

## **SARA BICKWEAT PENNER**

30 Schoolhouse Ln., Rochester, NY 14618 - (917) 309-7648 – sarampenner@gmail.com

### **EDUCATION**

**Master of Fine Arts**, The Actors Studio / New School For Drama at New School University, New York, NY (Summa Cum Laude)

- Studied with Arthur Penn, Arthur Storch, Elizabeth Kemp, Ron Leibman, Robert Lupone, Christopher Shinn, Paul Rudd, Nova Thomas and many others.
- Worked in session at The Actors Studio - worked in sessions moderated by Ellen Burstyn, Elizabeth Kemp & Lee Grant

**Bachelor of Fine Arts** in Acting, Music and Dance, Adelphi University, Garden City, NY (Summa Cum Laude)

**Bachelor of Fine Arts** in Music Theatre, Webster University Conservatory of Fine Arts, St. Louis, MO (Provost Scholar)

**Currently Studying ASL at MCC**

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

**University of Rochester International Theatre Department**

**Fall 2018 - Present**

Senior Lecturer of Theatre Movement

for the Actor

- Utilizes Alexander Technique, Viewpoints, Mask Work, Laban, Physical Characterization and many other exercises and explorations. Students gain an awareness of their own habits and physical tensions, learn alignment and relaxation techniques, let go of inhibitions and then learn to make physical choices to create diverse and inventive characters. Students learn to read the body language of others and acquire tools to use in their own lives to physically adjust, respond and relate to the world in new ways.

The Actor's Voice

- Linklater based voice class with a focus on freeing the body and voice to create optimum physical and vocal versatility and healthy, free vocal production. The class is student centered and emphasizes ensemble work as well as individual awareness and personal growth.
- Focus on how voice contributes to character work and action. Integrating and applying vocal technique to the text to make full, free, responsive, and specific choices.
- Explore and strengthen speech skills with an introduction to IPA, sound changes, resonance, and intonation. We talk about how all dialects are a combination of physical shape, resonance, and melodic pattern. Students gain awareness of their own speech and the ability to make choices vocally to adapt to the character and the world of a play and take ownership of the clarity and expressiveness in their speech and interpretation of text.

Devising for The Theatre

**Fall 2022**

- Learn about the types and tenant of various types of devised theatre and explore and practice devising tools and exercises and create a piece together using a consent-based process.

### Consent & Performance

**Spring 2023**

- Learn about the history and foundation of consent in performance, power dynamics and how to support a consent forward rehearsal space. Students explore and practice articulating their own boundaries and receiving the boundaries of their classmates. The course contains guest lecturers in victim- lead fight and feminist theory. Students learn a basic boundary practice and then create their own consent-forward performances in group.

### Advanced Acting

**Spring 2023**

- Scene study and text analysis class required for all Theatre majors and elective for other students. This class delves into more text analysis, some theatre history, physical characterization, and sensory work. The class begins with a “Classic American” plays (i.e. Hellman, Williams, Hansberry, Wilson), then a contemporary scene and ending with a stylized, or absurd scene.

### Eastman School of Music

**Spring 2023**

### Consent & Performance

- Learn about the history and foundation of consent in performance, power dynamics and how to support a consent forward rehearsal space. Students explore and practice articulating their own boundaries and receiving the boundaries of their classmates. The course contains guest lecturers in victim- lead fight and feminist theory. Students learn a basic boundary practice and then create their own consent-forward performances in group.

### Lecturer of Theatre, Finger Lakes Community College

**2014-2020**

### Acting I and Acting II

- Acting I is open to all students and required by all communications majors. We cover Acting Fundamentals, Improvisation, blocking and theatre movement, beginning text analysis and character work.
- Acting II is a scene study and text analysis class required for all Theatre majors and elective for other students. This class delves into more text analysis, physical characterization, and sensory work.
- Students study and explore plays from Classic American, Classical (Shakespeare & Moliere), Ibsen, Chekhov, Absurdist and Contemporary Theatre.

### Voice and Diction

- Explore and implement Linklater based voice classes with a focus on freeing the body and voice to create optimum physical and vocal versatility and healthy, free vocal production. I employ a student-centered approach, emphasize ensemble work as well as individual awareness and personal growth.
- IPA (reading and transcription)
- Teach Speech and Diction - Students gain awareness of their own speech habits and choices & the tools to speak in dialects different from their own with clarity and fluency.

