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Candidate Statement, August 2022
University of Denver Department of Theatre

I am grateful to the University of Denver (DU) and its Department of Theatre for giving me the opportunity to teach what I love and for providing significant resources to engage in professional creative work. Since receiving tenure in 2017, I have performed in seven fully produced professional productions and another six professional staged readings; co-written a new play, which will receive its world premiere in 2023; produced and performed *Grounded*, a one-woman show; co-researched, co-hosted, and co-produced four seasons of *The Actor's Mind* podcast with Psychology Professor Kateri McRae; begun, with Professor McRae, co-writing a book about the interdisciplinary ideas we discuss on our podcast; enriched professional partnerships with theater companies and established relationships with new ones; and directed four academic theater productions at DU, two of which the department produced in the midst of the pandemic. I teach in multiple venues beyond DU including the Denver Center for the Performing Arts Education Department and DU's Prison Arts Initiative. The past five years have been the most creatively productive of my professional life, and the university has been instrumental in this success.

I grew up attending a Congregational church, which provided me a powerful and comforting, warm, loving, and tangible sense of community. In my 20s, while doing summer theater in a small town in Maine, I crossed the street from a rehearsal for *Macbeth* to the local Episcopal church. The velvet costumes, the incense, and rituals, though superficially engaging, mostly felt to me empty of meaning. I returned to rehearsal, realizing then and there that the rehearsal room was my sacred space. What is it about theater spaces—classrooms, rehearsal rooms, performance spaces—that makes them so potent to theater makers and audience members? The answers are many: theater allows a group of people to experience something true in real time and space; it allows us to absorb ideas, emotions, and events that open us to catharsis, to intellectual discovery, to a sigh of relief, a gasp of recognition, a belly laugh, even to synchronized heartbeats. That immersion is even more intense now: after over two years of heightened isolation and loneliness, doing and watching theater is a joyful reminder that all of us need to be *with* each other to make sense of the world, to feel we belong, to see and feel what others see and feel. Theater allows us to empathize with the lived experiences of others. It requires both creators and audience to investigate the world of the play, to marry fact with fiction, reality with imagination, and to ask “What if?” It nurtures—even creates—curiosity.

I am perpetually discovering and refining effective ways to teach my students to become better collaborators and communicators. Theater classes offer students the opportunity to practice the various ingredients of **collaboration**—listening, brainstorming, experimenting, synthesizing, empathizing, leading, and so on—all skills for a multitude of other disciplines as well. Theater can be, therefore, an **essential ingredient for a liberal arts education**. To be sure, it relies on a variety of rules, structures, and concepts particular to its discipline. However, those very organizing principles share **commonalities** with those of, say, business, science, and music. I have experienced firsthand how challenging it is for theater instructors to translate our

language into one that graduate business students understand. But with patience, we found some translations. One example is the similarity between theater's *stage presence* and business' *executive presence*. What business schools call "soft skills" (leadership, communication, problem solving, team building, time management, collaboration, and more) are crucial skills that theater students and professionals practice daily.

A theater classroom models the kind of **inclusive, ensemble-driven, participatory learning environment** valuable to most fields of study. It demands a diversity of ways of teaching and learning: with physical, vocal, and imaginative activities, discussions, tool-building exercises, and performance assignments. A chapter we read for an acting class might lend itself first through discussion, then through an acting exercise, and finally through a performance. This "ensemble classroom," as a friend calls it, creates a culture of empathic, full body and mind learning that works for disciplines beyond theater.

Seeing, creating, and talking about theater **builds relationships and communities** which serve as an antidote to our highly curated, social-media-obsessed online world. Theater is social, participatory, welcoming, experimental, and it asks us to use all the parts of ourselves—cognition, body, voice, imagination—to participate fully. Since 2020 I have seen increased anxiety in my students—more depression, anxiety, lethargy, eating disorders, drinking, sadness, and loneliness. When we were allowed to unmask for DU's spring quarter 2022, my advanced Acting III course staged Sarah Ruhl's *Orlando*, a play adaptation of Virginia Woolf's novel. And what joy we felt in the classroom, as we giddily engaged in building the world of the play: the gestures, body shapes, stage pictures, voices, props, and more. There was a palpable feeling of happiness and relief as we returned to doing what had been prohibited for two years.

