

Briana Rae Bower

EDUCATION:

University of Texas at Austin

Anticipated May 2016

- Master of Fine Arts in Drama and Theatre for Youth and Communities

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

2011

Bachelor of Arts in Theatre with a focus in Theatre Education

- Graduated Summa Cum Laude and Departmental Honors
- **Senior Honors Thesis:** “Our Haven: An Exploration of Site-Specific Devising with Youth”
- **Thesis Advisor:** Michael Rohd
- GPA of 3.91

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Storytelling with and for youth, exploring memory and story through object exploration and installation art creation, devising interactive storytelling performances with/for diverse communities, working with youth to develop creative curriculum.

GRANTS, HONORS, AND AWARDS:

Morton Brown, Nellie Lea Brown, and Minelma Brown Lockwood Scholarship Fund in Drama

2014 – 2016

The University of Texas at Austin College of Fine Arts

Leah and Mike Hale Endowed Fund for Excellence in the Arts

2014 – 2015

The University of Texas at Austin College of Fine Arts

Cohen New Works Festival Go! Grant

2014

The University of Texas at Austin Cohen New Works Festival

Coleman A. Jennings Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Creative Drama/ Theatre for Young Audiences

2013 – 2014

The University of Texas at Austin College of Fine Arts

Elizabeth McGoldrick Surginer Endowed Scholarship

2013 – 2014

The University of Texas at Austin College of Fine Arts

Deans List

2008 – 2011

Northwestern University, School of Communication

ACADEMIC TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Crockett High School, Austin, TX

Student Teacher

Spring 2016

- Designed and implemented a New Play Development unit with the Theatre 2 class, during which students had the opportunity to collaborate with an Austin playwright on the creation of a new play
- Designed and implemented Mask-making and Stage Makeup units, in which students designed and created dynamic “creature” masks and stage makeup designs
- Assistant directed the UIL One Act Play Competition production of *Blue Stockings* by Jessica Swale

- Directed the “Only One Gorzycki Night” theatre performance for incoming 5th grade students
- Co-directed the Middle School UIL Festival production of *The Yellow Boat* by David Saar
- Designed and implemented a digital storytelling unit during which students wrote and storyboarded personal stories, and then created digital versions of those stories in iMovie
- Assistant directed *The Little Mermaid Jr.* lyrics by Ashman and Slater, music by Menken, book by Wright

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Instructor, Fundamentals of Acting

Fall 2105

The University of Texas at Austin

- Facilitated students’ exploration of the tools of the actor – voice, body, imagination, play, and critical and text analysis – and what it means to be a member of an ensemble, to create a character, and to build a performance.
- Led students in a wide range of theater games, improvisation, collaborative performance-making, writing exercises, and in-depth storytelling and scene work,

Instructor, Arts Integration

Fall 2015

The University of Texas at Austin

- Facilitated students’ exploration of theatre and how theatre can be integrated into other fields.
- Worked with students to develop arts integrated facilitation plans.
- Co-Facilitated lessons that explored how to integrate different art forms.

Teaching Assistant, Curriculum and Instruction – Arts and Theatre

Spring 2015

The University of Texas at Austin

- Co-facilitated this upper-division seminar course for pre-service theatre teachers focusing on curriculum development for elementary, middle, and high school theatre classrooms
- Assisted with class duties: grading, organizing in class teaching schedules, and leading in class activities

Drama Specialist, Drama For Schools

August 2013 – 2015

The University of Texas at Austin

- Designed and taught professional development workshops/trainings, which help teachers integrate Drama Based Instruction (DBI) into their classroom curriculum
- Co-Created and Co-Taught DBI lessons based on specific Texas Education Standards
- Conducted interviews/collected data concerning the impact of professional development trainings and the use of Drama-Based Instruction in Austin schools
- Managed the formatting/content of the DBI Network Website

