

# MEGAN SANDBERG-ZAKIAN

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## EDUCATION

*MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts* Goddard College, Plainfield, VT  
Graduate Thesis: *There Must Be Happy Endings: On the Raveling of Optimism and Honesty*

*BA in Educational Studies and American Dramatic Literature* Brown University, Providence, RI  
Honors Thesis: *Performance Everyday: Supporting & Sustaining Teacher Development Through the Arts.*

## ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP

**Freelance Director, Various** 2009-present  
• Productions and developmental workshops at theaters across the country.

**Co-Founder, Maia Directors** 2017-present  
• Consulting group supporting artists and organizations looking to explore stories and cultures from the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia (MENASA) in an accurate, nuanced, respectful way. Clients include: Actors Theatre of Louisville, California Shakespeare Theatre, Big Bridge Theatre Consortium, The Muse Project, StoryWorks.

**Organizational Consultant, Various** 2010-present  
• Work with and advise arts organizations on Equity and Inclusion initiatives, Strategic Planning, Leadership transition, Mission refresh. List of projects available upon request.

**Director-in-Residence, Merrimack Repertory Theater, Lowell, MA** 2015-present  
• Focus on developing and directing new work

**Artistic Associate, Central Square Theater, Cambridge, MA** 2013-2014  
• Collaborated with Artistic Directors of The Nora Theatre Company and Underground Railway Theater to select scripts and develop projects; Lead Diversity & Inclusion and Connectivity initiatives.

**Associate Artistic Director, Underground Railway Theater, Cambridge, MA** 2011-2013  
• Recipient of TCG Future Leaders grant for a two-season mentorship with URT Artistic Director Debra Wise.  
• Responsible for audience engagement efforts, support opportunities for diverse local artists, and development of plays increasing public understanding of science through Catalyst Collaborative, a partnership with MIT.

**Associate Artistic Director, Providence Black Repertory Company, Providence, RI** 2005-2009  
• Responsible for overseeing all aspects of theater vision, programs, production, and personnel.  
• Worked closely with playwrights through play development process; produced developmental readings of plays that went on to national success such as *The Ballad of Emmett Till* (world premiere: Goodman Theatre, 2008), *Trojan Barbie* (world premiere: American Repertory Theatre, 2009).

**Associate Artistic Director, The 52<sup>nd</sup> Street Project, New York, NY** 2000-2005

- Produced eight productions/year at off-Broadway theaters, involving young people and artists such as Frances McDormand, Edie Falco, and Lewis Black.
- Supervised and evaluated artistic programs; developed and implemented new programs.

## EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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Harvard University, <i>Harvard Playwriting Festival Director/Mentor</i>	2010–present
Brown University, <i>Visiting Lecturer, Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies</i>	2010
Rhode Island College, <i>Mentor (MFA in Performance and Society)</i>	2006–2009
The Yale School of Drama's <i>The Dwight Edgewood Project, Playmaking Instructor</i>	2003, 2008

## CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS (representative recent)

*Identity, Difference, and Representation: Serving a Diversifying Student Body Through the Arts*, segment of ATHE Leadership Institute (2016)

*Changing Values, Changing Communities: Case Studies From the Front Lines*, panel at TCG national conference, San Diego (2014)

*TCG Fall Forum on Diversity and Inclusion, Diversity and Inclusion Pre-Conference*, selected as organizational participant in ongoing TCG Diversity and Inclusion initiative (2012, 2013, 2014), panelist on “Diversity and Inclusion Institute: Learnings, Successes, and Challenges from the Field” (2013)

*Walking Our Talk*, workshop for MFA students, Goddard College, VT (2014)

*There Must be Happy Endings: Hopeful Artmaking in a Chaotic World*, seminar for MFA students, University of Missouri Kansas City (2013)

*Interdisciplinary Improvisation*, workshop for Music Performance MA students, Boston Conservatory (2013)

*Applauding in Context: Public Engagement of Audiences as Organizational Cornerstone*, convener and facilitator of panel at TCG Annual Conference, Boston (2012)

Co-Organizer of *Making, Meaning, and Context: a Radical Reconsideration of Art's Work*, three day convening at Goddard College (2011)

*Participatory Interpretation: Making Meaning Through Performance*, workshop for Public Humanities Professionals, John Nicholas Brown Center for the Public Humanities, Brown U., Providence RI (2011)

*Creating a Collaborative, Site-Based Curriculum (and Bringing it all Back Home)*, collaborative seminar, Imagining America Conference, Seattle, WA (2010)

*Collaboration in the Visual Arts Classroom*, workshop for MFA students, RISD, Providence RI (2010)

## ADDITIONAL TRAINING

*Diversity and Inclusion*: Carmen Morgan, Leadership Development in Interethnic Relations

*Management of Cultural Institutions*: Gayle L. Gifford, ACFRE

*Dramaturgy*: Oskar Eustis

*Teaching Artistry*: The ArtsLiteracy Project; Shakespeare and Co.; Liz Lerman Dance Exchange; Daniel Sklar

## HONORS AND AWARDS

Princess Grace Foundation Theater Fellowship, 2015

Lincoln Center Directors Lab, participant, 2012

Theater Communications Group Future Leaders Fellow, 2011–2013

Resident Artist at Perishable Theatre (RAPT-or), 2009–2011

TCG Observership Grant Recipient, 2008

ASSITEJ-USA, *Ann Shaw Fellowship Recipient*, 2005

**WRNI, Rhode Island's NPR News Station, *Community Advisory Board Member*, 2008-2012**

**Publications:**

- “Real Theatre for Real Life: African Artists Speak Out,” *TYA Today*, Spring 2008 (reprinted in Namibia's *New Era* newspaper and on the African Children and Youth Theater Arena website)
- “Arising From Sullen Earth: The 52<sup>nd</sup> Street Project's Transformative Teen Shakespeare Program”, *Teaching Artist Journal*, Vol. 8, Issue 3, July 2010, pages 165-174.
- “Slightly Beyond Knowing: The Neo-Utopian Vision of Harriet Jacobs”, Forward to *Harriet Jacobs* by Lydia R. Diamond (Northwestern University Press, 2011).
- “The Ferguson Theater Syllabus,” *American Theater* online, December 2014, with Claudia Alick.
- Forward to *Sila* by Chantal Bilodeau (Talonbooks, 2015).
- Upcoming book publication: *There Must Be Happy Endings: On Making Hopeful Art in an Unjust World* (The 3<sup>rd</sup> Thing Press, 2020)