

Director

Dramaturg

Emma Jude Harris

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Bio

Emma Jude Harris (she/her) is a London-based director and dramaturg, originally from Los Angeles. Emma studied literature at Sarah Lawrence College before relocating to the UK, where she received an MA in Shakespeare Studies from King's College London and Shakespeare's Globe and trained at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama on MFA Advanced Theatre Practice.

Her practice encompasses new writing, opera, music theatre, and 'classic' theatre with a particular interest in early modern theatre and the Restoration. Her work as both a director and dramaturg looks to recontextualise historical work while also dismantling inherited notions of canonical value. Her practice combines deep historical research, close textual reading, contemporary theatre aesthetics, and multidisciplinary analysis, with a mission to platform historically marginalised voices and interrogate canonical ones.

Emma's credits on historical work include directing the English premiere of Amy Beach's chamber opera CABILDO (Arcola Theatre and Wilton's Music Hall), dramaturging The Donmar's production of Lillian Hellman's WATCH ON THE RHINE, and directing productions of THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR and ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD (East 15). She was the research consultant on the RSC's production of VENICE PRESERVED. Emma has facilitated decolonised Restoration projects including THE BASSET TABLE (RADA) and THE ROVER (Oxford School of Drama).

As a neurodivergent Jewish American immigrant, Emma is a champion for dismantling inherited notions of canonical value, platforming marginalised voices, and ethical representation both onstage and off. Emma is interested in Jewish and diasporic dramaturgies, music-led storytelling, heightened language, and stacked forms.

While initially focused on looking to the past to illuminate the present, Emma has also found herself drawn to close collaborations with contemporary writers and makers. She often works as either director, dramaturg, or both, to develop new work from its early stages, such as Uri Agnon's ANTISEMITISM : (((A MUSICAL))) by Uri Agnon at Camden People's Theatre, and David Merriman's THE AWAKENING OF CHEERFUL FEELINGS UPON THE ARRIVAL OF SINGLE MEN OF GOOD FORTUNE (RCSSD) a queer operatic adaptation of Pride and Prejudice. This summer Emma will be director and dramaturg on the premieres of two new plays by Somebody Jones and Nick Cassenbaum.

Emma works extensively at drama schools and is passionate about empowering the next generation of artists to make radical (and canonical) work safely and inclusively. She has directed and taught at RADA, Central School of Speech and Drama, Guildhall, Mountview, Rose Bruford, East 15, and Oxford School of Drama.

Associate/assistant directing credits include: THE FAIRY QUEEN (Longborough Festival Opera), THE CORONATION OF POPPEA (English Touring Opera), CINDERELLA (English Touring Opera), ROYAL ACADEMY OPERA TRIPLE BILL (Royal Academy of Music), and THESE WONDERING STONES (Barbican).

Emma is the recipient of a Global Talent visa.