CREATIVE WORK

Since receiving tenure in 2017 my creative work has become more diverse and I more confident. I have continued working professionally with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and Stories on Stage. I have also worked with two additional theater companies, Local Theater Company and BETC (recently renamed Butterfly Effect Theatre of Colorado). Here and in my supporting documentation I focus on five creative projects I've developed over the past five years: 1) acting with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival; 2) *The Lady M Project*; 3) *Grounded*; 4) *The Actor's Mind* podcast, co-produced with DU Psychology Professor Kateri McRae; and 5) Joan Didion's *The Year of Magical Thinking* with Stories on Stage.

Stage acting dominates my professional creative work. Since 2017 I have performed with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival four times in the following roles: Portia in *Julius Caesar* (2017); Queen Margaret in *Richard III* (2018); Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* (2019); and Penelope in *The Odyssey* (2021, postponed from 2020). I will play Lady Macbeth in 2023 in a full production of a new play I co-wrote, *The Lady M Project*, produced by Local Theater Company. I performed the one-woman show *Grounded*, written by George Brant, in 2021, directed by my colleague, Rick Barbour. I also performed Soccer Mom in *The Wolves* with BETC (Butterfly Effect Theatre of Colorado) in 2018, and I have worked every year with Stories on Stage, most notably performing Joan Didion's *The Year of Magical Thinking* in 2017.

Acting is intellectual, emotional, imaginative, visceral, and kinesthetic. It is a dance between preparation and spontaneity, work and play, process and product. In rehearsal and especially in performance I attend to many experiences, sometimes simultaneously: What am I doing physically? How am I using my breath and voice to best express character and story? Where am I in space? Am I listening to my scene partner? Which tools in my proverbial actor toolbox work best for this character? What's the right scale and style of performance? How do I honor the playwright's intent *and* personalize the role to make it my own? All of this requires a level of focus that is challenging and energizing.

The actor's job—to “live *truthfully* under the *imaginary* circumstances of the play”—is a paradox. How does one do that? There are multiple ways to find truth inside of the play's fiction. Thorough script analysis gives an actor specific information directly from the playwright about a character's behavior and their relationships, objectives, obstacles, actions, given circumstances, and environment. One also experiments with physical and vocal choices that fit the character. And there's *personalizing* the role by 1) finding aspects of yourself that are the same as the those of the character, and 2) locating substitutions that allow you to increase your emotional connection to the role. These final two tools of identity and substitution empower actors to marry their own factual lived experiences with the fictional, imagined ones of the character.

As my acting continues to mature, the gap between what I want to do with a role and what I can do narrows, challenging me beyond what I sometimes think I can ask of myself. Psychologist Adam Grant says in his *WorkLife* podcast episode [“The Creative Power of Misfits,”](#) I and so many others are energized and motivated by the “just manageable difficulty,” a project that challenges us optimally, in which we intuitively trust that we'll find our way.

Mercutio, *Romeo and Juliet*, CSF, 2019

My most substantial and complex role with Colorado Shakespeare Festival was Mercutio, the loud-mouthed, bombastic, fast-talking, restless friend of Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*. It's a dream role usually played by a young man, but I got to play him when I was a 44-year-old woman. Mercutio's language is deliciously rude, sexually charged, aggressive, vivid, poetic, and in many ways, very *male*. Inspired by director Chris Duval's desire to have a Mercutio who was born a girl but now lives her life as a man, I imagined she had run away from home as a teenager and entered military service. She is a badass fighter whose skills surpass those of all her friends and her sworn enemy, Tybalt. As I worked on Mercutio, his pronouns kept shifting between feminine and masculine, and eventually I realized both were accurate.

