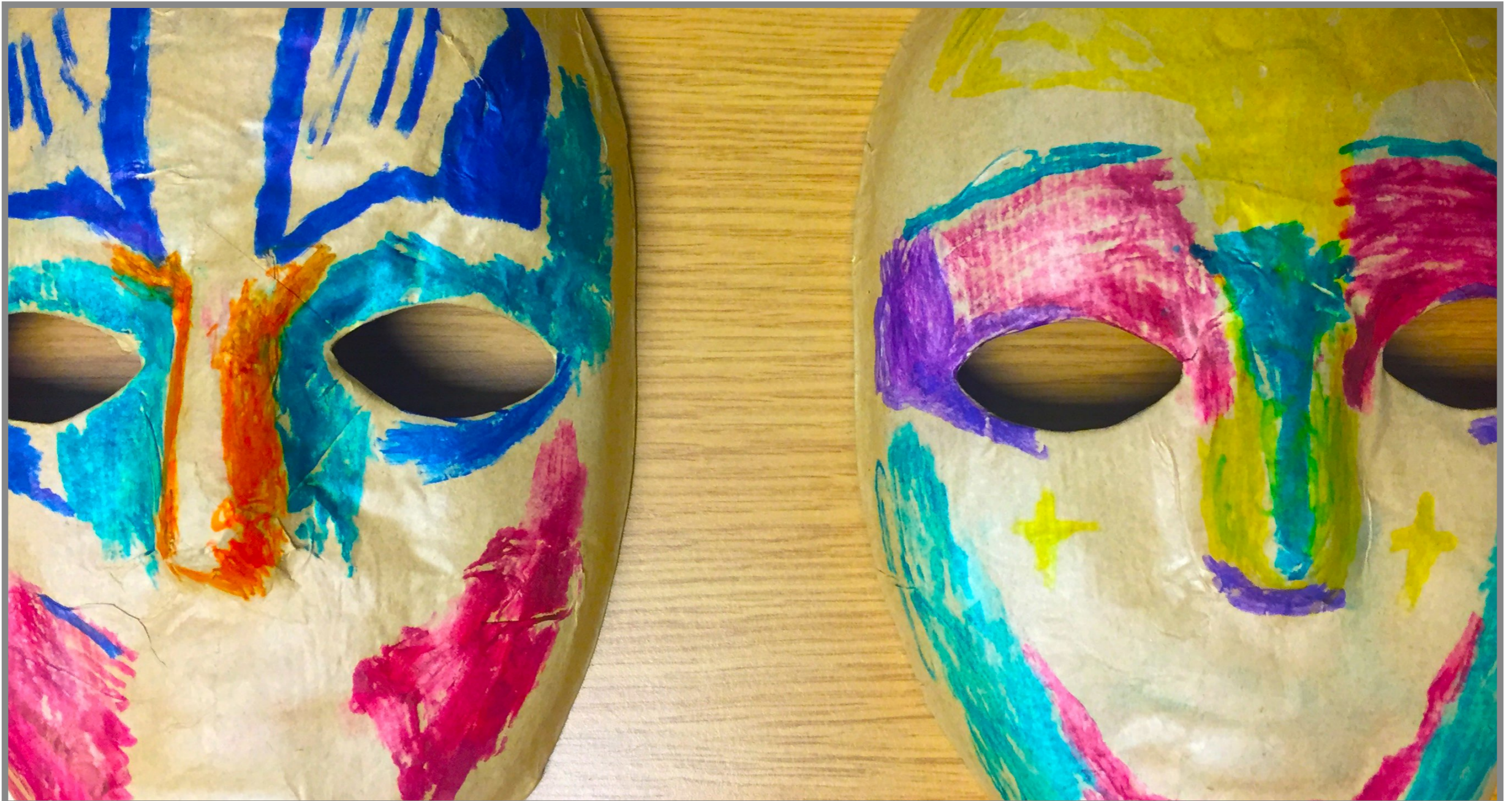


Drama Therapy in Houston

A DRAMA THERAPIST'S PERSPECTIVE



Updated: 04/03/19

Clinician, Artist, and Scholar

ROLES FULFILLED BY DRAMA THERAPIST NINA L. GARCIA



Projective devices are often used to help create a bridge toward understanding thoughts, emotions, and/or behaviors better.

