

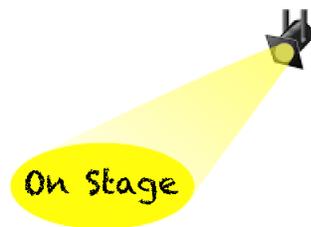
On Stage: Creating a Community Dialogue Around Live Theater

Collected Stories

MN Jewish Theatre Company, February 24 – March 18, 2018

Created by: Lucas Erickson

Fiscal Sponsor: Springboard for the Arts



On Stage: Creating a Community Dialogue Around Live Theater

Mission: To make local theater relevant to younger and non-traditional audiences and to lay the groundwork for building future theater audiences

“On Stage” raises awareness of the theater offerings in the Twin Cities to academic classes and groups. It brings local actors to Twin Cities college classrooms and community settings to read scenes from a play in current local production. Participants then engage in a lively discussion of the play’s themes, tying in current events, personal values and narratives to stimulate critical thinking. Subsequently attending the full play is encouraged.

ON STAGE: *Collected Stories* – Discussion Schedule

1. U of M - ENGL 1101: Introduction to Creative Writing – Mariela. Monday, February 26th, 2:30-3:30PM. 26 students. Shelly, Stuart

* The class is divided into three genre sections over the course of the semester: poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. They will be two classes into the fiction section, and the teacher plans to teach them how to craft dialogue in scene through an improvisational acting exercise for the other half of the class.

2. U of M - ENGW 3106: Intermediate Literary Nonfiction Writing – Kristin. Tuesday, February 27th, 11:15-12:15PM. 20 students. Shelly, Stuart

* Students will investigate the stretch and depth of Creative Nonfiction, examining the many forms, subjects, and lengths it might inhabit, sometimes, perhaps, disagreeing about where an individual text falls in the spectrum of genre (is this actually journalism? poetry?).

3. Metro State - WRIT 251: Introduction to Creative Writing – Melanie. Tuesday, February 27th, 6:00-7:00PM. 17 students. Shelly, Nora

* They are interested in different genres of writing. It's a pretty culturally diverse class as well. The teacher thought they would talk about memoir and creative nonfiction and who has "rights" to certain shared experience.

4. U of M - TH 1321: Beginning Acting: Fundamentals of Performance – Luverne. Wednesday, February 28th, 12:10-1:10PM. 20 students. Shelly, Stuart, Ashley

* Vocabulary/techniques for practical performance studies. Use/training of body/voice. Creation of choices and dramatic phrases. Storytelling. Training the will, the instrument, and the imagination.

5. MCTC - ENCW 2212: Introduction to Creative Nonfiction Writing – Stephen. Wednesday, February 28th, 2:30-3:30PM. 25 students. Stuart, Ashley

* Students will have written several brief creative nonfiction essays, often based on personal experience. In class we regularly discuss issues of social identity (race, gender, religion, etc).

6. U of M - ENGL 1101: Introduction to Creative Writing – May-LeeYang. Thursday, March 1st, 2:15-3:15PM. 26 students. Shelly, Stuart, Ashley

* Writing poetry/prose. Small group workshops, lectures by visiting writers. By the time you arrive, the students will have had 3 weeks of poetry, and almost two weeks of fiction writing.

7. Metro State - WRIT 352: Writing Memoir and Creative Nonfiction – Patricia. Thursday, March 1st, 6:30-7:30PM. 18 students. Shelly, Nora

* The students are consistently studying the first person voice in literature - in essay and memoir. And, they are working on writing their own.

8. Normandale - ENGW 2800: AFA Capstone – Kris. Friday, March 2nd, 12:00-1:00PM. 17 students. Shelly, Stuart, Ashley

* Students complete individualized creative writing projects, which may include fiction, drama, poetry, or creative nonfiction pieces, internships, or service learning projects.

