



JOSHUA POHJA
CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST

818.960.9227
joshpohja@gmail.com

BIOGRAPHY

JOSH POHJA is the Managing Artistic Producer of Wisconsin Classic Stage (est. 2025) and co-founder of Vanguard Productions in 2022 bringing his distinctive creative vision to its launch helming its annual audience favorite *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*, *Antigone* and its critically acclaimed production of *My Name is Rachel Corrie*. Josh co-produced Milwaukee Chamber Theatre's Young Playwright's Festival in 2022, and assistant directed Molly Rhode on its production of *Great Expectations*. JP is a graduate of the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama for Acting during the residency of the Moscow Art Theatre; Anatoly Smeliansky, Andrei Șerban, Natalia Fedorova, as well as Bulgarian director Mladen Kiselov, Ibsen Scholar Brian Johnston, Victoria Santa Cruz, Gregory Lehane, Don Marinelli, and Don Wadsworth. These scholars and teachers shaped his love for re-imagining classical theatre. As a teacher, he has mentored nationwide and locally through his training ground Ignition Actors Lab in Milwaukee. As an actor, Pohja has performed nationally with, most notably, The Guthrie Theater (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*; dir. Joe Dowling), The Acting Company (*Richard III* dir. Eve Shapiro), Old Globe (*The Full Monty* Broadway Workshop dir. Jack O' Brien), Alley Theatre (*A Christmas Carol*; dir. Stephen Rayne), Judson Church, HERE Arts Center, NYC Fringe Festival and more. Josh is also a proud alumni of the Wisconsin Directors Lab, Saratoga International Theatre Institute (SITI) under the guidance of Anne Bogart and the SITI Company, and the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. He is a 25 year member of Actors Equity Association and SAG-AFTRA.

RELEVANT INSTITUTIONAL AND CREATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WISCONSIN CLASSIC STAGE	2024-Current
Founder and Producing Artistic Director	
Director: <i>Henry V</i>	May 2025
Education Director: Ignition Actor Labs at The Calvary	June 2024
VANGUARD PRODUCTIONS MKE	2022 - Current
vanguardmke.com	
Co-Founder, Artistic Associate, Producer & Director	
Director of Artistic Training: Vanguard APEX Education	
Director: <i>Antigone</i> March 2024	
Director: <i>All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914</i> December 2024, 2023, 2022	
Director: <i>The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark</i>	
(Max Pink, Laura Gordon, Jonathan Wainwright)	



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Reading || Baumgartner Center for the Arts || Milwaukee Ballet Studio B || August 2023

Director: *Endgame*

(Jim Pickering, Jonathan Wainwright)

Reading || Plymouth Church, Milwaukee || October 2023

MILWAUKEE CHAMBER THEATRE

2015 - Current

Young Playwright's Festival Artistic Producer | March 2023

Director: *To Be De(ad)cided, Mom* 2023

Director: *1-800-123-BOYS*; Young Playwright's Festival | 2019

Assistant Director: *Great Expectations* (dir. Molly Rhode) 2017

Director: *Great Expectations* Young Company u/s collaboration with First Stage

Teaching Artist: *Romeo and Juliet* Masterclass Reagan High School 2016, 2015

FIRST STAGE CHILDREN'S THEATER

Director: *An Enemy of the People* Young Company

March 2024

Director: *Hamlet* Company Class

August 2023

Director: *Julius Caesar* Company Class

August 2020

Director: *Much Ado About Nothing* Company Class

August 2019

Director: *Great Expectations* Young Company

April 2017

Director: *The Skin of Our Teeth* Young Company

March 2017

Director: *Blue Stockings* Company Class

July 2017

Director: *Antigone* Young Company

April 2016

Lead Teaching Artist for Young Company, Company Class and Summer Academy

UNIVERSITY OF MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN

2018

Guest Artist, Adjunct Faculty - UWM Theater Department

Acting, Viewpoints, Shakespeare | Two-Week Residency

MILWAUKEE REPERTORY THEATER

2015 - 2021

Education Programs Coordinator | Milwaukee Rep Education and Engagement

Lead Teaching Artist | Basic Acting 1-111

- Manage school subscription program in partnership with the Community Engagement Resident
- Managed and administered the Reading Residency Program
- Aided Community Engagement programming serving community



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- Wrote curriculum for the education programs, including in-school and summer programming.
- Conduct planning meetings with school partners.
- Oversee Corporate Training programming including recruitment of vendors / organizations.
- Act as a mentor to students and staff.

PIUS XI CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

2016 - 2021

Director: *Golden Child*

Director: *Much Ado About Nothing*

Director: *No Child*

Director: *The Laramie Project*

Director: *She Kills Monsters*

Teaching Artist; Shakespeare, Acting Theory, Movement

DUENDE COLLECTIVE | Los Angeles, CA

2006 - 2010

Artistic Director, Teaching Artist; Viewpoints, Acting Theory

Director: *The Persians*

THE ACTING COMPANY ON-TOUR

2004

Teaching Artist, Actor; Shakespeare, Viewpoints

GUTHRIE THEATER EDUCATION ON-TOUR

2000

Teaching Artist, Actor; Shakespeare, Viewpoints

FILM PRODUCTION AND CASTING

BEFORE THE DOOR PICTURES

2011 - 2013

Assistant to Producers; Neal Dodson, Corey Moosa and Zachary Quinto.

