

# CYNTHIA CROOT

## EDUCATION

**Columbia University**  
New York, NY

**Master of Fine Arts in Directing**  
Graduate School of the Arts, Theatre Program

**Washington College**  
Chestertown, MD

**Bachelor of Arts in Drama**  
Drama Department

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

**University of Pittsburgh**  
**Department of Theatre Arts**  
Head of MFA Performance Pedagogy  
2023-present  
Graduate Faculty, 2017-present  
Associate Professor, 2017-present  
Department Chair 2022-224  
Head of Performance, 2012-2022  
Assistant Professor, 2011-2017

Introduction to Performance  
Acting I  
Directing I  
Directing II  
Graduate Directing  
Seminar: Theatre and War  
Theatre and Collaboration  
Devising and Composition for the Stage

**Whitman College**  
**Drama Department**  
Assistant Professor, 2007-2011

Acting I and II  
Directing  
Voice and Movement  
Theory and Performance  
Theatre in the Arab World

**Bryn Mawr College**  
**Theatre Department**  
VAP, Fall 1998

Acting I  
Viewpoints Training

## DIRECTING

### Touring Works and Reprised Productions

*Bad Activist* by Mai Khoi, Ben Swanton, Cynthia Croot and Mark Miccheli.

An autobiographical piece performed by Vietnamese activist and musician Mai Khoi.

2024 – Joe’s Pub, New York, NY

2024 – Hood Black Box Theater, Pittsburgh, PA

2024 – Christopher Newport University, Newport News, VA

2024 – Stanford University, Stanford, CA for Human Rights Foundation College  
Freedom Forum

2024 – Playhaus by Disco Mary Corrective, Washington, DC

2023 – Trust Arts Education Center, Pittsburgh, PA for Pittsburgh Humanities Festival

2023 – James Simon Studios, Pittsburgh, PA

2023 – David L. Lawrence Convention Center, for Greater Pittsburgh Nonprofit Partnership Summit, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2023 – Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2022 – Emmanuel College, excerpt performed for TransCultural Exchange’s 2022 International Conference on Opportunities in the Arts: Create the Future, Boston MA  
 2022 – Pittsburgh Playhouse, Pittsburgh PA  
 2022 – Chatham University, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2022 – Pfarrei St. Josef, Rüsselsheim am Main, Germany  
 2022 – Kammgarn, Kaiserslautern, Germany  
 2022 – August Wilson Center, excerpt version for Vibes N’at, sponsored by the Kelly Strayhorn Theater and TCG, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2022 – Joe’s Pub, The Joseph Papp Public Theatre, New York, NY  
 2022 – Black Mountain Institute, Area 15, Las Vegas, NV  
 2022 – TESOL International Convention, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2022 – Perry Traditional Academy, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2021 – Duquense University, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2021 – University of Pittsburgh, Pitt Arts, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2021 – Jazz Poetry Festival, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2021 – Baldwin High School, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2021 – Sewickley Academy, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2021 – The Oslo Freedom Forum, Oslo, Norway  
 2021 – “Artful Wednesdays,” University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh PA

*RECOIL*, by Cynthia Croot and ensemble, a devised work exploring US gun culture.  
 2019 – ACCelerate, Smithsonian Museum of American History, Washington, D.C.  
 2018 – University of Pittsburgh, PA.

*Mirror Butterfly*, a jazz opera Composed by Ben Barson, Libretto by Ruth Margraff  
 2018 – Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, Washington D.C.  
 2018 – National Performance Network, Kelly Strayhorn Theatre, Pittsburgh, PA  
 2018 – CSA Series, New Hazlett Theatre, Pittsburgh, PA

*One Large*, Created by Cynthia Croot and Joy Katz of collective Ifyoureallyloveme  
 2017 - Actor’s Theatre of Louisville, KY  
 2016 - TCG (Theatre Communications Group) Conference, Washington D.C.  
 2015 - Open Engagement, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA

