

# Emma Catherine Ackerman

## Theatre Artist

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### OVERVIEW

**Emma Ackerman, née Chong (she/her) - highly motivated jack-of-all-trades with a love of collaboration, playful creation, organized chaos, and timetables. Work experience includes performance, arts education, administration, and production design.**

### EDUCATION

#### University of Chichester

2014-15

*M.A. in Performance (Theatre)*

- Focus in immersive art, abstract playwriting, location-based creation, and Grotowski's holy theatre
- Graduated with distinction

#### Gettysburg College

2003-07

*B.A. in English / Theatre Arts*

*Minor in Classical Studies*

- Regular performer/director in main and second stage productions; performer in college choirs and a capella ensembles; co-founder of student-run Shakespeare troupe, co-founder of campus musical theatre society, and vice president of campus theatre club
- Graduated Magna Cum Laude

### PRIMARY WORK EXPERIENCE

#### Touchstone Theatre (2008-2023)

*Ensemble Member/General Manager*

- Artistic duties
  - Direction, co-creation, and performance of original work
  - Project and production photo-documentation
- Production duties
  - Production managing community events (*Festival UnBound, Young Playwrights' Festival*)
  - Rehearsal and production stage managing mainstage performances
  - Lighting and sound design/operation
  - Animation and video editing/creation
- Administrative duties
  - Maintenance of social media accounts
  - Press release writing
  - Grant editing and assistance
  - Archive and database management
  - Print and digital graphic design
  - Note keeping at major meetings
- Educational duties
  - Teaching literacy enrichment afterschool Young Playwrights' Lab program (2012-present)
  - Leading technical theatre workshops through partnerships with Moravian University (2010-16) and Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts (2013-17)

- Directing, adapting scripts, and production designing for spring drama at Moravian Academy Middle School (2017-2023)
- Administrating (2013-2022) and teaching (2017-2023) Touchstone summer programming

## **PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE**

### **Gettysburg Area School District (2007-08)**

- Interim middle school theatre club manager; directed youth production of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, including Shakespearean language workshops for student participants

### **Williamstown Theatre Festival (2007)**

- Member of company management team; provided administrative and personnel support, database management, organization of artist housing and transportation logistics, and assistance with contract and Equity compliance
- Education and production support for Greylock Theatre Project children's theatre programming

### **Gettysburg College (2004-07)**

- Electrician and lighting technician in mainstage and blackbox theatre
- TA in advanced acting seminar
- Tutor in introductory level classes on Shakespeare and Ancient Greek

## **AREAS OF ARTISTIC INTEREST**

- Reinterpreting and deconstructing classical texts
- Exploring audience agency and immersion
- Exploring liveness (and absence thereof) in performance
- Exploring ambiguity in storytelling
- Outdoor and site-specific performance
- Bread and Puppet-style light-rehearsal, heavy-impact community performance

## **OTHER SKILLS**

- SOFTWARE: Microsoft Office suite, Qlab, Audacity, Photoshop, iMovie, Flipaclip
- MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: Flute (30 years, strong improviser); Ukulele (6 years)
- Comfortable with singing/vocals and improvised harmony (alto)
- Online/hybrid teaching experience
- Basic familiarity with stage combat (rapier)
- Basic comfort with archery (longbow)
- Regularly runs movement theatre workshops (adapted Grotowski)
- Regularly runs gaming groups (campaign, limited run, and one-shot)
- Regularly runs (up to half marathon)

## EXCERPTS FROM ARTISTIC WORK

### *Young Playwrights' Lab and Festival (2010-2023)*

- Stage manager, production manager, and co-director for annual festival of one-act plays written by local elementary and middle school students (2010-22)
- Lead teaching artist for eight-week after-school residency where elementary and middle school students learn to write short one-act plays (2012-23)
- Assisting with curriculum design and program curation (2014-23)

### *Christmas City Follies (2008-2022)*

- Stage manager, lighting designer, and production support for Touchstone annual holiday vaudeville (2008-22)
- Actor-creator, writer, lyricist, and musician in productions (2010-22)

### *Letters from Far (2020-22)*

- Research, development, writing, and implementation of a speculative fiction storytelling series told through letters and packages in the mail (2020-22)

### *Dictators 4 Dummies (2018-20)*

- Performer in premiere of musical satire exploring tools of totalitarian regimes, for Touchstone mainstage and for *Festiwal Ludzka Mozaika* in Goleniow, Poland (2018-19)
- Voice actor for *Tyrants of Tomorrow Telethon*, a film adaptation staged with action figures (2020). Accolades include Paris International Film Festival and International Music Video Awards.

### *The Complete and Authoritative Tour of Holy Stuff (2014-17)*

- Practice-based research exploring the expression and function of “holiness” in the modern world. Culminated in 15-minute solo performance piece (2014-15)
- Actor-creator of full-length movement-based performance piece for Touchstone mainstage, springing off from the above (2015-16)

### *Mae Swe / The Burma Project (2014-16)*

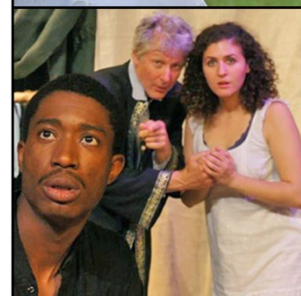
- Project and production manager for a one-woman performance exploring themes of home and belonging through stories of Burmese immigrants to America. Included coordinating story-gathering, pre-production, stage management, lighting design, and sound design (2014-16)

### *The Journey from the East Project (2013-15)*

- Interviewed and transcribed story-gathering sessions for community-based theatre project based around stories of Chinese-Americans in the Lehigh Valley community (2013-14)
- Actor-creator in *Journey: Dream of the Red Pavilion*, as part of this project (2014)
- Stage manager, personnel support, and performer in *Journey from the East*, as part of this project, performed outside and free to the public (2015)