Introduction

As a Drama Therapist, I enter with an artistic lens, a knowledge of clinical disorders, ability to pursue scholarly research, and a particular clinical knowledge regarding an experiential and psychodynamic treatment called drama therapy. Complementing counseling, which “focuses on specific issues and is designed to help a person address a particular problem, such as addiction or stress management”, therapy provides a more nuanced and gradual approach to address “a person's patterns of thinking and behavior affect[ing] the way that person interacts with the world” (Goldberg, 2017). This indirect approach, in turn, leads to enhanced wellbeing regarding the specific concerns the client wished to address in the first place.

NADTA (2018) wrote that “a drama therapist first assesses a client's needs and then considers approaches that might best meet those needs...The theoretical foundation of drama therapy lies in drama, theater, psychology, psychotherapy, anthropology, play, and interactive and creative processes”. Just like other mental health professionals, we take notes, analyze the compiled data, and assess for steps moving forward. As a drama therapist my approach is empowerment and resilience-based, and as with all drama therapists, highly individualized. I engage talk therapy, too. However I specialize in using theatre, drama, dance/movement, music, poetry, and more as creative psychological interventions for healing.

DRAMA THERAPY IN HOUSTON: CLINICIAN - ARTIST - SCHOLAR

What's possible...?

CLINICIAN = CLINICAL

I am capable of working in schools, theaters, mental health settings, hospitals, correctional facilities, community centers, private practice settings, training organizations, and more. Leading groups and individual sessions for clients is possible, as well as peer supervision groups for professionals. Having this drama therapist onboard means instilling playfulness, resilience, curiosity, and growth into the environment.

ARTIST = AWARENESS ADVOCATE

Seeking greater awareness of your cause or population? I am experienced in directing and devising original therapeutic theatre performances that will reach the public, leading to increased



Embodiment, projection, and role are important tools for the drama therapist. From "A Night at the Opera" by Maggie Gordon, featuring the class of Nina L. Garcia, available from www.Chron.com.

awareness, an enhanced concept of safe space, destigmatization of people's lived experiences, and potentially increased funds from your community members.

SCHOLAR = RESEARCHER

"Drama therapy empirical research includes arts-based, qualitative, and quantitative methodologies", and can increase the public's support and understanding for a particular population (NADTA, 2018).

NINA L. GARCIA: CLINICAL AWARENESS ADVOCATE & RESEARCHER

Where to now?

As a Drama Therapist in Houston, I have worked clinically in residential treatment with adolescents in eating disorder recovery, with adults in addiction recovery, and privately with people struggling to cope with life due to trauma, anxiety, and more. I also have experience with forensic and organizational therapy, as well as populations experiencing schizophrenia/psychosis, personality disorders, depression, and identity/role dysphoria. I have utilized theatre, drama, dance/movement, music, poetry, and more as creative psychological interventions for healing. As a Drama Therapist in the community, I volunteer with Houston's Playback Theatre - a performance experience that interacts with the audience by listening to their stories, in an effort to "play back" the essence of their very human experience in a safe space. As a Drama Therapist in North America, I am a member of the North American Drama Therapy Association, and eligible to receive board certification and the coveted RDT credential come May 2019. I am also pursuing the statewide licensure/credential LPC-I.

Moving forward, I have hopes to see an increase in mental health awareness through the use of both published and devised therapeutic theatre. I look forward to enriching a sense of community in Houston, as well as being enriched by the community. Plans to expand Houston Creative Arts Therapy LLC are underway, and I am open for creative collaboration.

Where could you see a Drama Therapist in your life?

