

George H. Brown

Statement of Educational Philosophy

I believe that the marriage between theatre and education is founded on a shared belief that the purpose of both is to enlighten the future and stimulate the growth of humanity. I also believe that this marriage can be healthy and productive when guided by individuals who respect the potential of the art to influence thinking and that have a vision of how the world can improve. As Artist-Educators we have a complex charge; we must ignite the artistic spirit and intellectual curiosity of our students, educate them to explore the world and to think critically, train them in the fundamentals of our craft, and empower them with a process to continue their own artistic journey. In essence we must train them to think as scholars and act as artists. Above all we must guide them to answer the question: “What does it mean to be an Artist in the 21st century?”

At the same time, we have a responsibility to educate, enlighten, and stimulate our non-artist community, our audiences, to appreciate the significance theatre can have in their lives. And that knowledge comes not only from a quality classroom experience, but also from participating as an audience member in the live theatrical experience. As my Artistic Philosophy states:

It is through the presentation of the highest quality theatre that we, as artists, can enlighten, challenge, stimulate and educate our audiences. Through the act of artistic creation, cultural barriers can be dissipated, the minds of our audiences can be opened to view our shared world in a new light, and the geographical isolation of our community can be lessened.

This double charge of educating artists and audience is challenging at best and made more complex by the need to nurture our own artistic spirits. The success of any theatre program to fulfill this mission hinges on the vision and strength of its leadership, the knowledge, skill and passion of its faculty, the dynamics of its program, the talent, hunger and discipline of its students and the support for academic excellence from the institution.

Academic excellence is achieved within the dynamic bond between faculty and students in a learning environment thoroughly supported by the administration. I believe in the pursuit of academic excellence. I believe in rigorously educating theatre artists by finding a balance between scholarship and artistry.

I also believe in a need for academic discipline that parallels those of the theatre. I believe students learn best in an environment that I can best describe as an educational artistic home, a place where they are free to experiment, to fail and learn from their failures, to succeed and learn from their successes. A place where students feel they are a part of the greater whole and are trusted to make artistic decisions.

Additionally, I am an advocate for service learning, the use of educational technology including web-based education, and support international experiences to heighten the student's world perspective. I personally believe in life-long learning, challenging myself to make new discoveries, new intellectual connections, and bring them back into the classroom. I support all efforts for faculty development, including the need to continue to work in the professional venues related to their discipline to keep their skills alive.

I am passionate about the theatre and about learning. I consider myself a theatre evangelist. I enjoy being in the classroom and sharing my passion for this art with students.