

Director's Note

When I read *Friends With Guns*, I was struck by how quietly it builds pressure. The play never shouts, but every scene tightens the space between characters until the air feels charged. I wanted to direct this piece because it captures something that feels true in 2020. Everyone is trying to stay connected to the people they care about while navigating conversations that can shift from calm to combustible without warning. There is something raw about that, and it matches the world we are all living in right now.

My approach focuses on trust and distance. The play lives in the moment when a relationship shifts. That idea shows up not only in the story but in how we produce the show. Because we are creating this in 2020, the process is a little scrappy and very DIY. I filmed each actor individually, with their scene partner joining on a video call so they could react to each other in real time. We later spliced the footage together, which created both a physical and a metaphorical distance that mirrors the tension in the script. In rehearsals I worked with the actors to hold on to the awkward pauses, the half-finished thoughts, and the instinct to soften or sidestep conflict. These choices revealed how fragile even the closest bonds can be once fear, safety, and ideology enter the room.

I was also drawn to how the script refuses to make anyone the obvious villain. Each character believes they are trying to do the right thing, which feels especially relevant in a year full of hard opinions and high stakes. I want our staging to honor that complexity by keeping everything grounded and intimate. Even with the fragmented filming process, the goal is to create a world that feels lived-in, like a home you could step into. The physical distance between the actors ends up highlighting the emotional distance that creeps in between people who care about each other.

Directing this production taught me a lot about tension and restraint. It pushed me to listen more closely to what is unsaid and to let silence sit long enough for the audience to feel it. Working in this DIY format also forced me to be resourceful and intentional, which only deepened the story. The play reminds me that conflict does not always explode. Sometimes it fractures slowly and quietly, and those small breaks are the ones that stay with you.