

James Louis Wagner BFA, MFA, PhD

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Acting & Movement Teacher

PROFILE

- 20+ years as an educator and acting teacher
- BFA Acting, MFA Acting, and PhD in acting pedagogies
- Working Actor: 150+ projects in theater, television, & film
- Excellent with difficult emotional or spiritual dimensions of the work
- Specialized in teaching integrative acting, movement, scene study, & audition skills

I. EDUCATION

University of California at Santa Barbara
American Conservatory Theatre
California Institute of Integral Studies

BFA: Acting
MFA: Acting
PhD: Supernormal Functioning in Actors

II. TEACHING

American Conservatory Theatre, San Francisco, CA

Acting Instructor

2006-2019

- **MFA**
 - Lead MFA Recruitment Workshops around the southwestern United States.
 - Taught the third-year students' courses on business skills for actors.
 - Lead introductory workshop on Grotowski's paratheatrical techniques.
- **Young Conservatory**
 - Taught for three consecutive summers while in the MFA program.
 - Taught "Acting for the Camera", "Basic Acting", and "Improv Techniques", and Movement Techniques, including Grotowski, Suzuki, Viewpoints, and mask work.
- **Directed Productions**
 - "Pneumonic", "Second Class", "The Hours", "Arabian Nights", and "Poems to God"

Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, Berkeley, CA

Acting Instructor

2008-2024

- Actor's Retreat

- Ran annual retreats style workshops first week of January each year.
- Some retreats focused entirely on one playwright such as Arthur Miller, Sam Shepard, Edward Albee, or Ibsen/Strindberg/Shaw.
- Other retreats focused on specific topics such as psychophysical action, spiritual renewal, or applied physical theatre.
- Intermediate/Advanced Scene Study
 - Each class focused entirely on one playwright or group of playwrights such as Anton Chekhov, Samuel Beckett, Eugene O'Neill, Sam Shepard (twice), John Logan, American Classics, 20th Century Classics, or 21st Century Plays.
- Intermediate/Advanced Acting Techniques
 - Each class sequence focused on a different type of skill such as psycho-physical actions, physical characterization, applied Grotowski techniques, and practical aesthetics.
- Audition Techniques
 - Constantly taught classes on self-tape mastery during and after Covid.
 - Taught meditative tools for heightened presence and relaxation at live auditions.
- The Artist's Way for Actors
 - A 12-week course based on Julia Cameron's curriculum.
- An Actor Goes Pro: Business Skills for Actors
 - Gave lessons on demo reels, websites & casting profiles, seeking representation, casting director relationships, unions and contract knowledge, tax prep, and more.

New York Conservatory of Dramatic Arts: New York, NY

Acting Instructor

2023

- Michael Chekhov Technique: intro to all major techniques in 10 sessions
- Integrative Movement for Actors: month long class drawing on Grotowski, Viewpoints, Suzuki, dance, Lecoq, Chekhov, and others.

Evolving Actor Studios, LA/NY

Teacher & Coach

2009-2024

- **Private Coaching**
 - Private career and audition coaching for 15+ years.
 - Retained some private students for 10+ years.
 - Coached actors starring in feature films (from audition to final premiere).
 - Coached actors starring in plays (from audition through closing night).
 - Helped students get into top undergraduate and graduate acting programs.
- **Group Classes**
 - Grotowski Inspired Paratheatre Labs
 - Lab Themes: Gods of Acting, Totems, Beginners Mind
 - Locations: SF, LA, NYC

- The Artist’s Way for Actors
 - Facilitated groups based on Julia Cameron’s “Artist’s Way” curriculum.
 - Used various Julia Cameron books as the foundation of different groups, including “The Artist’s Way”, “Finding Water”, and “Walking in this World”.
- Business Goals Groups
 - taught business of acting: branding, budgeting, marketing, business plans, tax strategy, representation relationships, demo reels, headshots, resume’s and more.

