

# LAURA EPPERSON

theatre artist | educator | collaborator

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## CURRENT ARTISTIC RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Aesthetic Perspectives in Arts for Change  
Applied Drama/Theatre and  
Transformative Justice  
Arts-full Learning toward Belonging  
Community Engaged Performance  
Cross-cultural Collaboration

Drama-Based Pedagogy and Practice  
Ensemble Devising  
Healing Centered Engagement  
Theatre for Dialogue  
Theatre with Youth

## EDUCATION

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**University of Texas at Austin**

Austin, TX

**Master of Fine Arts, Drama and Theatre for Youth and Communities**

2020

Graduate Portfolio in Women's and Gender Studies

**University of Evansville**

Evansville, IN

**Bachelor of Science, Theatre Performance**

2012

Associated Study in French

*Summa Cum Laude*

## UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS AND TEACHING

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**Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University**

Blacksburg, VA

**Post-MFA Fellow in Applied Performance**, School of Performing Arts

2021-2023

- 2-year faculty appointment in the Theatre and Cinema Program.
- Designed and taught acting and collaboration courses for undergraduate students from diverse majors.
  - Spring 2023
    - TA 2024: Introduction to Acting (one section)
    - TA 2404: Introduction to Applied Collaborative Techniques (two sections)
  - Fall 2022
    - TA 2024: Introduction to Acting (two sections)
    - TA 2404: Introduction to Applied Collaborative Techniques (two sections)
  - Spring 2022
    - TA 2024: Introduction to Acting (two sections)
    - TA 2404: Introduction to Applied Collaborative Techniques (two sections)
  - Fall 2021
    - TA 2024: Introduction to Acting (two sections)
    - TA 2404: Introduction to Applied Collaborative Techniques (one section)

**Faculty Fellow**, Center for Communicating Science

2022-2023

- Designed and led performance-based explorations of communication, collaboration, and connection across academic disciplines.
- Supported partnership development with the Center for the Enhancement of Engineering Diversity (CEED).
- Workshops include:

- Summer 2023, Summer 2022 – CEED Summer Program Staff Training and High School Camp Workshops.
- Spring 2023, Spring 2022 – “Transferring Stories,” Transfer Student Mentor Workshop.
- Fall 2022 – “Communication and Collaboration,” Advising Ambassadors Workshop.
- Spring 2022 – “Communicating Science and Identity,” Developmental Psychology Brown Bag Series.

**Guest Artist-Lecturer**, WGS 5914: Feminist Theory 2022

- 2-hour workshop staging a street theatre performance in response to the supreme court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* (Professor Dr. Bonnie Zare).

**University of Texas at Austin** Austin, TX

**Guest Artist-Lecturer**, TD 387D: Performing Justice Project 2024 (remote)

- 1.5-hour class co-led with Faith Hillis exploring co-facilitation in performance-building with youth. (Professor Lynn Hoare)

**Instructor**, Department of Theatre and Dance 2018-2020

- Designed and taught courses for undergraduate students from diverse majors to explore foundational theatre and drama theories, skills, and practices.
  - Spring 2020 – TD 303: Fundamentals of Acting (Transitioned courses to online instruction in response to Covid-19 pandemic.)
  - Fall 2019 – TD 306: Introduction to Improvisational Drama
  - Spring 2019 – FA 308: Arts Integration for Multidisciplinary Connections (Collaboratively Taught with Dr. Beth Link, Faith Hillis, and Lara Dossett.)
  - Spring 2018 – FA 308: Arts Integration for Multidisciplinary Connections (Collaboratively Taught with Dr. Beth Link, Faith Hillis, and Stephanie Kent.)

**Teaching Assistant**, Department of Theatre and Dance 2018-2020

- Co-taught graduate and undergraduate courses in drama and theatre for youth and communities.
  - Spring 2020 – TD 383P: Drama and Theatre Applications in Museums (Professor Katie Dawson)
  - Fall 2019 – TD 326D: Theatre for Young Audiences (Professor Jennifer Hartmann Luck)
  - Fall 2018 – TD 351T: Teaching Artists in Schools and Communities (Professor Katie Dawson)

**Director of Ensemble**, Voices Against Violence 2018-2019

- Led undergraduate actor-facilitators in devising and presenting *Get Sexy, Get Consent*, an interactive performance that engaged campus audiences in conversations about consent and intimacy.

**Graduate Assistant**, Drama for Schools 2018

- Collaborated with program director and coordinator to plan, schedule, and facilitate drama-based pedagogy professional learning experiences.

