experimental. Workshops are tailored to the skills and needs of each group. I offer:

Colleges and Universities

- one-day workshops and lecture demonstrations
- one- and two-week intensives
- semester-long classes at schools in the NYC area
- devising intensives, in which original devised pieces are created with students
- guest direction of productions

Professional Artists

- one-on-one monologue coaching
- group workshops for individual artists or existing ensembles
- movement coaching and direction for productions

MY PROCESS FOR CORPORATIONS AND NON-THEATRE PROFESSIONALS

I bring my methods to teams working together on any task across the corporate world, and individuals preparing for presentations. No theatre experience necessary! Workshops are tailored to the needs and interests of each group. I offer:

Corporate Teams

- seminars in collaboration, team-building, and creative problem-solving
- workshops in presence, and confidence in public speaking and presentations
- ongoing classes to foster communication and collaboration, or to focus on a particular issue or challenge

Individual Professionals

- one-on-one sessions to enhance physical and vocal presence, and to build confidence when entering any room
- coaching for presentations and speeches

TESTIMONIALS

The two-week immersive physical theatre training developed by Blessed Unrest stands among the most essential and effective training for young theatre artists I have encountered in over 25 years of college and university teaching. Under the guidance of the brilliant team of Jessica Burr and Matt Opatrny, the visionaries behind Blessed Unrest, students are challenged to create an

original, company-driven devised physical theatre piece while being introduced to cutting edge movement modalities, and a variety of story-telling techniques. What emerges in performance is an electrifying synthesis of theatre, dance, movement, music, original text, and design – a journey which not only inspired our students, but changed the creative trajectory of our program as well. Highest recommendation!

~ Lamby Hedge

Artistic Director, Summer Theatre Institute

Associate Professor, Theatre Arts, Stephens College, Missouri

Blessed Unrest indeed. They have brought our students training in everything from playwriting to devised theatre, from movement to intention, from creation to dissection. They do exactly what the title of their innovative theatre company suggests—inspire the sort of unrest that serves as a catalyst, encouraging students to explore how their inner psyche interacts with their physical presence. They are truly “blessed” in how far they take our students in only a few days. Hired to help kick off WildWind Performance Laboratory, a month long intensive in June, Jessica and Matt were instrumental in finding how to best reach students, to push them hard without pushing them away, and to foster growth in a challenging but safe environment. Innovators in theory and practice, Blessed Unrest will shake your educational foundation to the core, and then help rebuild it, better and stronger than it was before.

~ Mark Charney

Director, School of Theatre and Dance, Texas Tech University

NYU’s College of Global Public Health offers a unique course called Behavioral Communications Strategies for Epidemics that brings behavior change communications specialists working in high-risk areas around the world together with graduate students to design innovative communications strategies. Blessed Unrest ran a workshop for the course recently on how to use collaboration and theatrical tools to communicate sensitive messages to vulnerable communities. The workshop was a big success with the class, especially due to the professional and thoughtful program that Blessed Unrest put together, and a number of the final proposals reflected what students learned from the team. I have no doubt that it resulted in better public health options for many people.

~ Chris Dickey DrPH MBA

Director of Global Health

Director, Global Professional Studies and Entrepreneurship

Clinical Associate Professor of Global Public Health

New York University