

# CYNTHIA CROOT

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## Directing Credits

- 2008** *Apparition*, Anne Washburn, Whitman College, WA
- 2007** *The Ghost Sonata*, August Strindberg, Whitman College, WA  
*Julius Caesar*, William Shakespeare, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Boulder, CO  
*insurgency/Counterinsurgency*, a collaborative weekend of art-making and policy making at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, resulting in five new works for the stage.  
*Buzz*, Cynthia Croot and Sophia Skiles, CUNY Grad Center, part of the NoPassport Conference: "Dreaming the Americas", panel curated by Brooke Stowe and Caridad Svich.
- 2006** *Scenes from the Last Five Years* - (an agit-prop hip-hop musical revue) by Tommy Smith. THAW Collaboration Weekend, part of the Culture Project's Impact Festival, Baruch College, NYC  
*Cold* by Liz Blocker and the Present Tense Theatre Ensemble. Bank Street Theatre, NYC
- 2005** *Reading List*. Susan Miller. Vital Signs Festival, produced by Vital Theater, McGinn Cazale, NYC  
*The Details of Silence*, Nathalie Handal. In cooperation with Nibras and the Mahrajan Al-Fan Festival of Arab Arts, Symphony Space, NYC  
*The Winter's Tale*, William Shakespeare. Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Boulder, CO  
*Spring Awakening*, Frank Wedekind. Harper Joy Theater, Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA
- 2004** *A Teacup Full of Vodka*, Cynthia Croot, Chekhov Now Festival, Connelly Theatre, NYC  
*Isadora... No Apologies*, Andrew Frank. Conceived and created by Lori Bellilove. Isadora Duncan Dance Foundation, Symphony Space, NYC. Reprised at Mills College, Berkeley, CA
- 2003** *The Macbeth Project*, from Shakespeare. El Rayo Misterioso Experimenta, Rosario, Argentina
- 2002** *Three Sisters*, Anton Chekhov, translation by Paul Schmidt. Chekhov Now Festival, Connelly Theatre, New York, NY. Run extended at the Brick Theatre, Brooklyn, NY  
*The Grand Design*, Susan Miller. *Featuring Marsha Mason and Scott Cohen*. World premiere, part of "Brave New World: American Theatre Responds to 9/11" Town Hall, NYC  
*Venus*, Suzan-Lori Parks. The Windybrow Theater, Johannesburg, South Africa; The Saartjie Baartman Women's Center, Cape Town, South Africa  
*Act of the Possessed*, Haroldo de Campos. *Brazil, Body and Soul*, Guggenheim Museum, NYC
- 2001** *Uncle Vanya*, Anton Chekhov, translation by Paul Schmidt. Chekhov Now, Connelly Theatre, NYC  
*My Left Breast*, (Associate Director) written and performed by Susan Miller. Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA  
*Buzz*, Cynthia Croot and Sophia Skiles, from *The War Lover* by John Hersey. Ontological-Hysteric Theatre, New York, NY. Reprised at PS122, NYC
- 2000** *Trust*, Steven Dietz. Blue Sphere East, Raw Space, NYC  
*Slangrivier*, Nina Steiger. New York International Fringe Festival, NYC  
*Mata Hari*, by Croot, Herman, Mendoza and Croal. La Mama First Street Theatre, NYC  
*The House of Blue Leaves*, John Guare. Perseverance Theatre, Juneau, AK
- 1999** *Air Traffic*, conceived and created by Cynthia Croot, a 4-episode radio program exploring the unique

experiences of Alaskans. Texts by Richard Foreman, Kenneth Koch, Sherwood Anderson, Peter Cook, Sherman Alexie, Jack Cannon, Carol Lucci Wisner, Richard Housden, Gerry Sharp, Benjamin Dean, Thomas King. Performed live at Perseverance Theatre; aired statewide on KTOO FM, Douglas, AK  
**Nightwood**, Cynthia Croot, from the novel by Djuna Barnes. Horace Mann, Columbia U., NYC