9. Grandview BookClub - Monday, March 5th, 3:00-4:00PM. 10 participants. Shelly, Stuart.

10. Bethel - ENL 200: Juvenile Literature (during 'community time') - Susan. Tuesday, March 6th, 11:10-12:00PM. 20 students. Shelly, Stuart

ON STAGE: *Collected Stories* – Total Tickets Purchased

Total Participants: 199

Total Tickets Purchased: 42

Note: The total tickets purchased was confirmed by MN Jewish Theatre Company Box Office.

ON STAGE: *Collected Stories* – Survey Results

1. Have you seen a play before?

67 YES (93%) 5 NO

2. Have you been to this specific theater before?

70 NO (97%) 2 YES

3. After our visit, do you feel more inclined to see the play?

66 YES (93%) 5 NO

4. Do you now feel more inclined to see other plays at this theater?

58 YES (84%) 11 NO

5. Do you think this program works well in college classes?

71 YES (99%) 1 NO

Note: This survey was issued to participants in four of the ten discussions.

ON STAGE: *Collected Stories* – Discussion Agenda/Topics

Lucas will welcome everyone, thank the teacher/sponsor, say why we are there, ask who has seen play/been to MJTC, why we want you to see a play, and pass it off to the actors to briefly introduce themselves and why you go to theater and why is important for others to go.

Stuart/Nora/Ashley and Shelly will briefly set up MJTC and the play/weigh in about their personal take on it.

Lucas will set up the first scene (Pg. 14-17). Then **Stuart/Nora/Ashley and Shelly** will read the scene.

Ask audience what they heard/thought.

Stuart and Shelly will a discussion tying in themes of: Mentorship; Admiration; Professional/personal relationships (Blurred lines? Grey area? Teachers getting emotionally attached to students?). Do you have a favorite teacher? What makes a mentor?

Lucas will set up the first scene (Pg. 52-55). Then **Stuart/Nora/Ashley and Shelly** will read the scene.

Ask audience what they heard/thought.

Stuart and Shelly will a discussion tying in themes of: Creative Writing (what to write about? Inspirations? Embellish on a true story to make is sound better?). What is your expectations of trust? ‘Stealing’ other peoples’ stories to write about (in the first person). Ownership of stories. What is your intention of using someone else’s story (personal gain vs. paying tribute). Do you need permission from the owner of a story? Copyright infringement? Stealing identity? What is the definition of truth? Can trust have two definitions? How does a memory/truth evolve over time? Jealousy. Whose side are you on: Ruth or Lisa?

Final thoughts.

Lucas will remind everyone how to get \$14 tickets to *Collected Stories*, final plug for MJTC, and ask actors to plug work they are currently doing.

End.

ON STAGE: Collected Stories – Feedback

Lucas,

As I hoped for and suspected the question of who owns a story -- and how does a writer (respectfully) deal with stories that include others, as most do -- was very relevant and fruitful for this writing class. The actors were great, the questions they posed to the students elicited responses that were helpful for me to hear and to take forward into the rest of the semester. My students loved it and so did I! They found it helpful, illuminating and a great chance to talk/think about why they write, who for... One student said she really related to Nora (she is Chinese/American) about coming to know oneself well enough to write the story of her life. I wasn't sure what to expect and I was really happy with how the material connected with my students' writing process. It was valuable all the way around and a refreshing way to reflect on what we are doing in our class. Important questions were raised by the scripted reading and also the discussion and questions that followed. Definitely insightful. We all THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!! For coming in, sharing your time and energy and thoughtfulness and skills!

Patricia Hoolihan – Metro State University

Lucas,

I think my students really enjoyed it, and I think you all did a great job of presenting to students and drawing them in. I like how there were some invitations to respond ("what did you hear?") as well as invitations to generate themselves ("have you ever been in X situation yourself?")---I find that esp. the latter kind of prompt keeps students engaged for longer stretches.

