

Miriam Laurence Bio: 2020

Miriam Laurence (miriamlaurence.com) coaches, trains, and directs actors. She has been influential in the growth of a long list of recognized actors, directors, writers, and teachers. She has coached on a long list of film and television productions. She has taught her own technique, *Integrated Acting System*, for around 30 years.

Ms. Laurence trained at New York's Circle-in-the-Square Theatre School with Madeleine Sherwood. She studied with Lee Strasberg for three years and was granted 'working observer' privileges at The Actors Studio East and West for four years. Ms. Laurence holds an MA in Theater Arts (Directing and Critical Analysis) from UCLA and a MFA in directing from York University. From 2016-2018, Miriam was a member of the Playwright/Director's Unit at the Actors Studio West from 2017-2019.

As well as being in constant demand as a private audition coach for actors of all ages, Ms. Laurence has been hired as Language/Dialect Coach for Vin Diesel and other actors in *The Pacifier*; for Sienna Guillory and Thomas Kretschmann, in *Resident Evil II: Apocalypse*.

Miriam served as dialect coach for fifty-three cast members in *Harlan County*, directed by Tony Bill and starring Holly Hunter and most recently for George McKay and Daniel Webber on 11/23/62.

She has worked as the Acting Coach for Abigail Spencer and Paul Popowich for *Angela's Eyes*, on CBC's *Street Legal* and *I'll Never Get to Heaven*, Don Shebib's *Change of Heart*, Universal's *Billy Madison*, *Fast Track* for Alliance. She has been a personal role preparation coach for several actors, among them, Alex Rice on two projects.

Directing credits for theatre include: **The Gnadiges Fraulin** at Summerworks and the sold-out production of **Birdbath** at The Toronto Fringe; **A Dream Play** at Seneca College Studio Theatre, **World of Colour** at Mel Lastman Square, **Lilly, Alta.** and **Fool for Love** at York University. **Fool for Love** was remounted professionally in a highly acclaimed production at Solar Stage Theatre.

Since 1999 Miriam has directed several short films. *Rue the Day* was screened at the Los Angeles International Short Films Festival in 2005. In 2010, her documentary, *Madeleine's Method; recipe for the actor* was chosen to be shown as part of the SpringBoard program at the Victoria Film Festival.

Her recent short, **Magic Madeleines**, was an Official Selection at the following festivals: *LA Skins; Oneota; Winnipeg Aboriginal; Paris lift Off; Mediterranean at Cannes: Indianer Inuit.*

She is currently teaching her classes while writing the feature version of **Magic Madeleines**.

Miriam Laurence

289 Poyntz Avenue
North York, Ontario
Canada, M2N 1J8

416-221-9933

e-mail: miriam.laurence@gmail.com

website: www.miriamlaurence.com

Professional Affiliations

- Member of the Actors Studio West Playwright/Directors Unit (accepted through an interview process with Mark Rydell, Martin Landau and Elaine Madsen), 2017 - 2019
- Founding Member of Actors Repertory Company with John Neville, Chuck Shamata
- Artistic Director, Meeting Place Theatre, 1987 – 1994
- Founder, Artistic Director, Ensemble Film Group Productions
- ACTRA Member
- Canadian Actors' Equity Member
- Member of the Playwrights Guild of Canada
- Theatre Ontario Talent Bank Member
- Toronto Association of Acting Schools – Member since 1995, Chair, 2009-2012

Education and Training

Master of Fine Arts in Directing, York University, North York, Ontario, Canada 1995

Thesis: *Fool for Love* by Sam Shepard

Master of Arts in Theater, University of California, Los Angeles, 1982

Thesis: “The Chekhovian Women: Catalysts of Action, A Study of Female Characters in the Five Major Plays”

Bachelor of Arts, Interdivisional: French Literature and Theater, Bennington College, Vt., 1976

Thesis: Translation and direction of *Forever Yours, Your Marie-Lou* by Michel Tremblay

Intensive Linklater voice/dialect/accent reduction training with master voice teacher

David Smukler, Equity Showcase and privately, 1983 – 1991

Acting Training

New York and Los Angeles, 1975 - 1980

- The Actor’s Studio, New York and Los Angeles, 1976 - 1980; ‘Finalist with Official Observer Status,’ Actors and Playwright/Director's Unit
- Lee Strasberg Institute; Master Class with Lee Strasberg, New York, 1975 - 1979
- Scene Study and Acting Technique with Madeleine Sherwood, Circle-in-the-Square
- Text Analysis (Audit) with Stella Adler

