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Personal Artistic Manifesto

Art is challenging. It excites me because it challenges both the artist and the audience through the topics it may explore, or the way in which the art is presented. When an artist wants to tell the story of a past trauma, the pain can be excruciating. The artist may be terrified others will not understand, but it is the artist's duty to take that risk and share the story in order to help the audience know they are not alone in the pain or trauma they may have experienced. The art may also teach empathy to the audience if people in the audience have not gone through a certain experience, but want to learn about understanding the pain others may face. Art is particularly important in turbulent times because art can be cathartic. Instead of wallowing in self-pity about a situation I do not have control over, I express my feelings through art. It allows me to confront issues I am dealing with that are too uncomfortable to speak about in a normal conversation. The process of writing a song, a play, or a poem about how I feel is easier. The issues art presents can be confusing and complex, which is what makes art so exciting. It can be complicated for an artist to explore a social or political issue in a piece of work. How can an artist most successfully present something like the abortion debate or the gentrification of cities through art, so that the audience will understand? Sometimes it can be very challenging for the audience to understand. But if the artist successfully creates the work, it can spark a dialogue within the audience that may have never happened without the art.

Art is relief. New issues emerge in our world every day, and people need an escape. Art does not always need to be soul crushing or deeply profound. Sometimes all we need is a little joy. Art is a place where the artist and the audience can connect and let their imaginations run wild. My art allows me to re-enter the mind I had as a child, and delve into magical stories. As

an artist, I get to delve into my imagination and create something that can brighten a person's day or calm daily anxieties. Art is healing.

Art is for everyone. It should be accessible to everyone, no matter one's race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or socioeconomic status. We all have something to learn from an artist's work, and all deserve an opportunity to see live theatre. I want to eliminate the elitist stereotype that has been attached to theatre for so many years. I want to create equitable theatre spaces that allow everyone to have a voice with a diverse team of people. If art is examined purely for its commercial potential, accessibility will never be achieved. Art must be viewed as a mode of public expression that we can all be a part of. The commercialization of theatre makes it difficult to diversify audiences as ticket prices only increase. And how can we diversify theatre if rich white people make up the entire audience? Art that may seem controversial or out of the ordinary is the type of art that is most important for all to see. Many newcomers to theatre tend to avoid challenging theatre, as they are scared or turned off because it is outside the norm. But if newcomers went in with an open mind, they might change their views and learn to be more accepting of others. Being able to change one person's point of view with the art I create is the most rewarding experience.

Art is for the present. As an artist, I strive to create art that will serve the present moment. It is important not to obsess over whether my art will stand the test of time or not because trying to create a piece of art that is long lasting may make it irrelevant to the present moment. Instead of worrying about what my art could accomplish later, I should shift my focus to what my art can accomplish right now by creating pieces that will relate to the present human experience. But this does not necessarily exclude using works from the past. Art from the past can be retold and reinterpreted to serve as an important message to the present moment. Concentrating on the

present effect of my art as opposed to worrying about my artistic legacy will help me avoid overthinking about the art I am creating and just allow whatever I feel to flow out of me through my art.

Art is imperfect. Perfection is nonexistent as it is completely subjective. Striving for perfection in my art is a hopeless case, though I tend to do it often. Embracing imperfection creates a sense of freedom in art. I am my own harshest critic, but it is healthy to be able to find imperfections in one's art. Instead of letting those judgements dominate my thinking, I should acknowledge their presence, and allow myself to feel pride and joy about the art I created despite its lack of perfection. Imperfection can be even more exciting than perfection. What one person considers a flaw, another person might see it as the most exciting aspect of the piece. Art is a mirror into the human experience, and the human experience is nothing close to perfect, so why should art be perfect?

Theatre is a space to get to know myself. It helps me to learn more about myself through telling a story about my own journey, or telling a story about someone completely different from me. Having a place to be authentic and learn about the human experience makes me feel whole. Artists should be selfless in order to give one hundred percent of themselves through their art to teach others about the human experience. But selfishly, theatre excites me because it fulfills me and allows me to shed the insecurities I carry around with myself everyday in the real world.