

## **Enemy of the People- Director's Note**

Who is able to deliver to disseminate information? Who decides what truth is? What keeps people from being able to hear and respond to those truths? What responsibility do we have as Humans when it is made clear lives are being put at risk? These are some of the questions we explored while working on "An Enemy of the People"- Arthur Miller's 1950 adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's play from 1882. These are questions, I believe, that have been asked throughout time and hopefully will continue to be. What does it really mean to be an enemy of the people? And who gets to decide?

I was drawn to this play because it continues to be relevant. "An Enemy of the People" explores conflicts between familial ties, the relationship between money, power, media, health, resources, and social responsibility. One of the key relationships we explored was between the people and the media. We live in a time where for many, information is available to them at the click of a button and yet many have little access. It is a time where many can post, repost, like, share, tweet, or blog about anything they wish. However, many cannot. For many, sharing their truth would put themselves at too great a risk. So again I ask, who is able to disseminate information? How can we decipher truth?

Taking in information and claiming personal truths, I believe, is at the root of middle school life. They are at such a critical time in life. They are working to figure things out for themselves: Where they stand on important issues, right along side of where to sit for lunch. They feel all of the things. These are just some of the reasons I was not deterred from doing such rich and powerful work with 7th and 8th grade students. They have shown such a capacity for deep thinking. Reflecting reality and challenging it. They have stepped into leadership roles within our ensemble collaborating with other artists Melissa McClung, Leigh-Ellen, Tina Padgett, and Lisa Cappello and her yearbook team. Thank you also for the support of Mike Arquilla, Martin Bridge and so many students for assisting in this truly collaborative theatre piece. There is power in youth voices, creativity, and facilitation. It is my goal to encourage a space where those things could happen as much as possible.

The evenings of May 21st and 22nd are sure to be engaging, immersive, and hopefully challenging. My hope for all who come to experience the show is that they leave questioning. What does it really mean to be an enemy of the people? Who gets to decide?