*The Millay Sisters*, by Cynthia Croot, Joan Jubett, Rachel Murdy, and Margi Sharp  
 2019 - Saco River Theatre, Bar Mills, ME  
 2019 - Arts Farmington, Farmington, ME  
 2018 - 53 Above Broadway, New York, NY  
 2018 – Steepletop (the home of Edna St. Vincent Millay) Austerlitz, NY  
 2016 - The Vanderbilt Republic, Gowanus Loft, Brooklyn, NY  
 2013 - Stonington Opera House, Stonington, ME  
 2010 - Orlando Cabaret Festival, Orlando, FL  
 2009 - Magis Theatre Company, Abingdon Theater Arts Center, New York, NY  
 2008 - Ancram Opera House, Ancram, NY  
 2007 - Don't Tell Mama Cabaret, New York, NY

*Irina’s Birthday Party*, by Cynthia Croot with Conni’s Avant Garde Restaurant  
 2013 - Brick Theatre, Brooklyn, NY

2013 - Mother Lodge Festival Louisville, KY  
2012 – North American Culture Lab, Highland Lake, NY

*Venus*, by Suzan-Lori Parks

2014 - University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA  
2007 - Staged reading featuring Andre De Shields, Jayne Houdyshell, and Arliss Howard. Harlem Stage at the Gatehouse, New York, NY  
2002 - The Windybrow Theater, Johannesburg, South Africa  
2002 - The Saartjie Baartman Women’s Center, Cape Town, South Africa  
2001 - Staged reading featuring Tim Robbins, Kathleen Chalfant and Joe Morton. Joseph Papp Public Theatre, New York, NY

*Little West 12th Night*, By Peter Lettre and Conni’s Avant Garde Restaurant

2012 - Underground Zero Festival, New York, NY  
2010 - Site-specific performances in New York’s Meat Packing District, including Brass Monkey, Highline, Standard Hotel, New York, NY

*Buzz*, adapted by Cynthia Croot and Sophia Skiles from “The War Lover” by John Hersey

2007 - NoPassport Conference, CUNY Grad Center, New York, NY  
2001 - Performance Space 122, New York, NY  
2001 - Ontological-Hysteric Theatre, New York, NY

*Isadora... No Apologies*, by Andrew Frank. Created by Lori Bellilove.

2004 - Mills College, Berkeley, CA  
2004 - Symphony Space, New York, NY

*Three Sisters*, by Anton Chekhov, translation by Paul Schmidt

2002 - Brick Theatre, Brooklyn, NY  
2002 - Chekhov Now Festival, Connelly Theatre, New York, NY

*Nightwood*, adapted by Cynthia Croot, from the novel “Nightwood” by Djuna Barnes

1999 - Columbia University, New York, NY  
1998 - *Nightwatch*. New York International Fringe, New York, NY

### **Live and Recorded Video Productions**

2021 *Melwezzle South*, a semi-autobiographical screenplay about disability and social stigma by Megan Moodie. Zoom recording screened at the American Association of Anthropology Conference at UC Santa Cruz.

*Bad Activist Video*, by Mai Khoi, Ben Swanton, and Cynthia Croot. An autobiographical performance piece performed by Vietnamese activist and musician Mai Khoi, recorded at City of Asylum, Pittsburgh, PA.

### **Traditional Works for the Stage**

2022 *Angelmakers: Songs for Female Serial Killers* by Molly Rice, Pittsburgh Winery, Pittsburgh PA

2021 *We Crossed the River*, libretto by Angie Cruz, music by Eric Moe. Opera/newmusic staging of “Testimonios” given by children detained at the southern border of the U.S. Recorded at City of Asylum, Pittsburgh, PA. Livestreamed to an international audience.