Steven Healey – MCTC

Lucas,

Thanks so much for arranging the visit to my class. I thought it went really well and the students seemed engaged and interested. Unfortunately, the two students who were absent, due to car difficulties and illness, were also quite vocal on the subject so I am really sorry they missed it. I thought the format with the two selected contrasting scenes worked really well. Having the actors ask simply what students were hearing, as a first question, seemed really fitting to me as it was not intimidating and help warmed them up to sharing their ideas with strangers. Michelle and Nora did a great job, I thought, and it was easy to envision the two characters and their evolving interaction. I think this was a valuable addition to the class that only required a little restructuring on my part in terms of our focused discussion the week before on many of the issues involved. The subject of who "owns" a story is fascinating and complex and was very fitting for a creative writing class. Thanks again. I really enjoyed it and so did the students.

Melanie Richards – Metro State University

Hi Lucas,

Students said that they really enjoyed having you all as class guests. Students' favorite moments altered between just listening to the wonderful reading of the play and the discussion that followed. They were most interested in the question of who gets to tell what stories and then beginning to debate the ramifications of answering that question. They also said they appreciated the warmth and energy from all of you. They said if anything, they would have liked if you all could have stayed longer. :) I hope that many of them go to see the play and will pass on any feedback they have. Thanks again for coming in.

Kristin Collier – University of Minnesota

ON STAGE: Collected Stories – Feedback

Lucas,

The topic fit in perfectly with what we've been talking about in Juvenile Literature (especially the controversy around Native American representation in books like Little House on the Prairie and My Heart is on the Ground.) It also was a great fit for the students who are taking a class on the literature of refugees and migrants. When I came to class on Wednesday morning, three of my students were in a heated discussion about your presentation on Tuesday and how that fit with the class material-- that's a really good sign. The students who were there from the journalism class also had a lot of opportunity to think about how they do their jobs telling others' stories. The format that you use-- reading a scene from the play and then using it as the basis for a larger discussion works for everyone. If we've seen the play, we are reminded of the situation and if we haven't, we are able to enter the discussion as well. I think we had about 15 students attend the play on Thursday, March 1. They represented three different classes. We had three professors attend and a couple of other students who wanted to attend even though it wasn't a part of any classes. One of our departmental goals is to get students out into the arts community, so this definitely helped us reach that goal. As a department, we subsidized tickets and we're charging students just \$10 for any theater performances that they are offered through their English classes. Even though it was only a \$4 difference for students, I think it made a difference in attendance (and it cost our department less than \$100.) Thanks again,

Susan Brooks – Bethel University

ON STAGE: Collected Stories – Sample Contract

PROJECT CONTRACT

On Stage: Creating a Community Dialogue Around Live Theater

This Agreement is made effective as of **10/15/16** by and between **On Stage**, and the following individual ("Actor")

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

- 1. DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES AND PAYMENT.** Actor will receive compensation for providing the following services/expenses including but not limited to: 6 discussions (\$600), 4 planning meetings (\$200), facilitator prep time (\$150), and parking expenses (\$20).
- 2. TOTAL PAYMENT.** On Stage will pay total compensation for services in the amount of **\$970**. Payment will be sent directly to the Actor from On Stage at the address listed above at a date postmarked on or before **11/14/16**.
- 3. TERM/TERMINATION.** This Agreement shall terminate automatically on **11/14/16**.
- 4. RELATIONSHIP OF PARTIES.** It is understood by the parties that the Actor is an independent contractor with respect to On Stage, and not an employee or contractor of On Stage.
- 5. WORK PRODUCT OWNERSHIP.** Any copyrightable works, ideas, discoveries, inventions, patents, products, or other information (collectively, the "Work Product") developed in whole or in part in connection with the Services Rendered shall be the exclusive property of On Stage.
- 6. NAME AND LIKENESS.** Actor agrees to allow On Stage full use of their name, likeness, voice, testimonial, and/or portrayal in whole or in part, severally or in conjunction with other material, for any documentation and marketing purposes at any time including after determination of this agreement.
- 7. ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Agreement contains the entire agreement of the parties, and there are no other promises or conditions in any other agreement whether oral or written. The actor waves any liability against On Stage.
- 9. SEVERABILITY.** If any provision of this Agreement shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the remaining provisions shall continue to be valid and enforceable. If a court finds that any provision of this Agreement is invalid or unenforceable, but that by limiting such provision it would become valid and enforceable, then such provision shall be deemed to be written, construed, and enforced as so limited.
- 10. APPLICABLE LAW.** This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota.

