

# Kalliope Vlahos, Professional Theatre Artist and Educator

TECHNICAL DIRECTION | DESIGN | EDUCATION

## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

The study and participation in the theatre arts can be seen as the examination of humanity. At its best, theatre creates meaning and compels our attention, enlightening and influencing the practitioners and observers perception of self and the societies in which we live.

As an educator, I endeavor to create an accessible learning environment within the classroom, rehearsals, and in the design process. By doing so, I strive to prepare each student for the literal and the figurative “stages” of life. In the study and creation of theatre, I encourage students to look, both out at the world and into their own hearts, and think critically on the reasoning behind production design, the written play, as well as actor and director choices. To that end, students need multiple and varied opportunities to attain a set of skills that, while specific to theatre arts, also offer a structure for success in all aspects of life. These skills include:

- Critical thinking: students attain this through script analysis, construction techniques, and conceptual design work;
- Project management: attained through the inherent collaborative nature of the theatre, both in the classroom and on stage. A stage production is fundamentally a business project. There are teams of people working together to successfully accomplish a task on time and on budget;
- Grit: I invite students to have courage and faith in their ideas; this builds strength in their personal character while they are also being taught to stand at the helm of a theatrical production, whether realized or conceptualized;
- Respect: The theatrical community, and the plays which are found within it, is a representation of all of humanity. Students are taught to internalize a code of professional and ethical behavior adaptable to any situation.

As an educator, I believe that instruction is more than imparting content. My goal is to assist students in finding, inspiring, and nurturing new thoughts and bridging these newly found ideas with the knowledge the students already had. This means that the act of teaching is the enabling of students to merge new material into their lives. This engaging method of teaching draws the students into an ongoing journey of discovery, creating life-long learners.

Technology is ever-present in our daily lives and essential to the art of theatre. I find that by using a variety of technology within the classroom, as well as stage production, I am able to better impart theatrical subject matter and connect to the newest generation of collegiate students.

As an educator, I believe it is necessary that students be guided in exercising and reinforcing their abilities to communicate thoughts proficiently in three domains: writing (play reviews/critiques, conceptual design summaries, essay questions on exams), spoken expression (verbal discussion and critique), and public performance (in-class presentations and on stage).

To conclude, by offering students many opportunities to unearth and commune with their inherent knowledge and abilities, my goal is to make them aware of their own creative talents and excite the students passion for whatever their life goals may be, whether in theatre or otherwise.