**Graduate Mentor**, UTeach Theatre First-Year Interest Group 2017

- Co-planned/implemented weekly meetings to support first year students in understanding university processes and resources.

**James Madison University** Remote

**Guest Lecturer**, ELED 510: Creative Arts in Elementary Education 2021

- 3-hour class titled “Social Justice Education and Arts-Based Learning” for three sections of this graduate education course (Professors Lina Chambers Lipkin and Dr. Beth Link).

**Austin Community College** Austin, TX  
**Guest Artist-Lecturer**, Activating Learning through the Arts 2019  
• 3-hour drama-based pedagogy workshop exploring belief with adult educators.

## TEACHING ARTIST PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

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### *International Arts Collaborations, Training, and Consulting*

**U.S. Embassy Warsaw** Warsaw, Poland  
**Teaching Artist**, Performing Justice Project 2024  
• In partnership with Kulawa Warszawa, design and facilitate 2-week performance-building residency that explores identity and (in)justice with young adults with physical disabilities.

**Africa/US Teaching Artist Collective** Remote  
**Founding Member** 2021-present  
• Collaborate with colleagues in Ghana, South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, Egypt, Malawi, Uganda, New York City, and Georgia (USA) to promote the efforts of teaching artists in our communities and beyond.

**U.S. Embassy Sarajevo** Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)  
**Arts Integration Expert**, Arts Integrated Teaching Community 2022 (remote)  
• 2-hour workshop titled “The Performing Justice Project: Exploring Identity and Imagining Possibilities.”  
• Used performance action to explore identity-based power and oppression with BiH educators.  
**Curriculum and Resource Specialist**, One BiH One Book 2020 (remote)  
• Created and implemented arts-based virtual workshops and digital resources to support English teachers across BiH in engaging students in the novel *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone.  
**Instructor**, Applied Drama Institute 2019  
• 4-day intensive in drama-based pedagogy for 60 educators across BiH.

**National Chenchi University (Taiwan)** Remote  
**Lecturer and Learning Designer**, Experimental Education Center 2021  
• 3-day institute titled “Applied Drama Institute: Critical and Creative Teaching in the K-16 Classroom.”  
• Introduced drama-based pedagogy to 50 local educators and University researchers.

**Foundation for Rare Disorders (Taiwan)** Remote  
**Consultant**, Patient Autonomy Research Center 2021  
• Advised teaching artist I-Chia Chui on partnership development and project design for this new collaboration focused on supporting “the upcoming grief” for families of people with advanced care plans.

**Educators Institute on Human Rights** Remote  
**Teaching Artist**, How the Arts (Re)Shape Human Rights Education: Exemplary Lessons from Around the Globe 2020

- 1-hour model lesson/discussion for an international webinar series.
- Explored how to use performance to explore race and gender with youth.

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**International Teaching Artist Collaborative** Remote  
**Teaching Artist**, ITAC 5 Conference (hosted by South Korea) 2020

- 2-hour invited workshop titled “Ground, Shape, Drive: Translating your Artistic Process into a Reflexive Teaching Artist Practice.”

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**University of South Australia** Adelaide, Australia  
**Instructor**, Winter Creative Body-based Learning Institute 2018

- 2-day intensive in drama-based pedagogy and aboriginal pedagogy for K-12 and university educators.

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**Carclew** Adelaide, Australia  
**Curriculum Consultant** 2018

- Supported structure and curriculum development of a 4-week drama-based pedagogy math residency.

**Arts for Change Projects and Workshops**

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**Performing Justice Project** Various Locations  
**Resident Teaching Artist** 2019-present

- Design and facilitate youth-centered play-building processes to explore identity-based (in)justice.
- Develop professional learning experiences for educators and artists to explore how to engage youth in exploration of racial and gender justice.
  - 2021 (remote)
    - Residency at Wheelock Family Theatre: 6-week virtual project, 9 grade-college age (13 sessions)
    - 2-part learning series for Wheelock Family Theatre teaching artists.
  - 2019 (Austin, TX USA)
    - Residency with youth living in foster care: 10-week fall project, 9-12 grade (20 sessions)
    - Residency with youth living in foster care: 3-week summer intensive, 9-12 grade (14 sessions)

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**Farm & Wilderness** Plymouth, VT  
**Teaching Artist and Consultant** 2022-2023

