

ROYAL CENTRAL

SCHOOL OF SPEECH & DRAMA

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

**DR AMANDA STUART
FISHER, BA, PGCE, MA,
PHD**

Job title

Reader in Contemporary Theatre and Performance

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PROFILE

I am an academic and writer with a strong interest in new writing and verbatim and testimonial performance practices. After graduating from Middlesex University, my first job was as a teacher of dance and drama at a secondary school in Haringey, London. I then worked freelance, as an applied theatre practitioner and spent a year as the education coordinator at the Royal Court Theatre. It was these different experiences, the young people and the different communities I worked with during this time which ignited my passion for new writing and my belief in its capacity to give a voice to sections of society who are often excluded or unrepresented by mainstream culture. Since then, I have committed myself to sharing this passion with the students I teach and I have enjoyed the opportunity to develop a number of playwriting opportunities on the B.A. (Hons) Drama, Applied Theatre and Education (BADATE) degree. It was therefore very exciting when BADATE launched a new writing for performance pathway, which I am the pathway leader for.

Over the past fifteen years I have been working on a number of research projects which have been concerned with how testimonial and verbatim theatre responds to events of trauma and how we might interrogate and understand the relationship between truth and fiction in these modes of performance practice. My research often includes elements of performance and in 2007 - in collaboration with the charity Mosac - I wrote *From the Mouths of Mothers* (Aurora Metro Publications 2013), a verbatim theatre play which tells the stories of seven mothers whose children were sexually abused. The play subsequently received its first production at The Pleasance Theatre London in 2013 (supported by the Big Lottery Fund/ Awards for All). Another element of my research is focussed around care and was initiated by an HEA Development grant which enabled me to develop some drama projects with trainee nurses (in partnership with Kings) and social workers (in partnership with Royal Holloway, University of London). I am now building on these experiences to develop a new research project in partnership with Professor James Thompson (Manchester University) which explores the relationship between care and performance, while also working on a monograph on testimonial theatre.

COURSES

Drama, Applied Theatre and Education, BA

Applied Theatre, MA

Research Degrees (MPhil/PhD)

TEACHING AREAS

Writing for performance
Theatre and the Real
Applied Theatre Performance
Ethics and socially engaged performance

RESEARCH AREAS

Testimonial and verbatim theatre
Cultural memory and performance
Performance and care
Ethics and performance
Practice as Research
Theatre making and vulnerable groups

PHD SUPERVISION

I currently supervise PhD projects in the areas of: crip theory, blindness and acting and applied theatre and war veterans.

KEY PUBLICATIONS

2016. 'Imagining Theatre in Auschwitz: Performance, Solidarity and Survival in the Works of Charlotte Delbo' in Duggan, P. and Peschel, L. (eds.) *Performing (for) Survival: Theatre, Crisis, Extremity*, Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, pp. 78-99.

2015. 'A Choreography of Words: Reflections on Justitia' in Johnson, P., Dobkowska, S. and Vardimon, J. *Justitia: Multidisciplinary Readings of the Work of the Jasmin Vardimon Company* (Bristol: Intellect), 133-143.

2015. (with Leonard, K., Gupta, A. & Low, K.) 'From the Mouths of Mothers: Can Drama Facilitate Reflective Learning for Social Workers?', *Social Work Education*, 22.10, pp.1 - 14.

2013. *From the Mouths of Mothers in Plays for Today by Women*, edited by C. Robson and R. Gillieron (London: Aurora Press), pp. 55 – 112.

2011. 'That's who I'd be, if I could sing': reflections on a verbatim project with mothers of sexually abused children' *Studies in Theatre and Performance*, 31.2, pp. 193 - 208.

2011. 'Trauma, Authenticity and the Limits of Verbatim', *Performance Research*, 16.1, pp. 112-122.

2011. with Mackey, S. 'Theatre Applications: Location, event, futurity', *Research in Drama Education*, 16.3, pp. 357-364.

PRACTICE

A lot of my research engages creatively with different kinds of performance practice. Currently, I am working in partnership with RHUL on a workshop for social workers which draws on testimonial material from my play *From The Mouths of Mothers*. I have also directed many productions at Central with the B.A. (Hons) Drama, Applied Theatre and Education students, such as:

2013. Writer and Director, *Glorious Food: A verbatim theatre play*
2012. Writer and Director, *Who Will Carry The Word, An Adaptation of Charlotte Delbo's Play*
2012. Director, *The Adventures of Big Bad Wolfy* (under-fives)
2011. Director, *Alice* (under-fives)

REGISTER OF INTEREST

Little Fish Theatre Company (CIC) - on the board of directors