Playing this role—hyperbolically verbal and physical even for a male—was shockingly liberating. That sensation of freedom while embodying a man was energizing and alarming. And that led me to think about the weight of gender in so many plays, including in Shakespeare. How much do women get to talk? How many decisions and plot points are decided *for* them versus *by* them? These thoughts were a big catalyst for creating *The Lady M Project*.

The Lady M Project, 2019-2023

I began daydreaming about *The Lady M Project* a month or two after *Mercutio* ended. For years I'd been thinking about how Shakespeare's female characters often hold crucial positions in the plots of their plays but don't get to thoroughly share their experiences with the audience. Gertrude navigates the actions of Hamlet, Claudius, and poor Ophelia with so few words; Hero barely speaks in *Much Ado About Nothing* despite her central role in the plot; Brutus' wife Portia brilliantly examines her husband's behavior but to no avail. They simply do not get the level of intellectual or emotional processing that the men do. And though there are several examples of wonderful female roles in Shakespeare's plays (Juliet, Viola, Rosalind, Margaret), they don't match the men's. The male characters have greater opportunity to initiate action that impacts other characters; the women often just respond to what the men are doing. I love when a Shakespeare character welcomes the audience into the story by speaking straight to them, in a quick aside or a longer soliloquy. This activates the space, it invites the audience into the story, and it puts that character in charge of that moment and what comes next. What if female characters had more room to do this? What if we gave, say, Lady Macbeth the time *she* needs to work it all out with the audience? This was the thinking that inspired *The Lady M Project*.

So, in November 2019 I asked my friend and collaborator Mare Trevathan to embark on an experiment in playwriting: what if we investigated the story of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* from Lady Macbeth's perspective? This project has enjoyed a long process thanks to my two co-writers and the support of Local Theater Company. First, Mare and I extracted Lady M's scenes from the original script and developed compositions ("recipes") to explore what might be going on for her in these scenes. In 2020 we were accepted into Local Theater Company's Local Lab, and we also invited dramaturg Hadley Kamminga-Peck to join the writing team. In December 2020 we held a successful week of online rehearsals and one performance with professional actors, and I was invited to join Local Theater Company as an Associate Artist. During all of 2021 and into 2022, we developed the script further. I applied for and gratefully received three DU grants to support the project's rehearsals and performance. And now we're preparing for a full production in spring 2023 with Local Theater Company. *[Please visit [The Lady M Project](#) supporting documentation if you'd like to watch either/both of the December 2020 and March 2022 performances.]*

Grounded solo performance, 2020-2021

As the pandemic closed in on all of us and our lives became smaller and more uncertain, I knew I had to delve into an acting project or I'd go stir crazy. For over five years I'd wanted to work on the one-woman show *Grounded* by George Brant about a female Air Force fighter pilot. And in March 2020 I finally had the time. I invited my colleague, Rick Barbour, to direct me in the role of the Pilot. Our collaboration was sublime. Rick has always been a mentor to me, as we teach so many of the same courses and I admire how he works as a teacher and director. I realize now that the confining circumstances of the pandemic set us up for a simplified, profoundly satisfying experience together.

As I stated, I'm drawn to the "just manageable difficulty" and *Grounded* was certainly that. Also, I've always wanted to work on a one-woman show. Brant creates an astonishingly well-defined, vivid character. The Pilot's story hooked me. She excels at her job, but then gets "grounded" once she discovers she's pregnant. After her daughter is born, she can't wait to get back to the sky, her "blue," but instead she's assigned to fly drones out of Creech Air Force Base in the Nevada desert. Because of the precision of the cameras on Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), she ironically has a clearer, more intimate view of her targets thousands of miles away than she ever did flying directly above them in her plane. What follows is her slow deterioration into madness as, confined to a tiny dark trailer, she's unable to reckon with the consequences of being assigned to kill dozens of people half a world away.

My acting work strengthened and matured from working on this script and character, collaborating with Rick, and allowing the play and storytelling to develop slowly over more than a year of rehearsals and performances. We began outdoor rehearsals in June 2020 and I performed the piece twice, first in May 2021 in a church with no lighting design and minimal sound design, and then again in November 2021 with fully produced lights and sound.