Toronto, 1983 - 1995

- Uta Hagen, The Actors Workshop
- Equity Showcase Theatre School: David Smukler, Linklater; Neil Freeman and

- Marti Maraden, Shakespeare Text Analysis and Scene Study; David Rotenberg, On-Camera Technique with David Rotenberg; Kurt Reis and Michael Shurtleff
- The Brooke Studio; Scene Study and Acting Technique with Samantha Langevin
- World Theatre Congress, Equity Showcase Theatre School: intensive workshops in Suzuki, Grotowski and with Yoshi Oida
- CAST: Scene Study with William Hickey, Carol Rosenfled (audit), Kurt Reis
- Tarragon's Maggie Bassett Studio; Voice - Lloy Coutts; Hagen - Patricia Hamilton

Teaching Experience

ACTING STUDIOS/SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITY, Toronto, Ontario

- 1995 – 2020: Miriam Laurence Studio, Integrated Acting System
- 1987 – 2020: Private Coaching: Acting, Audition Preparation, Accent Reduction & Vocal
- 1990 – 2013: Equity Showcase Theatre: Scene Study and On-Camera workshops
- 1983 - 2004: Young People's Theatre School: Creative Drama and On-Camera Acting
- 1992 – 2004: Seneca College Theatre Certificate Program: Scene Study I & II, On-Camera
- 1992–1995: York University, North York, Ontario, Canada, Teaching Assistant:
Aspects of Theatre/Ines Buchli, Theatre History Survey/Tamara Trojanowska
Guest Lecturer, 'The Development of Acting Techniques During the Past Century' by Miriam Laurence for *Aspects of Theatre*
- 1993 & 1994: The Ontario Independent Schools' Drama Festival, Adjudicator and Acting Techniques Workshop Leader
- 1990 – 1993: Acting Technique, The George Randolph Studio, The Actor's Network:
- 1989 – 1991: Artistic Director, Main Workshop Leader, Voice Teacher, Producer and Director for Meeting Place Theatre's Youth Theatre Training Program (sponsored by Theatre Ontario through The Ontario Arts Council)
- 1987 – 1989: The Brooke Studio, Method Technique and Scene Study
- 1985 – 1987: Theatre Training for Young Actors, Tarragon, Maggie Bassett Studio
- 1981: Consultant and Course Leader for 7th grade workshop: "Literature and Visual Arts: Cultural Contexts of the Fine Indian Art and the *Ramayana*" school, Los Angeles County Museum

Coaching for Television and Film, 1994 - 2013

ACTING/HOST COACH

- The First Encounter*, Personal Acting Coach for Sera-Lys McArthur
- Given To Walk*, Personal Acting Coach for Alex Rice, Robert A. Guthrie
- The Nature of Things, The Suzuki Diaries*, Host Coach for Sarika Suzuki, CBC, Kenton Vaughan
- Indian Summer: The Oka Crisis*, Personal Acting Coach for Alex Rice, CBC, Gil Cardinal
- The Border*, Acting/Dialect Coach, Sofia Milos, CBC
- Project X*, Coach for four lead hosts, CBC
- Angela's Eyes*, On-set Acting Coach for lead actors: Abigail Spencer, Paul Popowich, 5 episodes, NBC Universal Television
- Fast Track*, Rehearsal and On-Set Acting Coach for series regular, Guylaine Ste-Onge, 5 episodes, Alliance
- Billy Madison*, On-Set Acting Coach for all child leads and extras, 6 week shoot on set, Universal, Tamra Davis
- Street Legal*, Rehearsal and On-Set Acting Coach for various child and adult series regulars, 20 episodes, CBC
- A Change of Heart*, Rehearsal and On-Set Acting Coach for child lead, 4 week shoot, Desca Productions Feature Films, Don Shebib

I'll Never Get to Heaven, Rehearsal and On-Set Acting Coach for all child actors,
6 week shoot, CBC, Stefan Scaini

DIALECT/VOICE/LANGUAGE COACH

11/22/63, Dialect Coach for George MacKay, Daniel Webber, Bad Robot, J.J. Abrams, Stephen King, James Franco

Killjoys, Dialect Coach, 1 episode, 2016

Shadowhunters, Language Coach for Alan Van Sprang,

Cosmopolis, Dialect and Line Coach for George Touliatos, Alfama Films/Prospero Pictures, David Cronenberg