This Project Contract is executed and agreed to by:

ACTOR

(Printed Name) _____

(Date Signed) _____

(Signature) _____

ON STAGE

(Printed Name) _____ (Project Manager)

(Date Signed) _____

(Signature) _____

ON STAGE: Collected Stories – Financials

- **Michelle O’Neill (Facilitator) - \$1270**
 - * 10 discussions (\$1000), 2 planning meetings (\$100), facilitator prep-time (\$150), and parking expenses (\$20).
- **Stuart Gates (Facilitator) - \$1070**
 - * 8 discussions (\$800), 2 planning meetings (\$100), facilitator prep-time (\$150), bonus discussion (\$100), and parking expenses (\$20).
- **Nora Montanez (Facilitator) - \$470**
 - * 2 discussions (\$200), 2 planning meetings (\$100), facilitator prep-time (\$150), and parking expenses (\$20).
- **Ashley Montondo (Actress) - \$420**
 - * 4 discussions (\$100) and parking expenses (\$20).
- **Lucas Erickson (Project manager) - \$565**
 - * Planning and coordination of all On Stage discussions (\$500), rehearsal space (\$20), miscellaneous (\$25), and parking expenses (\$20).

TOTAL: \$3,795

Notes: 1 discussion (1 hour in length) is \$100, 1 rehearsal (1 hour in length) is \$50, 1 extra meeting (1 hour in length) is \$50 (not listed on the above budget), prep-time for the facilitator is \$150, and the coordination stipend is \$500. The number of classroom/community visits (5) is an approximate number. The total number of actors/facilitators in the program (3) is an approximate number. These fees are based on a similar program that was used at the Guthrie Theater (*Creating Dialogue*) and Project SUCCESS (fiscal sponsor pilot program). The program emphasizes education, and is not a performance piece. The discussions will take place in college classrooms and community spaces (i.e. library room, public meeting room, etc.).

ON STAGE: *Collected Stories* – Marketing

Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company

Igniting your mind by touching your heart.
(Even if you're not Jewish!)

Collected Stories
by Donald Margulies

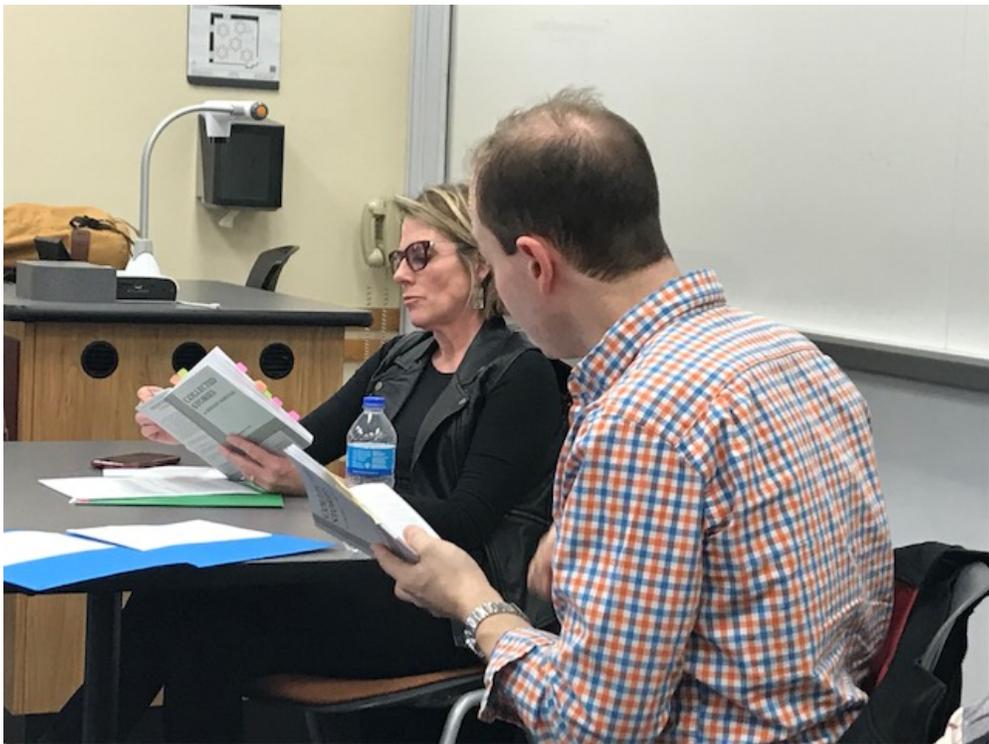
February 24 - March 18
directed by Jennie Ward

