



Introducing Maria Zarrillo!

Blog
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Introducing Maria Zarrillo: Pi's new Associate Artistic Manager

Originally from Winnipeg, Maria is an Equity Stage Manager, freelance Producer and Arts Administrator currently based in Vancouver. Since graduating from Studio 58's production program, she has worked on a variety of shows in a variety of capacities. Some credits include the original, remounted & touring productions of Empire of the Son (Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre), The Invisible Hand (Pi Theatre), L'Elisir D'Amore (Vancouver Opera), Broken Tailbone (Nightswimming Theatre) and Kim's Convenience (Pacific Theatre).

Maria just finished a yearlong contract as the Operations Assistant for Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre and is pursuing a career in artistic and stage management.

Maria on working in arts management:

"I've never considered myself an artist. Sure, I acted in a play once way back in the day, but honestly, I began stage managing in theatre way before that, when I was 15 years old, and I've always preferred the organizational side of things. It was never about being afraid to be in front of a crowd, it was more about knowing what I like to do and what I want to do. My strengths have always manifested in providing an outlet and a space for others to do what they want to do. I've had this passion and understanding for theatre as an art form from an early age, but I've found the most joy in juggling schedules, creating spreadsheets, writing emails and being the eye for continuity in a rehearsal room.

I've often found myself in conversations where I mention that 'I'm not an artist' or 'I don't consider myself an artist', and the person I'm speaking with almost always feels the need to aggressively assure me that I am.

'Oh, of course you're an artist! Arts management is an art!'

I don't actually disagree with these people. I agree that there is an art to arts management (it's right there in the name!). However, I've always felt a little twinge of resentment whenever this happens because I'm always being spoken to as if I should be striving to be an artist. As if me saying that I'm not an artist is self-deprecating and discrediting the work that I do. As if working in arts management or administration is just there for financial support while I pursue what I really want to do, just a stepping stone, a means to an

end, for what everyone must strive to be: an artist. That's not true for me. It never has been.

I've had a lot of conversations with friends and theatre colleagues lately about where they fit in the theatre community. The idea of taking up space that isn't theirs to take up often comes up in these conversations and it got me thinking. I've spent a lot of time over last couple years focussing on where I fit best within the theatre community to benefit myself and to further my career. However, lately, I've become more interested in where I fit in the theatre community to best benefit the community. I feel very fortunate that I get the best of both worlds by working in arts management.

Pi theatre and Artistic and Producing Director Richard Wolfe have been supporting my career since before I even graduated theatre school. I couldn't be more thrilled to join their team as Associate Artistic Manager for their 2018-19 season and spend this year doing what I love (and getting paid for it!)."