



JOSHUA POHJA
CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST

818.960.9227
joshpohja@gmail.com

BIOGRAPHY

Josh Pohja is the Executive Artistic Producer of **Wisconsin Classic Stage** (est. 2025), where he directed the company's inaugural presentation of *Henry V*, launching the organization with a bold, ensemble-driven reimagining of Shakespeare that emphasizes clarity, physicality, and textual precision.

Between 2022 and 2024, Pohja directed several acclaimed productions as Artistic Director of **Vanguard Productions**, including *All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*, *Antigone*, and *My Name is Rachel Corrie*, which received both critical praise and audience acclaim for their direction and text-driven storytelling. Critics have noted his distinctive approach, with one writing, "*Pohja's blocking...make the play feel lyrical and appropriately deterministic. I've seen many great things..., but this represents a new height in sophistication.*" Earlier in his career, he co-founded and served as artistic director of **Duende Collective** in Los Angeles, cultivating original productions and contemporary reimaginings of classic theatre.

In Milwaukee, he has collaborated with **Milwaukee Chamber Theatre**, co-producing the 2022 *Young Playwrights Festival* and assistant directing Molly Rhode on *Great Expectations*. He has taught Shakespeare, acting, and Viewpoints throughout the city and directed educational theatre productions with **First Stage's Young Company** and **Pius XI Catholic High School**, staging works including *Hamlet*, *The Laramie Project*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Blue Stockings*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Golden Child*, and *No Child*

A graduate of the **Carnegie Mellon School of Drama**, Pohja trained during the residency of the **Moscow Art Theatre** with Anatoly Smeliansky, Andrei Șerban, Natalia Fedorova, Bulgarian director Mladen Kiselov, Ibsen scholar Brian Johnston, Victoria Santa Cruz, Gregory Lehane, Don Marinelli, and Don Wadsworth.

He leads the **Wisconsin Classic Stage Actors Studio**, the company's resident training program, where he develops performers through rigorous study of classical text, voice, and physically driven ensemble practice. As an actor, he has performed nationally with **The Guthrie Theater**, **The Acting Company**, **The Old Globe**, and **Alley Theatre**, as well as at Judson Church, HERE Arts Center, and the New York Fringe Festival. Pohja is an alumnus of the **Wisconsin Directors Lab** and **Saratoga International Theatre Institute (SITI)**, a graduate of the **Los Angeles County High School for the Arts**, and a 25-year member of **Actors' Equity Association** and **SAG-AFTRA**.



JOSHUA POHJA
CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST

818.960.9227
joshpohja@gmail.com

RELEVANT INSTITUTIONAL AND CREATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

WISCONSIN CLASSIC STAGE 2024-Current

Founder and Producing Artistic Director

Director: *Henry V*

May 2025

Education Director: WCS Actors Studio

June 2024

VANGUARD PRODUCTIONS MKE 2022 - 2024

vanguardmke.com

Former Co-Founder, Artistic Director

Director of Artistic Training: Vanguard APEX Education

Director: *Antigone* || March 2024

Director: *All is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914* || December 2024, 2023, 2022

Director: *The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* | Reading

Director: *Endgame* | Staged Reading

MILWAUKEE CHAMBER THEATRE 2015 - Contractual

Young Playwright's Festival Artistic Producer | March 2023

Director: *To Be De(ad)ecided, 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



JOSHUA POHJA
CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST

818.960.9227
joshpohja@gmail.com

UNIVERSITY OF MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN	2018
Guest Artist, Adjunct Faculty - UWM Theater Department Acting, Viewpoints, Shakespeare Two-Week Residency sub for Rebecca Holderness	
MILWAUKEE REPERTORY THEATER	2015 - 2021
Education Programs Coordinator Milwaukee Rep Education and Engagement Lead Teaching Artist Basic Acting 1-111	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Manage school subscription program in partnership with the Community Engagement Resident- Managed and administered the Reading Residency Program- Aided Community Engagement programming serving community- 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: <i>Golden Child</i> Director: <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> Director: <i>No Child</i> Director: <i>The Laramie Project</i> Director: <i>She Kills Monsters</i> Teaching Artist; Shakespeare, Acting Theory, Movement	
DUENDE COLLECTIVE Los Angeles, CA	2006 - 2010
Artistic Director, Teaching Artist; Viewpoints, Acting Theory Director: <i>The Persians (Los Angeles, CA and Brooklyn, NY)</i>	
THE ACTING COMPANY ON-TOUR	2004
Teaching Artist, Actor; Shakespeare, Viewpoints	
GUTHRIE THEATER EDUCATION ON-TOUR	2000
Teaching Artist, Actor; Shakespeare, Viewpoints	



JOSHUA POHJA
CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST

818.960.9227
joshpohja@gmail.com

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; 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

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 Danieleley, 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



JOSHUA POHJA
CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST

818.960.9227
joshpohja@gmail.com

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

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 Smeliansky, 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.



JOSHUA POHJA
CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST

818.960.9227
joshpohja@gmail.com

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 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, a 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) and Actors Equity Association

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Jesse J. Perez, Program Director, Old Globe Graduate Theatre Program
Sheri Williams Pannell, Bronzeville Arts Ensemble
Jim Pickering, Actor
Paula Foley Tillen, Music Director