

TAKE FIVE

A Revealing Q & A
with... **Dahlia Katz**



Dahlia Katz is both a professional photographer and the Artistic Director of Solar Stage. She directs multiple productions a year and photographs many others, as well as headshots, portraits, weddings, festivals, and sometimes real estate. As a multidisciplinary artist, she has roots in puppetry performance and construction, acting, mask, biographic literature, performance art and performativity, and semiotics.

1. When did you first think of yourself as an artist?

When I was spending my evenings and weekends during kindergarten sitting on my kitchen floor making puppets.

2. Who helped you develop your voice as an artist?

Jeannette Lambermont exemplified the perfect blend of nurturing and command as a director, the alchemical result of which brought the very best out of her actors and everyone around her. Ron Singer, who taught me that strong and authentic communication is the foundation of all good working relationships and art-making. Sandglass Theater (Eric Bass, Ines Zeller-Bass, David Regan) taught me allegiance to storytelling, and to always let the content shape the form, not the other way around. All these things have also made me the photographer I am today.

3. What's something that's inspired you this week?

Opening Princess Knight at Solar Stage this past weekend grew my heart two sizes, seeing how quickly and beautifully the cast and designers learned the puppetry in this very complicated show and even took it up several notches in one short week of rehearsals... The creative process is always enriching and rewarding, but I'm most inspired by the hand-off: I can walk away and let it live its own life, breathing and changing through its interaction with every audience. It's an incredibly organic and human thing.

4. What's your favourite restaurant in the city to visit?

My favourite restaurant is Cava. Not unlike in theatre, the best experiences are characterized by the people you're surrounded by, and that restaurant is full of the most dedicated and passionate staff, and it's evidenced in the food, the service, the long-term customer experience. I worked there once, years ago when I was establishing my career, and they were always supportive and flexible, and the owner even came to see a show or two. But even though the staff are all different there now, it's still the warmest team of people who take such great care of each table and make you feel like your money is well spent. Also, THE FOOD!

5. What do you want to see more of on Toronto stages?

Optimism. I think - more than ever - our audiences need some happy inspiration.