

WITHIN THE ECHO OF VIOLENCE



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# Meet the Team

## Direction



**Carlos Alexis Cruz** is the Producing Artistic Director of the Nouveau Sud Circus Project. He holds an MFA in Physical Theatre from the Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre and is currently an Associate Professor of Physical Theatre at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Prior to forming Nouveau Sud, Cruz trained Circus Arts and Chinese Acrobatics at the San Francisco Circus Center before touring full-time with Do Jump! Dance Theatre, Imago Theatre, and the Miracle Theatre Group.

**Flora Bare** is the Show Director of *Ricochet*, a multidisciplinary artist living in the Triangle Area. She has her MFA in Physical Theatre from The London International School of Performing Arts. She is a former nine time All-American and National Champion collegiate gymnast and Cal Aggie Hall of Fame inductee from the University of California, Davis. She is a director, performer, and creator of devised physical theater and circus.

[florabarearts.com](http://florabarearts.com)



## Cast



**Theresa Edge**, born in Fayetteville, NC, started her circus journey in 2015. She is also the Asst. Artistic Director of Nouveau Sud and serves on the Social Circus Committee with the American Circus Educators. Her performing repertoire currently consists of Fabric, Aerial Hoop, Aerial Straps, Adagio, and Partner/Group Acrobatics.



**Jordan Garcia** is from Nokesville, VA and has been living in Charlotte for over 7 years. He has been practicing hand-balancing for over 10 years but plays with many different circus disciplines. He is a dad and likes eating chipotle.



**Sarah Hahn** is a Charlotte-based performer and educator. Hahn trained gymnastics for 13 years as well as various dance and theatre disciplines. She began her circus training in 2012 with Aerial Fabric, Aerial Hoop, Aerial Straps, and Trapeze. She is also the co-owner of Bloom Movement Artistry and a co-performer with Satarah Productions.

# Meet the Team

**Krysta Rogden**, born in Rome, NY, began her circus training in Charlotte in 2016 after 14 years of dance education. Her circus disciplines consist of primarily dance trapeze, aerial hoop, and fabric. She is also an educator for after-school and summer circus programs and is currently earning her master's degree in arts administration.



**Kirsten Taylor** is a Charlotte based circus performer who has dedicated over ten years of training to stage. She started her artistic carrier in 2013 and in 2021, she joined Nouveau Sud. She is currently a circus educator who specializes in teaching individually based curricula.

## Music Creation

**Sarah Dressel** grew up in Cary, NC, and earned a BA in Electronic/Media/Broadcasting from Appalachian State University. She is a collaborative composer and performer for Nouveau Sud. Sarah is also a Registered Piano Technician and started In Tune Piano services in 2017 and taught piano for four years at Charlotte Music School.



**Sean Mulcahy** is a multi-instrumentalist and composer from Charlotte, NC currently based in Greensboro. Sean has worked with various Charlotte-based arts organizations including Children's Theatre, CPCC, and UNCC. He has collaboratively composed and performed live scores for the Nouveau Sud Circus Project since 2015. He has also been teaching private lessons for guitar, ukulele, bass, accordion, and piano since 2010.



**Mathew Tully** is a founding member of Nouveau Sud, and serves as the company's co-music director and composer. He studies percussion with Rick Dior and Yshai Afterman. His favorite bird is the Carolina Wren.

# **THE NOUVEAU SUD PROJECT: A CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL CIRCUS INITIATIVE**

The Nouveau Sud Circus Project is a contemporary social circus initiative started in the various dance/acrobatic/physical theatre scenes present in the vast array of cultures in Charlotte. Through physical language – dance, movement, and circus – these communities tell stories of their struggles, histories, traditions, transformations, and iconography, as we examine the idea of what it is to be a citizen of the ‘new’ south.

The Nouveau Sud Project strives to create meaningful and thought-provoking dialogue on social issues that are often not addressed, through the use of movement, acrobatics, music, spoken word and other various physical art forms. The company is committed to centering and uplifting BIPOC voices and stories in every facet from stage to leadership in the belief and hopes that accurate and empowering representation can become the standard within the arts at large.

This diverse group of artists, brought together by director Carlos Alexis Cruz, aspires to help the community progress by celebrating the creative process and staying available to the populace. Nouveau Sud accomplishes this by staging public rehearsals, previews of shows and open practice times – as well as utilizing any other opportunities to grow, be accessible, and facilitate conversations on pressing societal topics.

# **BEHIND THE STORY**



- How do we solve the gun violence problem in America?
- How did we end up here?
- How are people affected differently by gun violence?
- Can we put an end to the problem?