The Darkest Hour, English ADR coach for Yuriy Kotsenko, Regency Enterprises, Chris Gorak

Rookie Blue, 'Hearts and Sparks', Dialect Coach for Christine Horne, ABC/CanWest Global, T.W. Peacocke

XIII: The Series, 'The Bank Job', Language Coach for Stuart Townsend, Prodigy Pictures, Lee Rose

Maggie Hill, Dialect Coach for Christina Cole and *The Wire's* Gbenga Akinnagbe, Fox Stephen Hopkins

Covert One: The Hades Factor, Cast Languages & Dialect Coach, CBS, Mick Jackson

The Pacifier, Language coach for Vin Deisel; Language and Dialect Coach for Carol Kane, Walt Disney Pictures, Adam Shankman

A Separate Peace, Acting & Dialect Coach for lead actors, Showtime Peter Yates

The Eleventh Hour, Languages & Dialect Coach for Cle Bennett, Alliance Atlantis, Creators: Semi Chellas^[1] & Ilana Frank

Resident Evil II: Apocalypse, Dialect/Accent Reduction Coach for: Sienna Guillory, Thomas Kretschmann, Sophie LeVasseur, Screengems, Alexander Witt

Charms for the Easy Life, worked with director Joan Micklin Silver for dialect casting, Dialect Coach for the 80 actors cast; Coaching sessions for: Gina Rowlands and Mimi Rogers, Showtime/Dufferin Gate

Beauty and Power, Coaching Sessions for John Ralston, ShowTime/Dufferin Gate

Breakfast with Dick and Dorothy, Accent Reduction Coach for lead actress, Mystery Wheel

Annus Horribilis, Acting/Dialect Coach for four leads, on and off set, Showtime, Eric Stoltz

Harlan County War, starring Holly Hunter; Six week shoot on set: Individual Ongoing Dialect coaching for over fifty actors, Showtime, Tony Bill

Relic Hunter with Tia Carrerre, Dialect Coach, six episodes on set for over fifteen actors

Alex: The Life of a Child, Dialect/Accent Reduction Coach for Genny Jarvis, four weeks on set, ABC /Heartstar Films, Robert Markowitz

Directing

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR - Film

- 2019: *Magic Madeleines* – Official Selection at the following festivals –
LA Skins; Oneota; Winnipeg Aboriginal; Paris lift Off; Mediterranean at Cannes: Indianer Inuit.
- 2009: *Madeleine's Method* – a documentary about Madeleine Sherwood the actors' process, and the Actors Studio (made possible through a grant from the Ontario Arts Council) -- featured at The Victoria Film Festival's SpringBoard Program, 2010.
- 2005: *Rue the Day*—premiered at the Los Angeles International Short Film Festival, September 2005
- 2004: *Wheel and Clay*, a poem by Naomi Guttman. (Made possible through a grant from the Ontario Arts Council's First Projects: Film and Video program.)
- 2002: *Smokin' Joe*
- 2000: *Walkers*
- 1999: *Corridor*

PROFESSIONAL THEATRE

Toronto, Ontario

- 2015: *Crimes of the Heart*, Sterling Theatre, The Theatre Machine
- 2011/12: *English Mint*, retranslation/adaptation and direction, in development
- 2011: *To Distraction*, Toronto Fringe Festival, Director
- 1999: *The Gnadiges Fraulin*, Tennessee Williams, Summerworks
- 1996-98: *Creditors*, retranslation/adaptation, Actor's Repertory Company'
- 1995: *Fool for Love*, Solar Stage Theatre, Co-Producer, Director
- 1988 - 1994: *Chanukkah!!*, *Hag Samaach Capers*, *Purim!!*, Toronto JCC, The Leah Posluns Theatre, Seneca College Studio Theatre, Writer/Director/Actor
- 1991: *Birdbath*, Toronto Fringe Festival, Producer/Director
- 1989: *Orexia*, The Theatre Centre's Research and Development Series: Producer, Director and Writer
- 1989: *In the Jungle of Dreams*, A Time For Kids Festival, Canadian National Exhibition Producer, Director and Head Writer,
- 1987 *Toronto's Biggest Breakfast Show*, Kellogg's/Burson Marsteller, Toronto Island, Producer, Head Writer, Director
- 1985: *Aphra Buddies in Bad Times Rhubarb Festival*, Theatre Centre Producer/Director
- 1985: *Flood, The Suicide, Have, Staged Readings at The Theatre Centre*, Producer/ Director