Read and write script coverage for over 50 scripts; help cast and maintain a high level of confidentiality between agency and producers during artist contract negotiations; delivered scripts to A-List talent; listened in and took notes on significant deals with Hollywood A-list writers and producers. Worked pre and post-production on films *All Is Lost*, *A Most Violent Year*, *Dog Eat Dog*, *The Banshee Chapter*, *Never Here*, *Margin Call* and reality tv show *The Chair*.

DOG EAT DOG, Assistant to academy award winning director and writer Siân Heder 2013



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NATIONAL AND OFF-BROADWAY STAGE PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

GREAT EXPECTATIONS u/s Actor #6 | Milwaukee Chamber Theatre; Molly Rhode
MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM *Francis Flute* | Guthrie Theatre On-Tour; Joe Dowling
RICHARD III (*Nat'l Tour and Off-Broadway*) Prince Edward | Acting Company; Eve Shapiro
A CHRISTMAS CAROL Young Scrooge | Alley Theatre; Stephen Rayne
THE FULL MONTY (*Pre-B'way Workshop*) *Nathan Lukowski* | Old Globe; dir. Jack O'Brien
w/ Roger Bart, Dana Reeve, Jason Danieley, André De Shields and Annie Golden.
DR. FAUSTUS LIGHTS THE LIGHTS Doctor Faustus | Judson Church; New York Fringe
CHEAP THRILLS Danny Martini | HERE Arts Center

FILM AND RADIO PERFORMANCE

MILK [Feature Film] ADR Artist | Dir. Gus Van Sant | Producer: Dan Jinks & Bruce Cohen
COMPANY K Pvt. Yawfitz | Waterfront Pictures dir. Bob Clem
THE ORCHARD Sascha | dir. Kevin Thompson
GHOSTS (Audiobook) Osvald Alving Right Track Studios, Pittsburgh
CATCHER IN THE RYE (USC Grad Film) Holden Caufield | dir. Kevin Thompson
ARBY'S | National Radio Spot | Lead Voice Merkley + Partners

COMMERCIAL PERFORMANCE

Volkswagen "Curiosos" w/ Sylvester Stallone
[Comercial Novo Gol Curiosos com Sylvester Stallone](#)
MCDONALD'S "Delivery" Arnold Worldwide | Z Group Films
[McDonald's Iced Coffee Commercial](#)
HBO DEF COMEDY JAM "Beep" HBO | Harvest Films
ARBY'S "Laughing Stock" Merkley + Partners | Sandwick Films
(1) [Arby's Chicken Naturals](#) (2) [Arby's Chicken Naturals](#)
CHEEZ-ITS "San Francisco" Leo Burnett USA | Biscuit Filmworks
[Cheez-It commercial](#)
FOX SPORTS NETWORK "Congrats" FOX | TBWA/CHIAT DAY



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HONDA “SportsDrive” TBWA | CHIAT DAY

[International, Regional and Industrial Spots Available Upon Request.]

MUSIC VIDEO - DIRECTION

TIME OF MY LIFE - Christopher Dallman

Director, Producer and Cinematographer || Location: Paris, France

[▶ TIME OF MY LIFE - Christopher Dallman](#)

SO HIGH - Christopher Dallman

Director, Producer and Cinematographer || Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

[▶ Christopher Dallman | SO HIGH | Official Music Video](#)

NO SENSE IN REGRET - Christopher Dallman

Director, Producer and Cinematographer || Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

[▶ NO SENSE IN REGRET - Christopher Dallman feat. Chantae Miller](#)

DANGER ZONE - Christopher Dallman

Director, Producer and Cinematographer || Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin

[▶ Danger Zone · Christopher Dallman · Official Music Video · Kenny Loggins Cover](#)

THEATRICAL TRAINING

CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY - B.F.A. ACTING (Dean’s List, During the Moscow Art Theatre residency with Andrei Serban, Anatoly Smeliensky, Natalia Fedorova. Studied under professors Mladen Kiselov, Victoria Santa Cruz, Don Wadsworth, Barbara Mackenzie-Wood, Anthony McKay, Greg Lehane, Don Marinelli, Ingrid Sonnichsen, Jed Harris, Kaf Warman. Performed in *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Intruder*, *Our Town*, *A Flea In Her Ear*.

SARATOGA INTERNATIONAL THEATRE INSTITUTE (SITI) - Suzuki, Viewpoints and Composition | Anne Bogart and the SITI Company; Ellen Lauren, Will Bond, Kelley Maurer, Leon Ingulsrud, J, Ed Araiza, Barney O’Hanlon, Stephen Webber.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS - Acting/Directing Program; Produced, wrote and directed *Silhouettes Against The Moon* which went on to win the Ivar Theater’s Inner City Cultural



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Festival's 1995 Best New Play || Performed in *Fly Blackbird* (dir. C. Bernard Jackson), Wasitacatisaw, *Cyrano De Bergerac*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Becoming Memories*, *The Winter's Tale*.

PLAYWRITING

POTTERS FIELD, folk opera
'SHROOMS
PAWNS
MUNITIONEM
PRINCE OF THE RAINDROPS
VEL & GROPPY - IN THE DEEP TRACKS

AFFILIATIONS

Wisconsin Director's Lab - January 2025
SAG-AFTRA (Screen Actors Guild)
Actors Equity Association

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Jesse J. Perez, Program Director, Old Globe Graduate Theatre Program
Sheri Williams Pannell, Bronzeville Arts Ensemble
Brent Hazelton, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Artistic Director
Josie Trettin, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Artistic Associate Director
Jason Fassl, Anti Shadows
Jim Pickering, Actor
Neal Dodson, Film Producer
Paula Foley Tillen, Music Director