

RALPH GREGORY KRUMINS

Research Statement

My research focuses on the creation of artistic works that integrate authentic storytelling, community engagement, and improvisation with a particular emphasis on Theatre for Young Audiences (TYA) and Theatre for the Very Young (TVY). Identity and authentic representation in casting and portrayal are the crux of my interdisciplinary approach regarding theatre for young audiences.

Improvisation and Authentic Storytelling.

At the core, improvisation is the base of creativity and connection for actors and our audiences. I apply improvisational techniques that build dynamic narratives that resonate with all audiences. This process allows actors to practice presenting genuine interpretations of themselves, their characters, and the story. With devising troupes, playback ensembles, and my one-man musical improvisation show *Ivories Guy*, I prioritize pure storytelling, allowing audiences to see themselves reflected in the narrative which fosters empathy, community connection, and understanding.

Identity and Young Audiences

The developing young mind is constantly stretching and exploring its environment, interactions, and sense of self. My creative process often delves into characters' true thoughts on identity, connecting them to contemporary issues youth face. These topics include gender, socioeconomic status, age, expressionism, and digital identity. The expectation is to create stories and interactive moments that create a sense of curiosity about identity and acceptance among young audiences. I hope to create a space through this approach where young people feel seen and heard, as actors and through representation, encouraging empathy and understanding.

Community Engagement

The cornerstone of successful connections to our audiences is the ability to meet them where they are. My goal is to collaborate with diverse organizations, schools, and community members to build works together that not only share distinct stories but also amplify voices. This

partnership with local populations is paramount to creating important theatre, an opportunity to ignite cathartic empathetic conversation.

In conclusion, my practicing research focuses on improvisation, authentic storytelling, and community engagement to create life-changing artistic opportunities. Combined with the interest in themes of identity, these theatre for young audiences productions allow families to connect and open dialogue to build thoughtful, understanding, and curious minds.