These are the communally reoccurring questions that sparked the creation of *Ricochet*. For over two decades we have seen an increase in the unfortunate and terrifying events of mass shootings at a national level. Examining such cases, has brought us to the larger question of Violence as portrayed and accepted in many circles in our society. With the structure of a series of vignettes, utilizing our signature acrobatic language and the contemporary circus arts as vehicle we will look for answers to our questions.

## **BEFORE THE SHOW:**

This topic might be sensitive and will include differing views based on individual backgrounds. Yet, these discussions are important to practice personal reflection and civil discourse. Allow time for students to reflect on these questions before sharing. It's important when having discussions to create an environment of respect for the exchange of ideas. Below are some ways we can foster successful discussions:

1. Use "I" statements (ex. "I feel this way...").
2. Support others during the discussion and check-in regularly.
3. Ask questions if something is unclear.
4. If someone says something that hurts you, do not attack the person. Acknowledge how the comment-not the person- made you feel.
5. Put-downs are never okay.

## **KICK-OFF QUESTIONS:**

1. How do you feel about gun violence and how it may affect your campus?
2. What are the various opinions about guns and gun ownership?
3. What are ways communities can and do support each other in the aftermath of gun violence?
4. Have you seen any other media/performances related to gun violence?

**NCES.RED.SE.2** - Understand the relationship between self and others in the broader world.

**CCSS.NCEX.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1** - Participate in communicative exchanges.

**NCES.8.TA.CU.1** - Analyze theatre in terms of the social, historical, and cultural contexts in which it was created.

# FACTS THAT INSPIRED US

In the US, as of November 12, 2023 there has been a total of **37,235 gun violence related deaths** and **32,237 gun violence related injuries** in 2023 alone (This is an increase of 8,208 deaths since *Ricochet*'s premiere on September 2nd, 2023 - 29,027) [1].

In the US, as of November 12, 2023 there has been **601 mass shootings** (an incident in which at least four people are injured or killed). That is approximately **2 mass shootings per day in 2023** [1].

In 2022, there were nearly **78,000 licensed gun dealers** in the US—more than all McDonald's, Burger King, Subway, and Wendy's locations combined, and twice the number of US post offices [2].

While federal agencies recommend annual or more frequent inspections for elevators and restaurants, Federal Firearms License holders can expect to be inspected, at current rates, less than once per decade [2].

States with the most gun dealers per capita have **10 times higher rates of guns trafficked to another state** and subsequently used in a crime than states with the fewest gun dealers per capita [2].

[1] Gun Violence Archive

[2] Everytown Research and Policy





## **AFTER THE SHOW:**

1. What themes or ideas about gun violence did you notice in the performance?
2. How did the spoken word aid in your understanding of the performance?
3. Describe images that stood out to you and how it impacted your understanding of the performance.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.2** - Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.8.5** - Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style

**NCES.8.TA.A.1.1** - Analyze plays in terms of theme, characters, conflict, dialogue, mood, and atmosphere.



## **ACTIVITY - EXPRESS YOURSELF:**

In the performance, **spoken word** was used to convey ideas and feelings that the cast felt on the topic of gun violence. We used spoken word in the forms of **short stories**, **poems**, and the **listing of facts**. Now, it's your turn to create your own spoken word. There is no right or wrong way to write or read spoken word so this is an opportunity to **be creative** and let your personal reflections guide your writing.

1. Start by listing ideas, themes, facts, and feelings you know personally on the topic of gun violence.
2. Develop the main idea or theme of your piece.
3. Start writing! Think of narrative and literary devices to get your point across (dialogue, alliteration, repetition, rhyme, metaphor, simile).
4. Present your spoken work to the class or in groups. What do you notice about how others use spoken word to express themselves?

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.3** - Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.3.B** - Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters

**NCES.8.TA.C.1** - Use movement, voice, and writing to communicate ideas and feelings.

# FURTHER LEARNING:

If you enjoyed the performance and wish to learn more about gun violence in America, check out these resources:

## Organizations to learn about:

### **MarchForOurLives.com**

Student-led organization founded in 2018

### **SandyHookPromise.org**

Resources for victims and survivors of gun violence.

### **EverytownSupportFund.org**

Resources for victims and survivors of gun violence.

## Further reading:

### ***Glimmer of Hope***

Official, definitive book from The March for Our Lives founders.

## Further watching:

### ***Ricochet: An American Trauma***

A PBS NewsHour Special following several people who have been affected by gun violence and trauma in different ways.

### ***Gun Nation***

Commissioned by *The Guardian* as a follow-up to the 1999 novel, *Gun Nation*.