From *Grounded* I learned that there is so much freedom and loneliness as the only actor onstage. I also learned what a powerful tool substitution is as I worked to find commonalities between my experiences and the Pilot's. Throughout our indulgently long rehearsal process I located events in my own life that carried emotional resonances similar to those the Pilot's experiences held for her.

And as the producer for *Grounded* I had a whole second set of responsibilities: applying for a DU grant to pay collaborators; securing performance rights; finding performance space for both May and November; hiring professional lighting and sound designers, a stage manager, and a light board operator; purchasing a flight suit; marketing the show; and keeping track of the budget.

In May 2022 the *New York Times* published "The Unseen Trauma of America's Drone Pilots," along with an accompanying episode on [The Daily](#) podcast. The reporting focuses on the devastating psychological effects pilots suffer when killing targets thousands of miles away. *Grounded* captures so many details of the real pilots' experiences that many friends who saw the show contacted me after reading or listening to this reporting to say that the play helped them make sense of these real people's experiences. *[Please visit the [Grounded](#) supporting documentation if you'd like to watch a video recording of the November 2021 performance.]*

[The Actor's Mind Podcast, 2017-current](#)

From a listener—

I really appreciate the engagement between the two of you. As I've worked at the crossroads of theatre and the cognitive sciences, one of the hardest things to find are art-science dialogue partners who truly honor each other's expertise and are curious about how that can inform their own thinking. They are not easy dialogues to have - with different vocabularies, histories,

assumptions, and commitments - but when they happen, the richness (to use your phrase) makes my brain explode. – Maiya Murphy, professor, National Theatre of Singapore

My conversations with Psychology Professor Kateri McRae began in January 2017 after she attended my lecture on contemporary acting technique. As someone well versed in theater training, Kateri already knew most of what I was talking about. But what was new for her was the powerful collision and commonalities of psychological concepts and acting techniques. She emailed me immediately to suggest we get coffee and talk about these overlapping ideas. Thus began our joyful collaboration and friendship. We met every couple of weeks for over six months before I said, “What if we made a podcast?” to share our conversations with anyone who would listen.

To date we have researched, hosted, and produced nineteen episodes over four seasons. Some of the topics we tackled in Season 1 were comparisons of the acting tool *Objective* with the psychological concept *Appraisal Theory of Emotion* (episode 1) and *Substitution with Episodic Memory* (episode 2). Season 2 topics include *Auditioning with Impression Formation* (episode 1) and *Casting with Personality Traits* (episode 2). In Season 3 we interviewed director Anne Bogart and voice teacher Kristin Linklater for two separate episodes. And in Season 4 we invited psychologists to share actor-related research, to which we responded in subsequent episodes. As listener Jeremy Sortore notes, “*It’s one of the only podcasts I’ve found that focuses on the craft and process of acting (versus the business, politics, history, canon, current events, etc. of the theatre industry).*”

We have taken the past year to outline a book proposal and first chapter and currently are researching and contacting publishers. We will produce a fifth podcast season next year and already have defined a season’s worth of topics. As of August 1, we have had over 17,400 listens since we launched in 2018, and we gain an average of 100 listens per week. We met in July with a producer of the *More Than a Feeling* podcast, which is part of the *Ten Percent Happier* podcast family, to discuss our being guests on one of their episodes on emotion.

These conversations with Kateri have profoundly improved my teaching of acting. I now integrate a discussion of appraisal theory of emotion into my teaching of objective by arguing that emotions can be understood as the consequence of a character appraising if they have succeeded or failed in achieving what they want. This is just one of many ways that my collaboration with Kateri has deepened my teaching.

Joan Didion’s *The Year of Magical Thinking*, 2017

Of even greater duration than my relationship with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival is the one I’ve enjoyed with Stories on Stage and its artistic director, Anthony Powell. Since 2013, I have had the privilege of performing stories at least once a year with them. Stories on Stage presents readings of literature—not only plays—performed by professional actors. Because this style of storytelling lacks conventional staging (I stand behind a music stand and a microphone), and costumes, props, and set pieces, I must rely entirely on my voice.

