

Susan Stroupe

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Based in Baltimore

Portfolio: <https://bakerartist.org/portfolios/susanstroupe-0>

Upcoming Theatrical Projects

alight, sweet hearted (Dramaturg)

An original adaptation of the Hansel and Gretl tale by Karen Li, performed in a promenade immersive style. Dramaturgical role includes script work, movement devising workshops, and consultation on performer-audience relationship and audience experience. Performing at the Strand Theatre April 2024.

I am a tree in your life (Dramaturg)

An outdoor, one-person performance for one audience member created and performed by Bao Nguyen, about the possibilities created by forgetting, and how humans can rethink our relationship to trees in our communities. Dramaturgical role includes collaboration on narrative sculpting and text creation, performer-audience relationship, and audiences experience. To be premiered in the garden space of the Ivy Bookshop in Baltimore, Fall 2024.

John Proctor Is the Villain (Director)

By Kimberley Belflower. Produced by University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), April 2025.

Voyages: Chapter 7 (Core Devising Team)

Submersive Productions. Commissioned by the National Aquarium as part of their Voyages series, Submersive will work with marine biologists to create an audience-centered performance experience based on our guiding questions: How can we make a performance that will be pleasing to the fish and creatures of the Aquarium? How can we shift to be in community with the natural world rather than trying to control it? Currently in early devising stages and scheduled to be performed at in the National Aquarium, July 2025.

Selected Directing & Devising/Collaboration History

R/J (Director)

R/J was an adaptation of Romeo & Juliet conceived by O'Malley Steurman and Betse Lyons, adapted script by Aladrian Crowder Wetzel and Elizabeth Ung, as well as significant contributions from the acting ensemble. Centering queer experiences and "body enthusiasm" in all staging and design elements, R/J both updated and re-explored the original text in a way that reminded us all why that play is so enduring. Performed June 2023 at the Strand Theatre.

Katalepsis (Core Devising Team, Directing Focus)

Subversive Productions. Set in the far future, *Katalepsis* was an exploration of how humans create culture in deep isolation, and how we connect to each other when most paths to connection are gone. Originally conceived in 2019, the process of creating the show often paralleled our own emotional and physical journey through the pandemic. Performed March-May 2023 at the Peale Center.

Untitled Cave Play (Core Devising Team/Performer)

Working with long-time collaborators Jessica Lopez-Barkl and Emily Windler of In Strange Company, this piece is an adaptation of true story, of two people who lived in a cave in Central Park for a year during the Great Depression. Linking history to our experience of isolation, disconnection, and crisis during the pandemic, this piece will use clowning, physical comedy, and object puppetry to explore how relationships change in quarantine, the economic disparities that arise during a crisis, and what humans will do to feel “normal” under the most absurd circumstances. Currently in workshoping, with a development residency at the North American Cultural Laboratory (NACL) in July 2022.

Trouble in Mind (Dramaturg)

Dramaturg for Alice Childress’ *Trouble in Mind*, with Director Danielle Drakes, at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). Curating research for undergrad actors on the history of racism and acting in theater in the US, as well as coordinating campus talks, audience engagement materials, and talkback panels for the production. Nov 2022.

rECHOLlection (Core Devising Team, Directing Focus)

Submersive Productions. *rECHOLlection* was Submersive Productions’ first in-person performance since the pandemic began, and was devised with an ensemble of visual artists and performers, and performed in Druid Hill Park. Set in the near future, *rECHOLlection* was created to be an open-ended exploration between audience and Baltimoreans of the future, brought together in a temporal rift in the park, exploring questions of community, survival, memory, and interdependence. *rECHOLlection* was a performance that stood on its own, but we are also considering it a prologue to much larger future project, *Katalepsis*. Performed Oct-Nov 2021 in Druid Hill Park, Baltimore.

This Remains (Director)

This Remains was a devised, site-specific performance created with UMBC students as their first in-person performance since the fall of 2019. Students created original characters and stories, and sculpted a journey for the audience through the outdoor spaces that surround the Performing Arts Building, opening up space for questions about history, mythology, fairy tales, identity, and what we want future generations to remember about us. Performed October 2021.

