

It's been 3 years since Jaclyn and I started NOVA Nightsky Theater and its success is beyond expectations. We've told our origin story often but I like to tell it. COVID canceled two productions that led us to start the company. Jaclyn asked if I would direct her in Picnic which was shutdown just before Tech week. The other show was a show that I wrote and Jaclyn was going to produce at the Capital Fringe Festival. When Jaclyn met to discuss Picnic she said "The next play we do is yours." I asked if we were starting a theater company and she said we are and so we did. Having produced plays at the Capital Fringe, I knew a big obstacle for theaters is rehearsal space. Jaclyn had studio space and I walked into that funky room and said not only is it a great rehearsal space, we can put on shows here. And the essence of NOVA Nightsky Theater began.

The success of NOVA Nightsky Theater is far beyond our expectations. In the 3 years, we have produced 18 full-stage productions, plus 5 stage readings including 2 getting their first public reading. We wanted to build a community and we have. In those 22 productions, we have nearly 100 different actors work with us – and 39 have worked with us more than once. We have built friendships and a community that goes to see our friends when they perform on other stages. I love you all.

NOVA Nightsky Theater has been great to me personally. I've directed six shows and had so much fun and learned so much. Two shows that I wrote were produced (plus a stage reading of another). And everyone I worked with has been so complimentary to me. I feel uplifted. And it is that success that leads me to move on. I'm being asked to direct at other theaters, my playwriting is finding success across the country and I like to go see the productions.

I am stepping down from leadership, but not from friendships. I will see every show. I will drink afterward at Dogwood. I am grateful that the foundation I built will continue on.

Thank you to everybody but especially Sarah Baczewski and Adam Ressa for all the work they do as board members. And most all, my partner, my Jaclyn. We are two very different personalities from two different generations but we mesh beautifully when it comes to theater. Directing you is a great honor, working with you a great pleasure, being your friend a great joy.

-Ward Kay