

JACK NOVAK

artist • collaborator • teacher

EDUCATION

MFA in Creative Writing and Writing for the Performing Arts University of California, Riverside
Concentration: Playwriting, Screenwriting December, 2022

- Graduate lecture: "[Play the -Linear Writing Non-](#)"—a lecture on non-linear dramatic writing.
- Thesis works: *Retcon* (full-length drama); *Failure* (one hour TV pilot)
- Thesis Advisor: Mickey Birnbaum

Bachelor of Science, Theatre, cum laude Northwestern University
June, 2009

AWARDS

Arts & Humanities Fellowship Project – Grantee (Teaching Artist)	DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
Arts & Humanities Fellowship Project – Grantee (Playwright)	DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities 2018
Aurand Harris Memorial Playwriting Award – <i>Journeying Jack</i> (with David Novak)	New England Theatre Conference 2016
Winner, Dramatic Writing Competition, One-Act Category – <i>Crazy Weird</i>	Adirondack Shakespeare Company 2016
Agnes Nixon Playwriting Award – <i>A Decade of Wandering</i>	Northwestern University 2008

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Playwriting Teacher Washington, DC
Independent – “Playwriting Classes with Jack” January 2021 – present

- Solely responsible for conception, implementation, and marketing of classes—including managing mailing list, website, and course registration, as well as curriculum design and execution.
- Teaches a variety of online playwriting courses designed for adult students at all levels. Provides feedback on all work submitted by students. Courses include:
 - Monthly Seminar: A recurring four-week seminar. Each session focuses on a different contemporary play, analyzing and taking inspiration from its craft, with a unique topic & exercise for each of the first three weeks, and culminating in a workshop of student material.
 - Workshop Course: A course designed for students with a full-length draft of a play, in which each play receives a full reading (students reading along with an invited professional actor) followed by an in-depth feedback discussion.
 - Fundamentals of Contemporary Playwriting: A course designed to examine particular styles, techniques, and subjects popular among plays produced within the last 20 years. Each week focuses on a play exemplary of a particular style, with an exercise exploring the techniques of the play. Course culminates in a workshop of student material, with invited professional actors.
- Works one-on-one with students on full drafts of original work, providing in-line comments, written notes, and a one-hour discussion.

Senior Teacher

Washington Improv Theatre

Washington, DC

March 2015 – present

Adult Improv Instructor:

- Teaches long-form improv curriculum to adult students at multiple levels of a five-level training program.
- Teaches workshops in special subjects, including Pantomime, Short-form improv, and unique long-form formats.
- Coordinates with head of Education and other Faculty members to develop and unify curriculum.

Youth Improv Instructor:

- Spearheaded youth outreach programs, designing and leading improv programming to students at DC public schools and other local educational organizations, from grades 1-12.

Teaching Artist

The Shakespeare Theatre Company

Washington, DC

September 2018 – June 2023

Adult Playwriting Instructor:

- Independently designed, wrote, and executed curriculum of playwriting courses for adult students, including Playwriting for Beginners, Playwriting Workshop, and Advanced Playwriting.
- Spearheaded the pivot to virtual platforms at the onset of the pandemic, saving classes that were about to be cancelled.

Youth Drama Instructor:

- Led workshops to prepare middle & high school students to see productions at The Shakespeare Theatre Company, employing an interactive, dramatic curriculum to supply students with basic information about the characters, plot, and themes of the play, as well as audience etiquette.
- Led workshops on understanding and performing Shakespeare's text for young students. (grades 6-12)
- Created and implemented lesson plans for summer camps, teaching multiple subjects including physical theatre and stage combat, and directing youth productions of Shakespeare's plays. (grades 6-8)

Teaching Artist

The Theatre Lab

Washington, DC

June 2019 – August 2021

- Independently designed, wrote, and executed lesson plans for young students in a variety of subjects including Storytelling, Improv, Clown, and Eastern & African Theatre Traditions. (grades 3-8)
- Operated as lead teacher of full-day summer camp, navigating multiple activities and transitions. (grades 1-2)

Teaching Artist

Bullis School Summer Programs

Potomac, MD

June 2016 – August 2019

- Independently designed, wrote, and executed lesson plans for young students (ages 9-12) in a variety of subjects including Theatrical Devising, Stage Combat, Playwriting, and Improv.
- Worked within a budget to acquire all necessary materials for courses.
- Simultaneously led up to three two-week summer programs on a variety of subjects, including improv, devising, playwriting, and stage combat.

