

VINH G. NGUYEN

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Teaching Philosophy

As a theater educator, I don't teach talent. I encourage and provide training to those who wish to become effective story tellers. An artist can only grow as long as they put in the effort to fine tune their craft. I strive to nurture my students' raw abilities, foster their dedication to the art form, and empower them with the ownership of their success. I dare them to be ridiculous, to try new things, and to make mistakes. I believe in producing not just skilled performers, but also well-rounded artists and more empathic human beings. I utilize works created by BIPOC artists as well as teach history and classic repertoire through an anti-racist lens, to expand my students perspectives, cultural competency, and world viewpoints. I believe theatre has the power to enrich the human experience, ignite social change, and even heal a community. I encourage my students to use the transferable skills they learn in my theatre class to deepen their relationships, enrich their lives, and serve their communities.

I often say to my students: "Within these four walls of our classroom is the safest place you'll ever be; so don't hold back!" By creating an engaging and supportive artistic environment, I establish a space where my students can explore and express themselves without fear of judgment. I build an inclusive and anti-racist culture in my classrooms and rehearsals, where every voice is uplifted and every culture is celebrated. Understanding that my students may have differing skill levels and learning styles, I offer multiple options for them to demonstrate their mastery of the course content (such as multiple choice, essay, or oral presentation). I emphasize the process, for it is within the rehearsals where play, imagination, and exploration flourish. I equally value production, as application is the best way for scholar-artists to put theories into practice and understand the importance of collaboration within this interdisciplinary art form. I instill in them empathy, self-confidence, critical thinking, and social and cultural competency - skills that are crucial in a student's chosen field, and in life.