- Co-design and facilitate arts-based workshops and strategies that prepare camp staff to explore race, gender, and belonging with campers.
- Consult camp leadership on how to use active and embodied practices in justice work with youth.
  - 2023
    - 3-hour workshop for 40 staff who serve 4-10 year-old campers
    - 3-hour workshop for 50 staff who serve 9-14 year-old girls and non-binary campers
    - 2.5-hour workshop for 60 staff who serve 9-14 year-old boys and non-binary campers
    - 2.5-hour workshop for 30 staff who serve 11-14 year-old campers
    - 3-hour workshop for 15 staff who serve 15-17 year-old campers

- 1-hour reflection session with all camp leadership
- 2022
  - 3-hour workshop for 60 staff who serve 9-14 year-old boys and non-binary campers
  - 1-hour reflection session with camp leadership

**Center for Imagining and Performing Justice** Remote

**Actor-Facilitator**, Micro-aggression Workshop 2020-2021

- Performed scenes depicting examples of race-based micro-aggressions then implemented participant suggestions for intervention.

- 2021

- Arts Connect Houston
- School of Social Work, University of Texas at Austin

- 2020 – Dell Medical School, University of Texas at Austin

**UT Austin Counseling and Mental Health Center** Austin, TX

**Actor-Facilitator**, Voices Against Violence 2017-2018

- Performed *Get Sexy. Get Consent*, a theatre for dialogue piece that engages audiences in conversations about consent and intimacy.

**Community in Schools** Austin, TX

**Teaching Artist**, ASPIRE 2017

- 3-session residency using drama to write and perform original poems with adult newcomers and English as a second language learners.

**Arts-Based Professional Learning Programs and Intensives**

**Virginia Tech Center for Enhancement of Engineering Diversity** Blacksburg, VA

**Instructor**, Summer Staff Training 2022-2023

- Design and lead communication and community-building workshops for the staff of the CEED summer programs.
- Developed new workshop: “Communication Skills for STE(A)M Instruction”

**Drama for Schools** Austin and Clear Creek, TX and Remote

**Lead Instructor and Learning Designer**, Summer Institute 2018-2020

- Designed and facilitated drama-based pedagogy intensives for educators.

- 2020

- 4-day intensive focused on translating embodied learning to virtual spaces.
- First online drama-based pedagogy (DBP) professional learning intensive for K-12 educators around the US.

- 2019

- 3-day advanced intensive for K-12 educators in Austin, TX (2 sessions).
- Designed new workshops: “Developing DBP Capacity through Peer Mentorship and “Illuminating Impact through Advocacy.”

- 2018

- 4-day foundational intensive for K-12 educators in Clear Creek, TX.
- 4-day foundational intensive for K-12 educators in Austin, TX (2 sessions).

**Creative Learning Initiative** Austin, TX

**Teaching Artist**, Interrogating Power through Drama-Based Learning 2019

- 3-hour workshop for K-12 educators that used storytelling and embodied exercises to examine the role of whiteness in society.

**CUNY/Creative Arts Team** New York, NY

**Senior Actor-Teacher**, Early Learning Program 2015-2017

- Mentored educators through a year-long professional learning program that explored how to use drama strategies and interactive practices to support literacy learning in K-2 learners.
- Facilitated weekly workshops and small group planning sessions with cohort of 3-4 teachers at each participating school.
  - 2016-2017 – PS 149, PS 151, PS 171 (all in Queens)
  - 2015-2016 – PS 2 (Queens), PS 17 (Queens), PS 212 (Queens), PS 119 (Brooklyn)

**K-12 Arts Residencies, Curriculum, and Learning Design**

**John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts** Remote

**Program Design Specialist**, Turnaround Arts 2023-present

- Review, evaluate, and contribute to the creation of Turnaround Arts national program content, curriculum, and resources.
- Develop inaugural arts-full fellowship, a year-long professional learning program for educators.
- Co-created Arts-full Learning for Belonging framework.
  - Fall 2023 – Full-day think tank with national arts and education leaders to develop framework.

