

# ARI EDELSON

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## EXPERIENCE

2007 - Present

### THE ORCHARD PROJECT

#### Founder and Artistic Director

- **Founded and serve as Artistic Director of The Orchard Project, an organization that develops and supports new work.** Since its first summer as a two-week pilot, the Orchard Project has supported more than 1,500 artists and more than 400 different artistic projects. With programs in New York City, Saratoga Springs, NY, and online, it hosts about 40 projects each year in multiple verticals (performance, TV, and audio). In addition to its development work, ongoing activities of The Orchard Project include hosting events for artists nationwide (through the OP's "Open Process" program), a competitive professional development program for college and graduate theater students (the OP's educational Core Company); producing productions and large-scale events in NYC; and a summer season of new work showcases (Orchard Project Summer Festival).
- **Curate seasons through a competitive application process and leveraging deep industry relationships with theatres, producers, directors, agents, and ensemble companies, as well as playwrights, actors, and designers in the U.S. and abroad.** To date, the Orchard Project-supported theatrical works have been produced by the Royal Court, the Public Theater, Pig Iron, Fiasco, the Rude Mechs, the TEAM, Elevator Repair Service, Tectonic Theatre Project, and more. Our artists have included leaders and innovative voices including Robert Schenkkan, Young Jean Lee, Savion Glover, Moises Kaufman, Qui Nguyen, Stew, Theresa Rebeck, Rachel Chavkin, Dave Malloy, Nathan Tysen, Annie Baker, Marcus Gardley, Mike Bartlett, Adam Rapp, and Branden Jacobs-Jenkins. Productions the Orchard Project has supported and initiated include *Vampire Song* (Geffen, OSF), *Banghin' It* (La Jolla Playhouse), *A Play for the Living At a Time of Extinction* (Baltimore Center Stage, Barbican Theatre, UK), *Penelope* (Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival), *Female Troubles* (upcoming), *The Shipment* (The Kitchen, international tour), *33 Variations* (Arena Stage, Broadway), *Row* (Williamstown), *Gary* (Broadway), *Amelie: The Musical* (Berkeley Rep, CTG, Broadway), *Charm* (Northlight Theatre, MCC Theatre), *The Iphigenia Quartet* (Gate Theater, London), *The Aliens* (Rattlestick, OBIE Award), *An Octoroon* (Soho Rep, National Theatre UK, OBIE Award), *All the Way* (OSF, ART, Broadway, HBO Films, TONY Award), *The Object Lesson* (BAM Next Wave, International Tour), and *I Promised Myself to Live Faster* (Humana Festival).
- **Expanded the footprint of The Orchard Project to additional dramatic forms, including TV, audio, and digital media.** Digital performance projects created by The Orchard Project include plays and interactive events, such as *Conjurors Club*, which was later produced by American Repertory Theatre. The Orchard Project's Episodic Lab and Audio Lab have opened extensive relationships in TV and audio industries, including key partnerships with Sony TriStar and Audible. These labs, founded in 2018 and 2020, respectively, have already supported over 100 writers and projects, with projects optioned and sold to producers including Audible Originals and Amazon Prime.
- **Manage business and artistic development.** This includes artistic management, fiscal management, moves management, board management, cultivating new donors and board members, creating successful fundraising events, developing new earned income opportunities, and developing grant proposals.
- **Lead the Orchard Project's DEIA work, working with industry leaders Kaleel Jamison Consulting Group to expand access to our programs, create a culture of inclusion, and foster a community vocabulary that is both welcoming and also encourages artistic risk taking.** The Orchard Project's DEIA commitment is manifested in its new Leadership, Inclusion and Growth Lab, produced with the support of the Nathan Cummings Foundation, for Producers and Artistic Directors nationwide, which will share case studies in inclusive growth and workshops led by KJCG.