**Writers and Books, Instructor****2013 - Present**

Shakespeare &amp; Theatre Instructor

- Teach and direct Shakespeare workshops for elementary, middle and high school students. *As You Like It, Hamlet, A Midsummer Nights Dream, The Scottish Play, Richard III, Much Ado About Nothing, The Tempest.*
- *Let's Play* is a devising and playwriting workshop for students 7-10 years old.

**Early Childhood Arts Connections**

Arts Inclusion Specialist

**2017 - 2018**

- Taught Dramatic Arts and Music inclusion to UPK teachers and students in the Rush Henrietta School District.

**Theatre Arts Camp Director, JCC of Greater Rochester****2012**

Director of Youth Theatre Programs

- Directed and wrote shows for students K-8<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Hired and trained staff. Ran 6 summer camp sessions, 3 class sessions and 2 vacation camps.
- Taught classes, directed and wrote shows, handled registrations and parent communication.

**The Music Theatre Company, Chicago, IL****2011**

Acting Instructor

- Designed and taught Acting and Voice for the Stage classes for elementary, middle and high school students. Covered principles of Viewpoints, physical and vocal characterization, ensemble work, Mask and body-based vocal work.

**New York Film Academy, New York, NY****2006 - 2009**Adjunct Voice & Movement Instructor (*Voice & Movement, Speech & Dialects*)

- Developed the first accredited curriculum for First Year Voice and Movement and the Academy's new Advanced Movement course.
- Taught body-based voice and movement. Using Linklater, Alexander Technique, Viewpoints, Mask Work, Laban and Bartenieff fundamentals focused on freeing the body and voice to create optimum physical and vocal versatility and healthy, free vocal production. Employing a student-centered approach, emphasized ensemble work as well as individual awareness and personal growth.
- Organized performance field trips, and school wide trips to the Bodies Exhibit and the Met. Emphasized with students the importance of living in and learning from the world around them.

Accent Reduction Coaching

- Coached One on One Accent Reduction with students from all over the world, ages 18 to 60.
- Taught Speech classes dealing with IPA, sound changes, resonance, and intonation.

Dialects Instructor

- Taught Dialects to second year students. Using the international resources of fellow students at NYFA, the class taped and musically analyzed the accents of their peers. Focused on learning accents as well as teaching students how to teach themselves in the future.

**Broadway Bound**, New York, NY

**2007 - 2008**

Director & Instructor- Acting, Movement, Dance & Musical Theatre

- Taught & directed private and public school students K-8 in both private and public schools around NYC. Devised, choreographed, and directed shows twice a year for parents and the community.

## **DIRECTING & INTIMACY DIRECTING EXPERIENCE**

**The Company Theatre**

**April 2023**

Intimacy Director (Dir. Carl DelBuono)

- *The Seagull*

**University of Rochester International Theatre Program**

**April 2023**

Voice & Acting Coach & Intimacy Director (Dir. Joe Calarco)

- *Metamorphoses* by Mary Zimmerman

**University of Rochester International Theatre Program**

**February 2023**

Intimacy Director (Dir. Vernice Miller)

- *The African Company Presents Richard the Third*

**National Technical Institute for The Deaf (NTID)**

**April 2023**

Intimacy Director (Dir. Malik Parris)

- *Deaf Republic*

**University of Rochester International Theatre Program**

**December 2022**

Acting Coach & Intimacy Director (Dir. Nigel Maister)

- *The Crucible*

**JCC CenterStage**

**May 2023**

Intimacy Director (Dir. Esther Winter)

- *Ragtime*

**Nazareth College**

**April 2022**

Intimacy Director (Dir. Hunter Foster)

- *Into The Woods*

**RCP Shakespeare in the Park**

**July 2022**

Intimacy Director (Dir. Carl DelBuono)

- *Antony & Cleopatra*

**GEVA Summer Academy****July-August 2022**

Choreographer/ Theatre Movement Teacher (Dir. Lara Rhyner)

- *There's A Place for Us*

**Magical Journey Through Stages**

Director

- *Thirteen the Musical*

**March 2021****Finger Lakes Community College Director/Choreographer**

Director &amp; Choreographer

- *Little Shop of Horrors*

**2018**

(TANYS Award for Excellence in Production Concept and Execution)

**TYKES/ Hillel School**

Devisor &amp; Director

- *The Princess & The Pea*

**2017****Fingerlakes Community College****2016**

Director/Choreographer

- *Godspell.*

- *This show, featuring a historically diverse cast for FLCC, was the most well attended production in over a decade. We sold more seats than they had tickets printed.*

**Writers & Books Summer Shakespeare****2013 - 2021**

Director

Shakespeare performance workshops for elementary, middle and high school students.

