

Grayson Skidmore

Artist Statement

I strive to create and be a part of art that is inclusive, accessible, and innovative. I believe that both theatre and dance have the power to educate, unite, and awaken a profound empathy across diverse audiences. These art forms possess the unique ability to allow us to witness lives and stories outside of our own, and in a time where division overshadows connection, I find it not only important but necessary to pursue works that challenge perspectives and foster understanding. Theater and dance allow this to occur not only through words, but movement, presence, and vulnerability. They allow us to feel what we are often encouraged not to, and relate to stories we would never expect. Above all else, I value empathy in my work and strive to carry it into the hearts of those who are watching.

As a performer, I am drawn to the raw, transformative power of movement and storytelling. With training and experience in both theater and dance, I bring a unique approach to my work. I understand the importance of a character's movement quality, their relationship to the space, and the way they can tell a story outside of words. I understand that every movement tells a story, every action has a deliberate reasoning, and that every choice is purposeful.

I approach performing as a way to connect to the audience and to connect deeper within myself. I feel that performance can act as a mirror. It can show an audience member a new side or perspective of themselves or what they're going through, and selfishly it allows me to view and explore myself through a new lens. I feel that there is a power in understanding the psychology of a character and the complex origins that explain why they take the actions they do. I care deeply about each character I play, in theater or in dance, and regardless of flaws, I help an audience understand them and have empathy for them.

It is very important to me to bring myself into every project I am a part of. I bring my identity, passions, and history into projects that I know would benefit from every element of it. I feel that my identity as a queer performer keeps me drawn to telling queer stories, especially to audiences that need to be told. I am passionate about trauma-informed practices, and I am moving towards obtaining a certification in intimacy coordination. I value safe rehearsal spaces and safe practices above all else, and I advocate for them for my peers and myself as well. This is an ever-changing industry, and I consistently work to stay informed and educated on how I can work to creatively improve every space and every project I am a part of.

I was once told that what sets me apart is my intense love for my craft, and that it will serve me well. That love and my steadfast passion to create meaningful stories keep me driven and focused on my goals to create change and promote empathy. I believe wholeheartedly that theater and dance have the power to change lives. It saved mine, and I strive to bring that change to anyone willing to listen.