- 2018 *Hawaiian Voices*. By Peter Lettre, Center for Performance Research, NYC
- 2016 *Hair*. By James Rado and Gerome Ragni, and music by Galt MacDermot. University of Pittsburgh, PA
- 2015 *Curse of the Starving Class*. By Sam Shepard. University of Pittsburgh, PA  
*No Pressure*. By Matt Henderson. BUS 10, Bricolage Theatre, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2014 *The Ecologists*. By Gab Cody. Swan Day, No Name Players, New Hazlett Theatre, Pittsburgh, PA
- Lawrenceville 91*. By Molly Rice. Bricolage Urban Scrawl (BUS) 9, Bricolage Theatre Company, New Hazlett Theatre, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2013 *Seminar*. By Theresa Rebeck. Perseverance Theatre, Juneau, AK
- 2011 *Much Ado About Nothing*. By Shakespeare. Stonington Opera House, ME
- Funnyhouse of the Negro*. By Adrienne Kennedy. In collaboration with Esther Terry. University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA
- 2010 *Women in a Holy Mess*. By Ai Nagai, translated by Andy Bragen. Staged reading, U.S. premiere, Japan Society, New York, NY
- The Sea*. By Edward Bond. Whitman College, WA
- The Secret Lives of Coats*. By Stephanie Fleischmann and Christina Campanella. Whitman College, WA
- 2008 *Our Town*. By Thornton Wilder. Whitman College, WA
- Apparition*. By Anne Washburn. Whitman College, WA
- 2007 *Julius Caesar*. By William Shakespeare. Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Boulder, CO
- The Ghost Sonata*. By August Strindberg. Whitman College, WA
- 2006 *Scenes from the Last Five Years*. By Tommy Smith. Theaters Against War, Culture Project Impact Festival, Baruch College, New York, NY
- Softcops*. By Caryl Churchill. Staged reading hosted by the International Foucault Society, The New School, New York, NY
- Empty Chalice*s. By Judy Veramendi. Staged reading, Urban Stages Theater Company, New York, NY
- Sky/Nikita Mitskevitch*. By Andrei Rui. Staged reading from an Evening of Belarussian Plays, Culture Project, Baruch College, New York, NY
- The Three Hagi Sisters*. By Ai Nagai, translated by Loren Edelson. Staged reading, U.S. premiere, Japan Society, New York, NY

- 2005 *The Details of Silence*. By Nathalie Handal. Nibras and the Mahrajan Al-Fan Festival of Arab Arts, Symphony Space, New York, NY
- Reading List*. By Susan Miller. Vital Signs Festival, Vital Theatre Company, McGinn Cazale Theatre, New York, NY
- The Winter's Tale*. By William Shakespeare. Colorado Shakespeare, Boulder, CO
- Spring Awakening*. By Frank Wedekind. Whitman College, WA
- 2004 *Ubu Roi*. By Alfred Jarry, adapted by Christopher Carter Sanderson. Staged reading for Theaters Against War (THAW), Brick Theatre, Brooklyn, NY
- 2003 *The Designated Mourner*. By Wallace Shawn. Staged reading for Theaters Against War (THAW), Brick Theatre, Brooklyn, NY
- 2002 *Act of the Possessed*. By Haroldo de Campos. Brazil, Body and Soul Exhibit, Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY
- The Grand Design*. By Susan Miller. Starring Marsha Mason. Brave New World: America Theatre Responds to 9/11. Town Hall, New York, NY
- 2001 *Uncle Vanya*. By Anton Chekhov, translation by Paul Schmidt. Connelly Theatre, New York, NY
- 2000 *Trust*. By Steven Dietz. Blue Sphere East, Raw Space, New York, NY
- Slangrivier*. By Nina Steiger. New York International Fringe, New York, NY
- The House of Blue Leaves*. By John Guare. Perseverance Theatre, Juneau, AK