### *The Tempest (2009-13)*

- Stage manager, lighting designer, and production support for Touchstone's three-person adaptation of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (2009)
- Assistant-directed re-mount for tour to Baltimore Theatre Project (2010)
- Director, stage manager, teaching artist, and tour coordinator for production as part of the National Endowment for the Arts' *Shakespeare in American Communities* (2010-11 and 2012-13)



## EXPANDED ARTISTIC WORK

<i>Hours of Anne: The Last Day in the Life of Anne Boleyn</i> (2024)	Stage manager	Act One Productions & Theatrix USA
<i>Amelia's Big Idea</i> (2024)	Ensemble	Miners Alley Performing Arts Center
<i>Triumph of Love</i> (2024)	Lead actor	Wheat Ridge Theatre Company
<i>Night Terrors</i> (2023)	Lead storyteller	Artists Anonymous
<i>Midsummer at Columcille</i> (2022-23)	Lead actor-creator	Touchstone Theatre, with Columcille Megalith Park
<i>Young Playwrights' Festival</i> (2010-23)	Production manager,	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Essential Reading for This Moment in History</i> (2023)	Lead actor	Reading Theatre Project
<i>Games We Play</i> (2023)	Lead actor-creator	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Christmas City Follies</i> (2008-22)	Ensemble, production manager, video editing	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Maafa Commemoration Project Lehigh Valley</i> (2022)	Production manager	Touchstone Theatre, with Resurrected Life Community Church
<i>Peace and Tranquility</i> (2022)	Ensemble	Worldwide Ukrainian Play Readings
<i>The Princess Bride</i> (2022)	Director, designer	Moravian Academy Middle School
<i>Letters from Far</i> (2020-22)	Director	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Kitchen Chronicles</i> (2022)	Director, co-designer	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Festival UnBound</i> (2019-21)	Production manager	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Spring Drama Online</i> (2021)	Director, video editing	Moravian Academy Middle School
<i>Earth Girls</i> (2020)	Musician	Headeye
<i>Songs of Hope and Resistance</i> (2020)	Stage manager	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Women's Weekend – Emma Allison</i> (2020)	Lead actor-creator	National Museum of Industrial History
<i>Edith Piaf: Hymn to Love</i> (2020)	Ensemble	Touchstone, with Teatro Potlach
<i>Jakopa's Punch Bowl</i> (2017-20)	Musician	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Fresh Voices</i> (2009-19)	Stage manager	Touchstone Theatre
<i>The Three Musketeers</i> (2019)	Director, designer	Moravian Academy Middle School
<i>Festiwal Ludzka Mozaika</i> (2018)	Ensemble	Teatr Brama
<i>Rent Asunder: A Story of Tahireh</i> (2018)	SM, lighting design	Kingfisher Theatre Company
<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> (2018)	Director, designer	Moravian Academy Middle School
<i>Dictators 4 Dummies</i> (2018)	Lead actor	Touchstone Theatre
<i>The Drowsy Chaperone</i> (2018)	Lighting design	LV Charter High School for the Arts
<i>Mr. Bach Comes to Call</i> (2018)	Stage manager	Bach Choir of Bethlehem
<i>Jakopa's Punch Processional</i> (2017)	Ensemble, musician	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Hair</i> (2017)	Lighting design	LV Charter High School for the Arts
<i>Coraline</i> (2017)	Director, designer	Moravian Academy Middle School
<i>The Complete Tour of Holy Stuff</i> (2017)	Lead actor-creator	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Città Invisibili</i> (2016)	Ensemble	Teatro Potlach
<i>Bhadoo</i> (2016)	Lead actor-creator	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Mae Swe</i> (2016)	Stage manager	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Exhibit A</i> (2015)	SM/LD	Moravian University Theatre Company
<i>Journey from the East</i> (2015)	Lead actor	Touchstone, with Moravian University
<i>The Morningtime of Now</i> (2014)	Lighting design	Mock Turtle Marionette Theater
<i>Superstory</i> (2014)	SM/LD	Moravian University Theatre Company
<i>Young Meister Bach and Kaffeekantate</i> (2014)	Stage manager	Bach Choir of Bethlehem
<i>Journey: Dream of the Red Pavilion</i> (2014)	Lead actor-creator	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Proof</i> (2013)	SM/LD	Moravian University Theatre Company
<i>Hamlet</i> (2013)	Lighting design	LV Charter High School for the Arts
<i>Ulysses Dreams</i> (2013)	Ensemble	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Walden</i> (2009-2013)	Musician	Touchstone Theatre
<i>The Memorandum</i> (2013)	SM/LD	Moravian University Theatre Company
<i>The Tempest</i> (2009-2013)	SM, touring director	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Christmas Spirits</i> (2012)	Musician	The Sugarpills
<i>Faust in France</i> (2012)	SM/LD	Moravian University Theatre Company
<i>The Pan Show</i> (2010-12)	Ensemble	Touchstone Theatre
<i>A Resting Place</i> (2012)	Stage manager	Touchstone, with Moravian University
<i>The Whitman Piece</i> (2011)	SM/LD	Touchstone, with Moravian University
<i>Into the Dark</i> (2011)	Lead actor-creator	Touchstone Theatre
<i>Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog</i> (2010)	Lead actor	Touchstone, with Moravian University
<i>The Clean House</i> (2010)	SM/LD	Moravian University Theatre Company
<i>Clytemnestra's Daughters</i> (2010)	Lead actor	Touchstone, with Moravian University
<i>Shipwrecked!</i> (2009)	Stage manager	Touchstone Theatre