2002 - present      **FREELANCE DIRECTOR**

- **Served as a freelance director** working in theatres in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Japan, with experience in new work, classic work, musicals, and opera.
- **Directing credits include:** *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* (Arkansas Rep, with Judge Reinhold), *Priming* (Arkansas Rep, World Premiere), *Building the Wall* (New World Stages, NY Premiere), *Vengeance* (Cherry Lane Theatre, World Premiere), *Expats* (The New Group, World Premiere), *The Attic* (Play Company, American Premiere), *The Atheist* (Theatre 503, London, UK Premiere), *Blood Wedding*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* (Theatre Project Tokyo), *True West* and *Tape* (Tokyo Globe), *Little Black Dress* (Boston Playwrights, NYC, World Premiere), *Mauritius* (Dorset Theatre Festival), *The Scariest* (45 Bleeker, World Premiere), *Jump!* and *Realism* (The Exchange, NY), *Prometheus Bound* (Young Vic, London), *Rape of Lucretia* (English National Opera, London and Luxembourg).
- **Upcoming directing projects include:** a podcast series for AudioUp/Audible titled *American Moments*, an adaptation of Jay Cronley's novel *Good Vibes* (the source of the movie *Let It Ride*), and a commissioned adaptation of *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

2017- 2019      **SARATOGA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (SPAC)**  
**Artistic Consultant**

- Advised the President & CEO of the 50-year-old institution on programming, audience engagement, and facilities.

2011 - 2016      **CULTURE CRAVER**  
**Co-Founder**

- Conceived and launched a culture and technology startup that created custom mobile applications and websites for consumers and institutions, including a recommendation algorithm that introduced audiences to arts and culture they would love.
- Cultivated project partners including Sing For Hope, the Gansevoort Hotel Group, and others.
- Culture Craver's technology lives on as the event listings backbone that powers listings at media companies such as *The New York Times*.
- Developed expertise in existing/emerging technologies related to social media, recommendation engines, ticketing, marketing, and distribution.
- Responsibilities included: programming, design, business development, and partnership development.

2002-2010      **OLD VIC THEATRE, LONDON, UK**  
**Founder and Artistic Director, Old Vic/New Voices US/UK Program**

- Created transatlantic new play program for London's Old Vic Theatre
- Provided the first stateside introductions to work by British artists including Roy Williams, Simon Stephens, and Richard Bean, and, to the UK, to work by artists including Sarah Ruhl, Lynn Nottage, and Stephen Belber.

2000 - 2003      **ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA, LONDON, UK**  
**Staff Director**

2001-2003      **NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY**  
**Faculty Member, Northwestern University Summer Programs**

2001                      **NEW DRAMATISTS, NEW YORK**  
**Director on Attachment**

1998-1999                **TVT RECORDS**  
**Director, Broadway Division**

- Directed project development and marketing for the Broadway division of the boutique record label
- Produced five major Broadway cast recordings (including the complete cast recording of *Follies* and *1776*).

## **EDUCATION**

1999 - 2000              **ROYAL SCOTTISH CONSERVATOIRE**  
Master of Drama (Directing), Honors, June 2000

1994 - 1998              **YALE UNIVERSITY**  
BA, Double major in Theater Studies (Directing) and Psychology

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

2016 - 2019              Board Member, Project Audience

2016 - Present           Board Member, Saratoga Arts Advisory Commission

2008 - 2010              Artistic Director, The Joseph Kesselring Award

2006 - Present           Panelist for the Drama League Awards, Drama League Directors Programs, Philadelphia Theatre Initiative/Pew Charitable Trusts

2004 - 2008              Artistic Associate, Theatre Project Tokyo

Fall 2001                 Fall Directing Fellow, Drama League of New York

Winter 2001              Japanese Bunka-Cho Award

2000                        Scottish Opera/Scottish Television Bruce Millar Memorial Trust Award

**Tech Skills:** Experienced with PHP, HTML, JavaScript, MySQL, Adobe Premiere, InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator, Excel, and more.