

Brigid Wallace - Artistic Statement

Sometimes my mind will get a strong image in my head, triggered by a phrase someone said or my own twisty train of thought. Sometimes it is as random and abstract as an image of my friend as a cartoon playing piano wildly, smoke flying from his fingertips. Sometimes it helps me understand my world more clearly. This image for example: a colorful construction site, but instead of a "Men at Work" sign, it would be a "People at Play" sign. And what we're constructing is a person's life. We are building, from the foundation up, a life of a character to create their individual architecture - to tell their story.

Actors are builders. We start with the basics: what we understand about humanity as a whole. That is our cornerstone. Then we refine with specifics of our character's background and decorate with quirks to create the truest version of the character. This process builds the most sturdy home for our work to live in and interact with its environment, forming relationships and revealing the story. This process is grueling work, but it is "Play." We have to approach our creation with the wide eyes of a child, unafraid of the challenges we will face. In fact, we are hungry to take them on and delighted by what may come from them. This is how I strive to approach my work.

Through acting, music, voice work, teaching, and writing, I create characters and scenarios that challenge our concepts of failure, that remind us that our purpose and joy in life is drawn from others, that explore the ideas of capitalism and commodification that are such prevalent themes in our culture, and that remind us of what we all share as human beings, especially our shared dignity and right to have our love and our lives.

I am able to do this work through research and dramaturgy with a particular interest in the anthropology of other groups. I also use my understanding and exploration of who I am and how my relationships work, which often becomes clear through observation and writing, to connect these ideas to my characters. My focus and listening skills are two of my strengths. I find they make me a stronger member of the ensemble, and, when in a leadership position, they make me more open-minded. The stories I receive from others bring me back to our common human condition and detail the different ways human beings can experience our shared narrative.

As a theatre artist in the DC area and recent college graduate, I play from my perspective and my experience in this generation. I work with the desire to understand and connect to the diverse communities of the area and expand beyond my peers to absorb our recent American history. I also strive to use these experiences to leave wisdom for the upcoming generations to navigate the quickly changing, quickly shrinking world.

My work in the theatre as performer, writer, and teacher is about mending divides, translating and mediating between opposing perspectives, and reminding audiences and artists (including myself) that it is worth the risk. It is worth risking discomfort, challenging our unconscious bias, and falling on our faces for the sake of connecting, storytelling, sharing, and unifying.

My mission is to go back to our cornerstone, and start building something new with the community through play, through joy, through curiosity, and through love.