**Virginia Tech Center for Enhancement of Engineering Diversity** Blacksburg, VA

**Instructor**, C-Tech<sup>2</sup> and BEE VT 2022-2023

- Designed and facilitated workshops for CEED summer camps.
- Workshops include: “Play and Performance: Building Collaboration and Communication Skills” and “Playful Presentation: Preparing for Design Project Showcase”
  - C-Tech<sup>2</sup> – Rising 11th and 12th grade girls (4 cohorts of 15 students each)
  - BEE VT – Rising 11th and 12th grade Black students (4 cohorts of 15 students each)

**What If Puppets** Remote

**Teaching Artist**, In the Workshop 2021

- 3-session residency exploring social emotional learning in K-2 classes.
- Used Zoom and mmHm platforms to visit classes virtually and lead students in narrative pantomime designed to develop focus and empathy skills.
- Liberty School District (Kansas City area) – Kindergarten (two classes), 1st grade (four classes), 2nd grade (four classes)

**Lee Elementary School** Austin, TX

**Teaching Artist**, The Age of “Discovery” 2017

- 1-hour 5th grade class exploring how to identify and investigate missing perspectives from historical texts

**CUNY/Creative Arts Team** New York, NY

**Senior Actor-Teacher**, Early Learning Program 2015-2017

- Taught weekly drama-based English language arts lessons with a variety of populations, including second language learners and learners with disabilities.
  - 2016-2017
    - PS 149 (Queens) — 24-week residency, Kindergarten (three classes)
    - PS 151 (Queens) — 24-week residency, Kindergarten (three classes)
    - PS 171 (Queens) — 24-week residency, 1-2 grade (three classes)
  - 2015-2016
    - PS 2 (Queens) — 24-week residency, Kindergarten (three classes)
    - PS 17 (Queens) — 24-week residency, Kindergarten (three classes)
    - PS 212 (Queens) — 24-week residency, 1-2 grade (three classes)
    - PS 119 (Brooklyn) — 24-week residency, 1-2 grade (three classes)

### **Green Generations**

New York, NY

#### **After-School Facilitator**, PS 5 (Bronx)

2016-2017

- 30-week residency with ten 3rd graders meeting twice a week to build and exercise emotional health and life-skills.

### **Community Word Project**

New York, NY

#### **Teaching Artist**

2016-2017

- Created multidisciplinary in-school arts residencies that invited students to interpret and respond to the world.
- PS 316 (Brooklyn) – 16-week residency with one 1st grade class.

### **NaliniKids**

New York, NY

#### **Curriculum Consultant**, Connect Collection

2015-2017

- Designed arts-based, social emotional learning curriculum for K-8 grades.
- Curriculum selected as NYC Department of Education’s SEL curriculum in 2017.

### **Wingspan Arts**

New York, NY

#### **Teaching Artist**

2014-2016

- Developed theatre, storytelling, and visual arts residencies that explored diverse artistic worlds and engaged personal voice.
- School residencies:
  - 2016 – YCS (Manhattan), “Storytime Theatre,” 16-week residency, K-1
  - 2015
    - PS 303 (Queens), “Next Stop, Broadway,” 16-week residency, 2-3
    - YCS (Manhattan), “Storytime Theatre,” 16-week residency, K-1
    - PS 281 (Manhattan), “Global Arts,” 16-week residency, 2-3
    - PS 303 (Queens), 16-week drama residency, 2-3 (assisted)
  - 2014
    - HVA East (Manhattan), 5-week drama residency, K-2 (assisted)
    - HVA West (Manhattan), 5-week drama residency, K-2 (assisted)
- Guest workshops:
  - Neighborhood School (Manhattan), “Actor’s Toolkit” 1 session, 1-3
  - Anderson School (Manhattan), “Studio Art,” 2 sessions, 1-3
  - YCS (Manhattan), “Creature Creations,” 3 sessions, K-1
  - PS 40 (Manhattan), “Jr. Asphalt Jungle,” 1 session, K-1
  - PS 281 (Manhattan), “Jr. Art Attack,” 2 sessions, K



- BSI (Brooklyn), "Myths & Legends," 1 session, PreK-K
- PS 118 (Brooklyn), "Modern Masters," 3 sessions, K
- PS 130 (Brooklyn), "Music to My Ears," 1 session, PreK-K
- PS 303 (Queens), "Music to My Ears," 1 session, PreK-K

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### **SOOP Theatre Company**

Pelham Manor, NY

#### **Teaching Artist**

2014-2016

- Directed small-scale, workshop musicals with K-6 grade students.
  - 2016
    - *The Jungle Book*: 10-week residency, K-2
    - *101 Dalmatians*: 10-week residency, K-2
  - 2015
    - *Alice in Wonderland*: 10-week residency, K-2
    - *Cinderella*: 10-week residency, K-2
  - 2014 — *The Ice Princess*: 10-week residency, 3-8

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### **Indianola High School**

Indianola, IA

#### **Teaching Artist**, Improv 101 Intensive

2015

- 2-day intensive on basic rules/techniques of short-form improv.