Teaching Assistant, Directing the Young Performer

Fall 2014

The University of Texas at Austin

- Co-mentored 8 pre-service theatre teachers in this upper-division undergraduate seminar as they directed 60 middle and high school students in short plays
- Provided students feedback and support throughout their directing/design process, and during tech week and performances
- Assisted with class duties: leading activities, facilitating discussion, grading, and taking notes

Assistant Instructor, Summer Institute: Activating Learning Through the Arts

Summers of 2014/2015

The University of Texas at Austin

- Co-Planned and Co-Facilitated an 8 day intensive for pre-service and in-service teachers, which immersed participants in an interactive exploration pedagogy and practice of Drama Based Instruction
- Mentored teachers as they developed content-specific lesson plans using DBI strategies

Teaching Assistant, Historiography of Drama and Theatre for Youth and Creative Dramatic Literature

May 2014 – Present

The University of Texas at Austin

- Worked with professor to re-organize/re-format syllabi, assignment calendars, and assignment instructions for these graduate courses and organized historical documents and assembled course materials

Teaching Assistant, Theatre for Young Audiences

Spring 2014

The University of Texas at Austin

- Created and facilitated lectures and activities concerning plays and theatres studied in this upper division undergraduate course
- Assisted with class duties: grading, organizing of class trips, and notation of class attendance/participation

Teaching Assistant, Languages of the Stage

Fall 2013

The University of Texas at Austin

- Created and facilitated lectures and activities concerning topics addressed in this freshman seminar course
- Assisted with class duties: grading, organizing guest lecturers, and leading in class activities
- Provided students feedback on their papers and creative projects

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant, Creative Drama

Summer 2011

Northwestern University

- Assisted instructor with facilitation of in class creative drama lessons and accompanying discussions
- Mentored undergraduate students as they worked to develop their own creative drama lessons

Undergraduate Student Teacher, 6th – 8th Grade Drama

Fall 2009, Fall 2010

Haven Middle School in affiliation with Northwestern University

- Co-Taught 6th – 8th grade students in a variety of drama classes under the supervision of Betsy Quinn
- Worked with 120 middle school students as they prepared for and performed in a production of “Fiddler on the Roof”

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN**One Act Super Conference Coordinator**

2014

University Interscholastic League

- Organized and coordinated over 50 workshops and performances to help 900 Texas high school students and teachers acquire invaluable theatre skills that will help them prepare for the UIL One Act Play Competition
- Led a team of 4 graduate and undergraduate students to organize and run the conference

CHILD’S PLAY TOURING THEATRE

2011 - 2013

Teaching Artist

- Developed and facilitated programming for *New Voices* summer camp programming designed to help students grades K – 9 write and perform original shows
- Co-Facilitated *Writing is Child’s Play* interactive assemblies designed to help students understand the process of creating a story and how that story might be realized through performance
- Taught dynamic in-class writing workshops in designed to help students K-5 develop creative, original, and engaging stories

Tour Manager

- Coordinated rehearsal schedules, call times, and often functioned as a stage manager for rehearsals
- Worked with school administration to determine the logistics of each performance/program
- Organized the tour schedule, hotel reservations, and on the road communication
- Created Tour-Managers handbook, and trained future company members for the position
- Designed and created specialty props and costumes

Ensemble Member

- Adapted stories written by students into stage productions, showcasing their creativity and writing skills
- Directed fellow ensemble members and students in the performance of original stories
- Performed stories written by students at schools and theatres all over the country – often performing a brand new, school-specific production at each venue

DREAM BIG PERFORMING ARTS WORKSHOP

2011 - 2013

Teaching Artist

- Designed and facilitated collaborative musical theatre and creative drama classes for students ages 4 – 14, which helped students develop skills in acting, playwright, musical theatre performance
- Directed students in final performances of their original work

LIGHT OPERA WORKS

Summer 2010

LOW Teacher, Light Opera Works Summer Musical Theatre Program

- Created engaging and fun theater lessons/workshops for students and taught daily games and warm-ups
- Rehearsed scenes, dances and songs with campers for the weekly musical

