

Christina Phillips

July 22, 2008

How did you get involved with New Play Project?

My first experience with New Play Project was at *All's Fair*. I worked with Jana, and she invited me. And I went because I like watching theatre. And I liked it, especially "Play the Game"—I loved "Play the Game" and thought it was fantastic. Then I went out of the country, so I wasn't around for the next few shows, but Jana invited me to *Thorns & Thistles*.

After that I got in a car accident and was in rehab. When I got out, I didn't have a job or anything going on. I had no life. Really. One night, I went down to her house and met James for the first time. We went to Nicolitalia Pizzeria and were sitting around eating pizza, and James found out that I had no life and was really bored. He was going to have me assistant direct, but it didn't really work out, and by the time he responded to me it was a week before the show, so he said, "We'll just have you help out at the show." He put me in running box office, and it was a little crazy, but all the theater happenings and goings on around me were awesome.

That's how I got involved with New Play Project, and I've been really involved ever since.

What all have you done as far as writing, acting, directing, etc.?

Well, the first thing I did was run box office. And then for *Lost and Found* I acted. For *Swallow the Sun* I was house manager. And I've done odd jobs on the side—I take minutes at the open staff meetings, I'm working on a directory for New Play Project, I'm assistant directing for this show [*Long Ago and Far Away*] and I wrote a play for this show, "Darkwatch."

How did the workshops affect your play?

They greatly affected it—most of the critiques I got were from workshop. My play needed fleshing out because you couldn't really associate with the characters. So I did a little bit of that, mostly in the last two scenes. But then it created an imbalance; the first half was still really skeletal, but in the next half things were happening all of a sudden—"Wait, what just happened? How did we get to this point?"

But then after another one or two workshops, I got it a little more balanced, to a point where people were actually really enjoying how it was going. Workshop



helped a lot. And I loved getting ideas from people, knowing that I didn't necessarily have to use them but that they were there for me to use if I wanted. My play wouldn't be anything like what it is if I hadn't taken it to workshop.

Describe your experience with NPP thus far, the plays, the people, just the whole overall.

I'm in love with this organization, with what this group is trying to do, with the opportunities it gives to everyone. If you go to BYU and audition for a play, if you don't have any experience you probably won't get in, because there's so many people out there who do have experience and who are better actors.

But with New Play Project, average Joe from off the street can walk in and get cast for a part. Average Joe can write a play and have it produced. If you've had even just a little bit of experience with theatre, they'll let you try assistant directing or directing. You can come and help out with tech. Anybody can get involved in any aspect of this organization.

And I love the people. Holy cow! New Play Project people are amazing. I don't hang out with anybody but NPP people right now—these are my favorite people in the world. I love them. In a very short time I feel like I got to know them very well and got to be very good friends with them. Everybody has been very accepting, very open, and just very encouraging as far as the work I've been doing with the group.

I've told other people this, but the only reason I'm in New Play Project is that I got in a car wreck. If I hadn't gotten in the wreck, I never would have gotten involved, because I've always been too busy with school and work to do anything extracurricular. But I wouldn't trade getting in the car wreck for anything, because it got me into New Play Project. ■