

# Maegan McNerney Azar

DIRECTING  
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“To reach out is to risk.”

Anne Bogart

People come to the theatre to share a common experience, to reach for similarities, and to understand differences. As a director, my principle task is to tell a story by empowering thoughts and questions. I am guided by a passion for artistry, for physical interpretation, and for expression. By giving the audience a sense of tradition, I hope to create an environment where people can risk their ideas, where ideas can take new shape, where people can commune.

I believe that the theatre is our modern day temple. Theatre is a place where dueling objectives can create questions. It is a place where people come who have lost a sense of tradition. Theatre guides new beliefs, it searches to unify the human experience, it finds commonalities where there was only strife. We enter the theatre to connect with other souls, and we reach awareness through stories - stories that give us a sense of who we were, who we are, or who we wish to be. The written word is the leaping-off point for these stories, and it is what we do with them that tells the tale.

I believe that physical interpretation is what creates and augments a solid story. I strive to unlock our hopes and dreams, our goals and objectives, our conflicts and resolutions that have been trapped for generations. In the oldest sense of theatre tradition, we are searching for meaning and we are searching for shared experiences. Locked inside our muscles are stories full of emotional depth, and by tapping into those feelings, we can garnish a deeper understanding of our past. By visually representing aspects of a story's style, we can make the most challenging concepts palatable.

I believe that the ensemble is the strongest collaboration that exists in theatre. By creating an environment where designers and actors can thrive and share interpretation, I hope to create a corps of devoted contributors. My task is not solitary, but rather dependent on a cohesive team of collaborators. Guiding a company toward successful collaboration is a direct result of communion. I not only strive to give the audience a sense of tradition, but also the team with which I work. That is, perhaps, the greatest benefit of theatre - creating an ensemble of interpreters, of allies, of conspirators. The best stories are ones that are shared, both in creation and presentation.

I believe that the theatre is a place that can reach beyond the limits of realism. In its very nature theatre is unrealistic: people gathered watching a play about the mundanity of daily life is not very dramatic. We come to the theatre to watch heightened experiences that result in profound decisions and resolve in significant alterations to a character's path. We should not force theatre into realism if we can reach beyond daily expression to create momentous insight and significance. Theatre is an art form that gauges its revelation by how many steps near or far it is to realism.

Theatre is powerful. It is a place where people come for catharsis. It is a place where people come to find a sense of tradition. Theatre is a place where people come with questions and doubts, but they do not necessarily require answers. As a director, my aesthetic begins and ends with the story, but I do not limit the possibilities that can emerge in the honest telling of it.