#### **Devised, Adapted, and Original Works**

- 2023 *Ghosts of the Furnace with Little Amal* (world-renowned Syrian refugee puppet) Real Time Arts.org, Carrie Furnace, Pittsburgh PA
- 2018 *A Snowball's Chance* Company-written. Conni's Avant Garde Restaurant. Cleveland Public Theatre, Cleveland, OH
- 2016 *9AM*. By Cynthia Croot and Ensemble. Devised workshop, part one of "RECOIL," University of Pittsburgh, PA
- 2014 *Border Car*. Conceived by Cynthia Croot with Dror Yaron. Part of Israeli, Palestinian, and U.S. exhibition "Sites of Passage: Borders, Walls & Citizenship." Curated by Tavia LaFollette /Art Up and the Mattress Factory, Pittsburgh, PA
- Dis Place*. By Maureen Monaghan. Bricolage Theatre, Pittsburgh PA
- Illyria/Loisaida*. By Peter Lettre and Conni's Avant Garde Restaurant. University Settlement, New York, NY

- The Herald Angels Fling*. Company-written. Conni's Avant Garde Restaurant. Cleveland Public Theatre, Cleveland, OH
- 2013 *City of Asylum*. Conceived and created by Cynthia Croot with writers Khet Mar (Burma), Israel Centena (Venezuela), Huang Xiang (China), and Horacio Castellanos Moya (El Salvador). University of Pittsburgh, PA
- 2012 *The Secret Social*. By Cynthia Croot and Conni's Avant Garde Restaurant, Cleveland Public Theatre, Cleveland, OH
- 2011 *Home for the Hollandaise*. Company-written. Conni's Avant Garde Restaurant. Cleveland Public Theatre, Cleveland, OH
- The Mothership Landing*. Company-written. Conni's Avant Garde Restaurant. In collaboration with Paul Bargetto, Irondale Center, New York, NY
- The Walls*. Conceived and created by Cynthia Croot. Whitman College, WA
- 2010 *Feast of Miracles*. Company-written. Conni's Avant Garde Restaurant. Cleveland Public Theatre, Cleveland, OH
- Midsummer Feast*. Company-written. Conni's Avant Garde Restaurant, American Repertory Theater, Club Oberon, Cambridge, MA
- 2009 *Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith*. Adapted by Cynthia Croot, from "Moonlight on the Avenue of Faith," by Gina Nahai. Whitman College, WA
- 2008 *Whispering Voices on the Phone*. Based on "Apparition" by Anne Washburn. With video artist Kristen Hutchinson. Blackfish Gallery, Portland, OR
- 2007 *Insurgency/Counterinsurgency, a Collaborative Weekend of Art-Making and Policy Making*. Company-created. Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and School of the Arts, part of the Columbia University Forum on Political Violence, New York, NY
- 2006 *Cold*. By Liz Blocker and the Present Tense Theatre Ensemble. Bank Street Theatre, New York, NY
- 2004 *A Teacup Full of Vodka*. Adapted from the short stories of Anton Chekhov by Cynthia Croot. Chekhov Now Festival, Connelly Theatre, New York, NY
- War Bride*. By Cynthia Croot. Bric-a-Brac Series, Brick Theatre, Brooklyn NY

## PUBLICATIONS

### Book Chapter

- 2019 "Taking Refuge: A case study in interdisciplinary and community-based diversity research." Diversity Dialogs, David Berg Center for Ethics and Leadership, University of Pittsburgh, PA, Information Age Publishing.

### Journal Articles

- 2016 “Venus Embodied,” Theatre Forum. Volume 49. UC San Diego press, 2016.
- 2009 “This Tool We Dream Through - Roundtable: Theatre in New York and the Arab Middle East” New York Theatre Review, 2009.
- 2006 A Letter from Syria, Theater. Vol. 36, No. 1, Duke University Press, 2006.