CHICAGO CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Summer 2009

Education/Administration Intern

- Worked closely with CCT staff and learned the inner workings of a Chicago based theatre company including budgeting, outreach and development
- Developed educational material/study guide for CCT's production of "The Hundred Dresses"
- Assembled materials and facilitated workshops for the CCT/Erikson Teacher workshop: "Using Theatre in the Classroom for Children with Autism"

Camp Red Kite Intern/Counselor

- Collaborated with CCT staff and local Special Education autism specialists/teachers to create and develop curriculum for the 2009 "Camp Red Kite", a theatre camp for autistic children
- Worked as a group leader during the camp to facilitate class activities and make sure that all students felt safe, welcome, and included in the camp environment

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

Summer 2007

Intern, Pre-College Theatre Program

- Assisted Pre-College Teachers with theatre activities
- Worked with high school students on individual monologues/scenes

Intern/Facilitator, Augusto Boal Theatre of the Oppressed Workshop

- Co-Facilitated Theatre of the Oppressed exercises
- Worked with high school students develop theatrical pieces that conveyed their political ideas/beliefs
- Photo-documented the workshop process
- Researched political articles and quotes for the workshop

PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE:

APPLIED THEATRE PROJECTS:

Community Outreach/Head Facilitator, The Fifth Wall Project

2014 – Present

The University of Texas at Austin

- Developed and facilitated creative story writing workshops designed to help students create original stories with rich visual vocabularies
- Collaborated with Creative Director/Founder to transform the stories into full wall projections, immersing students in the worlds of their stories

Director/Ensemble Member, *Reimagining Alice*

2015

The Harry Ransom Center in partnership with The UT Austin Theatre & Dance Department

- Co-wrote and directed an original piece of interactive Museum Theatre for the Harry Ransom Center's exhibit "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" celebrating the 100th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's novel
- Performed the piece during the Harry Ransom Center's Family Day event, engaging students of all ages in the process of reimagining their own version of Alice

Co-Director/Project Lead, *Shrines to Childhood*

2014 - 2015

The University of Texas Cohen New Works Festival

- Collaborate with fellow directors and ensemble members to devise an experiential site-specific installation that explores how sharing stories in, around, and through shrines to childhood can help both the ensemble and the audience share, reflect on, and make meaning from childhood experiences
- Facilitate workshops and rehearsals that allow ensemble members to create original shrines and storytelling performances that in some way reflect their lived childhood experiences
- Engage audience in a interactive experience, which invites them to engage in their own art-making process

Performer/Facilitator, *Get Sexy. Get Consent.*

2014 - 2015

The University of Texas at Austin Voices Against Violence Program

- Engaged audiences in an interactive performance that explores what consent means and how we can make sure to get consent in different situations surrounding sex
- Co-Facilitated audience discussions concerning sexual consent, safer sex, assumptions about gender/gender roles, and what messages we get about sex and about consent

Facilitator/Collaborator, *Patchwork Stories Project*

2014 - 2015

The University of Texas at Austin and The University of Exeter

- Collaborated with Megan Alrutz and Fiona Macbeth to develop story prompts that interrogate the question "In this day and age what makes people turn towards each other?"
- Interviewed individuals from both the Austin and Exeter community
- Co-Curated and Co-Edited collected interviews to create short story collages
- Documented the final installation of the project to support future iterations of this project

Director/Facilitator, *Our Haven*

2011

Haven Middle School in affiliation with Northwestern University

- Collaborated with Betsy Quinn and Northwestern students to create a site specific devised performance involving 90 seventh and eighth graders
- Taught/directed a class of 26 eighth graders, to collaboratively develop and perform an original script
- Created dynamic ensemble building and devising curriculum
- Supported other directors as they engaged in their own devising processes