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### **Harper Elementary School**

Evansville, IN

#### **Lead Teaching Artist**

2008-2012

- Designed and facilitated weekly after-school theatre program for grades 3-5.

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## **CREATIVE MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP**

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### **Center for Imaging and Performing Justice, LLC**

Remote

#### **Founding Co-Director**

2020-present

- Create and facilitate performance-based workshops, projects, and partnerships that build connections, activate dialogue, and spark change.

#### **Project Manager**, Farm & Wilderness partnership

2023

- 1-week staff training residency.
- Led project planning, communication, and curriculum development.
- Managed project-specific budget and external contracting.

#### **Logistics and Communication Coordinator**, Arts Connect Houston partnership

2021

- 8-week virtual "Equity and Justice Learning Series" for arts and cultural leaders in Houston.
- Coordinated logistics and communication and facilitated all technical needs during online workshops (Zoom, Google Drive).

#### **Project Manager**, Wheelock Family Theatre partnership

2021

- 6-week virtual performance-building residency with Youth Advisory Council.
- Worked with community partners to manage scheduling, rehearsal logistics, participant recruitment, community communication, performance invitations, and project evaluation.

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### **Africa/US Teaching Artist Collective**

Remote

#### **Assessment and Communication Specialist**, ITAC Climate Grant

2022-2023

- Grant awarded to support 8 projects engaging climate crisis issues in 8 different communities across the continent of Africa and the U.S.



- Supported teaching artists in collecting data and sharing the story of their project.

**Drama for Schools** Remote

**Special Projects Coordinator** 2020-2021

- Coordinated development of international projects that connect educators with arts-based professional learning and local support networks.
- Supported projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Taiwan.
- Collaborated with community partners and DFS Director to assess project efficacy and impact.

**Project Manager**, Online Summer Institute 2020

- Led small team in developing DFS's first online professional learning training.
- Managed project tasks, deadlines, and overall scope.
- Utilized Zoom, Prezi, and the Google Suite to implement the institute.

**University Interscholastic League** Austin, TX

**Conference Coordinator**, Student Activity Conference 2018

- Curated 60+ diverse and dynamic workshops and managed logistics for this one-day theatre conference for over 300 high school students.

**Assistant Conference Coordinator**, Student Activity Conference 2017

- Supported conference producers with logistics.

**UT Austin Department of Theatre and Dance** Austin, TX

**Community Engagement Coordinator**, *Matawan* by Dan Caffrey 2018

- Developed and implemented engagement efforts including in-class facilitation, post-performance discussions, and an interactive lobby installation.

**Community Engagement Collaborator**, *Enron* by Lucy Prebble 2018

- Supported engagement efforts including in-class workshops, post-performance discussions, and an opening weekend symposium event.

**School Performance Coordinator**, *(Anon)ymous* by Naomi Iizuka 2017

- Managed school performance reservations, accommodations, and post-performance engagement.

**Williamstown Theatre Festival** Williamstown, MA

**Apprentice Coordinator**, The Workshop 2013

- Directed the renowned Apprentice Program, a fully immersive training program for emerging theatre artists that incorporates master class programming, performance opportunities, and Festival work calls.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGED APPLIED PERFORMANCE**

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***This is NOT a Scam (Generative Performer), 2023*** — Interactive applied performance. Devised as a part of the Project to Reduce Online Scams in collaboration with the Department of Sociology and School of Performing Arts at Virginia Tech (Blacksburg and Christiansburg, VA)

***YOUTH THEATRE REVIVAL (Co-Director), 2021*** — Ensemble-based performance of *String People* (ages 7-12) and *The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip* (ages 13-18) at Rocky Mountain Repertory Theatre (Grand Lake, CO)

**A PLAY ON WORDS, A PERFORMING JUSTICE PROJECT (Co-Director), 2021** — Youth-devised virtual performance. Developed in partnership with Wheelock Family Theatre at Boston University (remote)

**OUR VOICE: IMAGINING A NEW WORLD (Co-Director, Producer), 2019** — Youth-devised performance. Developed in partnership with Settlement Home for Children (Austin, TX)

**THE PEOPLE WHO PARENT US (Co-Creator, Facilitator), 2019** — Community storytelling workshop exploring who, how, and why we parent. (Austin, TX)

**betcha'fckn'wnt: an experiment in guided mischief (Writer, Voice Artist), 2018** — Interactive audio piece that took audience members on a solo journey of public mischief in the University of Texas at Austin Fine Arts Library.