University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma

Adjunct Acting Faculty

2020

- Breath, Body, and Voice for Actors
 - Taught basics of Middendorf breath work and a progression from breath to improvisatory movement and vocal expression.

Naropa University

Teaching Assistant

2005

- As an ABD PhD student, supported students in courses on “Integral Theory” and “Qualitative Methodologies”.

California Institute of Integral Studies

Teaching Assistant

2013

- Supported Contemplative Psychology MFT program students in creating and performing their senior solo-performance thesis.

III. ACTING

- See Acting Resume and Reviews at jameslouiswagner.com

IV. WRITING

Stand Up Monk	Feature Film	2008
Toll Roads	One Man Show	2005
Dante’s Denouement	Short Film	2004
What Genius	One Man Show	2000

V. PRODUCING

Glass	Full Length Play	2015
Share	Short Film	2012
Toll Roads	One Man Show	2003
What Genius	One Man Show	2000

VI. DIRECTING

Student Production - Pneumonic
Student Production - Second Class
Student Production - The Hours
Student Production - Arabian Nights
Student Production - Love Poems to God

VII. AWARDS / RECOGNITION

ACTING

Keep an Eye on: Award	Theater Bay Area	2010
Bay Area Theater Critics Circle	Best Ensemble	Secret Order/San Jose Rep
Bay Area Theater Critics Circle	Best Ensemble	Seminar / SF Playhouse
Bay Area Theater Critics Circle	Best Ensemble	Buried Child/Magic Theater
Boston Theatre Awards	Best Ensemble	Seared/ Gloucester Stage

TEACHING

CIIS Grant	Research Grant	2011
Esalen Grant	Research Grant	2012
Meta-Integral Grant	Research Grant	2013

VIII. REFERENCES

Marybeth Cavanaugh, MFA

Director of Classes, Berkeley Rep School of Theatre

mcavanaugh@berkeleyrep.org

Dr Marika Kuzma

Professor Emerita, University of California, Berkeley

kuzmamarika@gmail.com

Michael Samuel Kaplan, MFA

Voice Faculty, UCON

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Marianne Shine, MFT

Drama Therapist

marianne@marianneshine.com

Paul Oertel, MFA

Founder, Performance Inventions

oertel@performanceinventions.org

IX. TESTIMONIALS

The following are quotes gathered from student evaluations.

- James is one of the most gifted teachers I have ever encountered: perceptive, kind, challenging, knowledgeable, patient, and no-nonsense all at the same time. He has the unusual ability to see the artists as a whole creative being and guide accordingly. – Marika K.

- James has a good eye for priority feedback and will hone-in on the biggest obstacle of your work, making the sessions extremely effective and productive. He's professional yet provides a comfortable environment that's great for vulnerability and creative play. – Melanie F.
- James is a genius teacher. I loved his class. The depth and breadth he achieved, the techniques he offered, and the unique perspectives on the acting process he shared were all done with a profound understanding of the art. He is uniquely brilliant at working with actors and I feel extraordinarily lucky to study with him. – Marjorie
- I felt like I grew a lot and learned so much in his class. He is a tremendous teacher. I have learned many practical exercises and activities to take with me, but most importantly I learned about myself. – A. Miller
- James is the kind of teacher who is in tune with his students; he sees to their strengths and weaknesses and gently coaxes to new methods of acting that not only build confident foundations in the acting and improvisation world, but open doors to whole new ways of learning as well. – S. Tyler
- I've been working with James consistently for almost 10 years. I appreciate how present he is at each session. My inner critic can be strong, but working with James, I consistently feel safe enough to stretch beyond my fears and explore bold choices. His coaching is inspiring: it has taught me to be honest in my art and life. The work we have done together has changed my life and awakened a part of my soul I didn't even know was sleeping. – Marianne S.
- Student Testimonials @: www.evovingactor.com/testimonials.html