

## Synopsis for The Simian Assembly's *This Is Not She* by Julia Haist

*This is Not She* is an immersive, realist solo piece, comprised of scripted text and improvised interactions with audience members, set in a grade ten English class. The teacher, Maura is determined, despite an earth-shattering event in her personal life, to continue as planned with her introductory lesson on *Troilus and Cressida*, a Shakespearian satire with themes of infidelity and amorality.

The show's audience plays the role of the students and are invited to contribute opinions, read passages and answer questions. The element of interaction strives to open a discussion amongst the audience about morality and the human condition, during which they get to interact and forge a connection with the protagonist, and begin to discover that Maura may be more personally invested in these topics than just as abstract ideas.

Playwright Julia Haist's mother was an English teacher for over thirty years, and growing up, Haist was witness to both the rewards and the challenges of this profession, and how teachers are frequently over-worked, underpaid and dehumanized. She realized that these struggles could provide the perfect stakes for a character who is at the end of her rope, and has to maintain her professionalism while on the verge of a personal emotional breakdown.