

Artist Statement

I'm tired of everyone acting like love means only one thing. I want to collaborate in environments where ideas and perspectives are no longer siloed by the bounds of perceived skillset and field. I want to tell and hear stories from the entire universe of experiences and for subjects to be explored through infinite perspectives and to infinite nuance.

I'm aromantic and asexual. I'm nonbinary. I'm queer. I'm autistic. I'm mixed-race. So much of my life is defined, not by "not fitting into a box," but by forgetting that there was a box to fit into in the first place. Just like my love of the word queer, I wholeheartedly embrace being a theatre artist and storyteller; my most successful collaborations don't follow traditional splits, but instead come from finding someone with a complementary skillset and actively filling in the weird gaps and holes around them. As an orchestrator who loves working on story, I see the ways in which you can lean into or break expectations to further your point. As a writer whose key collaborators are not listed under "book/music/lyrics," I am invigorated by the new questions and contributions that each collaborator brings to a project through their specific worldview. I, along with everyone else, want to love my work and the projects that I'm working on, and theatre artists are united by a passion for storytelling. This collective love for the story, for the characters, for the world – all from diverse perspectives and skillsets – only benefits a piece of work.

I am driven by curiosity. Science fiction and fantasy allow both the creator and audience to adjust the settings of the given society, to isolate the variable that they want to study. Science itself shows us the wonder in both the things we know and the things we are still learning. I write about the questions that I'm curious to research for hours, because like any teacher says, if I have that question, somebody else probably does too. I strive to give my audience something familiar, such as the structure of a meet-cute or expectations in an online community, but then, through a narrative, encourage them to investigate it with a renewed sense of curiosity. What gaps have we seen so many times that our eyes skip over it? Why is this "the way it is?" What do we gain from that attitude, and what do we lose?

Recently, somebody told me that, after seeing my show, they went down a Wikipedia spiral on the subject. This is the highest compliment I can imagine. Our brains are hardwired to thrive on story, and both theatre and science reveal the stories around us every day. Curiosity breeds innovation, and the continual asking of "why" (or, as toddler me asked endlessly, "because what") gives us the chance to see what structures are helping and what structures are hurting. Beyond that, though, curiosity fosters compassion. The desire to know more about someone, to understand them, and then to take the time to do so – what is that but love?