

NICOLAS BENACERRAF
Artist, Facilitator, and Scholar
for Live Performance

EDUCATION

- Ph.D.** **Theatre & Performance Studies.** The Graduate Center, City University of New York (New York, NY). Level 3, expected 2022.
Dissertation: "Persuasive Performance: The Scenography of Public Relations and Political Theatre" (Advisor: David Savran)
- M.F.A.** **Scenic Design for Performance.** California Institute of the Arts (Valencia, CA): School of Theater, 2012.
- M.A.** **Aesthetics & Politics.** California Institute of the Arts (Valencia, CA): School of Critical Studies, 2011.
Thesis: "The Unintended Revolution: S.D.S., The Weathermen, and the End of the Student Left"
- B.A.** **Sociology & Theater (High Honors).** Wesleyan University (Middletown, CT): 2008.
Thesis: "Disrupting the Social Script: The Unwelcome Transgressions of Avant-Garde Performance"

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- 2020 – present **Edge Effect Media Group.** Founding Creative Director. www.edgeeffectmedia.org/
- 2020 – present **Calling Us In: An Antiracist Network for White Folks in the Arts.** Organizing Nucleus.
<https://callingusin.wordpress.com/>
- 2006 – 2020 **The Assembly Theater Project.** Founding Co-Artistic Director.
www.assemblytheater.org/

CREATIVE & POLITICAL WORK

• PROJECT LEADERSHIP (MULTIMEDIA)

Director of Design, Producer. *Everybody Is Gone: A Piece of Immersive Journalism about the Uyghur Cultural Genocide.* Created by The New Wild. (Premiering 2022).

Environment Designer, Associate Director. *CANNABIS: A Viper Vaudeville* (Immersive Concert). Created by Baba Israel, Grace Galu, and Soul Inscribed. Dir. Talvin Wilks.
HERE Arts Center (2019-2020), Little Island (2021), MassMoCA (2021), PROTOTYPE Festival (Premiering 2022 at La MaMa).

Conceiver, co-Director, Scenographer. *SEAGULLMACHINE*. Created by The Assembly.

Wesleyan University (2019), La MaMa ETC's Ellen Stewart Theater (World Premiere 2018), TDF Performeteria (2017), Williams College Theatre Lab (2016), undergroundzero Festival (2014).

co-Lead Artist, Environment Designer. *UP AND AWAY: An Immersive Play for Children on the Autism Spectrum*. Created by Trusty Sidekick, commissioned by Lincoln Center Theatre. The Rose Theater at Lincoln Center (2015 & 2018).

Scenic Designer, co-Author. *I Will Look Forward to This Later*. Created by The Assembly.

New Ohio Theatre (World Premiere 2016, *Archive Residency*), New Ohio Ice Factory Festival (2015), North American Cultural Laboratory (2015).

Creative Director. *Happiness Machine #1*. Created by Edge Effect.

ChaShaMa West 37th Street Manhattan Storefront (2014).

co-Director, co-Author. *Babel: A Tribute to Elevator Repair Service*. For the 2014 Edwin Booth Award Ceremony. Martin E. Segal Center (2014).

Scenic Designer, co-Author. *That Poor Dream*. Created by The Assembly. Dir. Jess Chayes.

The Tank Theater (2015), New Ohio Theatre (World Premiere 2014) HERE Arts Center (2014), Prelude Festival (2013), New Ohio Ice Factory Festival (2013).

Installation Designer, Dramaturg, co-Author. *HOME/SICK*. Created by The Assembly. Critics' Pick in *The New York Times* and *Backstage*.

JACK (2017), Odyssey Theatre in Los Angeles (2016), Wesleyan University (2014), The Living Theatre (two runs in 2012), The Collapsible Hole (2011).

Peer Sexual Health Advocate. How I first learned how to be an intentional facilitator. With HiTOPS (Health-interested Teens' Own Program on Sexuality) 2003-2004, and with Wesleyan's Office of Health Education (2005-2008).