In 2017 I had the privilege of spending several weeks with Anthony rehearsing the two-hour long, one-woman dramatic piece, *The Year of Magical Thinking*, which Joan Didion adapted from her book of the same name. As a fan of Didion's writing, it was a privilege to make her voice my own. I was constantly struck by the dissonance between her hard, no-nonsense reporting of her husband's death, and the interior vulnerability she reveals as memoir, private and uncomfortable for her.

The other professional acting role I've played since 2017 was Soccer Mom in Sarah DeLappe's *The Wolves* with BETC in 2018. Though *The Wolves* was first produced in 2016 and the language sounds incredibly contemporary, on the page it's written, as is *Grounded*, in verse. I was able to use some of the same text tools I use for Shakespeare, especially experimenting with what the character's experiencing at the end of each line before they speak again. What was most challenging and rewarding about the role was negotiating Soccer Mom's manic grief. Acting students often mistake emoting for acting. In all my acting classes I constantly drive home the need to play action instead of emotion, and for emotion to be an organic consequence of playing action. For Soccer Mom I translated her grief into things I could repeatedly *do* as an actor: my breath, physicality, vocality, the vivid images in the text, and her objectives.

[I encourage you to read the letters from seven professional collaborators discussing my creative work located in the Letters folder.]

Directing

Annually I am tasked with six courses (2 per fall, winter, and spring quarters), and often one of these "courses" is directing a departmental show. Since 2017 I have directed three productions at DU: Diana Son's *Stop Kiss* (2022), Sarah DeLappe's *The Wolves* (2021), and Jordan Harrison's *Kid-Simple* (2017). Currently I am preparing to direct Sophocles' *Antigone* at DU in the fall, and late this summer I also will direct a professional 45-minute school tour of *The Merchant of Venice* with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. Directing a show takes two to three times the amount of time and work as teaching a course. As a collaborator with both professional and student designers, I have developed a more confident director's voice than I had five years ago. And my preparation for rehearsals has become more thorough, even though (paradoxically) I have become more comfortable not knowing absolutely everything I want going into each rehearsal. I am confident that many things will get worked out in rehearsal through discussion and staging experiments. One of the most joyful aspects of directing is collaboratively discovering the specific set of rules for a play's world. And one of my favorite guiding texts is Elinor Fuchs' essay, "Visit to a Small Planet," which is full of questions to ask about a script to determine its rules about space, time, characters, and more.

When a director leads with empathy, confidence, and patience, the collaborators in the room respond positively. I encourage all collaborators to speak up during the process. When I direct at DU, the students and I start the process slowly, taking the time to develop collectively the rules of the play world as well as the rules of working together. This careful beginning creates a social contract that clearly defines how we will work and take care of one another in the room. This allows us then to speed up the process as we progress.

Beyond building a strong, secure community culture in rehearsal, directors are navigating an abundance of responsibilities throughout the six to twelfth month design and rehearsal process. Of the almost countless things, I most emphasize the following guiding principles:

- 1) Determining the World of the Play: analyzing the script to develop designs that support the story, as well as researching topics to make sense of the play's world. *The Wolves* requires a basic knowledge of soccer warmups/exercises and teenage girl dynamics; *Stop Kiss* requires a rudimentary knowledge of brain injuries and the consequent physical/emotional trauma.
- 2) Activating Time and Space: utilizing the playing space to its fullest potential to create potent stage pictures that guide an audience moment to moment and developing the ideal pacing for movement and speaking.
- 3) Actioning the Text: determining what each character wants at any given moment onstage, and what actions they play to achieve that objective.
- 4) Personalizing: nudging students to identify with their characters by expanding their own sense of self and locating substitutions to emotionally align with their character's experiences.
- 5) Staging Metaphor: building stage pictures that visually represent or symbolize what's happening in the story.

