

JESSE DREIKOSEN

DESIGNER. ARTIST. EDUCATOR

608-385-6088 – jedreikosen@yahoo.com - www.jessedreikosen.com

Philosophy of Theatre, Theatre Training & Education

When I reflect on my approach to teaching, I am fully aware that no one method of teaching is effective for every student. I do not believe in a “one size fits all” type of instructional method. Instead, I seek to engage each student as an individual. My purpose is to discover whatever it is that sparks a student’s passion to explore an idea further, as well as to know more about theatre in general. I encourage that hunger for learning by giving it direction, focus and opportunity, both in the classroom and in practical production work. I believe the most effective environment in which to achieve this type of learning is one which offers a broad and diverse landscape within a liberal arts setting.

“One learns
by doing
a thing;
for though
you think
you know it,
you have
no certainty
until
you try.”
-Sophocles

Teaching offers an incredible opportunity to share my love and enthusiasm for theatre. I find it rewarding to guide students as they explore their individual interests. My teaching style facilitates this individual exploration of the nature of theatre, how it functions in our society and the opportunities it offers. Helping students follow their impulses and seeing them learn from both their mistakes and their successes gives me a sense of fulfillment that I have not found anywhere else. I find that while my students are learning from me, I also am learning from them, which creates a stimulating working environment and encourages experiential learning. This, in turn, leads to collaboration and greater growth for everyone.

Part of my responsibility as an educator is to present methods and practices of innovators in theatrical design. With this in mind, I continue to seek out professional design opportunities and workshops to attend. A good theatre education does not end in the classroom; it must extend beyond it into the real world, so I also think that it is important that I see as much theatre as possible in order to keep current on what is happening in the entertainment industry so that I can pass these experiences on to my students. I encourage my students to do the same. I think it is important that students understand that talent alone is not enough to be successful, that talent combined with hard work, sound technique and an active curiosity are all necessary ingredients for a successful career.

I believe students should work in as many areas of performance and production as possible to appreciate theatre as a whole. When young artists work in several areas of performance and production they learn to appreciate and develop a deeper appreciation for the symbiotic nature of theatre. Having this kind of experience encourages students to think more collaboratively about their work and offers opportunities for inspiration and insight into new creative possibilities.

My goal as a teacher of young theatre artists is to help them discover that researching, discussing and producing theatre is not an end in and of itself. I do not teach just to produce art but, rather, to encourage students simply to learn, whether or not they choose to apply that learning to a career in theatre or the broader entertainment industry. I set very high standards and have very high expectations for all my students, and I strive to provide them with the skills and guidance to meet those expectations. While the level of progress or growth is ultimately up to each individual, I have vested interest in helping them as far along their path as possible.