

Wesley Savick (00:01):

My name is Wesley Savick and I am a professor of theater at Suffolk University. I think the thing that initially drew me to theater was this was a place where I could be my full self, where I could be who I actually am and, actually maybe more than that, discover who I could be. I think theater is actually the place where a bunch of talented, well-intentioned people can work together to make something beautiful, or impactful, or funny, or moving. My favorite course to teach is directing because that's where it all comes together. You need a director to translate the intentions of a play through action and performance and time and space into a memorable experience and to do that well, you have to draw on every single other aspect of theater. So I enjoy directing because that's how the theater of the future is going to be changed.

(01:28):

I think the study of theater is the oldest form of experiential learning. There's no academic distance in what we do, but when you're actually writing a play that's going to be read by your peers in class, that's experiential learning. Boston is a thriving community for the creation of theater, which provides us with a lot of opportunities to bring in professionals to share their work and their expertise and their enthusiasm with our students. Suffolk University alumni have established themselves as a powerful force in the professional theater in Boston and that's a very exciting aspect of having such a rich community. And they're loyal to Suffolk and have extended that support to our current students.

(02:34):

If you are drawn to the study of theater because you are ferociously curious about other people and what they think and what they feel, if you are someone who loves your time in the rehearsal room and figuring out what's going on in a scene with a director and with other actors, these are all attributes of our most successful and adventurous students. At Suffolk, we wildly encourage our students to try all kinds of things, like directing, like writing plays, like stage managing, like designing. Our best students do all of it while they're here. Suffolk is an outstanding place to study theater for this reason: opportunity. Every single year in January we post our application process for the next year. Students propose projects that they would like to put on stage the following year. We select anywhere between 13 to 17 of those proposals for production in the following year. I think it's important for prospective students to know how seriously we take the initiative from students to propose and imagine and follow through on a vision for what can happen on stage when we devote enormous amount of our support to make these ideas realities.

(04:29):

Juvenilia is a Suffolk-centric professional company. We've done a number of projects. Most recently, I found a very compelling pamphlet from 1942 called The Handbook of Civilian Defense. This Juvenilia production opened at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Juvenilia is almost an opportunity to invite back our alumni to participate in something meaningful where they're working even more to break into the larger professional community. What's being taught is learning how to work with others towards a collective goal, learning how to identify problems and solve them creatively, learning how to make a big appointment and keep it. I'm going to open a play that I wrote and directed and it's going to open on October 7th and then it does. What's being taught is a series of values. Respect for others, respect for varying viewpoints, a high priority on clarity, on saying what you mean and meaning what you say. Our students leave here very marketable in any number of professional pursuits outside of theater itself.