

Erlangen MS festival artist biographies

Artist biographies



Christy Cyr – Rep

An educator going on 13 years, across five continents and thousands of children and not a day has gone by in which drama was not part of my craft. I am a true believer in the value and worth movement has in the classroom.

I have had the absolute pleasure of working with some incredibly talented artists throughout my career and within ISTA. I find it to be an honour to learn from, create with and explore alongside these talented folks. I leave each festival giddy with new ideas and inspiration.

I find all aspects of theatre fascinating. While watching performances, I can't help but imagine all the combined effort that has gone into what is taking place around me. From organising and leading trips to being an ISTA Rep, I bring my collaborative leadership skills to the ISTA table knowing that I will come away a better person..

Student ensemble leaders (SEL)



Matt Baker

I am a composer and musical director based in the United Kingdom. I am artistic director of Theatre in the Quarter which creates dynamic new work with actors and artists, choirs and young people. I am musical director of British choir A Handbag of Harmonies, LGBT Choir Proud Marys. I have composed for several UK theatres and have been composer of world renowned Chester Mystery Plays for the past twenty years.

Through ISTA I have had the privilege of many years of experience working internationally as a musical director with so many wonderful students. I am passionate about enabling people of all ages and backgrounds to create new theatre, often with music, inspired by the world they live in, a world that has passed or a world they would like to create.



Jane Coulston

I am the director of Beyond Repair Dance company and alongside my uber talented team I create original productions for events, television, advertising and film. After a longish stint as an artistic gymnast, I changed direction and trained as a professional dancer at Trinity Laban in London.

My artistic ambition is to build new audiences for contemporary dance, giving people an opportunity to appreciate dance in an open, all-inclusive and accessible way. I strongly believe that movement tells stories in a way that

resonates like no other medium – making us connect to the performance on a deeply personal level.



Claudia Kennedy

Trained in contemporary dance/theatre and with a MA in Drama in Education, I've worked mainly in Europe and Africa as a dancer, choreographer, theatre artist and teacher. I'm also a teacher trainer, workshop leader and schools' consultant for the IB and work with artists young and old and educators from all around the world. I love taking the seeds of an idea and exploring it through movement, gesture, text, voice, sound... to evoke images in the imagination. To create something where before there was nothing. Physical theatre and the use of non-naturalistic forms such as puppetry and mask fascinate me as well as creating site-specific and promenade pieces that challenge an audience.



Will Kerley

I'm a freelance director of theatre and opera and I've just directed my first feature film. I've worked on productions at companies including the RSC, the National Theatre, the Bush Theatre, the Almeida Theatre and in opera at Opera Philadelphia, the NCPA Beijing and the Royal Opera House. I've directed plays and operas all around the world, old classics and new works.

I believe that making good theatre is all about finding the right balance of spontaneity and discipline. It's a paradox we might call 'serious play'. When I'm working, whether on classic texts or new/devised ones my approach is always this: energy first – analysis later!

External workshop leader biographies

Gundl Hitchings

I have always loved to draw with only pencils. Occasionally some charcoal or pen or color, but not often. Currently, I am making things out of paper and light on a small scale but I find the challenge of transforming a small drawing into a large piece for a theatre set fun and exciting.

Pierre Ringwald

I have been teaching MYP Drama for eight years. I love the process of discovery that unfolds in a drama class. Drama is a powerful discipline - it offers us the opportunity to better understand ourselves and the world around us through the timeless ritual of storytelling.

John Almond

I am a trained English and drama teacher from England who now teaches MYP and DP Literature. The common ground between everything that I teach, poetry, prose and drama is the communication of human emotion and this is why I love to teach literature.