**REVOLUTIONARY JOY (Co-Creator, Producer), 2018** — Community art workshop exploring Toni Cade Bambara's quote "The role of the artist is to make the revolution irresistible." The event included an hour of laughter yoga followed by a joyful task party. (Austin, TX)

**MIDNIGHT SOCIETY (Co-Creator, Performer), 2018** — Community storytelling event that explored the question what stories don't you tell out of fear that no one will believe you? (Austin, TX)

**THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES (Director, Performer), 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012** — Directed and performed in V's play annually. Facilitated community workshops and organized corresponding art auction and fundraising campaign to benefit Albion Fellows Bacon Center domestic violence shelter. (Evansville, IN)

## SELECTED PERFORMANCE WORK

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~ indicates new work | \*indicates collaboratively devised

~ <i>My Body, No Choice</i>	"Chance"	The Lyric Theatre, Blacksburg, VA
<i>Our Town</i>	Stage Manager	Theatre 101 - Blacksburg, VA
<i>The Battlefields of Clara Barton</i>	Dolly	Zach Theatre - Austin, TX
<i>Nightfall</i>	Mackenzie	University of Texas - Austin, TX
~* <i>Magic Box</i>	Snail	University of Texas - Austin, TX
<i>This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing</i>	Narrator	Prague Youth Theatre - Prague, Czech Republic
~* <i>The Art of Tuberculosis</i>	Scientist	Ligo Project - NYC
~ <i>Graduation Day</i>	Mrs. Claus	Amios Theatre Company - NYC
~ <i>Nicholas and Alexandra</i>	OTMA	Amios Theatre Company - NYC
~* <i>Something Wicked</i>	First Witch	Everyday Inferno Theatre Co. - NYC
~ <i>By Sun and Candlelight</i>	Benedick	Everyday Inferno Theatre Co. - NYC
~ <i>The Brothers Booth</i>	Clara	Speakeasy Dollhouse - NYC
<i>A Doll's House</i>	Ensemble	Williamstown Theatre Festival - MA
<i>200 Feet and Counting</i>	Debra	Williamstown Theatre Festival - MA
<i>Late Night Cabaret</i>	Musician (viola)	Williamstown Theatre Festival - MA
<i>Proof</i>	Catherine	Shanklin Theatre - Evansville, IN

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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- Epperson, Laura and Marissa Stewart. **“Showing up for Us: Healing Centered Engagement for Youth Workers”** NYC Arts in Education Roundtable: Face to Face Conference. Interactive Workshop. New York, NY. April 2024.
- Epperson, Laura and Lynn Hoare, Faith Hillis. **“Cultivating Critical Creativity: The Performing Justice Project”** National Guild for Community Arts Educators Conference. Interactive Workshop. Washington DC. April 2024.
- Epperson, Laura and C. Meranda Flachs-Surmanek, Jenna Phan, India Johnson, Sarah Mitchener. **“Performance and Play: Fostering Student-Centered University Learning Cultures.”** Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Conference. Interactive Workshop. Chicago, IL. May 2022.
- Namayandeh, Alireza and Rachel Nunn, C. Meranda Flachs-Surmanek, Laura Epperson, Maddie Betts, Mason Rosenthal. **“The Intersection of Performance Art and Science.”** ComSciCon Virginia Tech. Interactive Workshop. Blacksburg, VA. March 2022.
- Moon, Beata and Laura Epperson. **“Integrating the Arts into the Classroom.”** Africa Arts Conference. Interactive Workshop. Online. September 2021
- Epperson, Laura and Faith Hillis. **“Prioritizing Impact over Intent: Teaching Artists’ Role in Building an Ensemble Culture of Generosity and Accountability.”** American Alliance of Theatre and Educations (AATE) National Conference. Interactive Workshop. Online. July 2021.
- Hillis, Faith and Laura Epperson, Lynn Hoare, Megan Alrutz. **“Performing Justice Project: Envisioning Racial and Gender Justice with Youth.”** Children, Youth and Performance Conference. Panel. Online. June 2021.
- Epperson, Laura, Faith Hillis, Jasmine Games, Quinn Wozniak. **“The Performing Justice Project: Embodying Justice in Action with Youth.”** CUNY School of Professional Studies Racial Justice Conference. Online, hosted by City University of New York Masters of Arts in Applied Theatre program. Interactive Workshop. Online. November 2020.
- Dawson, Katie and Laura Epperson, Faith Hillis. **“Ground, Shape, Drive: Translating your Artistic Process into a Reflexive Teaching Artist Practice.”** International Teaching Artist Conference 5. Online, hosted by South Korea. Interactive Workshop. Online. September 2020..
- Alrutz, Megan and Lynn Hoare, Faith Hillis, Laura Epperson. **“The Performing Justice Project: Devising, Racial and Gender Justice, and Youth.”** AATE National Conference. Interactive Workshop. Online. July 2020.
- Hillis, Faith and Laura Epperson. **“Performing Action: Envisioning Racial and Gender Justice in Our Communities.”** National Association for Multicultural Education Conference. Interactive Workshop. Tucson, AZ. November 2019.

