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STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

“You can never be overdressed or overeducated.” —Oscar Wilde

My teaching goals are to send students into the world with practical skills for a career in theatre and film, as well as having honed emotional and critical thinking skills as artists and thinkers to take into their everyday lives. Students should walk away from class having expanded their worldview and ability to think critically, whether they continue a career in academia or enter into the the working world.

I strive for inclusiveness in all my classes, and spend time researching artists and designers to discuss that reflect both the students in class and the larger population. I spend a significant portion of my time attempting to both decolonize and diversify my thinking, and unlearning habits and stereotypes I have been fed, with the intention of bringing this work with me to class. Students are encouraged to delve into the context of the time and society in which each artist discussed lives or lived, in order to peer deeper at the art they create. By encouraging these discussions I hope to foster a safe space for students to explore their own tastes, cultural influences, and artistic inspiration. Students will also establish a thorough baseline of pop culture vocabulary that they can draw upon as they approach designing, directing, producing, writing, acting, or dramaturgy in future collaborations.

In construction and technology classes, the goal is for students to foster a sense of independence, and a deeper understanding and appreciation for the work that goes into the creation of an everyday object. Students should leave class with, for example, the ability and inclination to fix a loose button rather than throw the entire shirt away. I focus on thorough preparation work and on honing the eye to see details in renderings and during the actual construction process. I guide students throughout the process of construction, from learning basic hand stitches to creating complicated garments, catering as much as possible to the individual level of each student.

Students must understand that art, history, and construction are impossible to separate from creation in costume design. It is vital for design students to have basic experience constructing garments so they may gain a deeper understanding of the details that make a costume serve its purpose. It is also important to know the established rules—in cutting, draping, style lines, and construction—in order to break them. Overall, it is best to learn by doing. This could mean hours spent drawing, taking part in an active discussion, discovering something new in group work, or



creating renderings, collages, and garments, but the “doing” is what makes the lesson stick. I create a safe space for students to work out concepts and styles in class, while providing a strong sense of direction by prompting them to think deeper, delve more into research, and focus on details and preparation work.