TEACHING

What skills can a theater classroom teach its students? It asks them to use their intellects, emotions, bodies, voices, and imaginations to engage fully in the course content. It asks them to surrender to the fact that some things cannot be fully understood until they are experienced emotionally, viscerally, or imaginatively. It teaches empathy. It encourages optimism because it asks collaborators to trust that the group can figure out how to build a successful finished product without quite knowing at the start *how* they'll get there. It argues that the process is sometimes more important than the product, while at the same time positing that a successful process can create a successful product. It teaches practical skills for an effective leader, manager, and mentor: presence, focus, collaboration, clear speaking, active listening, and more. It inspires curiosity, prompts questions, teaches literary analysis, and the building of real and imagined worlds.

My teaching philosophy is now tied (forever?) to my experience of teaching during the pandemic. The classroom has become a place of greater vulnerability, anxiety, distraction, and absence since spring 2020. All teachers have had to establish a balance between these added circumstances and our need to work through our lessons and syllabi. I've experimented with embracing more vulnerability while still keeping track of my teaching objectives and the clock. Including these more personal experiences has in some ways strengthened class culture, as any artistic endeavor benefits from this personalization.

More generally, over the past five years I've been working toward further individualizing my teaching to respond to the needs of each student and their various learning styles. Equally

important, I have slowed down my teaching, especially at the beginning of the quarter. For example, I use the first week of classes to articulate carefully the course plan and expectations as well as to resist the temptation to make snap judgments about the students. The more agreement the group has from the start, the more productive and successful the class will be. Our world is bursting with (fun, dumb, dangerous) distractions, and so I want my students to practice working with deep focus in the classroom. The importance of paying attention to the world in which we live is a crucial acting skill, and to me it's also a human skill. However, it is challenged daily by the dominance of social media, our divisive national culture, and dramatic end-of-world headlines. In response to these chaotic distractions, acting perhaps can help young people to ground themselves in their own bodies, imaginations, and voices.

Acting I is my bread and butter; I teach it anywhere from one to three times a year. This introductory course is made up of Theatre majors and non-majors and its goal is straightforward: to provide students with more tools in their proverbial actors' toolbox, and to give them class experiences in which they can practice using those tools. Though I believe there is no definitive acting textbook, I use *A Practical Handbook for the Actor* for its concision and directness, portions of Uta Hagen's *Respect for Acting* and *Challenge for the Actor*, as well as *Actions: The Actors' Thesaurus*. The class starts with a basic primer in Stanislavski technique, and I also teach the students introductory Viewpoints vocabulary.

In **Acting II**, an intermediate course dedicated to acting Shakespeare, I use Barry Edelstein's *Thinking Shakespeare*, along with (usually) two of Shakespeare's plays and some sonnets to give students tools to speak, play, and embody complex language. Some of this course's most satisfying moments occur when students transcend their initial trepidations about acting Shakespeare's language and start utilizing techniques that open up their bodies, breathing, and voices, allowing them to play the words energetically and viscerally. I also delight in re-discovering with my students the beautiful interplay of ideas and emotions in Shakespeare's language.

Acting III is an opportunity to challenge even the strongest student actors to deal honestly with their strengths and weaknesses as performers. In spring quarter 2022, nine students and I staged Sarah Ruhl's play, *Orlando*. We embraced the hyper-theatrical and presentational style of the play, collectively building the rules of the imagined world. We experimented with the various shapes the ensemble could make onstage, how much stillness or movement a moment required, and how many of the nine bodies we needed onstage each moment to make the strongest stage picture. All students also either designed or assistant directed. I credit the students with committing 100% to the demands of our ambitious quarter-long project.

Directing I is a required course for all Theatre majors on their way to directing their Senior Capstone projects. Damon Kiely's *How to Read a Play* is a reliable resource for comprehensively guiding students through the directing process. I admire the multitude of director voices Kiely provides throughout all chapters. I also use *The Viewpoints Book* by Anne Bogart and Tina Landau, *Notes on Directing* by Frank Hauser and Russell Reich, a chapter or two from William Ball's *A Sense of Direction*, and portions of a new book, *Staging Story*, by Robert Moss and

Wendy Dann. Anyone who has directed knows that simply *doing it a lot* is the best way to learn how to do it well. I start the course by guiding students through the basics of directing: stage picturization, composition, movement, script analysis, and communication with actors. The course culminates in each director presenting a 10-minute play performed by two of their classmates.