- 1998** **Machinal**, Sophie Treadwell. Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania  
**Nightwatch**, Cynthia Croot, from the novel "Nightwood" by Djuna Barnes. New York International Fringe Festival, NYC  
**Dynamo**, Eugene O'Neill. HERE Arts Center, NYC  
**Hamlet and Ophelia**, from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Columbia University, NYC  
**Chance**, 12 Poems written and selected by Mac Wellman. The House of Candles, NYC  
**Kiki und der Baker** by Kurt Nickisch, Caterina Klusemann. Radio direction in Klagenfurt, Austria
- 1997** **Culture of Desire** (Assistant Director to Anne Bogart). SITI Company, City Theatre, Pittsburg, PA  
**Freak Show**, Tara Knel. Adobe Theatre Company, Ohio Theatre, NYC  
**Daddy**, Kenneth Finkle. Horace Mann Theater, Columbia University, NYC
- 1997** **Waiting**, Tara Knel. Shapiro Theatre, Columbia University, NYC  
**Evening of 16 Plays**, playwright ensemble, Shapiro Theatre, Columbia University, NYC  
**Number 10** by Samuel Beckett. Manhattan Theatre of the Ear, WKCR FM, New York, NY  
**He's Left** by Harold Pinter. Manhattan Theatre of the Ear, WKCR FM, New York, NY  
**Night** by Harold Pinter. Manhattan Theatre of the Ear, WKCR FM, New York, NY
- 1996** **Swans**, Kara Manning. Horace Mann Theater, Columbia University, NYC  
**Wolf at the Door**, Eric Ehn. Café Voltaire, Chicago, IL  
**In Candlelight and Quiet**, Gibson and Moore. Straw Dog, Chicago, IL
- 1995** **Offending the Audience**, Peter Handke. Bailiwick Theatre, Chicago, IL
- 1994** **White Money**, Julie Jensen. Splitting Image, Theatre Project, Baltimore, MD  
**Cabaret Verboten**, Jeremy Lawrence. Axis Theater, Baltimore, MD
- 1993** **Largo Desolato**, Vaclav Havel. Axis Theater, Baltimore, MD
- 1992** **A Midsummer Night's Dream**, Shakespeare. NST at Patterson Park, Baltimore, MD
- 1991** **The Maids**, Jean Genet. Tawes Theatre, Washington College, Chestertown MD, 1991

## Staged Readings

- 2006** **Sky/Nikita Mitskevitch** by Andrei Rui. From an Evening of Belarussian Plays, curated by Aaron Landsman, part of the Culture Project's Impact Festival, Baruch College Nagelberg Theatre, NYC  
**The Three Hagi Sisters** by Ai Nagai, translated by Loren Edelson. Japan Society, NYC
- 2006** **Softcops**, Caryl Churchill. International Foucault Society, The New School, NYC  
**Empty Chalice**, Judy Veramendi. Urban Stages, NYC
- 2004** **War Bride**, Cynthia Croot. Bric-a-Brac Series, Brick Theatre, Brooklyn NY

**Ubu Roi**, Alfred Jarry. Adapted by Christopher Carter Sanderson. Performed in tandem with THAW (Theaters Against War) protests worldwide, Brick Theatre, Brooklyn, NY

**2003** **The Designated Mourner**, Wallace Shawn. THAW, Brick Theatre, Brooklyn, NY

**2002** **Venus**, Suzan-Lori Parks. *Featuring Tim Robbins, Kathleen Chalfant and Joe Morton* (to benefit the Kazbah Project/Venus Project Worldwide). Joseph Papp Public Theatre, NYC

## Education

### **Columbia University – New York, NY (1999/2001)**

Master of Fine Arts – Theatre Directing. Coursework in classical and experimental texts, theatre history, dramatic theory and criticism, interdisciplinary collaboration, set design, theatrical adaptation, playwriting, and two years training in the Viewpoints. Thesis: adapted and directed “Nightwood” from the novel by Djuna Barnes. Professors: Arnold Aronson, Anne Bogart, Elinor Fuchs, James Leverett, Kristin Linklater, Andrei Serban, Robert Woodruff.

### **SITI Company – Saratoga Springs, NY (1998)**

Advanced instruction in the Viewpoints and Suzuki methods of actor training.

### **Washington College – Chestertown, MD (1991)**

Bachelor of Arts – Drama. Graduated cum laude. Awarded Clark Porter Medal. Member of Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society, Dean's List, Washington College Scholar and MD General State Scholarship recipient. Honors for design and direction of senior thesis: Jean Genet's *The Maids*.