• SCENOGRAPHY & ENVIRONMENT DESIGN (MULTIMEDIA)

DATE	PRODUCTION	DIRECTOR	VENUE / COMPANY
2020	<i>The Dark Heart of Meteorology</i>	The Assembly / Jess Chayes	Torn Page
2019	<i>Mother Courage</i>	Emilie Whelan / UBUNTU	Mills Performing Arts Ctr (Oakland)
	<i>The Bad Infinity</i> (Film)	Graham Sack	Staging Film / NYCITFF
	<i>Looking At You</i> (Opera)	Kristin Marting	HERE Arts Center / Opera On Tap
	<i>WORD.SOUND.POWER.#3</i>	Baba Israel	BAM
2018	<i>WORD.SOUND.POWER.#2</i>	Baba Israel	BAM
	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i>	Emily Whelan / UBUNTU	The Alice Collective (Oakland)
	<i>Tear a Root from the Earth</i>	The New Wild / Marina McClure	BRIClab
	<i>Foreign to Myself</i>	Goat in the Road / Chris Kaminstein	University of New Orleans
2017	<i>Under the Rainbow</i>	Jonathan Schmidt Chapman	Congregation Beit Simchat Torah
	<i>Tear a Root from the Earth</i>	The New Wild / Marina McClure	New Ohio Theatre
	<i>The Light Princess</i>	Steve Pacek	Arden Theatre

	<i>WORD. SOUND. POWER. #1</i>	Baba Israel	BAM
	<i>Foreign to Myself</i>	Goat in the Road / Chris Kaminstein	New Orleans Contemp. Arts Ctr.
2016	<i>HOLDEN</i>	Anisa George	FringeArts (Philly) / New Ohio
	<i>IDIOT</i>	Kristin Marting	HERE Arts Center / Ice Factory
	<i>Leveling Up</i>	Jess Chayes	University of Scranton
2015	<i>Elektra</i> (trans. Ezra Pound)	Teresa Choate	Kean University Zella Fry Theatre
	<i>Children of Eden</i>	Holly Logue	Kean University Wilkins Theatre
	<i>Peter Pan</i>	Holly Logue	Kean University Wilkins Theatre
2014	<i>The Imprt. of Being Earnest</i>	Teresa Choate	Kean University Zella Fry Theatre
	<i>The Lover</i>	Anna Demers	Kean University Zella Fry Theatre
	<i>In the Heights</i>	Suzanne Agins	Kean University Wilkins Theatre
2013	<i>Here We Are</i>	Judith Malina	The Living Theatre
	<i>so go the ghosts of méxico</i>	Meiyin Wang	La Mama E.T.C.
	<i>Blackbird (Installation)</i>	Nathan Shreeve	Location One Gallery (Soho)
2012	<i>GOODBAR</i>	Waterwell / Arian Moayed Tom Ridgely	The Public Theater (UTR)
	<i>The City (US Premier)</i>	Matthew McCray	Son of Semele Ensemble (LA)
	<i>And Then There Were None</i>	Casey McClellan	Waterwell Performing Arts School
	<i>On the Frontier</i>	Lars Jan	Center for New Performance (LA)
2011	<i>GOODBAR (Concert)</i>	Waterwell / Arian Moayed	Ideal Glass Gallery
	<i>Phaedra's Love</i>	Marina McClure	CalArts
2010	<i>GOODBAR</i>	Waterwell / Arian Moayed	East River Park (Summer Stage) / Yale Cabaret / Ideal Glass Gallery
	<i>Boxed (Opera)</i>	Lily Whitsitt	Wild Beast / CalArts
2009	<i>The Misanthrope</i>	Anna Brenner	P.S. 122 / undergroundzero
	<i>#9</i>	Tom Ridgely (Waterwell)	59E59
2008	<i>Big Love</i>	David Jaffe	Wesleyan University CFA Theater

• **ASSOCIATE & ASSISTANT SCENIC DESIGN (MULTIMEDIA)**

PRODUCTION	DESIGNER	DIRECTOR	VENUE
<i>24-Decade History of Popular Music</i>	Mimi Lien	Taylor Mac & Niegel Smith	St. Ann's Warehouse
<i>Queen of the Night</i>	Douglas Little	Christine Jones	Diamond Horseshoe
<i>Old Fashioned Prostitutes</i>	Richard Foreman	Richard Foreman	Public Theater
<i>Water (by Sheila Callaghan)</i>	Mimi Lien	Daniella Topol	14 th Street Y
<i>Richard III</i>	Nick Vaughan	Elizabeth Williamson	Hartford Stage
<i>Between the Door and the Street</i>	Suzanne Lacy	Suzanne Lacy	Creative Time