Use code "ONSTAGE" to reserve \$14 tickets online for Wednesday & Thursday night performances!
www.mjewishtheatre.org

Use Promo Code: **ONSTAGE**
For \$14 Tickets to
COLLECTED STORIES
On Wednesday and Thursday Shows

The poster features a background image of a hand holding a pen over a document. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout with a mix of blue, pink, and black colors.

ON STAGE: *Collected Stories* – Photos



ON STAGE: *Collected Stories* – Photos



ON STAGE: Total Outreach

An Octoroon (Mixed Blood Theater – Fiscal Sponsor: Project SUCCESS)

Total Participants: **196**
Total Tickets Purchased: **115**

A Raisin in the Sun (Park Square Theater)

Total Participants: **190**
Total Tickets Purchased: **100**

Anna in the Tropics (Jungle Theater)

Total Participants: **142**
Total Tickets Purchased: **73**

We are the Levinsons (MN Jewish Theatre Co.)

Total Participants: **128**
Total Tickets Purchased: **30**

Pike St. (Pillsbury House Theatre)

Total Participants: **163**
Total Tickets Purchased: **25**

Revolt. She said. Revolt again. (Frank Theatre)

Total Participants: **296**
Total Tickets Purchased: **100**

Collected Stories (MN Jewish Theatre Co.)

Total Participants: **199**
Total Tickets Purchased: **42**

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 1,314

TOTAL TICKETS PURCHASED: 485

*** 37% OF THE STUDENTS/COMMUNITY MEMBERS WE
HAVE VISITED SAW THE PLAY THAT WE DISCUSSED.**

The Need For A Younger Theater Audience

NEA 2012 Survey: The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) is the largest and most comprehensive survey of U.S. arts participation, with a total sample size exceeding 37,000 adults, ages 18 and over.

- Adults who attended performing arts or visited museums as children were three to four times as likely to see shows or visit museums as adults. Exposure to the arts in childhood turns out to be a stronger predictor of adult arts participation than education, gender, age, or income.
- Technology is a great enabler of arts creation and participation. In 2012, nearly three-quarters of American adults—about 167 million people—used electronic media to view or listen to art.
- 12.3 percent of adults in 2002 said they had attended a non-musical play in the past year; only 8.3 percent of adults in 2012 could say the same.
- The average age of those attending classical music performances, the ballet, jazz concerts and plays is increasing. This is not just because the median age of the general population is creeping up as well; it is the result of one generation of audience members not being adequately replaced by the next.
- The average age of the theatergoer for touring Broadway is 52 (according to The Broadway League).

June 17, 2012, Boston Globe:

“The Boston area is home to an estimated 250,000 college students from September to June. In other words, there is a huge population of 18-to-22-year-olds at more than 65 colleges and universities, quite a few of whom are eager, even desperate, for something to do off-campus on the weekends. Many who go to college here settle down in the area after graduation; they are the logical foundation of Boston theater’s future. So, theoretically, Boston should be the perfect laboratory for experiments in how to attract young adults to the theater, right? ... Intellectual curiosity and a spirit of cultural adventure are, or should be, cornerstones of higher education” (Don Aucoin).