Epperson, Laura. **“Post-Keynote Conference Discussions.”** AATE National Conference. Facilitated Discussion. New York City, NY August 2019.

Coleman, Shavonne and Laura Epperson, Faith Hillis. **“Fortifying the Collective: #ForTheCulture.”** International Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Conference. Interactive Workshop. Pueblo, CO. June 2019.

Chambers, Carolina and Laura Epperson, Jada Cadena. **“A Method for the Magic: Devising and Developing Engaged Theatre for the Very Young using Collaborative Observation.”** TYA/USA Festival & Conference. Interactive Workshop. Atlanta, GA. May 2019.

Roy, Ananya and Laura Epperson, **“Get Sexy. Get Consent: An Interdisciplinary Performance-Based Approach to Sexual Health Education.”** Center for Health IPE: Interprofessional Health Showcase. Poster Presentation. University of Texas at Austin. May 2019.

Epperson, Laura and Zachary Markizer, Ananya Roy, Mireya Treviño. **“Get Sexy, Get Consent.”** Student Educator Forum. Interactive Workshop. University of Texas at Austin. February 2019.

Epperson, Laura. **“Yes, Let’s! Storytelling and Devising Strategies for Early Childhood Spaces.”** Austin Teaching Artist Symposium. Interactive Workshop. Austin, TX. June, 2018.

## **PUBLISHED REFLECTIVE SCHOLARSHIP**

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Alrutz, Megan and Laura Epperson, Jasmine Games, and Faith Hillis. **“Negotiating Gender (in)Justice: The Politics of Visibility in the Performing Justice Project.”** *Applied Theatre and Gender Justice*. Routledge. [in process; anticipated publication 2024]

Epperson, Laura. ***Our Voice is Powerful: Toward an Aesthetics of Healing in the Performing Justice Project.*** University of Texas at Austin. MFA Thesis. 2020.

Epperson, Laura and Faith Hillis. **“Pushing Past Fear: Asking the Tough Questions.”** *Devising Critically Engaged Theatre with Youth: The Performing Justice Project*. Megan Alrutz and Lynn Hoare. Routledge. 2020.

Epperson, Laura. [“Teaching by Example.”](#) *Community Word Project Blog*. July 2015. Web.

## **PUBLISHED TEACHING RESOURCES AND CURRICULUM**

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Link, Beth and Laura Epperson, Faith Hillis, Giana Blazquez. [One Book, One Bosnia and Herzegovina Teaching Resource website](#). United States Embassy, Drama for Schools, and the University of Texas at Austin. Fall 2020. Web.

Epperson, Laura. [“Lesson Plan: The Age of ‘Discovery.’”](#) *Drama-Based Instruction Network*. Drama for Schools and the University of Texas at Austin. 30 March 2019. Web.