ASSISTANTSHIPS

- 1988: *Semmelweiss*, directed by Robin Phillips, Equity Showcase Theatre, Dramaturge/Assistant Director
- 1986: Line Coach for Roberta Maxwell in *Agnes of God*, Mercury Theatre
- 1985: *The Diary of Anne Frank*, directed by Richard Greenblatt,

- Young People's Theatre, Research/Dramaturge
- 1978: *The Wakefield Plays* by Israel Horowitz, The Actor's Studio New York, premiere production with Michael Moriarty, Joanna Miles, Madeleine Sherwood, Stage Manager
- 1977: *Yoyo*, Ensemble Studio Theatre, with James Remar, directed by Madeleine Sherwood, Stage Manager

UNIVERSITY, WORKSHOP, and COMMUNITY THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

Toronto, Ontario

- 2013: *Alice in Wonderland*, (original adaptation done with black light), City Playhouse
- 2012: *The Lark*, (original adaptation/retranslation), City Playhouse
- 2012: *To Be or Not To Be*, (original adaption of *The Suicide*), City Playhouse
- 2011: *Chalk Circle*, (original adaptation of *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*), City Playhouse
- 2008: *La Ronde* (retranslated/adapted by M. Laurence), Seneca College
- 1996 - 2004: *Night of Scenes*, yearly final performance, Seneca College Advanced Scene Study
- 1996: *The Investigation*, Remembrance Day and Holocaust Memorial Week, JCC
- 1995: *Soldat Hans Stumpf*, Remembrance Day and Holocaust Memorial Week, JCC
- 1995: *Fool For Love*, M.F.A. Acting Ensemble, York University
- 1992: *Lilly, Alta*, 3rd Year Acting Ensemble, York University
- 1986: *Summer Six Love*, Acting Training for Young People, Tarragon Theatre

United States:

- 1978 – 1979: *Diminishing Returns, Hagar's Children, A Night of Pity*, M.F.A. directing program, University of California, Los Angeles
- 1975 – 1976: *Forever Yours, Marie-Lou, Tango Palace, Ex-Miss Copper Queen on a Set of Pills*, Bennington College, Bennington, Vermon

Grants

- 2007 Ontario Arts Council, Media Grant for Mid-Career Artist; for *Madeleine's Method*
- 2003 Theatre Ontario, Professional Training Grant
- 2002 Ontario Arts Council, New Projects: Video or Film; for *Wheel and Clay*
- 1991 Grants awarded by:
- The City of North York, Theatre Ontario
 - Theatre Ontario, Youth Theatre Training Grant
 - The Municipality of Metro Toronto
 - The Ontario Arts Council Department of Arts in Education
 - The Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship for *World of Colour*
- 1989/1990 Theatre Ontario/Ontario Arts Council, Youth Theatre Training Grant
- 1989 The Theatre Centre, Research and Development grant

Critical Reviews

Online:

April 19, 2015:

Mooney on Theatre, Istvan Dugalin, *Crimes of the Heart is an 'Exhilarating,' and 'Empowering' Piece of Theatre.*

<http://www.mooneyontheatre.com/2015/04/19/review-crimes-of-the-heart-sterling-theatre-company/>

The Mind Reels, TD Rideout, *Under the able direction of Miriam Laurence, the audience is transported back to the 1970s, and the lives of the Mississippi born and raised MacGrath sisters.*

<http://themindreels.com/2015/04/19/crimes-of-the-heart/>

Scene Changes, Jeniva Berger, ...*superbly directed by Miriam Laurence, has a real winner in the pint size theatre (The Theatre Machine) thanks to first rate performances.*
<http://www.scenechanges.com/reviews.html>

Print:

Kate Taylor, "Foolproof acting saves plot: Theatre review of *Fool for Love*,"
The Globe and Mail, July 22, 1995 – three stars

Geoff Chapman, "Lovers ignite Shepard story," The Toronto Star, July 14, 1995

Phil Johnson, "Rock musical about students help teach racial tolerance," The Toronto
Star, September 12, 1991

David Nickle, "*World of Colour* tackles multicultural harmony," North York Mirror,
September 8, 1991

Anne-Marie Waters, "Seneca troupe's *Dream Play* shows polish," Toronto Star,
August 8, 1989

Christine Koserski, "At Seneca's Studio Theatre Youth theatre group presents *A Dream
Play*," The Mirror, August 2, 1989