## Awards and Fellowships

**NEA/TCG Career Development Program Award**, Theatre Communications Group, NYC (2007-2009)

**Residency Award from the New Pacific Studio**, Vallejo, CA (2006)

**TCG Career Development Program Alternate**, Theatre Communications Group, NYC (2005)

**Residency Award from the U Cross Foundation**, Sheridan, WY (2002)

**Kazbah Project Residency Award for research in South Africa**, Arts International, NYC (2002)

**Shubert Fellowship** to create *Air Traffic* at Perseverance Theatre, AK, Columbia University, NYC (1999)

**Shubert Fellowship** to assist Anne Bogart on *Culture of Desire*, Columbia University, NYC (1998)

**Directed Research Fellowship**, Columbia University, NYC (1997-1998)

## Conference and Lectures

### **NoPassport Conference – Dreaming the Americas, CUNY, New York, NY (February, 2007)**

Presented *BUZZ*, an adaptation of John Hersey's novel *The War Lover* created with actress Sophia Skiles, and moderated session entitled “Intercultural Illuminations: Practice and Performance.” Panelists included Ruth Margraff and John Jesurun.

### **Harper College – Chicago IL (February, 2005)**

Guest lecturer discussing theatre and cultural life in Syria, part of Harper College's Symposium “Syria: What's Next?”

### **Amnesty International Firefly Project – New York, NY (January, 2005)**

Helped organize conference at OfficeOps for AI Firefly's *AND SO FORTH: a Post-Inaugural Assembly*. Panelists and participants included several OBIE award-winning theater companies.

### **Damascus University – Damascus, Syria (December, 2004)**

Guest lecturer on contemporary U.S. actor training practices at the Higher Institute for Theatrical Studies.

### **Radical Alternative Theatre International Conference – Argentina (December, 2003)**

Co-organizer and facilitator of R.A.T. conference at the El Rayo International Experimenta (Roasario, Argentina). Co-curated an afternoon of theatre presentations, taught a bi-lingual Viewpoints workshop (in Spanish and English) and collaborated with the Wilaldea Theatre Collective (Buenos Aires, Argentina) to promote exchange of training methods between U.S. and Latin American artists.

## **Columbia University, School of the Arts, Graduate Theatre Division – New York, NY (September, 2002)**

Guest speaker with Bridgit Evans of the Kazbah Project, discussed international theatre collaboration in South Africa and the challenges of intercultural dialogue. Hosted by Kristin Linklater.

## **Publications**

**Artistic Censorship and Conflict Transformation** essay in *Out of Silence* by Caridad Svich, publication pending.

**A Letter from Syria** Theater Magazine, Johns Hopkins University Press, Winter 2006.

## **Teaching Experience**

### **Higher Education**

#### **Whitman College – Walla Walla, WA (Fall 2007 - present)**

Assistant Professor, Theatre Department.

#### **Washington College – Chestertown, MD (2000-2006)**

Viewpoints instructor in recurring workshops for undergraduate theatre students and professors. An improvisational movement system for actors, choreographers and directors, the Viewpoints were developed by Anne Bogart.

#### **Whitman College – Walla Walla, WA (Spring, 2005)**

Guest artist and director of Franz Wedekind's *Spring Awakening*. Active participation in student mentoring, formal and informal speaking engagements, extra-curricular performance events and residential life.

#### **Bucknell University – Lewisburg, PA (October, 2001)**

Guest artist with Susan Miller, hosted by the Women's Studies Department. Staged Miller's Obie Award-winning play *My Left Breast* to mark breast cancer awareness month. Informal and formal talks with drama students and campus community.

#### **Bryn Mawr College – Bryn Mawr, PA (Fall, 1998)**

Associate Professor and Guest Director of Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal*. Production hours constituted coursework – students received evaluation and college credit for participation. In addition to directing the main stage production, designed curriculum and taught Acting I, incorporating Viewpoints, Boleslavsky and Stanislavski techniques.

### **Teacher and Artist Training**

#### **Peace Education Center, Teachers College, Columbia University – New York, NY (2005)**

Guest Instructor for the Afghan Institute for Learning, founded by Nobel Peace Prize nominee Sakena Yacoobi. Explored theatre skills and conflict resolution training for use in schools in Afghanistan.

#### **International Institute for Peace Educators, – Rhodes, Greece (July – August, 2005)**

Guest artist, team-taught workshop entitled *Representation and Perception in War Time - Close-up: Syria* with collaborator Nathalie Applewhite. Provided teacher-training and lesson plans exploring the power of art and the media to influence international conflict.

