

Elissa Wolf

Profile

Driven and passionate educator, coordinator, practicing artist, and scholar with wide-ranging hands-on experience, specializing in Shakespeare. Adept at taking notes, providing constructive feedback, social media usage, planning, reviewing auditions, and researching. Interested in using Shakespeare to connect with students and community members, while making art more accessible. Believes collaboration is the cornerstone to creating unique and engaging practices for actors and audiences. Strives to create positive environments where others feel comfortable to share their ideas and nurture creative expression.

Education and Qualifications

University of Birmingham – Shakespeare Institute, Stratford-Upon-Avon, UK **2020**
Master of Arts, Shakespeare and Creativity – with Distinction

- The Shakespeare Institute is engaged in a partnership with the Royal Shakespeare Company. Their collaboration is, “rooted in a vision of theatre as an engine room for creative thinking and research,” seeking to fuel connections between art and society.
- Explored Shakespeare in Society (Past and Present), Ensemble Devising, Shakespearean Performance, Use of Asides in Shakespeare.

Key Areas of Focus

- Theatre and Education
- Research
- Directing
- Community Engagement

Highlights

- Computer & social media savvy
- Strong filming and video editing skills
- Very well organized
- Effective collaborator

Work Experience

June 2015 to Present, Freelance Actor – Chicago Based

- Film and edit self-tapes for various casting submissions
- Attend multiple auditions, study roles, and memorize lines by the off-book date
- Research material related to auditions
- Arrive to rehearsals early to ensure there is enough time to warm-up and get ready
- Conduct research on numerous roles to develop well-rounded and honest characters
- Collaborate with directors to ensure that their vision comes to life

April 2023 to August 2023, Door Shakespeare – Baileys Harbor, WI

Managing Director

- Processed and managed payroll for 30 employees using Quickbooks Online
- Collaborated with the production team members to track expenditures against allocated funds
- Utilized marketing strategies to establish connections between our 2023 season themes and the local community
- Coordinated and monitored schedules for vendors, actors, and box office staff, ensuring the timely arrival of personnel and goods at the appropriate locations
- Developed and oversaw housing and actor contracts for company members, ensuring compliance and smooth operations
- Conducted training sessions for box office staff, allowing them to succeed in their roles and deliver excellent customer service

March 2023 to April 2023, Steel Beam Theatre – Saint Charles, IL
Assistant Director

- Conducted research and provided valuable insights to support the Director's vision
- Assisted in the development of blocking, scene transitions, and overall staging
- Collaborated with the stage management team to maintain accurate production documentation, including scripts and blocking notes
- Assisted the director in organizing and conducting rehearsals
- Collaborated with the Director to provide constructive feedback and guidance to actors, assisting with character development and blocking

September 2022 to Present, Chesapeake Shakespeare Company – Baltimore, MD
Teaching Artist: Critical Analysis for Adults

- Created lesson plans based on the historical context and themes surrounding Shakespeare's works
- Developed PowerPoints that paired with each lecture
- Presented lectures online for class
- Fielded discussion questions and facilitated class dialog
- Liaised with Director of Education to formulate class structure
- Hosted talk back with actors for corresponding classes

September 2021 to December 2022, Chicago Youth Shakespeare – Chicago, IL
Teaching Artist & Learning Resources Coordinator

- Helped run auditions, providing feedback on audition pieces
- Facilitated vocal and physical warm-ups
- Constructed education guide for schools
- Co-taught with other Teaching Artists
- Ran workshop on 'You' and 'Thou'

June 2022 to August 2022, Kingsmen Shakespeare Company – Thousand Oaks, CA
Teaching Artist & Acting Apprentice

- Developed and led engaging youth drama sessions
- Assisted and co-taught with fellow teaching artists
- Created lesson plans
- Cut and adapted text as needed
- Adapted workshops based on the attention and needs of the students

April 2022 to May 2022, Lily's Talent Agency – Chicago, IL
Freelance Office Assistant (Interned previously in August 2021)

- Phoned actors to check on availability for auditions and bookings
- Organized office paperwork
- Made sure talent profiles were up-to-date
- Managed the front desk
- Created and planned social media posts
- Corresponded with talent and clients to ensure that they had current information
- Trained incoming interns

