

LISA DiFRANZA

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www.lisadifranza@gmail.com

WORK HISTORY: OVERVIEW

TEACHING

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| Guest Artist/Instructor, New College of Florida | 2023 |
| Workshop Leader, Art Ovation Hotel arts program | 2017 – 2020 |
| Senior Lecturer, Liberal Arts + Sciences, Columbia College Chicago, Chicago, IL | 2012 – 2015 |
| Director, Mentor and Teacher, Dance/Theater Projects, K-8, Portland, ME | 2008 – 2015 |
| Lecturer, Liberal Arts + Sciences, Columbia College Chicago, Chicago, IL | 2007 – 2012 |
| Adjunct Instructor, Meadville Lombard Theological School, Chicago, IL | 2014 – 2015 |
| Visiting Artist, International Writing Program, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA | 2003 – 2009 |
| Adjunct Instructor, Department of English, University of New England, Portland, ME | 2004 – 2007 |
| Adjunct Instructor, Bangor Theological Seminary, Portland, ME | 2004 – 2005 |
| Adjunct Instructor, Arts and Theology, Andover Newton Theological School, MA | 2001 – 2005 |

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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| Community Project Coordinator, Realize Bradenton, Bradenton, FL | 2021 – 2022 |
| Cultural Curator, Art Ovation Hotel, Sarasota, FL | 2017 – 2020 |
| Assistant Principal for Arts Education, Manatee School for Arts, Palmetto FL | 2015 – 2017 |
| Founding Director, The Living News Theater Project, Chicago, IL | 2010 – 2017 |
| Assistant Director, First Year Seminar, Columbia College Chicago, Chicago IL | 2014 – 2015 |
| Interim Director, The Children's Theater of Maine, Portland, ME | 2007 |
| Interim Director, The Center for Cultural Exchange, Portland, ME | 2006 |
| Consultant/Symposium Producer, Maine College of Art, Portland ME | 2001– 2002 |
| Literary and Education Director, Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME | 1999 – 2002 |
| Artistic and Executive Director, The Children's Theater of Maine, Portland, ME | 1991– 1998 |

SELECTED ARTISTIC PRODUCTION: VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

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| Studio Artist, Bradenton, FL | 2020 – present |
| Founding Cultural Curator, Art Ovation Hotel, Sarasota, FL | 2017 – 2020 |
| Director, The Living News Theater Project, Chicago, IL | 2010 – 2017 |
| Theater Director, Summer Dance-Theater Projects, Portland, ME | 2008 – 2015 |
| Guest Director, International Writing Program, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA | 2002 – 2012 |
| Guest Director (mainstage and studio) Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME. | 2002 – 2007 |
| Artist-in-Residence, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA | 2002 – 2003 |
| Affiliate Artist, Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME | 2002 – 2012 |
| Producer and Director, new play festivals, Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME | 1999 – 2002 |

WORK HISTORY: DETAILS

Studio Artist, Bradenton and Sarasota, FL (2020-present)

Artist

Solo exhibitions in Florida at Saks Fifth Avenue, MARA Gallery, Art Ovation Hotel, Arcos Gaze Gallery in Sarasota, FL. Group exhibitions at Ad Hoc Gallery, ArtCenter Manatee, Art Center Sarasota, Art Ovation Hotel, Sarasota, FL. Cottonmouth Southern Kitchen, and One of A Kind Show in Chicago, IL. Online gallery: www.lisadifranza.com

Realize Bradenton, Bradenton FL (2021- 2022)

Project Manager

Coordinated and managed high visibility "Love This City" project, a redevelopment initiative to promote the downtown. Collaborated city-wide with all ages. Built partnerships.

Art Ovation Hotel, Sarasota, FL (2017 – 2020)

Cultural Curator

Founding curator for innovative arts hotel. Curated art exhibitions, guest artist programs and performances; established substantial partnership with students and faculty at Ringling College of Art + Design, collaborated with arts, education and cultural organizations; created educational programming, led workshops and training for staff and community.

Manatee School for the Arts, Palmetto, FL (2015 – 2017)

Assistant Principal for Arts Education

Managed arts curriculum; created interdisciplinary and integrated learning opportunities for middle and high school students and faculty; led innovative professional development workshops; developed curriculum; worked with colleges to bridge pathways for students; collaborated with administration, faculty, students, parents and community members;

Columbia College Chicago (2007 – 2017)

Senior Lecturer

Full time faculty. Developed and taught interdisciplinary arts and humanities courses, served as guest faculty in the English and Theater departments, mentored and advised undergraduate students, curated student exhibitions; served as leading member of Columbia's Teaching Academy. Selected as MC for first college-wide faculty and staff convocation, and keynote speaker for new student celebration.

The Living News Project, Chicago, IL (2010 – 2017)

Founder and Director

Initiated and managed a multi-year collaboration between Columbia College Chicago students, politicians, journalists, and staff and residents at a homeless shelter to create a theatrical living newspaper examining homelessness in Chicago..Produced readings and community discussions through the Illinois Humanities Council. Project aired on CAN-TV.