#### **Theaters Against War / Hunter College – New York, NY (April, 2004)**

Helped facilitate *Resistance 101: a Creative Peace and Justice Teach-In* including speakers, panel discussions, and performances from prominent civil libertarians, academics, journalists, students, and theater activists

#### **The Kazbah Project / Imagining Peace Project, Columbia University – New York, NY (September, 2001)**

Researcher and instructor, helped train teaching artists working with students during the first few weeks after the September 11th terrorist attacks. Efforts were aimed at challenging stereotypes and discouraging ethnic violence.

#### **Perseverance Theater – Juneau, AK (1998)**

Guest director of John Guare's *House of Blue Leaves* and instructor of eight-week Viewpoints Training Intensive.

### **Secondary Education**

#### **IRC (International Rescue Committee) Refugee Resettlement Program – Bronx, NY (2006)**

Guest instructor in after-school theatre program with refugees aged 14- 19 from Sierra Leone, Uganda and Guinea. Curriculum based on social theatre model (Augusto Boal) incorporating personal narratives and English vocabulary skills.

**New York University – New York, NY (November, 2003)**

Provided adjudication and commentary for the New York Student Shakespeare Festival

**East Harlem Middle School at Exodus House – New York, NY (2002-2003)**

Designed curriculum and team-taught collaborative playwriting and acting classes. Spring 2003 semester culminated in a performance of the student-created play *Destination Station*.

**Park School – Brooklandville, MD (1992-1993)**

Taught visual and performing arts and creative writing during two summer sessions at progressive, private Baltimore Middle School. Adapted and co-directed 80-student theatre production drawn from world myths and folk tales.

**Folger Shakespeare Theatre – Washington, D.C. (1991)**

Shakespeare in the Schools Instructor. Team-taught the Folger curriculum in Baltimore City Middle Schools with Center Stage Theatre Education and Outreach staff.

**Related Experience and Affiliations****NoPassport Coalition – New York, NY and Los Angeles, CA (2005-present)**

Member of pan-American theatre coalition with an emphasis on US Latina/o and Latin American writing.

**Center for International Conflict Resolution, Columbia University – New York, NY (2004 – present)**

Selected to represent emerging U.S. artists as part of a four-person delegation to Syria funded by the U.S. State Department. The 2004-2005 exchange introduced the U.S. team to colleagues from the University of Damascus during several weeks of residency in both countries. Exchange included meetings with such luminaries as Noam Chomsky, the U.S. and Syrian Ambassadors, and many other religious leaders, dignitaries, academics and artists from both countries. As work continues, we hope to improve relations between nations through innovative use of media and the arts. Currently we are pursuing an Arab-American drama exchange in cooperation with the Whitman College in Walla Walla, WA.

**Theaters Against War – New York, NY (2003 – present)**

Lead organizer of grassroots collective with over two hundred member theaters and over 1,000 listserv participants worldwide. Activities include monthly pro-peace cabarets, teach-ins, post-show discussions, march contingents, youth outreach initiatives, calls to action and town hall meetings intended to be replicated in local communities to promote engaged citizenship and artist-driven activism. Recipient of Village Voice OBIE Grant (2004). Recent projects include the THAW Collaboration Weekend (with the Culture Project, NYC), THAW on the AIR – a radio series showcasing experimental, politically engaged theatre artists on WBAI Radio, New York, NY, and the THAW scholarship, granting funds to artists working in conflict zones.

**The Venus Project Worldwide – New York, NY (2001 – present)**

Co-Founder and Director of *Venus*, by Suzan-Lori Parks. VPW first produced *Venus* as a reading at the Public Theatre, NYC with Academy Award-winner Tim Robbins, Tony Award-nominee Kathleen Chalfant and film and television actor Joe Morton. A subsequent research residency in Mafikeng, Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa was funded by Arts International. Our full production of *Venus* with local South African cast members premiered at the Windybrow Theatre in Johannesburg, 2002, coinciding with the repatriation of the remains of Saartjie Baartman (a.k.a. the Venus Hottentot) from the Musee del l'Homme in Paris to her homeland. Our final performance in South Africa was at the Saartjie Baartman Women's Center on National Women's Day, concurrent with her burial in the Eastern Cape. This summer we plan to bring The Venus Project to Croatia.

**Amnesty International Firefly Project – New York, NY (2003 – present)**

Member of artist-driven chapter of Amnesty International using the arts to respond to global injustice.

**Axis Theatre – Baltimore, MD (1992-1994)**

Artistic Associate and founding member of critically acclaimed Baltimore theatre company producing new and established texts. Directed Vaclav Havel's *Largo Desolato*, and *Cabaret Verboten* by Jeremy Lawrence.