Director/Facilitator, *Devising around The Wrestling Season*

2010

The Northwestern University Purple Crayon Players

- Mentored a group of five High School seniors interested in pursuing careers in theatre
- Devised a piece based on the themes of *The Wrestling Season* by Laurie Brooks
- Created devising activities, warm-ups, writing prompts, and guided students in a script writing process

THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS:**Community Engagement, *Esperanza Rising***

2014

The University of Texas Department of Theatre and Dance

- Co-Created an interactive lobby display/lobby installation which invited audience members to leave their own thoughts in response to the themes of *Esperanza Rising*

Education Outreach, *Annie Jump and the Library of Heaven*

2014

University of Texas New Theatre

- Created a study guide for the performance which explored both the themes of the play and the scientific topics addressed in the script
- Led post show discussion with UT Astronomer Rachel Livermore

Director, *Selkie*

2011

Northwestern University

- Selected by a committee of professors to direct a show in the Theatre and Interpretation Center's Struble Theatre

- Created an apprenticeship program that invited eight grade students from Haven Middle School to assist the college designers and the rehearsal team throughout the process
- Planned a storytelling event that celebrated Scottish stories, while raising funds for the project

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:

Briana Bower and Jenny Arffmann. "Performative Installations." The American Alliance for Theatre and Education National Conference: Tapping the Power of Creative minds. Milwaukee, Wisconsin. August 2015

Lara Dossett, **Briana Bower**, Rebecca Drew Ramsey, Lauren Smith. "Drama for Schools: Practical Strategies for Reflective Practice." The American Alliance for Theatre and Education National Conference: Tapping the Power of Creative minds. Milwaukee, Wisconsin. August 2015

Briana Bower. "The Journey of the Artifact: Drama Based Object Exploration." The American Alliance for Theatre and Education National Conference: Traversing the Rockies – Local to Global Theatre and Education. Denver, Colorado. August 2014.

Betsy Quinn, **Briana Bower**, Robyn Char, Jeff Glass, Elise Hauskin, Jacob Watson, Seventh and Eighth Grade Students from Haven Middle School. "Our Haven: Site Specific Devising in a Public Middle School." The American Alliance for Theatre and Education National Conference: Lakeside Reflections. Chicago, Illinois. July 2011.

PUBLICATIONS:

INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Briana Bower and Patrick Lord. "A Collaborative Conversation: How a Projection Designer and Teaching Artist created "A Happy Space Party"." *TYAUSA Blog*. 14 Feb. 2016. Web.

Bower, Briana. "Lesson Plan: Exploring Personal Narratives & Values Through Objects." *Drama-Based Instruction Network*. Drama for Schools and The University of Texas at Austin. Nov. 2013. Web. Sept. 2014.

--- and Hayley James. "Lesson Plan: Farmer Fran's Seeds: How Seeds Travel." *Drama-Based Instruction Network*. Drama for Schools and The University of Texas at Austin. Mar. 2013. Web. Sept. 2014.

--- "Lesson Plan: Fire in the Forest! – Exploring Organisms and Ecosystems." *Drama-Based Instruction Network*. Drama for Schools and The University of Texas at Austin. Oct. 2013. Web. Jan. 2014.

--- "Lesson Plan: The Matter Museum." *Drama-Based Instruction Network*. Drama for Schools and The University of Texas at Austin. Oct. 2013. Web. Nov. 2014.

--- "Lesson Plan: The Shape Detectives." *Drama-Based Instruction Network*. Drama for Schools and The University of Texas at Austin. Oct. 2013. Web. Nov. 2014.

--- and Danielle Dutchover. "Lesson Plan: Traveling Through the Seasons." *Drama-Based Instruction Network*. Drama for Schools and The University of Texas at Austin. Mar. 2013. Web. Sept. 2014.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

American Alliance for Theatre and Education	2010 – Present
• Part of the 2011 Conference Committee	

TYA USA	2015 – Present
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