- *As You Like It, Hamlet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Scottish Play, Richard III, Much Ado About Nothing, The Tempest.*

**Candentia Theatre Company, NFP., Chicago, IL****2011**

Director

- *The Sea* by Mashuq Mushtaq Deen.
  - Collaborated with playwright through development process leading to final draft and performance.

**Candentia Theatre Company, NFP., Chicago, IL****2011**Producer and Director of *Spark Project!*

- Produced and directed a New Play Project highlighting contemporary writers from New York and Chicago.
- Cast and coordinated rehearsals for 5 pieces, 4 writers, 10 actors and 3 directors.
- Screened writers and submissions to choose 5 writers with diverse and unique voices. Playwrights included writers of color, a female comedian, a transgender artist and a writer/composer. Writers ranged from age 23 to 62.

- Collaborated with production team on all technical elements including: sound, costume, lighting, etc.

**NY Film Academy, New York, NY** **2008 - 2009**

Coach and Collaborative Director

- Worked with final semester students creating and preparing for their final industry showcase performance scenes, monologues and films for agents & casting directors.

**Snug Harbor Performing Arts, New York, NY** **2006**

Assistant Choreographer/ Dance Captain - SCROOGE

- Ran rehearsals with the ensemble
- Maintained the integrity of choreography and staging during the run

**Adelphi University, Garden City, NY** **2003**

Choreographer

- Choreographed *Bat Boy: The Musical*, Directed by Tim O'Donnell

**Adelphi University, Garden City, NY** **2003**

Director

- *Lessons of My Father* by Catherine Filloux

**Adelphi University, Garden City, NY** **2002**

Director

- *The Most Massive Woman Wins* by Madeleine George

**New Dramatists, New York, NY** **2002 - 2003**

Literary and Directing Intern

- Participated in readings and worked with resident directors and playwrights including Melissa Kievman, Lynne Nottage, Christopher Shinn, Dianna Son, Catherine Filloux, Brooke Berman, Neena Beber and many others.

**Honeoye Falls-Lima Central Schools, Honeoye Falls, NY** **2001**

Choreographer (dir. Pam Marsocci)

- *The Sound of Music*

**Pittsford Summer Enrichment Institute, Pittsford, NY** **1999 - 2002**

Choreographer/ Instructor

- Choreographed and taught 2 sessions of 60 middle school students each in full length productions including *Annie*, *Oliver*, *Peter Pan* and *The Sound of Music*.

## **DIALECT & VOCAL COACHING**

**Blackfriars Theatre**

*Dialect Coach*

- *Austin's Pride*
    - *Received Pronunciation*
- JCC Center Stage** **March 2019**  
Dialect Coach
  - *Survivors*
    - Polish, German, Russian & French
- Webster Schroeder Highschool** **May 2021**  
Dialect Coach
  - *Cabaret*
    - German, Cockney & Yiddish
- Blackfriars Theatre** **May 2019**  
Vocal Coach
  - *The Undeniable Sound of Right Now*
    - Vocal Coaching for actors in the show on Vocal Production and Projection.
- Webster Theatre Guild** **January 2017**  
Dialect Coach
  - *Fiddler On the Roof*
    - Yiddish
- RELATED EXPERIENCE**
- SUNNY Brockport College** **March 2023**  
Consent- Forward Artist Workshop
- U of R Program of Dance & Movement Faculty Training** **January 2023**  
Creating a Consent- forward Classroom
- Blackfriars Theatre** **October 2022**  
*Consent & Intimacy in Theatre Workshops*
- Laurie McFarlane and Dancers** **October 2022**  
Linklater Voice Workshop
- Candentia Theatre Company, NFP., Chicago, IL** **2010**  
Producer
  - Producer of *CRAVE* by *Sarah Kane* , Prop Theatre, Chicago & Minneapolis International Fringe Festival.
- Bravo Network / Inside the Actors Studio, New York, NY** **2003 - 2005**

#### Head Production Assistant & Network to School Liaison

- Facilitated tapings and editing sessions. Handled everything from hosting Elton John's entourage to watching Jennifer Connelly's baby, to editing the bump off Barbara Streisand's nose.