The Oresteia: Live! (Ensemble Deviser/Lyricist/Performer)

An adaptation of Aeschylus’ *Oresteia* Trilogy as a 1940s-style radio musical comedy. First devised and performed in Albuquerque, NM in 2007, this updated version was re-adapted for Zoom performance with original In Strange Company members, and performed virtually Dec 2020.

Out of Time (Deviser/Performer)

Commissioned for the first cohort of the Performance Interface Lab, which was experimenting with 1:1 virtual immersive experiences in the first months of the pandemic. *Out of Time* was created in collaboration with Joan Cummins, and explored our relationship to the concept of time through map-making. Sold out, extended run April-May 2020.

See Also (Devising Ensemble/Performer)

Submersive Productions. Performed at the historic George Peabody Library, an open-frame collage immersive piece where the audience journeyed with characters who were based on women and nonbinary suffragists, journalists, adventurers, musicians, etc, that we uncovered in the archives of the Sheridan Libraries at Johns Hopkins University. *See Also* (a reference to the directive in card catalogs) was commissioned by the Peabody as the first theatrical piece of their concert series *In The Stacks*. Feb 2020.

Hunting & Gathering (Director)

By Brooke Berman. Produced by University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), October 2019.

MASS/Rabble (Core Devising Team/Performer/Dramaturg)

Submersive Productions. A wordless immersive movement piece performed at the Baltimore War Memorial, inviting audiences to consider how people move in masses, and what moves them. In collaboration with Berlin-based Butoh artist Yuko Kaseki. April 2019.

The Institute of Visionary History And Archives of the Deep Now (Core Devising Team, Directing Focus)

Submersive Productions. A 6-episode immersive experimental story-telling series hosted at the historic Peale Museum. Core Team worked with 6 individual and groups of performers to devise original, experimental works based on a framing device of a fictional secret society. The episodes ranged from 20 minutes to 8 hours. Performed Sept-Dec 2018, with a second run of Episodes 2 & 3 in July/Aug 2019.

The Orphan Sea (Director)

By Caridad Svich. Regional Premiere, Cohesion Theater Company. Directed in Repertory with Cecelia Raker's *La Llorona*. March-April 2018, Baltimore.

La Llorona (Director)

By Cecelia Raker. Regional Premiere, Cohesion Theatre Company. Directed in Repertory with Caridad Svich's *The Orphan Sea*. March-April 2018, Baltimore.

The Goodies (Conceiver and Director)

A new devised piece for Iron Crow Theatre Company, a modern re-telling of the Salem Witch Trials, devised with an acting ensemble of women of color. Premiere December 2017, Baltimore.

H.T. Darling's Incredible Musaeum (Co-Director)

Submersive Productions. Co-director with Glenn Ricci and Lisi Stoessel. An immersive, devised work with six actors, premiering at the Peale Museum, Baltimore MD, March-May 2017, with a remount Nov-Dec 2017

Peter Pan (Peter Pan)

By J.M. Barrie. Produced by All-of-Us-Express Children's Theater, East Lansing, Michigan, July-August 2016.

Harry and the Thief (Director)

By Sigrid Gilmer. Produced by Strand Theater Company at St. Mark's, March-April 2016.

Brainstorm 5: The Ties That Bind (Festival Director)

Festival Director for Brainstorm, a nearly annual short play festival produced by Glass Mind Theatre in Baltimore. Facilitator for recruiting and managing seven playwrights, seven directors, and an ensemble of actors that created original works over the course of 5 weeks. Oversaw the transition from a general theme to one that focused on the community conversations and engagements following the unrest in the city following Freddie Gray's death. June 2015.

The Mesmeric Revelations of Edgar Allan Poe (Co-Director)

Submersive Productions. Co-director with Glenn Ricci, an immersive, devised work with six actors, premiering at the historic Pratt House, Baltimore, MD, March 2015. Devised as part of the Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance's Rubys Grant. Second run Oct-Dec 2015.

The All-American Genderf*ck Cabaret (Director)

Written by Mariah McCarthy. Produced by Glass Mind Theatre at Gallery 788, April 2014

Directing With and For Young People

Young Playwrights' Festival 2020

Baltimore Center Stage's annual production of the winning submissions to the Young Playwrights Festival written by Maryland K-12 students. Originally to be performed at Center Stage in March 2020, instead performed virtually in June 2020.

