

## DIANE LEE MYERS DOYLE

"If you look in the dictionary, you will find Diane Doyle's picture just about everywhere. She defined what it meant to be an artist, actress, choreographer, teacher, writer, visionary, creator and leader. She embodied the word creativity; she exuded inspiration, and demonstrated what it meant to take risks. She led by example. If Di could do it, I reasoned, so could I. Or at least try.

She created one of the greatest young conservatories in the country for South Coast Repertory and headed it for decades. My interview with her consisted of me running behind her and trying to keep up as she raced between theaters preparing to open one of her shows. I truly believe I was hired solely because I didn't trip in the wake of her dynamic and superhuman ball of energy. Robert Frost said, "I am not a teacher, but an awakener." That is precisely what Di did for thousands of students, teachers and actors. She woke us all up to the talent and ability we had within us, that only she saw, that we didn't even know we had and, with determination, brought it out in us. She therefore defined another word: MENTOR.

My mother used to say, "If all your friends jumped off a bridge, would you?" The obvious response was a begrudging "No". However, if Diane Doyle asked me to jump off a bridge with her, I WOULD, because I trusted that something amazing awaited us. With a full, validating, infectious laugh, Di saw the world as a nonstop river of ideas to be used for a creative piece, a book, or a performance.

More recently she was writing a book about the environment and recycling, a subject she cared greatly about. One of my greatest joys was having Diane in the life of my children as well. They got to fall under her inspired gaze from the time they were born. She would bring them creative journals to draw or write in and the, always appreciated, Sun Chips. Once she gave them a plastic cube she had filled with found objects. She called it "Think Outside The Box". The idea was to create whatever you wanted with all the objects. The artistic possibilities were unlimited. So simple, yet so profound. Creativity in a little box. Those were the kinds of things Diane gave us that may have seemed simple, yet only in hindsight are now so profound.

We lost Diane the other day and an artistic hole has been created in the Universe. I will be forever grateful to have been included in her orbit as a colleague and friend. A post-Diane world seems empty. I will honor her memory for the rest of my life by mentoring, seeing the best in people, coaxing and encouraging, and experiencing the world as a rich, creative and very deep well. As Maya Angelou said, and Diane Doyle lived, "As long as you're breathing, it's never too late to do some good". Please help me carry on her vision and her memory. To Sarah and her family with respect, comfort and love."

Bud Leslie