December 2021 to March 2022, O'Connor Casting – Chicago, IL
Casting Intern

- Assisted with running casting sessions
- Read with actors during casting sessions
- Viewed self-tapes
- Checked-in actors in the lobby
- Looked over resumes and headshots of actors who submit materials

October 2019 to September 2020, Shakespeare Institute – Stratford-Upon-Avon, UK
Devised Ensemble Member

- Collaborated with ensemble members to ensure cohesive vision of the production
- Liaised with Royal Shakespeare Company staff to ensure RSC approval of production and administrative materials
- Discussed budget and proper purchasing procedures with Student Producer
- Scheduled and created social media posts
- Created programs and posters
- Researched for specific devising prompts/requests
- Assisted with and took notes during rehearsal

January 2019 to March 2019, Riverfront Playhouse – Aurora, IL
Costume Designer and Properties Designer for *These Shining Lives*

- Collaborated with the director to create a cohesive design
- Researched the time period of the production to craft accurate costumes and props
- Took measurements and made alterations to the costumes to ensure the correct fit
- Created preliminary costume designs to show the director
- Attended specific rehearsals to make sure props and costumes functioned properly

October 2018 to July 2019, Paramount Theatre – Aurora, IL
Audience Service Associate

- Fielded inbound calls with ticketing or subscription inquiries
- Renewed subscriptions and took down upgraded requests during the renewal period
- Became familiar with and communicated the most up-to-date show information to the patrons
- Handled cash and reporting
- Performed outbound sales calls as assigned
- Coordinated duties as assigned by the Audience Services Management Staff to ensure all projects were completed in a timely manner
- During performances worked the audience services desk or the box office helping patrons in the lobby.

February 2018 to May 2018, Hampstead Stage Company – Barnstead, NH
Actor & Workshop Instructor

- Performed in two shows during the 2018 tour
- Played multiple characters in each production
- Led workshops with student (Workshops: Improv & Developing a Character)
- Held question and answer sessions with the students and staff following each performance

Conference Presentations

“Shakespeare’s Asides,” BritGrad Conference - Stratford Upon Avon, UK - September 2023

“Shakespeare’s Asides,” Blackfriars Conference - American Shakespeare Center - November 2023

"Shakespeare's Asides," Australian and New Zealand Shakespeare Association Conference - Sydney - December 2023

“Shakespeare’s Asides,” Ohio Valley Shakespeare Conference - Akron, Ohio - October 2022

“Shakespeare’s Asides,” Wooden O Symposium - Utah Shakespeare Festival - August 2021

Abstract:

Throughout Shakespeare’s quartos and folios, there are only four stage directions for asides and two vocal directions to address one’s self. These markings appear in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Richard III*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *The Merchant of Venice*. This is compared to the roughly six hundred asides marked in the *New Oxford Shakespeare: Modern Critical Edition*. It is from these four marked asides and two vocal directions that we can obtain a glimpse at the possible deliveries and functions of asides, as far as Shakespeare—or, perhaps, his publishers—were concerned. What do the differences between Shakespeare’s text and modern editions mean for performers? How do the different forms of aside-address affect the meaning of a scene? Furthermore, how does public or private address influence an audience’s understanding? By assessing current scholarship, it is clear scholars are divided on what asides are. Furthermore, they don’t often question how their research can be applied by performers. This research’s assessment of marked asides among modern editions is used to contribute to the multiple functions and performance options of asides. The performance workshops, conducted during research, highlighted how certain aside deliveries can change the understanding of a scene. By understanding these aside dynamics actors are able to adapt aside deliveries to fit the character and moods they wish to present, not just what an editor has presented them with. My research shows that not all asides marked in editions must remain asides and variations in marked asides provide a range of delivery options for performers to discover.

Additional Education

Master’s in Shakespeare and Creativity – Shakespeare Institute – 2020 – Instructor: Abigail Rokison-Woodall

BFA in Theatre Performance – University of Wisconsin La-Crosse – 2017

Study Abroad in Performance Art - Plymouth University, UK – 2016

Shakespeare Coaching with Lawrence Yando

Shakespearean Monologue Coaching with Andrew Woodall