

**Rebecca M. Kemper**  
Directing Philosophy & Values

Our society is one in which most people are feeling less and less each day. We connect less with our neighbors, friends, family and co-workers. Each day, we directly interact with fewer people, exchanging eye contact and vocal resonance with clicking key boards, automated entertainment and electronic interactions. Our schedules become more and more frantic. We plan, we work, we do. We have little time for reflection and less psychic space to feel. We shut off our heart, even our minds, from a barrage of violent stimuli. We drink, eat, manage, rush, and sex ourselves into numbness. When this leads to dissatisfaction and depression, when our heart and soul demand to be heard by exploding uncontrollably in violence, despair, or even jubilation that does not fit within the bounds of expected normalcy, we condemn, medicate or retreat further.

Live theater is one of the last bastions of empathy and community-wide reflection and connection. By sharing stories of our humanity, by coming together and allowing ourselves to be moved, to feel, to breathe -- not in isolation -- but with each other, we learn how to be alive again, how to care and how to connect. Theater viscerally reminds us of our own humanity, creates community, and makes isolation, careless violence, and mindless acceptance more difficult. The plays of William Shakespeare through their universal and archetypal stories, told in rich poetry which integrates huge passion, complex thought, and insightful philosophy provides a perfect medium for this empathetic relearning, but we must approach the telling of these stories with emotional bravery, vocal transparency, physical audacity, and an insatiable curiosity for how best to reach our audiences...here and now.

I believe that the best way for artists to foster emotional and intellectual catharsis in the audience is through modeling. We must feel, deeply and freely. Only if we feel, will the audience feel. We must think. Only if we think with clarity and scope will the audience think with clarity and scope. We must be curious and diligent in our pursuit of masterful and meaningful communication. Only then may our audiences strive to communicate their experience with each other. We must breathe and embrace our own humanity, and then give it away generously. Only if we do this will audiences encounter their own humanity. Finally, we must be in community.

To this end, I want to create communities for and of passionate, intelligent and technically excellent artists with whom I can build a way of creating theater, which changes and heals our society. This way of working will integrate heart, body, mind, and soul ***through language*** to experience and communicate each of our individual experiences through the telling of timeless stories so profoundly that it resonates our collective and universal humanity.

This theater will be engaging, joyous, thought provoking, visceral, and above all relevant to our audience -- inviting and compelling them into community through their own imaginative, intellectual and emotional empathy, as well as our innovative exploration of plays and playing. I want to make theater matter again to non-artists, and I believe that ferociously played, physically engaged, emotionally resonant and intellectually provocative storytelling will accomplish this. The commitment and technical proficiency of the actors (particularly that which integrates language into the body connecting thought/feeling impulse with breath and deeply integrating linguistic patterning with our psychology and playing) are of great import, but must also work in complement to the theatrical environment and/or design elements in this revolutionary empathetic theater.

I believe theater, as the most collaborative of art forms must honor the actor and designer's art, as well as the director's vision. I see the director's role as a facilitator, a conductor of many artistic voices, weaving many viewpoints into a cohesive complex whole. It is in the complex, visceral multiplicity of voices that the song of the world emerges. As the leader, the director must inspire, gather, discern, and shape the work of many artists to create a visionary whole greater than any originating vision.

## Rebecca M. Kemepr

### Personal & Artistic Values

- I value *curiosity* and work to foster a spirit of inquiry in all my work.
- I believe in a *Mentoring model* that both educates and transmits values, and that this model is essential to the health of theater and society.
- I value a Spirit of *Generosity* in which every person is honored for their experience, humanity, and individual artistry.
- I believe in a spirit of *Serious Play*, which tempers a strong work ethic and sense of purpose with joy, humor, and wit. I strive for playfulness and grace in all situations.
- I believe that the *actor audience relationship* and *language* are the heart of the theatrical experience.
- I believe that *Exploring Elizabethan Theatrical Practices* helps us to create vital theatrical experiences for our generation, but should not be seen as an encompassing design concept or an end in itself.
- I believe in *open and honest communication* and strive to implement it on every level, even when it is difficult or unpleasant.
- I believe that while working for an arts organization is a privilege and has its own rewards, artists are professionals and should receive *competitive wages and secure benefits*.
- I value *community*. I believe that people of every race, ethnicity, economic status, and belief system deserve mutual respect. We should strive to be good neighbors and work for the community's well being. This means fostering deeply collaborative relationships.
- I value the *pursuit of excellence* and work to feel pride and pleasure in all of my endeavors.