

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT ON DANCING GIRL

In mid-April of 2019, I reached out to several directors in New York City who were directing for the She NYC Arts Summer Festival. I offered to assist in any way possible as long as I could observe in the room, as I explained in my emails, I could learn so much from observing at this point in my directing career and am hungry to be in the rehearsal room. Out of those twelve emails that I sent, only one director, Jenny Beth Snyder, as well as playwrights, Elinor T. and Drew Vanderberg, also replied. They would be happy to have me as a Production Assistant and I was very quickly sent the rehearsal schedule. I was surprised about how willing they were to allow me in the room and overjoyed at getting a response. This was how I became the Production Assistant on *Dancing Girl*.

As the Production Assistant, I went to all rehearsals from the very beginning and helped out whenever possible. Most of the time, this meant filling in for an actor who was not there as there were no understudies, or being on-book. I also helped set up and take down the room. Additionally, I helped make some props and was ready to say “yes” to anything asked of me. When not doing tasks, I took notes and observed as *Dancing Girl* is a very unique show as the whole show has translators for ASL. There were a total of twenty-seven cast and crew members. Additionally, this was the very first production of *Dancing Girl*, a modern adaptation of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, so the playwrights were in the room, making changes, up until the last week which was very exciting to get to watch.

I loved getting to observe Jenny Beth Snyder's directing. This full length piece is very interested in movement and ensemble work. It also was SO beneficial to get to see a woman director in charge of the room as I have mostly observed male directors. I learned how she takes control but also provides room for everyone to have a voice in the room which I believe is so important.

I write for Onstage Blog and wrote an article about the unique rehearsal process. I interviewed both Jenny Beth Snyder and Elinor T. Vanderberg and was grateful to get to ask them questions about the directing and playwriting directly for the article. I also love to write articles about my theatrical experiences, especially when observing, as it gives me a way to really collect all of my notes and write my thoughts.

ARTICLE LINK:

<https://www.onstageblog.com/onstage-blog-news/2019/6/21/dancing-girl-a-unique-rehearsal-process>