Teaching Artist
Imagination StageBethesda, MD
September 2012 – April 2018

- Independently designed, wrote, and executed curriculum to meet artistic and lifelong learning goals for young students K-12.
- Facilitated inclusion of students with disclosed disabilities into class activities and social interactions surrounding classes.
- Taught a variety of subjects including Acting, Improvisation, Mime, Devising, Playwriting, and Creative Drama.
- Acted as Director for Summer Musical Production Camp (grades 2-4), teaching Acting and directing musical production.

Speak Out Onstage – Playwright

- Worked with year-round program for young students in grades 4-6, devising a concept for an original musical, which I subsequently wrote (book and lyrics), and which was then rehearsed through the latter half of the year, ultimately receiving a full production with professional production design. (2014 & 2015)

Company Member, Shakespeare in the Schools
Educational Theatre CompanyArlington, VA
December 2015 – April 2019

- Performed abbreviated Shakespeare plays for students in grades 3-12 throughout DMV area.
- Led workshops on understanding and performing Shakespeare's text, as well as other subjects including Stage Combat and Clown.

Associate Artist
InterAct Story TheatreWheton, MD
June 2013 – June 2015

- Implemented Creative Drama & Story Drama curriculum based on Common Core learning standards in residencies for students in Head Start programs through 8th grade.
- Taught ongoing residencies and after school programs in general theater arts and improvisation for students in PreK-12th grade.
- Performed a variety of interactive plays and storytelling programs for schools in DC and Maryland.
- Acted as Team Leader, coordinating travel and lodging for overnight tours, and facilitating communication with sites.

Teaching Artist
Signature TheatreArlington, VA
January 2013 – October 2018

- Taught classes in Acting and Mime as part of Signature's in-house training program. (grades 6-12)

Signature In The Schools:

- Taught interactive, in-school workshops to students (grades 6-12) who then attended a production devised by high school actors around various inspiration sources (including the Arab Spring and *The Odyssey*). Workshops encompassed both theater skills and dramatic exploration of sources. Adapted curriculum to suit variety of class sizes and familiarity with material.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Commissions

Marvelous Mickey, Only Make Believe (Touring Production, 2023) – interactive touring play to be performed in the company repertoire for children in hospitals, care facilities, and special education schools.

[Dr. Automaton's Android*](#), Only Make Believe (Virtual Production, 2020) – interactive virtual play performed live online for children at sites nationwide.

Kaz on Canvas, Filament Theater Ensemble (Unproduced, 2016) – Theater for the Very Young (under 5); interactive play exploring the experience of creating art.

The Great Lt. Sprinkle Didn't Save Me, Field Trip Theater (Workshop & Production, 2015); as short play for Rorschach Theater, Klecksography festival (Production, 2013) – full-length ghost play.

Fanatics (Book and Lyrics), Imagination Stage (Production, 2015) – full length musical professionally produced with young actors as part of Speak Out Onstage program (see above).

Interface (Book and Lyrics), Imagination Stage (Production, 2014) – full length musical professionally produced with young actors as part of Speak Out Onstage program (see above).

Alice and Me, Filament Theater Ensemble (Touring Production, 2010) – interactive play for young audiences, adapted from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, by Lewis Carroll.

Additional Productions

This Historic Night, Capital Fringe Festival (2018) – collection of five short plays.

Panel Discussion, Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Festival (2017) – short play.

A Decade of Wandering, St. Bonaventure University (2016) – cycle of folktale-inspired short plays on a theme.

