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How did you get involved with New Play Project?

I inherited restlessness from my maternal line, and when it gets really bad, I do something spontaneous. This spontaneous thing happened to be a meeting for the BYU Experimental Theatre Company at BYU I read about in the little Theatre Media Arts newsletter the College gives out. This was in 2006. At the meeting, they mentioned that as a playwright, I might want to get involved with NPP and gave me their email.

Right after the meeting, I emailed New Play Project asking, “Can I play?” And I volunteered to direct for their upcoming production. This was back in the good old days when NPP was so desperate they said yes to people they hadn’t even met yet. It was just a little choice that’s really changed my life forever. I think it was divinely directed.

What have you done with NPP?

I’ve directed for *In Progress*, *A New Leaf*, *Thorns & Thistles*, and *Lost and Found*. I’ve acted in several of the plays (but since they’re not all on the archive, I don’t remember all of them). I have submitted dozens of plays to New Play Project, but they have chosen to perform seven: “The Fall,” “Pennies,” “Isolation,” “Based on True-ish Stories,” “Sunny,” “High School Reunion,” and right now they’re putting on “The Fatted Dragon.”

I think I’ve done so much with NPP because they drag me in. I tell myself I’m just going to write a play, but then I want to direct, and then acting looks like so much fun. I love being involved in every show.

Describe your experience with NPP thus far.

My goodness. I love NPP for very selfish reasons, I must admit. It has helped me grow so much as a writer and director. Those who are familiar with all the things I’ve done with NPP will certainly agree. That’s what I love about it. NPP takes you as you are and lets you grow, and grow you will! That’s the power of theatre. The people are so friendly and diverse, and the organization is extremely open to new ideas and new approaches.

It’s fun to be a part of something that is growing and still establishing itself, because it makes me feel like I’m part of a revolution—that’s an empowering feeling. I feel like I’m changing and affecting the world for the better. Perhaps it’s just a small little world, but it’s made



a profound impact in my own life.

Oh, and I forgot to mention the plays. I could write an essay about the plays. They are moving, inspiring, refreshing, sometimes not so good, and just fun.

That’s what the whole organization is about, and I think NPP lives up to its mission statement in an effort to produce values-driven theatre that is fresh and new and just plain *good*.

What do you see as NPP’s strengths?

I consider NPP a miracle organization (I am an optimist). It has a way of attracting dedicated people it needs the most. A non-profit organization is hard to maintain with only volunteers, and it takes a lot of different skills to run a theatre company. This means that in order for it to progress, we need lots of people. I have noticed that when we need certain skills, people arrive. If you produce it, they will come.

We just happen to have volunteers that are really good at web design, or stage managing, or business, or finances. And since NPP is so transient (being in a college town with lots of people coming and going) it’s quite impressive that people continue to arrive to fill in the gaps.

I think what allows NPP to be so amazing is that its purpose is unique, and it does things with integrity. I have heard various criticisms of NPP throughout the years, but what amazes me is how we turn those critiques into productive tools to change. We are always getting better.

I also think we strike a chord with what the community enjoys. We provide not only thought-provoking entertainment, but opportunities to do theatre and to get involved. It’s something to believe in and support and enjoy. Uplifting and enriching entertainment that changes lives—you really can’t do better than that. ■