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, AND DISTINCTIONS

- 2020 **COVID-Affected Research Area Grant**, PublicsLab at the Graduate Center, CUNY.
- 2020 **National Endowment for Democracy Grant** with The New Wild
- 2019 **Mellon Humanities Public Fellowship** (3 years), PublicsLab at the Graduate Center, CUNY.
- 2017 **Graduate Center Fellowship** (5 years), Program in Theatre & Performance at the Graduate Center, CUNY.
- 2016 **Scholarly Article by Cindy Rosenthal in TDR: The Drama Review**, "Circling Up with The Assembly" (Cover Story)
- 2015 **A.R.T./New York's 2016 Bel Geddes Design Enhancement Grant** for the scenic design of The Assembly's *I WILL LOOK FORWARD TO THIS LATER*
- 2015 **International News Coverage for UP AND AWAY** (role: Lead Artist / Environment Designer) featured on *Al Jazeera Global* (11/2015); *NBC Nightly News with Lester Holt* (10/2015); *CBS New York* (10/2015); *New York Times* (9/2015)
- 2015 **Archive Residency New Play Commission** (2 years), from the New Ohio Theatre and IRT, for The Assembly's *I WILL LOOK FORWARD TO THIS LATER*
- 2015 **North American Cultural Lab** (2-time resident), with The Assembly and HERE Arts Center
- 2014 **ChaShaMa Residency** for *HAPPINESS MACHINES*
- 2013 **L.A. Weekly Set Design Award**, Martin Crimp's *THE CITY* (US Premiere)
- 2010 **Orchard Project Residency**, Waterwell's *GOODBAR*
- 2008 **First student to design a mainstage faculty production at Wesleyan University**, in partial completion of senior thesis requirements

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

- CUNY Doctoral Students' Theatre Association**, "Negotiating Quotidian: Performing the Everyday," Virtual Conference, April 2021. Panel Moderator: *Protest, Assembly, and the Everyday*.
- American Society for Theatre Research Annual Conference** in Arlington, VA, November 2018. "The Room Where It Happened: How *Hamilton* Constructs Its Viewing Public." Working Group: *The Public's Many Theatre's*.
- USITT Annual Conference** in Salt Lake City, Utah, March 2016. Invited Panelist: "Design in Non-Traditional Spaces," Moderator: Patrick Rizzotti.

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

In Progress

"Performance by Design: Mimi Lien and Pig Iron's *SUPERTERRANEAN*." *TDR: The Drama Review*.

Performance Reviews

"Operatic Chambers." *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*. 42, no. 1 (2020): 43-48.

PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

The Brooklyn Commune Project, Andy Horwitz, Risa Shoup, Jessica Applebaum, Dorit Avganim, Kimberly Bartosik, Nicolas Benacerraf, et al. "The View from Here: A Report on the State of the Performing Arts from the Perspective of Artists," December 23, 2013.

<https://brooklyncommune.org/the-bkcp-report/>.

"Politics and the Aesthetics of Social Movements." *Culturebot*. September 17, 2013.

JOURNAL EDITING

2017-2018 Assistant Managing Editor, *European Stages*

2017-2018 Assistant Book Review Editor, *Theatre Survey*

PUBLIC SPEAKING

2020 **The Flea Theater's The Mac Wellman Symposium**. Panelist: *The Bad Infinity* (film). Moderator: Helen Shaw.

2020 **Baruch College**, Panelist: M.A. in Arts Administration's panel on "Innovative Structures," Prof. David Milch.

2020 **Torn Page**. Panelist: *The Bad Infinity*.

2015 **Undergroundzero Festival**. Panelist: "The Intrinsic Value of Art and Science," Moderators: Heather Denyer & Delaram Kahrobaei.

2015 **The Public Theater. Under the Radar Festival**. Panelist: "Theater and the Aesthetics of Democracy," Moderator: Andy Horwitz.

