

## Artistic Director 2015 – Biography



**Emily Morse** is a theatre artist whose career has spanned 25 years, and has encompassed performing, directing, playwriting, dramaturgy, devising, producing, arts administration, curating and artistic consulting at theatres and companies of all sizes, including Philadelphia Theatre Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, New York Theatre Workshop, LMDA, Ping Chong and Co, NADA, LEMA productions, HERE, the Wilma, Clubbed Thumb, New Georges, JAW/West Festival – Portland Center Stage, Creative Time, Ripe Time, Cincinnati Playhouse, Culture Project/Women Center Stage, PlayPenn, 13P, Drama League New Directors/New Works, Links Hall, and Re/Union Company at LaMaMa.

Emily's love affair with New Dramatists began in 2000 when she was one of four directors-in-residence for the 2001 season. She joined the staff in July 2001 and, at the helm of the Literary Office, reconceived that position into the company's first Director of Artistic Development. For thirteen years, New Dramatists' resident playwrights have benefitted enormously from Emily's artistic vision, dramaturgical skill and loving advocacy. Her leadership has guided the company's heretofore one-day reading culture into a robust, multi-faceted approach to new work development. She is also a formidable playwright advocate; over the last decade, she has helped seed fruitful long-term relationships between producing organizations and scores of individual writers.

Emily's credits within New Dramatists include her substantive shaping of **PlayTime**, New Dramatists' intensive studio for five projects being developed simultaneously over the course of two weeks: Emily's experience at Conwell Dance Theatre, the Philadelphia Theatre Company, New York Theater Workshop, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and Portland Center Stage directly impacted the trajectory of this two-week studio, which has a high success rate for developing ambitious new projects and launching them into productive professional lives. In 2008, Emily helped formulate and direct two formidable new projects, **FULL STAGE USA** and **The Creativity Fund**, which transformed the rhythm of New Dramatists' Playwrights Lab into a deeper, holistic series of programs, designed to support the development of the *artist* and her process, and partnerships between artists and producing theatres, as well as develop dynamic new work. Under Emily's direction since its inception, the Creativity Fund has blossomed into one of the most sought-after ND programs, with 14 to 17 Fund projects every season, each one distinct and individual, with each session focused on playwright-set goals and objectives.

A veteran theatre artist with a specialty in process-oriented devised work, Emily is a Lincoln Center Theatre Directors Lab alumna and NYTW Usual Suspect. She has participated in, and benefitted from, a variety of workshops, including: Choreography for Directors (Annie-B Parson); Butoh (Dawn Akemi Saito); Viewpoints (J. Ed Araiza); Critical Response and Movement/Stage Composition (Liz Lerman); playwriting (Eduardo Machado, Suzan-Lori Parks, Karen Hartman); BIG Artist (Chris Wells/Karen Hartman); and Third Bohemia (Todd London and Z Space). An avid dance fan, she has practiced various forms, including study of Swing, Argentine Tango, and Flamenco. She worked with Carol Gilligan and Jonathan Gilligan on an adaptation of *The Scarlet Letter* and dramaturged/co-adapted *Innocents*, Ripe Time's iteration of *The House of Mirth*, produced at the Ohio Theatre in 2005. Her other Ripe Time collaborations include *The Secret of Steep Ravines* and *The Holy Mother of Hadley New York* by Barbara Wiechmann, commissioned and co-produced with New Georges. With Rachel Dickstein, Emily was co-creator/curator of *ShapeShifting*, a salon series exploring adaptation.

Emily's ongoing engagement with the field at large includes serving on the Advisory Board for PlayPenn and New Georges' Kitchen Cabinet; spearheading and joining new play development panels, including her Playwright Leadership panel presented during the 2012 Humana Festival; service on numerous selection

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committees for playwright awards and development opportunities; her presence on the preliminary and final panels for TCG's inaugural Leadership U[niversity] Program; and a multitude of other field meetings, including her service as a guest respondent at the Baldwin Festival of New Work (UCSD), the Sewanee Writers' Conference, the Writing is Live Festival (Brown), and the New Works Festival (UT-Austin), and other hosting/facilitating engagements with the Lark and 2nd Stage, among others. In 2013, she was a judge for The Samuel French Off Off Broadway Short Play Festival.

Other field contributions include Emily's introduction to *America Dreaming and Other Plays*, a collection of plays by Chiori Miyagawa published by NoPassport Press, and the HowlRound-published Chiori Miyagawa interview *Reunion: Why Do They Keep Coming Back?* In 2010, her long term artistic relationship with Suzan-Lori Parks landed Emily the great honor of introducing her at a 92nd Street Y talk.

In May 2010, in recognition of her stature as a playwright advocate and significant contributions as a dramaturg, Emily received an inaugural Lilly Award for Advocacy. Emily is deeply honored to be one of the first recipients of this Award, an annual recognition of outstanding work by women in the American theatre.

Emily is a graduate of Temple University (B.A. in Theatre and Communications, Outstanding Student Award). She lives in Brooklyn with her husband Gary and their son, Lincoln.