Young Playwrights Festival Summer Residency

Residency Teaching Artist and Director of staged readings. By K-5 students of Dr. Bernard Harris Elementary. Produced in partnership with Center Stage and Child First, performed as a staged reading with professional actors, July 2019.

The Last Day On Earth

Teaching Artist and Co-Facilitator with classroom teacher Whitney Frazier. As part of a special Young Playwrights Festival residency with Baltimore Center Stage, middle school students at the Baltimore Public Montessori School devised an immersive, site-specific show in their building on the theme they chose, "the last day on earth." Two pieces, *The Last Supper* and *IKEA*, were invited to perform at the Young Playwrights Festival at Center Stage that spring. February 2018.

Young Playwrights Festival Summer Residency

Residency Teaching Artist and Director of staged readings. By K-5 students of Dr. Bernard Harris Elementary. Produced in partnership with Center Stage and Child First, performed as a staged reading with professional actors, July 2018.

Willy Wonka Jr.

Performance Director. Directed and facilitated actors aged 9-14 at the Monarch Academy, a public charter school in Baltimore City, May 2018.

Shrek, Jr.

Performance Director. Directed and facilitated actors aged 9-14 at the Monarch Academy, a public charter school in Baltimore City, March 2017.

You've Gone Too Far

Teacher/Co-Facilitator/Co-Director with Ann Turiano for a performance-sharing project between the St. Paul School for Girls (private, Baltimore County) and the Monarch Academy (public, Baltimore City), in which 6th and 8th grade girls created devised works based on the theme of boundaries: geographical, societal, and metaphorical. Performed at the Monarch Academy May 2016.

Peter Pan

Director. Cast of 50 actors ages 5-18. Produced by All-of-Us-Express Children's Theater, East Lansing, Michigan, July-August 2016.

The Wizard of Oz: Somewhere Over the Chesapeake

Co-Director with Sarah Lloyd. Adapted from *The Wizard of Oz* for the students at Monarch Academy. Directing and facilitating a performance including a core cast of 10-13 year olds, and 200+ students for ensemble numbers from 5-9 years old. Monarch Academy, Baltimore, January 2015.

Shrek: The Musical!

Puppetry Director and designer for production by PLAY Conservatory, Albuquerque. Book by David Lindsay-Abaire, music by Jenine Tesori. Directed by Jessica Barkl. Director for puppetry team of 12 performers age 10-13. August 2013.

Education

Towson University: MFA in Theatre Arts, 2012

Macalester College: BA, Major: English Literature & Creative Writing, Minor: Theatre, 2005

Company Affiliations

Core Creator and Founding Collaborator, Submersive Productions

Lecturer in Theater History & Script Analysis, University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC)

Teaching Artist and Trainer, Baltimore Center Stage

Project Manager, Center for International Theatre Development (CITD)

Honors, Grants, Publications

- Artist in Residence, North American Cultural Laboratory (NACL), Summer 2022
- Maryland State Arts Council Creativity Grant for Subversive Productions' *MASS/Rabble*
- Best of Baltimore (Baltimore Magazine): One-of-a-Kind Theatre Company, Submersive Productions, Best Audience Interaction, *HT Darling's Incredible Musaeum*
- Writing from the TESZT Festival, Romania, May 2016, on *Dispatches*, published by the Center for International Theatre Development (CITD):
<http://www.citddispatches.com/teszt-2016-productions>
- TDR: The Drama Review*: "Eye Contact: Mesmeric Revelations in Baltimore" by James R. Ball III (2018), on Submersive Productions' *Mesmeric Revelations of Edgar Allan Poe*
- Mesmeric Revelations of Edgar Allan Poe* named Best Theater Experience 2016 by City Paper
- Baltimore United Local Stage and Hidden Independent Theater Awards: Best Director (Nominated), Best Ensemble (won), Best Concept (won), Best New Work (won), Working for Social Change (won)
- Article: "Conversation Starter: Open-Gender Casting," published in *Howlround*, Aug 2012
- Representative speaker for the Graduate School, College of Fine Arts and Communication (COFAC), Towson University, Commencement May 2012. Nominated by faculty, selected by the Dean of COFAC

Full CV available upon request