### GRANTS, COMPETITIVE RESIDENCIES, AND AWARDS

#### Individual Honors and Awards

- 2022 Hewlett Award for researching *Bad Activist* in Vietnam.  
Creative Capital grant finalist for *Bad Activist*.
- 2021 Orchard Project Play Development for *Bad Activist*, NY.
- 2019 *Wozzeck*, Metropolitan Opera observership, NYC, attended rehearsals directed by South African artist William Kentridge.  
Hewlett Award for work in South Africa on *RECOIL*  
Global Studies Award for continued development of the opera *Mirror Butterfly*
- 2018 Finalist for Marion International Fellowship for creation of new work.  
Provost ACCelerate funding to restage *RECOIL* at the Smithsonian Museum, Washington, D.C.
- 2017 Provost’s Year of Diversity Fund, in support of “Taking Refuge II” being organized for Spring 2018, University of Pittsburgh, PA.  
Award for *Taking Refuge* from the Year of Diversity, Global Studies, Film Studies, Classics, Theatre Arts, and the Humanities Center, University of Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2016 Artist Opportunity Grant from the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council for travel to South Africa to direct the new opera “Sea Point.”  
Award to bring Noor Theater artist Lameece Issaq to campus for a reading of the play NAHDA in coordination Muslim Identity course offered by Global Studies. Funding from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Theatre Arts, and Global Studies, University of Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2014 John G. Bowman Faculty Grant, University of Pittsburgh, PA. Awarded for travel to France to research the life and letters of Jacques Verges for *Verges / I Choose Crazy*.  
Finalist for Sheth Distinguished Faculty Award for International Achievement, University of Pittsburgh, PA.

- 2013 Sites of Passage Art Up Research Residency in Israel and Palestine, to culminate in U.S., Israeli and Palestinian exhibition at the Mattress Factory Museum, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Humanities Center Collaborative Research Grant for “Investigating Venus,” Lecture and Panel Discussion, October 2013. Awarded from the Humanities Center and Theatre Arts, University of Pittsburgh, PA.
- 2010 Mellon Foundation-supported Global Studies seminar entitled “Deviant Bodies.” Whitman College, WA.
- 2007-2009 NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Directors Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and Theatre Communications Group, New York, NY
- 2008 TCG/ITI Eastern Europe Travel Grant from Theatre Communications Group. International Theatre Institute awarded for travel to Zagreb, Croatia with The Venus Project Worldwide.
- 2006 Innovation in Teaching Award from Whitman College, WA, for research residency in Damascus, Syria to explore cultural exchange. Residency Award from the New Pacific Studio, Vallejo, CA
- 2004-5 Center for International Conflict Resolution, U.S. Delegate in U.S./Syria Cultural Exchange. Represented emerging U.S. artists as part of a four-person delegation to Syria funded by the U.S. State Department and CICR. Exchange included meetings with Noam Chomsky, U.S. and Syrian ambassadors, religious leaders, dignitaries, academics and artists.

## **NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

### **Conference Presentations**

- 2022 Roundtable Moderator, NAST (National Association of Schools of Theatre) Conference, Baltimore, MD.
- 2019 “What Happens in the Restaurant Stays in the Restaurant” Devised Theatre Panel Presenter. Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Orlando, FL
- 2017 Organizer of *Taking Refuge* – an international collaboration highlighting the situation of Syrian refugees. Events hosted by the University of Pittsburgh; Louisiana State University; Colgate University; College of Charleston SC; Roehampton University UK; Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Washington College, College of the Holy Cross; and Noor Theatre, NYC.
- 2016 “The Collaborative Relationship between Director and Vocal Coach: Synergy II” Presented in collaboration with Professor Stacey Cabaj. South Eastern Theatre Conference, Greensboro, NC
- “One Large.” Featured Artist and Discussion Leader. Theatre Communications Group Conference, Washington, DC