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Committee on Anti-Racism, Co-Founder & Member

2020-22

CUNY Graduate Center, Ph.D. Program in Theatre & Performance, student-faculty committee

- Vice President for Conferences and Awards** 2019-20
 CUNY Graduate Center, Doctoral Theatre Students Association
 Chair of Edwin Booth Award Committee, honoring scenographer Mimi Lien
 (<https://mimilien.edwinboothaward.com/>)
- Committees on Curriculum, Facilities, Reaccreditation, and Personnel** 2014-16
 Kean University, Theatre Department

UNIVERSITY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Brooklyn College

Ph.D. Teaching Fellow, Department of Theater

- "Design Thinking in the Rehearsal Room" (Spring 2019) *
- "Introduction to Theater Production" (Fall 2018) *

Kean University

Full-Time Lecturer with rank of professor & Co-Head of B.F.A. Design & Technology Major, Theatre Department (Fall 2014 - Spring 2016).

- "Senior Seminar" (Spring 2016)
- "Theatre Laboratory" (Spring 2016, Fall 2015, Spring 2015, Fall 2014, Spring 2014)
- "Technical Theatre" (Spring 2016, Fall 2015, Spring 2015, Fall 2014)
- "Introduction to Theatre" (Fall 2015, Spring 2015, Fall 2014) *
- "Scenic Design" (Fall 2015) *
- "Advanced Technical Theatre" (Spring 2015) *
- "Drafting & Rendering" (Fall 2014)

California Institute of the Arts

Adjunct Lecturer, School of Theatre.

- "Theatre of Witness" (Spring 2012) *

* I have proposed and/or redeveloped these courses

ANTI-RACISM / DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSIONS TRAININGS (ATTENDED)

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| 2021 | artEquity, "Everyday Justice: Antiracism as Daily Practice." (11 hrs) |
| 2021 | Intimacy Coordinators of Color, "Intimacy Captain Certificate Training." (3 hrs) |
| 2021 | Hollaback!, "Conflict De-escalation Training." (1 hr) |
| 2021 | Hollaback!, "Anti-AAPI Violence Bystander Intervention Training." (1 hr) |
| 2021 | Organizing White Men for Collective Liberation, "Collective Care Training." (1.5 hrs) |
| 2021 | Coming to the Table, Training for The Big Learn. (9 hrs) |
| 2021 | Nicole Brewer, "Anti-Racist Theatre" for The Big Learn. (8 hrs) |

2020-21	Radical Evolution, "Antiracist Book Club." (75 hrs over 13 months)
2020	Nicole Brewer, "Anti-Racist Theatre." (7 hrs)
2020	Calling Us In, "We See You White American Theatre Learning & Action." (4 hrs)
2019-20	Raben Group, "Diversifying Our Organizations." for ART/NY (33 hrs over 7 months)

INVITED GUEST LECTURES

2021	Brooklyn College, "Theatre History 3," Prof. Jessica Adam.
2021	Loyola Marymount University, "Intro to Business in the Arts," Prof. Elena Muslar.
2021	Hunter College, "Intro to the Arts," Prof. Ruijiao Dong.
2020	Hunter College, "Intro to Theatre," Prof. Maria Litvan.
2020	Brooklyn College, "Theatre History 3," Prof. Taylor Culbert.
2020	Brooklyn College, "Intro to Theatre," Prof. Jessica Adam.
2018	Sarah Lawrence College, "Global Theatre."
2018	Hamilton College, "Collaborative Playmaking," Prof. Sarah Walsh.
2018	Baruch College, "MA Seminar in Arts Administration." Prof. David Milch.
2016	New York University program in Performance Studies, "Experimental Theatre: Then and Now," Prof. Richard Schechner.
2015	Colgate University, "Challenges of Modernity," Prof. April Sweeney.
2014	Wesleyan University, "Performance Studies," Prof. Claudia Tatinge Nascimento.
2013	California Institute of the Arts, "Production & Sustainability" MFA Seminar, Prof. Leslie Tamaribuchi.
2013	California Institute of the Arts, "Entrepreneurship in the Arts," Prof. Susan Solt.
2012-2014	The New School, "Theatre Production Toolkit," Prof. Sarah Peterson.
2012	California Institute of the Arts, "Conversations in Theatre," Profs. Shannon Scrofano & Chi-Wang Yang.
2011	California Institute of the Arts, "Interpretive Strategies for Performance," Profs. Shannon Scrofano & Evelyn Serrano.

WORKSHOPS ABOUT COLLECTIVE COLLABORATION (TAUGHT)

NYU (Stella Adler), Williams College, Sarah Lawrence College, Hamilton College, Wesleyan University, and the New Ohio Theatre.