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"2020: The Year of the Solo Artist"

Written by Jessica Lynn Johnson

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SOARING SOLO

*a Monthly Blog on How to Take
Solo Theatre To New Heights!*

Written by

Jessica Lynn Johnson



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"This is precisely the time when artists go to work. There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal."

-Toni Morrison

2020 is precisely the time for artists to go to work.

This is especially true of Solo Artists because we possess a unique bravery and vulnerability that incites inspiration and triggers transformation.

Pulitzer Prize and Nobel Prize winning novelist Toni Morrison's powerful quote above contains the medicine that our world needs to truly heal. A vaccine may kill the virus, but how will we kill the bigotry, eradicate the divisiveness, and murder the ignorance and passivity that has brought us to this point as a civilization?

One of the most powerful healing serums that I know of is Art, and more specifically, Solo Art.

There are so many deep wounds and agonizing issues in our world that desperately need illumination and a call to action from artists and audiences alike.

Yet, in all of the chaos, pain, and loss that this year has brought, many solo artists have become completely disconnected with the artist within.

If you are a solo artist who feels separated from your artistry due to the trials and tribulations of this year, then I hope that this article will aid you in finding your way back to creative connection.

To begin, let's take a moment to *accept what is*.

"Accept-then act. Whatever the present moment contains, accept it as if you had chosen it. Always work with it, not against it...This will miraculously transform your whole life."

-Eckhart Tolle

There is great empowerment to be found in Eckhart Tolle's quote above. Yet, it can be so deeply painful and wildly terrifying to be here now in this present moment that many solo artists are looking back at 2019 with nostalgia and grief. Others are fantasizing about the saving grace that 2021 may bring. The very last thing that many of us want to do is accept the reality of 2020.

However, if we forgo the present moment to reminisce on the past or dream of the future, then how can we possibly create and share art that brings healing and transformation into this current circumstance?

Yes, we are in a tumultuous and uncertain time. That is our current collective reality. And it is true that as solo artists, our artform looks nothing like it used to because audiences can no longer safely sell out theatres and hear our stories in person.

That is a painful reality to accept, indeed. Therefore, allow yourself to acknowledge the creative losses you have endured this year. Have grace for yourself in the artistic actions you took or did not take in the months since the pandemic struck. And, most importantly, allow yourself to really feel your feelings about all of this.

If we feel it, we can heal it, and then we can truly move forward.

Once we step into this present circumstance and accept what is, the next step is to *acknowledge what is unacceptable in our world*.

"Apathy is the acceptance of the unacceptable."

-John Scott

As solo artists, we are not meant to be in a codependent relationship with our art or our audiences. We are not writing, creating and performing in order to please and play it safe. No. We are called to shake things up, to say the hard things that need to be said, to speak our truth, and to boldly shed light on what is unacceptable.

One of the gifts in disguise that 2020 gave us was an acute awareness of just how many things are unacceptable in our society and in this world. Use this moment in time to acknowledge for yourself what those unacceptable things are from your unique point of view as a solo artist.

Once you have allowed yourself to accept what is, identify what is unacceptable, then the next step in this New Normal is to take meaningful creative action as a solo artist.

Be still and ask yourself...

What can I do as a solo artist in this present moment to illicit transformation of what is unacceptable to me? What do I have to say as a playwright and performer that will contribute to this important conversation?

"In the end we will remember not the words of our enemies but the silence of our friends."

-Martin Luther King Jr.

After you sit in silence listening for the answer, really trust the intuitive answer that comes up for you, and be silent no more.

Breaking your silence as an artist can take many forms as you start to find your voice again, so take it one meaningful step at a time.

The answer would be as simple as researching an online solo theatre class and beginning to educate yourself on this genre so that you can one day powerfully perform your show.

Maybe you already have a show written and the answer for you is applying to a festival or other performance opportunity to share your story with the world.

Perhaps your answer is that you need more time to be in a creative pause, but you want to support someone else who is livestreaming their solo show about a subject matter that you want to raise awareness.

Whatever the answer was for you, just remember to trust your inner artist and know that *"This is precisely the time when artists go to work."*

To conclude, please find encouragement and inspiration from this list of resources below of upcoming solo theatre related events and opportunities.

Let's keep LIVE theatre ALIVE!

Jessica Lynn Johnson

Founder & CEO of Soaring Solo LLC

SoaringSoloArtist@gmail.com

Submit to and Support the WORLD PREMIERE of the BLACK VOICES FESTIVAL!

A livestreaming festival at the whitefire theatre this Fall season featuring the solo shows of black solo artists. [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO ON THE BLACK VOICES FESTIVAL](#)

(<https://www.whitefiretheatre.com/>)

Submit to and Support the WORLD PREMIERE of the SOARING SOLO SALON!