- 2014 “Devised Solo Performance: Creating Work from Scratch.” Presenter. Southeastern Theatre Conference, Mobile, AL
- “The Collaborative Relationship between Director and Vocal Coach: Synergy.” Co-presenter with Stacey Cabaj. South Eastern Theatre Conference, Mobile, AL
- 2012 “Adapting *Nightwood* for the Stage.” Special guest, co-presented with April Sweeney. Djuna Barnes Conference, University of London, Bloomsbury, UK.
- 2010 Arts, Service Initiatives: Africa/Africa-US / Panelist. Art and Peacebuilding / Panelist. Arts in the One World Conference, Brown University, Providence RI.
- 2009 Theatre Communications Group Conference, Baltimore MD / Featured Guest. Portfolio displayed as Fellow of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program.
- 2007 NoPassport Conference –Dreaming the Americas, CUNY, NY. Session Moderator “Intercultural Illuminations: Practice and Performance.”
- 2005 Amnesty International Firefly Project Conference, NYC / Co-organizer  
*And So Forth: a Post-Election Assembly for Artists and Activists*, New York, NY.
- “Representation and Perception in War Time – Close Up: Syria.” Co-presented with Nathalie Applewhite, Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting. International Institute for Peace Educators, Rhodes, Greece.
- “A Letter from Syria.” Harper College International Affairs Symposia Series on Syria, Chicago IL
- 2003 Radical Alternative Theatre International Conference. Collaborator at El Rayo International Experimenta (Roasario, Argentina). Taught bi-lingual introductory Viewpoints workshop (Spanish and English).

### **Invited Talks and Workshops**

- 2024 “Venus in Production” Hosted by Africana Studies and the English Department. College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA.
- 2021 “Venus Onstage” Hosted by Dr. Nadine Knight of Africana Studies and the English Department. College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA.
- Featured Speaker in the Pitt Honors Dean's OCC Badge Podcast Series: Diversity Across the Disciplines. Interviewed by Dr. Audrey Murrell, University of Pittsburgh.  
(<https://youtu.be/7KenGgoYsuY>)
- 2019 “Taking Refuge.” Invited speaker at the College of Charleston, hosted a film screening of work by Rana Kazkaz followed by an interview with the artist.
- 2018 Viewpoints Movement Workshop, Washington College, Chestertown, MD.
- 2016 “Clarify: The big issues, minus the noise.” Sponsored by Spotify, Mic and HeadCount and WeShouldDoItAll. Spotify-hosted exhibition and conversation exploring the connections between music, art, and income inequality. SPACGallery, Pittsburgh, PA.

- 2014 “After the Freak Show and Still on Display.” Hosted by Africana Studies and the English Department. College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA.
- 2013 “Investigating Venus” Organizer and Panel Moderator with Laura Anderson Barbata, Bridgit Antoinette Evans, and Lisa S. Parker, in support of theatrical production of *Venus* by Suzan-Lori Parks, University of Pittsburgh, PA
- 2012 Barnard College Summer Program. Guest Artist discussing collaborative work on *Pearl*. New York, NY.
- 2011 Reza Abdoh Film Screenings and Discussion. Organizer and Panel Moderator. Iranian Theatre Festival. Brick Theatre, Brooklyn.
- 2010 “Arab Theatre.” Faculty Forum, Whitman College, WA
- 2009 “Theatre in the Arab World from a U.S. Point of View.” Featured speaker. Fadjr International Theatre Festival, Dramatic Arts Center of Iran, Tehran, Iran.
- 2004 “Contemporary U.S. Actor Training Practices.” Higher Institute for Theatrical Studies, Damascus University, Syria.
- 2002 “International Theatre Collaboration and the Challenges of Intercultural Dialogue.” Co-presented with Bridgit Antoinette Evans. Columbia University Graduate Theatre Program, New York, NY.
- 2001 “Imagining Peace: A Training for Artists in the Wake of September 11.” With the Kazbah Project, Columbia University, New York, NY.

**Conference Attendance**

- 2015 “Projection Design and Audio Masterclass” Attendee. South Eastern Theatre Conference, Chattanooga, TN  
The Field Conference. Guest Artist. Washington, D.C.
- 2012 GSPIA Peace Building Conference. University of Pittsburgh, PA
- 2009 Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas Conference. Washington DC,
- 2001 Radical Theatre Conference. Bread and Puppet Theatre, Glover, VT