Fox Cried, *devised work, self-produced (2015) – full-length multidisciplinary devised work, expanded from short work commissioned by Source Festival.

From the Circle, *devised work, Filament Theater Ensemble (2011) – full-length devised ensemble storytelling piece.

James Bond in: Nickle and Die, Annoyance Theater (2011) – one-act parody.

Life in Three Dimensions, Mercury Players Theater (2009) – short play.

Festivals/Events

Detective Kelcey and the Equinox Paradox, Imagination Stage, Play in a Day (Production, 2016) – short absurd play.

back to the island, Rorschach Theater, Klecksography festival (Production, 2015) – short play with music.

Fox Cried, *devised work, Source Festival (Production, 2013) – short multidisciplinary devised work, one of Source Festival “Artistic Blind Dates.” Later expanded and self-produced. (see above)

Development

Retcon, Independent (Reading, 2023) – full-length drama.

Transferal, Spooky Action Theater (Workshop & Reading, 2020); Rorschach Theater (Workshop & Reading, 2018) – full-length drama.

Crazy Weird, Adirondack Shakespeare Company (Reading, 2016) – one-act drama.

Journeying Jack (with David Novak), Asheville Creative Arts (Workshop & Reading, 2015) – full-length TYA play.

* password to video: onlymakebelieve

A Decade of Wandering, Filament Theater Ensemble (Reading, 2013); Northwestern University (Workshop & Reading, 2009) – see above.

Unproduced

The Gospel of Maree – Full-length Quirky Drama; As a doomsday cult leader sincerely predicts the end of the world every year, and is constantly disappointed, she explores the nature of faith, healing, and belonging in this world while searching for the key to gain her access to Spaceship Heaven.

Teleplays

Failure – Half-hour Sardonic Family Drama; *When an unfulfilled theater director is pressured into teaching drama at his ambitious daughter's ultra-privileged school, he juggles his roles as parent vs. artist as he tries to assert his highbrow artistic vision over this vacuous realm of musical theater drones.*

The Lizard People – Half-hour Serialized Conspiracy Fiction Comedy; *When a headstrong idealist fed up with self-interested and incompetent bosses is hired by the Illuminati to save them from their inept selves, she must learn to work with, not against, them to keep the world from falling apart, while attempting to do some good, in the process.*

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Work Experience

Company Member, Only Make Believe (2017–2021) – Performed touring interactive shows from a repertoire of 10+ plays for children in hospitals, care facilities, and special education schools.

Standardized Patient, George Washington University, Johns Hopkins University, others (2013–2021) – Performed patient interactions with medical students in educational setting. Provided feedback, focusing on interpersonal skills, and/or graded students' performance on practical exams.

Test Prep Instructor, The Princeton Review (2011–2015) – Taught/ tutored the ACT, SAT, and GRE.

Selected [Acting Credits](#)[^]

Balloonacy, Old Man – Imagination Stage, dir. Kate Bryer (2022) – TVY (Theater for the Very Young) Clown performance; one of many TVY productions I have performed in at Imagination Stage.

Lovers' Vows, Frederick/Butler – We Happy Few, dir. Kerry McGee (2019) – Helen Hayes Nomination, Outstanding Supporting Actor.

The Cherry Orchard, Fiers/Yasha – Faction of Fools, dir. Paul Reisman (2018) – Commedia dell'Arte; I am a Company Member with Faction of Fools, and have performed in numerous productions with them.

Mime Orpheus, Ensemble – The Mime Company, dir. Amanda Brown (2010) – I am a former company member of The Mime Company.

Additional Training

[Improvisation](#) – Upright Citizens' Brigade; Annoyance Theater; Second City.

Physical Theater (Clown, Mime, Commedia dell'Arte) – Synetic Theater; Dody Disanto; Mark Jaster/Sabrina Mandell; Faction of Fools; The Mime Company; Giovanni Fusetti.

[^] Full resume available [here](#).