



Maria Kolovou

Drama-in-Education Practitioner | Playwright | Performer

Maria Kolovou is an educator, improviser, and playwright whose work blends embodied storytelling, dramaturgy, and unscripted theatre. For more than a decade she created award-winning devised theatre in Greece—including two EU-funded projects—and staged multiple youth performances such as the devised pieces, *Dream On*, *Someone Light Up the Moon*, *The Red Notebook*, *Lies*, and scripted productions including *Lysistrata* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Her play *Someone Light Up the Moon* received First Prize in Greece's National Emerging Playwrights Competition.

For 13 years she was an active member of the Greek Network for Theatre in Education, developing participatory and youth-centered performance work.

Now based in Miami, Maria performs with Just The Funny and teaches at the University of Miami, where she supports faculty in embodied inquiry, presence-based communication, and creative pedagogy. Her artistic research focuses on presence, emotional truth, and emergent dramaturgy—core principles of Carpe DM's approach to unscripted performance. Workshops

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Maria works from a simple premise: the body knows before the mind does. Her workshops begin with body awareness exercises, move into emotion work, and build toward connection with a partner. The work accumulates: what you discover in the first exercise is still present in the last.

She brings the craft questions of scripted theatre into the improvised space: character, subtext, emotional stakes, spatial relationships. But she does not translate them directly. In unscripted work, starting from concept puts you in your head. So she starts from the body, the emotion, the real time moment, and lets the craft emerge from there.

From that connection between partners, a chain becomes possible: something is felt, something shifts, something is sent and received. Whether it travels through the body or through language, that chain is already a story. Her facilitation makes it visible, asking performers to notice it, trust it, and follow it further than they thought they could.

Her teaching draws on Viewpoints, Action Theater, and devised theatre dramaturgy. The through line across all her work is the same: meaning is not planned. It is uncovered.

CORE STRENGTHS

- Fine-tuned scene diagnosis
- Warm, focused guidance

SIGNATURE WORKSHOPS

The Language of Silence and Space

Have you ever been told to stop being in your head? This workshop finds out what happens when the body leads. Drawing on Viewpoints, we work with concrete physical elements: how far you stand from someone,

how fast or slow you move, the weight you carry in your limbs, the shape your body makes in space. Silence becomes a narrative force. Movement becomes dialogue. By the time language arrives, the scene is already alive.

Scenes with Depth and Meaning

Do you ever feel you are a much deeper person than the scenes you create? This workshop trains improvisers to stay inside a moment long enough for something real to emerge. Instead of widening, we deepen, uncovering emotional stakes and the unspoken forces driving the story. We re-enter scenes, reshape them, and discover what they are actually about.

From Moment to Meaning: Playing Subtext in Improvisation

A character says one thing and means another. They speak calmly and feel fury. They slow down when everything in them wants to run. Subtext in unscripted theatre is not a literary tool, it is a live physical event. This workshop explores opposing forces, emotional contradictions, and the gap between tempo and meaning as engines of scene work.

Viola Spolin and Action Theater: Presence, Impulse, and Play

Two foundational traditions, one shared question: what happens when you stop performing and start responding? We bring Spolin's games together with Ruth Zaporah's Action Theater to develop spontaneity, physical impulse, and genuine ensemble presence. The focus is on listening with the whole body and trusting what arrives. Accessible to all levels; transformative for any level.

Characters We Care About

Have you ever played a character and felt like you were wearing a costume from the outside? This workshop builds characters from the inside out, through body, impulse, and emotional truth. We ask what they want, what they are afraid of, and what they cannot bring themselves to say. Characters that resonate are not invented. They are uncovered.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Trained with:

Theater

Akis Davis Theater School (Athens, Greece)

Parathlasi Theater School (Thessaloniki, Greece)

Theater of Changes (Directing & Acting;
Athens, Greece)

Dramaturgy for Devised Theater

13-year member of the Greek Network for Theatre in Education

Improvisation Just the Funny (Miami)

Multiple intensives and workshops including:

iO, The Second City (NYC), Magnet Theater Dave Razowsky, Dan O' Connor

Degrees:

PhD, Teaching & Learning

University of Miami

M.Ed., Drama in Education

Trinity College Dublin