

Testimonials from The New Education Deanery of the Abbey of Regina Laudis

Dzieci faithfully worked with our community over many months as we put together a production from scratch. They listened to our ideas and taught us how to edit our written material to produce a tight script that captured the heart of what we were aiming to communicate. They facilitated exercises to help us break open the possibilities within the text, simultaneously encouraging use to break open possibilities within ourselves in how we relate to one another and how we perceive ourselves. Through an organic process they developed blocking and even created costumes. They offered a comprehensive theatrical package to draw forth a quality production from a group largely comprised of women who would not consider themselves to be actors.

Work with Dzieci is always fun, yet always challenging, as their form of theatre is an avenue of transformation: spiritual, psychological and physical. They provide a unique opportunity to “go deep” on many levels while being held and supported within the structure of the play’s text and their professional mentoring. As contemplatives we are always seeking what is real, and our work with Dzieci takes us to a place where we experience the raw energy and transforming fire of truth. Paradoxically, by entering into the role of another character, we come to know ourselves. To be led by Dzieci under the experience and dedication of Matt Mitler provides a unique and creative path for holistic spiritual renewal.

Katie, Postulant

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Dzieci took me places I didn’t want to go, but I was always pleased when I got there. They stretched us as a group and individually, and they certainly taught me it was always possible to go deeper, and a different response was always open. For them, acting is not about being someone else; it’s about being yourself and bringing that to the character.

Love,
Sr. John Mary

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Dear Matt, and Beloved Dzieci,

“Start from where you are...” “Don’t turn your back on the person you’re with...” Thank you for that amazing formation in “Ausculta”, in trust, and in risk. I loved every minute of it, and I’m looking forward to the “more”, to getting into the act.

Love,
Sr. Elizabeth

Dear Matt, and Dzieci,

Thank you for this wonderful experience for enabling us to access Shakespeare and humanity in such a personal and communal way - it was your troupe who opened so much of us to each other, and we have now “known” ourselves in a different, deeper way. A priceless gift!

Love,
Sr. John Mary

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Dear Matt and Dzieci,

How can I give concrete expression for the joy and gratitude I feel for your working with us: Well, first of all, from the time we worked with you on the Passion - then even more on our Shakespeare project - I (and we) have felt ourselves in the hands of a real Master in you Matt - all the more penetrating in that you give such scope to the gifts of the Dzieci who work with you - most recently Megan and Jesse - both of whom I found immensely helpful, especially when I was struggling. Thank you for your enormous work of bringing our disparate and wide-ranging Shakespeare texts into a coherent and dramatic form.

The experience in growing in naturalness, endurance, flexibility, humor, individuality in response to one another, drama, vulnerability, physical trust - and more- was a great experience of growth, for me and all the others. Above all, it has changed us as a body, a group- we know and appreciate one another with a whole new depth. I look forward to our next work together.

With love and thanks,
S. Emmanuelle

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Dear Matt and the Dzieci,

Thank you all for your givingness in body and soul. We have had such a deep education with all of you. The work we've done with you informs our “acts” and our community's body has been built up - preparation for an exciting future.

I look forward to our next cycle together. I hold you all in my prayers and hope you will call us if you are ever in need.

In Christ,
Sr. Alma

Dear Dzieci,

Thank you, thank you, thank you - thank you, for your innumerable ways of being, holding, securing, releasing, triggering, happening, challenging, supporting - “ing”ing. The performance itself is important, mostly as a reference, a risk, a “proving” but not *to* anyone; what is greater, however, is the act. The simple act that has to be got down to - of listening to another, of being here right now, of listening to oneself. The script is a way of mapping wonder - for that, thank-you-thank-you.

With love in Christ,
Sr. Ozanne

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Dear Matt and Dear Persons of Dzieci,

This process with you, beginning with our rocket speed work of editing Shakespeare (a’la Dzieci) assured us our offering would be original and from our heart. In that fearless encounter you guided us to keep only what we loved of those hallowed words. This gave us courage and daring from the start. So we created a world of multiple Bottoms that finally emerged into one perfect Bottom. I loved experiencing how energetically you guided us to create in the transitions as we built our play from one scene to the next. We had to be generous and open to each other’s work thus building our offering through relationship to each other and to our own interior life. This is why the play was such a gift to Mother Abbess - it was an offering of the whole being of the New Education Deanery.

But none of this could have occurred without the trust we have for each other. There were very hard places in this process where the vulnerability of living within the enclosure, and the vulnerability of creating a performance together, created a grinding resistance that was real, and had to be lived with to move through to honesty. Without our profound trust in you, I would never have made it.

I remember your first visit to the Abbey and the instinctive love I felt for you all. And later my sensibility was stabilized by your beautiful presence at Night Matins, your bringing your children, and your presence on our work days. Then we became your best and most grateful audience as you shared with us the magic of your Fools Mass. Love has been growing for many years when last year you blessed our work on the Passion. I will always treasure that experience with you. And this performance now will always bless our whole community. You are in my heart forever.

Love,
Sister Esther, the 1st 60 year old female King Lear <3

Dear Dzieci,

As a new postulant, I am aware that this life that I'm moving into bears many similarities to your art! Encircled, enveloped, shared in word and song and motion. Your work with me enabled me to gain a better understanding of community life. Thank you for the freshness, the challenges, and the pure joy of working with all of you!

Love,
Gwyneth

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Dearest Matt and Megan, Yvonne, Jesse, and all Dzieci,

Thank you for existing. This whacky world that we all inhabit is better, more intense and intelligent, not to mention fun and interesting and more complete because you all come together to be Dzieci.

Working with you was... so many things. Challenging & boundary expanding - I learned to like and appreciate Shakespeare for the first time; I learned to trust the process a bit more too. It's always about process isn't it? No matter what I was feeling before I got to rehearsals on Wednesday mornings, which was usually an enormous amount of 'I don't wanna', as soon as we began our work, I completely surrendered to it. It happened every single time and was an incredible gift as an experience. I think its because you all trust each other too in what you do together that allows you to impart that to us.

Thank you! I'd definitely do it again (can't believe I just wrote that!).

I hope we see you again, soon.

With love in Christ,
Sr. Maria Evangelista, O.S.B.