- Epperson, Laura. "[Lesson Plan: Strictly No Elephants](#)" *Drama-Based Instruction Network*. Drama for Schools and the University of Texas at Austin. 30 March 2019. Web.
- Epperson, Laura. "[Vocabulary Acquisition Technique](#)" *Early Learning Program Interactive Drama Strategies*. CUNY Creative Arts Team. October 2017. Web.
- Epperson, Laura. "[Hands Like This Technique](#)" *Early Learning Program Interactive Drama Strategies*. CUNY Creative Arts Team. October 2017. Web.
- Epperson, Laura. "[Donkey Activity](#)" *Early Learning Program Interactive Drama Strategies*. CUNY Creative Arts Team. October 2017. Web.
- Epperson, Laura. "['Oh, I Feel So Good' Song](#)" *Early Learning Program Interactive Drama Strategies*. CUNY Creative Arts Team. October 2017. Web.
- Epperson, Laura. **Connect Collection Volume 2**. NaliniKIDS. New York, NY. September 2017.
- Series of social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum (10 lessons each) integrated with arts learning and english language arts (ELA)
  - Authored sections includes:
    - "Third Grade Arts Curriculum Guide"
    - "Fifth Grade Arts Curriculum Guide"
    - "Seventh Grade Arts Curriculum Guide"
    - "Third Grade ELA Curriculum Guide"
    - "Fifth Grade ELA Curriculum Guide"
    - "Seventh Grade ELA Curriculum Guide"
- Epperson, Laura and Jenny Caruso. **Connect Collection Volume 1**. NaliniKIDS. New York, NY. January 2016.
- Multi-grade, 10-unit sequence of approximately 40 lessons that integrate SEL with Art(s), ELA, Science, and Math. Used for NYC Department of Education SEL curriculum in 2017.
  - Co-authored sections include:
    - "Kindergarten Curriculum Guide"
    - "First Grade Curriculum Guide"
    - "Third Grade Curriculum Guide"

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

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| 2022      | <b>Impact: Climate Grant Recipient</b> , International Teaching Artist Collaborative<br>Awarded as a member of the Africa/US Teaching Artist Collective.   |
| 2021      | <b>Distinguished Thesis Award</b> , American Alliance for Theatre and Education  |
| 2019      | <b>Poster Presentation Winner</b> (Best in Community Engagement, Best in Interprofessional Practice and Education, Best in Visual Layout),<br>Interprofessional Health Showcase, University of Texas at Austin<br><b>Mary Margaret Blair Lindsay Endowed Scholarship</b> , University of Texas at Austin |
| 2018-2019 | <b>Research/Travel Grants</b> , University of Texas at Austin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Association for Multicultural Education conference (Tucson, AZ)</li> <li>• Thesis research in applied theatre with youth</li> </ul>  |

- American Alliance for Theatre and Education conference (New York, NY)
- Courageous Conversations: Beyond Diversity workshop
- TYA/USA national conference (Atlanta, GA)
- Research on innovative community partnership programs (Charlotte, NC)
- Practice-based research with the University of South Australia (Adelaide)
- International Performing Arts for Youth Conference (Philadelphia, PA)

2017-2019 **Provost Fellowship** in Drama and Theatre for Youth and Communities, University of Texas at Austin

2008-2012 **Dean's List**, University of Evansville  
**National Merit Scholar**, University of Evansville

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND AFFILIATIONS

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2023-present **Teaching Artist Guild**, National Advisory Committee Member

- Collaborate with Co-Executive Directors and other advisory members on strategic direction and mission of the organization.
- Communication Committee – support curation and editing of monthly blog articles.

2019-present **National Guild for Community Arts Educators**, Member  
**American Alliance for Theatre and Education (AATE)**, Member  
**Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed (PTO)**, Member  
**Theatre for Young Audiences/USA (TYA/USA)**, Member

2017-present **International Teaching Artist Collaborative (ITAC)**, Member

2015-present **New York City Arts in Education Roundtable**, Member

## COMPLETED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

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**Groundwork: Healing and Community Arts Education** 2021  
National Guild for Community Arts Education Remote

**Collective Practice for Ending White Supremacy** 2021  
Stronghold Remote

**Moving the Needle on Our Equity Goals** 2021  
Mindpop Remote

**Anti-Racism as Organizational Compass** 2020-2021  
National Guild for Community Arts Education Remote

**Rootwork: Grounding Community Arts Education Beyond the Pandemic** 2020-2021  
National Guild for Community Arts Education Remote

**Listen. Learn. Lead. Antiracism in TYA.** 2020  
TYA/USA Remote

**Courageous Conversations: Beyond Diversity** 2019  
Leadership Austin Austin, TX

**Developing Your Practice II** 2017  
Lincoln Center Education New York, NY

<b>Joker Training Level 1 &amp; 2</b> Theatre of the Oppressed NYC	2017 New York, NY
<b>Developing Your Practice I</b> Lincoln Center Education	2016 New York, NY
<b>Everyday Arts in Special Education Summer Institute</b> Urban Arts Partnership	2015 New York, NY
<b>Summer Institute 5.0: Teaching Social Justice</b> Community Word Project	2015 New York, NY
<b>Teaching Artist Training and Internship Program*</b> Community Word Project <i>*Now called the Teaching Artist Project</i>	2014-2015 New York, NY