

GREGORY SIMS

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

As a director and seasoned professional actor I have over twenty five years experience in the realms of theater, film, television, commercial and voice over work. Combined with twelve years of teaching, directing and coaching actors at all levels of the professional ladder, I believe I bring a uniquely well-rounded presence that would be invaluable to the students at Azusa Pacific. I also feel my faith as a devout Christian adds to what I believe you are looking for in a mentor and professional role model.

WORK HISTORY

Director

Sacred Fools Theater Company - Los Angeles, CA April 2012 to Current
On going director, writer and actor in the late night comedy show Serial Killers at the award winning Sacred Fools Theater Company

Director/Producer/Writer

The Invisible Theater Company - New York, NY May 2000 to July 2000
Directed and produced my own new work, One Clean Statement.

Director

Nada Con Nada - New York, NY July 1999 to August 1999
Directed a series of original One Act productions.

Director

One Act Festival at Ensemble Studio Theater - New York, NY July 1998 to August 1998
Directed the play Murmurs by award winning playwright Scott Sickles and starring Tony award winning actor Christian Borle.

Director

Carnegie Mellon University - Pittsburgh, PA November 1995 to December 1995
As a graduating senior in the acting program at Carnegie Mellon University, I directed and wrote the annual Drama Department Christmas Show, working with classmates who would go on to become future Tony award winners and stars of television and film.

Acting Teacher

Practical Audition Technique - New York, NY and Los Angeles, CA May 2002 to Current
Starting my own small Acting Studio in 2002, I began teaching my self-created Practical Audition Technique to the young, early developing actor. In Practical Audition Technique we work on provided audition material, tailor-made to fit whatever area each student is currently focused on in his or her career and the next level up that the student is aiming for - multi-camera, single-camera, pilots, guest star episodic, commercial, film, v/o,

theater the entire professional realm is addressed based on the needs of each individual.

Goal Setting Coach

Practical Goal Setting Technique - Los Angeles, CA September 2009 to Current
Practical Goal Setting Technique (PGST) developed as an off-shoot of my Practical Audition Technique. Originally working only with actors, PGST has expanded over the years, and I now coach individuals from all walks of life (Financial Analysts, CEOs, Small Business Owners, Teachers, etc..) but over 65% of my clients are still actors and performing artists. I coach the actor in creating, refining and following through on an effective plan of action to move towards their goals without worshipping their goals. PGST, introduces highly effective tools that are based not on the impossible task of emotional and psychological mastery but on making friends with ego and neurosis by gently, and with great compassion, taking daily, practical action. My clients have acquired top-notch agents, booked multi-picture deals, landed roles as guest stars and series regulars, booked roles at top regional theaters and procured professional voice over and commercial work.

EDUCATION

Seminole Community College

Sanford, FL

1991

Associate of Arts: Acting, Theater

Carnegie Mellon University

Pittsburgh, PA

1995

Bachelor of Arts: Acting

PICNIC VISION

How do we work with the very human temptation to allow the ache of desire (or it's repression) to dictate the direction of our lives? How does one find true intimacy in a world where the idea of "surface beauty" is worshiped, thus creating deep cycles of repression and self-hatred? How does one accept it is the nature of the mind to obsess on the fantasy that there is some singular, idyll event that can catapult us into a pain-free world of unencumbered bliss?

These are the major themes that I find self evident in Picnic. My aim as a director would be to allow these themes to naturally resonant and rise. And what I find deeply inspiring is that these themes are as relevant in 2014 as they were in 1953, perhaps, dare I say, more so? We no longer live in an age where the Chamber of Commerce will vote someone Queen of Neewollah or the town Picnic may offer a last shot at redemptive love, but we do live in an age where addiction to social media/entertainment/screen distraction has cast a deep hypnotic glaze over many, and retreat into the fantasy of the superficial is hoped to offer powers of redemption and spiritual integration. The legendary theater director and drama critic Harold Clurman said the works of William Inge deal with "repressed people living, with all their inhibitions, moral confusion, awry ideals and profound isolation". There is a darkness buried at the heart of the play that I believe is key to the audience having a truly cathartic experience. The great trap in staging Picnic, as I see it, would be to create a quaint and generic "fifties" vibe of a time capsule, launched from an idyll, Rockwellesque cartoon-world. Inge fought tooth and nail with the original Broadway director Joshua Logan to preserve his original ending, in which Madge goes back to her job at the dime store losing her wealthy boyfriend and lost in despair. Logan wanted a "happy" ending, thus Madge running after Hal. I think

the reason the alteration works is not because we believe that Madge will find Hal and live happily ever after, but that her flight is filled with ambiguity, hysteria and potential destruction. There are no easy answers in this play, which is why I believe it has stood the test of time.

This is not to say I do not feel the play contains joy, lightness and pulsating vitality at the same time - it does! It is a beautiful exploration of youth itself - innocent, raw, proud, strong, courageous, passionate, destructive and confused. This portrait of youth, both in it's allure and it's trappings, is mirrored against what happens when it's powers have burned away and no spiritual center has developed to carry the individual into true adulthood. But where there is humanity there is hope and each character in the play embodies that as much as they do anything.

DIRECTING STYLE

My directing style is influenced by the many directors I have worked with who are at the very top of their fields - David Emmes, Paris Barclay, Mladen Kiselov, Joanna Kearns, Adam Arkin, Chris Smith, Rod Holcomb to name a few. My personal aesthetic as a director is one of simplicity and surrender - tell the story as directly as possible; do not encumber the vision of the playwright with ego, bluster and "interesting ideas". My directing style is first and foremost about serving the play - as Shakespeare said, "the play's the thing." Everything serves the story and the intention of the playwright. I believe the best direction is the kind that leaves no fingerprints. I would focus on making sure the actors, designers and entire production team all understand and are on the same page with the story we are telling.

I would focus on guiding the actors to create grounded and honest performances. To help them avoid the pitfall of caricature because of differences in age and era and to ensure that everyone on stage seems to be apart of the same natural world. I feel my greatest strength as a director is in my communication with and ability to reach actors. Being a professional, working actor and years of teaching and directing young actors has allowed me to become highly efficient in this regard, and aiding a performer in discovering the truth of the moment has become one of the great joys of my life.

I would work with the design team to incorporate a visual style that reflects the themes I articulated. I envision both the lighting and the set working together to create a world where things appear bright and preternaturally vivid, yet upon closer examination decay and decrepitude are rising to the surface.