

USC School of Dramatic Arts

presents

Hidden Stories

Original Concept by Domenica Diaz and Maddy Engelsman

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

For centuries theaters have brought people together, guiding them through a shared experience and reflecting the ethos of the time. What does it mean to make theatre in a world where people cannot physically gather? What does that work look like?

The challenge taken on by this incredible group of young artists is the same challenge that every theatre artist is currently grappling with. In a time where people are unable to convene, *Hidden Stories* sought to connect people by gathering their stories, artfully engaging with those stories and sharing it back with their community. Using the internet as the site of performance, the *Hidden Stories* team created a world that is both playful and inspiring. It is a world where audiences are participating in the stories they are watching and unlocking stories of people who may be hundreds of miles away, but feel as if they are just on the other side of a button.

Sometimes the questions we asked ourselves felt the same as our previous work. What is the tone of the piece? Will the audience understand what we are communicating? Other times unfamiliar challenges arouse such as how to code an arrow to link to the next page and how to have a performance with no actor in the space. But despite those challenges and daily endless zoom calls, every evening these students never lost sight of the importance of their work. They spoke passionately about what they were creating, displaying an earnest desire to make work that was aspirational, that pushed boundaries and that used theatre as a form of immediate artistic response to the world. What they came out with was an artistic success and a testament to their innovative spirit.

As theaters temporarily put their seasons on hold, I feel great comfort in knowing that young artists are not easily deterred and can prove that new forms of theatre will always arise to meet the occasion of the times.

SPECIAL THANKS

Visit hiddenstoriessc.com for complete list.