I developed a new course, **Movement and Voice Training for the Actor**, which I had the surreal challenge of teaching for the first time in spring 2020 as an online course as the pandemic began. Since then, I have taught it once in-person in spring 2021 and look forward to teaching it again in 2023. There are many important reasons to teach actor voice and movement separately. However, this course exams them as overlapping, as well as distinct, skill sets. In it I teach Kristin Linklater voice technique alongside Viewpoints and other actor movement trainings.

My colleagues and I together teach **Junior Seminar** every spring as well as **Senior Practicum**. Junior Seminar meets once a week and is an opportunity for all juniors and all faculty to model the Senior Capstone director/design pre-production process, to build resumes and portfolios, and to offer the juniors opportunities to brainstorm capstone play ideas and post-graduation plans. Senior Practicum is the official name of the Senior Capstone project, for which my colleagues and I mentor and advise students throughout their final year on play selection, design team options, budgeting, script analysis, casting, and rehearsals.

Finally, I teach one of the eighty or so **First Year Seminars**, or FSEMs, that all first-year students take their fall quarter. My course is called “Who Do You Think You Are? Performing Characters in Film and Literature.” In it the students read and watch several coming-of-age stories and characters and then write, edit, and perform multiple first-person dramatic monologues.

Outside of the DU Theatre Department I teach actor voice and movement classes at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts (DCPA) Education Department. I also have taught graduate students in DU’s Daniels College of Business and incarcerated men at the Denver Reception and Diagnostic Center (DRDC) prison here in Denver through DU’s Prison Arts Initiative (PAI).

[I encourage you to read the letters discussing my teaching and academic directing from eight current and former DU students located in the Letters folder.]

SERVICE

The overarching concepts of collaboration and of the power of liberal arts resonate with me when I think about the value of service. My colleagues and I serve the Theatre department and our students in many ways, including high-contact student mentoring, weekly faculty meetings, multiple committees, and constant communication with each other. Though this is time-consuming, these activities build and maintain a strong teaching and learning culture. The most substantive examples of my departmental service are 1) the various guest artist workshops I’ve organized (often in partnership with the Denver Center for the Performing Arts Education Department); 2) our popular Staged Reading Series that my colleagues and I have developed

over the past decade; and 3) my work leading diversity, equity, and inclusive (DEI) opportunities for our department. One specific accomplishment is our adoption of the Colorado Community Standards for Theatre starting next year. Each year I recruit students by attending the Colorado Thespian Convention in December, auditioning students during winter quarter for departmental scholarships, and marketing our department to area high school theater programs.

My college and university service includes serving as chair last year for the college's arts and humanities tenure and promotion committee, as well as serving on the Undergraduate Research, Marsico Visiting Scholars, and Library Liaison Advisory Group committees. I was honored to be invited by former Dean Danny McIntosh to give the Livingston Lecture in May 2019, in which I spoke about the history of the term *realism* in theater. I energized the lecture by incorporating several student performances to illustrate the ideas and techniques I described. I also directed a scene from Lauren Gunderson's play, *Ada and the Engine*, for Chancellor Jeremy Haefner's installation in fall 2021.

FUTURE

I thank DU and my Department of Theatre colleagues for giving me many challenging and joyful opportunities as a teacher and theater practitioner. I am grateful for the multiple university grants I have received, and I look forward to serving the university in the future and expanding my role here. My immediate goals for future Creative Work include a full production of *The Lady M Project* in 2023, directing *The Merchant of Venice* this fall with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and pursuing more professional directing, researching and producing a fifth season of *The Actor's Mind* podcast and finding a publisher for our book, and working with *Stories on Stage* next season. Next year's goals for Teaching include directing *Antigone* this coming fall and continuing to assess ways to improve all my courses. And my Service goals include leading the department in its adoption of the Colorado Community Standards for Theatre.