Award winning Director & Developer, Jessica Lynn Johnson, hosts an evening of brand new solo show excerpts. This enticing program will be livestreaming from the Whitefire Theatre and will rotate 6 superb Solo Artists in and out throughout the night. This event will be monthly and solo artists are encouraged to submit to future salons by emailing SoaringSoloArtist@gmail.com or [CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO ABOUT THE SOARING SOLO SALON](#)

(<https://whitefire.yapsody.com/event/index/581456/the-soaring-solo-salon>).

Start every Hump Day off right with FREE Guided Meditation and Writing Prompts with "Isolate Meditate Create"!

Join BEST NATIONAL SOLO ARTIST WINNER Jessica Lynn Johnson EVERY HUMP DAY @ 9AM (PST) on ZOOM for ISOLATE. MEDITATE. CREATE!

This is a 100% free guided meditation & writing prompt experience is designed to keep you healthy, connected and creative EVERY HUMP DAY during STAY AT HOME and who knows, maybe you will even write your one person play with the content you create.

[CLICK HERE TO ATTEND ISOLATE MEDITATE CREATE](#) (<https://www.jessicalynnjohnson.com/workshops-events/isolate-meditate-create-a-100-free-daily-meditation-writing-event/>) and obtain the Zoom link and password.

Attend the Soaring Solo FREE One Person Play Development class ONLINE!

No matter where you are in the creation of your solo show, idea phase, curiosity phase, full draft written, touring the festival and college market, BEST NATIONAL SOLO ARTIST & Founder of Soaring Solo, Jessica Lynn Johnson, will meet you where you are at and take you to the next level! All that is required to attend is a willingness to explore, a pen, and some paper. No previous writing or performance experience necessary, and no need to have written anything to bring to class. Each week Jessica will guide you in exercises to help generate and stage NEW material! So come and meet other creatives in a supportive space for expression and exploration! The class is ongoing and so you may pop in and out as you please as long as you RSVP by clicking here for this [FREE ONE PERSON PLAY CLASS](#) (<https://www.jessicalynnjohnson.com/free-one-person-play-class/>) (<https://www.jessicalynnjohnson.com/free-one-person-play-class/>)

Watch a slew of sensational solo shows this month!

The best way to CREATE a solo show is to SEE solo shows! Jessica Lynn Johnson has proudly Directed & Developed over 100 solo shows in her solo theatre career and is still going strong! She would absolutely love to have you join her and the rest of the Soaring Solo Community at any of the following upcoming LIVESTREAMING solo shows she has had the honor of creatively collaborating on.

[CLICK HERE FOR A ROSTER OF UPCOMING LIVESTREAMING SOLO SHOWS](#) (<https://www.jessicalynnjohnson.com/solo-events/>)

- [Whitefire Theatre Solofest Presents "Dear Yoko" \(/theatres/theatre-reviews/item/6833-whitefire-theatre-solofest-presents-dear-yoko\)](#).

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Do you have an event, video or news to share? Drop us an [email \(mailto:info@nohoartsdistrict.com\)](mailto:info@nohoartsdistrict.com) and you may see it on [NoHoArtsDistrict.com](#)

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Attend the 7th Annual VIRTUAL Empowerment Weekend by the LA Women's Festival!

The 7th Annual Solo Performer Empowerment Weekend is an extended week-end of workshops and panels tailored to empower and enhance the careers of solo performers in particular, and an event full of information to benefit all performers.

The event is presented by the Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival (LAWTF) via Zoom, Friday – Sunday, August 28 – 30, 2020.

Tuition for the weekend is \$25. This discounted tuition is made possible in part by support for this program provided through the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, Arts Development Fee Program.

A Zoom link will be sent to those who have completed registration.

[CLICK HERE TO FOR MORE INFO & TO RSVP FOR THIS EVENT!](#)

(<https://www.jessicalynnjohnson.com/workshops-events/virtual-empowerment-weekend-with-the-la-womens-theatre-festival/>).

Schedule an Online Coaching Consultation with Jessica Lynn Johnson to discuss the possibilities for your solo show!

Jessica brings her 15+ years of solo theatre expertise to work privately with solo artists from all over the world on an as needed basis.

1 on 1 coaching and consultation is for you if...

-You are curious about creating a solo show, but you need writing prompts to help you generate material.

- You are tossing around ideas for your solo show, but you need some accountability and encouragement to commit those ideas to the page.

-You have already written some material, but you need expert feedback on editing, story structure and play formatting.

-You have a great first draft, but need guidance on how to utilize multimedia and solo theatre technique in order to make your show a dynamic piece of solo theatre.

-You already premiered your solo show and now you want some tips on how to tour colleges and festivals, and garner accolades and great reviews!

-You have heard great things about Jessica's work and you're curious about hiring her as a Director & Developer for your solo show, but first, you want to feel her out and see if she is the right fit for you and your project.

Wherever you may find yourself on your solo journey, Jessica will help you overcome whatever immediate obstacle stands between you and your solo success.

If you resonated with many of the things on this list, then take the next step by emailing

SoaringSoloArtist@gmail.com for more information.

Read **402** times

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