Chicago HOPES, Chicago Illinois (2010 – 2012)

Arts Collaborator

Tutored K-5 students at Cornerstone Community Outreach, a homeless shelter in Uptown, Chicago. Tutored students to complete homework. As an arts collaborator, created and led collaborative arts enrichment activities for residents at the shelter

The Children's Theater of Maine, Portland, ME (2007)

Interim Director (short term contract - hired for transition period)

Led the organization through an artistic/business merger, working closely with board of directors and community volunteers, and children K-12, to reshape the institution and hire a fresh leadership team.

The Center for Cultural Exchange, Portland, ME (2006)

Interim Director (short term contract – hired for transition period)

Led the institution through a leadership transition, facilitated a restructuring of the organization.

Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA (2002-2003)

Artist in Residence and Adjunct Instructor

Designed and taught courses for Theology and Arts program; served on Public Dialogues on Art and Faith; Lifted up interfaith dialogue through exhibitions and productions.

Maine College of Art, Portland ME (2001-2002)

Consultant/Producer of "Artists Now," a national symposium

Coordinated/produced a national symposium about the artist's role in changing times.

Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME (1999 – 2002)

Literary and Education Director

Produced and directed annual festivals of new work. Supervised review of play scripts, worked with writers; created study guides, mentored interns; taught workshops; led post-play discussions.

The Arts Academy at Portland Arts and Technology High School (1998 – 1999)

Founding Director (position funded by the Maine Arts Commission)

Designed and launched an innovative, high caliber public school arts program for high school students, created as a pilot program for the State of Maine. Worked with community board of directors to establish the vision and mission of the program; developed curriculum.

EDUCATION

Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA

M.A. in Arts and Theology, *cum laude*, focus on arts and community

Bates College, Lewiston, ME

B.A. in Theater, directing emphasis

Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Arts

Painting courses at Maine College of Art, University of Southern Maine, Columbia College Chicago

SELECTED GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

Saks Fifth Avenue, Sarasota, FL, solo exhibitions of paintings and prints

One of A Kind Show, Chicago IL

MARA Gallery, Sarasota, FL, "Time Lapse" Solo exhibition of paintings and works on paper

MARA Gallery, Sarasota, FL, group exhibition, "Justified+Ancient"

MARA Gallery, Sarasota, FL, group exhibition, "Black and White"

Cottonmouth Southern Kitchen, Bradenton FL, solo exhibition of paintings and prints

Art Ovation Hotel, Sarasota, FL, solo exhibition of paintings and prints

Art Ovation Hotel, Sarasota, FL, group exhibitions

Artcenter Manatee, Bradenton, FL group exhibitions

AdHoc Gallery, Sarasota, FL, group exhibitions

Art Center Sarasota, Sarasota, FL, group exhibitions, award recipient

Creative Liberties, Sarasota, FL, group exhibitions

SELECTED THEATER PRODUCTIONS DIRECTED

Leaner Than Light, by Lisa Schlesinger, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA

Over the Tavern, by Tom Dudzick, Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME

As You Like It, by William Shakespeare, Stage at Spring Point, Portland, ME

The Price, by Arthur Miller, Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME

The Miser, by Moliere, Stage at Spring Point, Portland, ME

The Foreigner, by Larry Shue, Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME

A Perfect Ganesh, by Terrence McNally, Portland Stage Company, Portland, ME

Jack and the Beanstalk, adaptation by Charles Ludlam, Children's Theatre of Maine, Portland, ME

Fahrenheit 451, by Ray Bradbury, Children's Theater of Maine High School Program, Portland, ME

Cool Cat, Nice Shoes, a musical retelling of Puss 'N Boots, Children's Theater of Maine, Portland, ME

SELECTED AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

2023 Sarasota 10 x 10 at Sarasota Art Museum, speaking on the creative process

2023 Selected as artist for Fine Art Gallery, One of A Kind Show + Sale, Chicago

2021 HaLO Arts Fellowship Award for 365 days of Covid, painting project

2019 Speaker, Art Ovation Hotel, "Why Does Art Matter?"

2017 Imagining America National Conference, Presenter, "The Living News Project"

2017. Farm Theater, New York, Bullpen Session, Presenter, "The Living News Collaboration"

2015 Faculty Development Grant, Columbia College Chicago, Painting it Out, book project

2014 3ARTS grant award for community-based Living News Project, SHELTER/CHICAGO

2014 Illinois Humanities Council Collaborative City Award for SHELTER/CHICAGO

2014 The Columbia College Chicago Dean's Award for Outstanding Creative Work

2013 City of Chicago Grant from Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events

2010 Faculty Development Grant, Columbia College Chicago, theater collaboration grant

2010 Keynote Speaker, Columbia College Chicago, New Student Scholarship Gala

2010 First Year Experience 1st Annual Faculty Award, Columbia College Chicago