

# Annual Academic Assessment Report

## Department of Theatre

2024

The Department of Theatre is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST). To maintain our accreditation status with this organization, the Department of Theatre aligns our program goals and outcomes according to NAST standards.

### Degree Programs

**Master of Fine Arts in Theatre - Acting**  
**Master of Fine Arts in Theatre - Directing**  
**Master of Fine Arts in Theatre - Playwriting**  
**Master of Fine Arts in Theatre – Costume Design**  
**Master of Fine Arts in Theatre – Lighting Design**  
**Master of Fine Arts in Theatre – Scene Design**

The purpose of the University of Arkansas Master of Fine of Arts Degree is to provide professional study and training to prepare candidates for professional careers in theatre.

### **Learning Outcomes**

In Spring 2023, The Department of Theatre graduated the first full cohort with an MFA in Theatre. It was decided in 2019 to align recruitment of all disciplines in the Theatre MFA. To that end, all incoming MFA Candidates matriculated through the program as a group.

#### MFA in Theatre – Acting

Gabriel Franco-Kull  
Edwin Greene  
Anna Miramontes  
Riles Newsome  
Leah Smith  
Grace Taylor  
Jordan Williams

#### MFA in Theatre – Directing

Huan Bui  
Lacy Post

### MFA in Theatre – Playwriting

Adrienne Dawes  
Sarah Loucks

### MFA in Theatre – Costume Design

Callie Lythgoe  
Ripley DeCaluwe

### MFA in Theatre – Lighting Design

Austin Bomkamp  
Zack McJunkins

### MFA in Theatre – Scene Design

Morgan Mcinnis

All Candidates in each discipline satisfactorily completed the requirements for the MFA in Theatre. Each candidate conducted an exit interview with the Chair of Theatre. Although it is early to track success, we know of some candidates current employment.

- Gabriel Franco-Kull is working in Northwest Arkansas with several theatre companies.
- Anna Miramontes is working as an actor in the Houston area. She just completed a run in Jane Eyre at Alley Theatre in Houston, TX.
- Riles Newsome is working in Northwest Arkansas with several theatre companies.
- Leah Smith has moved to Cleveland, Ohio to pursue acting opportunities.
- Grace Taylor just played Ariel in The Tempest at Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre.
- Jordan Williams was awarded a Performing Arts artist fellowship through the Arkansas Arts Council.
- Zack McJunkins is the new Lighting Supervisor for TheatreSquared in Fayetteville, AR
- Austin Bomkamp teaches Lighting Design at the University of Wisconsin Steven's Point.
- Callie Lythgoe is teaching at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania.
- Adrienne Dawes has just written and filmed a short called Cry Time and she was awarded a Literary Arts artist fellowship through the Arkansas Arts Council.

- Sarah Loucks was awarded Literary Arts artist fellowship through the Arkansas Arts Council.
- Lacy Post has come onboard the Department of Theatre as the Marketing and Publicity specialist.

In Fall 2024, the department recruited a new cohort of actors, designers, directors and playwrights.

Randy Olarte	Costume Design
Taylor Bell	Costume Design
Samuel Danquah	Costume Design
Julz Jenney	Lighting Design
Olivia Mack	Lighting Design
Faith Spencer	Lighting Design
Gabby Mason	Scene Design
Cole McVay	Scene Design
Jamie Spillars	Scene Design
Harrison Baxley	Acting
Philip Brown	Acting
Bellah Crawford	Acting
Marjorie Gast	Acting
Selena Gordon	Acting
Gabriela Madu	Acting
Sean Ryan	Acting
Sarah Behrend-Wilcox	Directing
Claire Wewers	Directing
Connor Johnson	Playwriting
Basil Parnell-Luetgens	Playwriting

### **Fall and Spring Assessments**

All MFA Candidates in Acting, Directing and Playwriting were assessed through individual meetings Spring 2024.

All MFA Candidates in Design participated in a Poster Presentation/Display in the Fall of 2023 of their first semester work. IN Spring 2024, all Candidates were assessed in individual meetings with the design faculty.

## **Tectonic Theatre Project**

The entire MFA Cohort participated in 3 separate week long workshops with the Tectonic Theatre Project group led by Moisés Kaufman. Moisés Kaufman is a Venezuelan theater director, filmmaker, playwright, founder of Tectonic Theater Project based in New York City, and co-founder of Miami New Drama at the Colony Theatre. He was awarded the 2016 National Medal of Arts by President Barack Obama. The aim of the workshop was to build collaboration strategies and to devise a new work of theatre that was presented to an audience in Fall 2023. The department of theatre is currently working with Tectonic to create a first in the nation partnership that will result in a certificate for University of Arkansas MFA Theatre graduates.

## **Productions**

The Department of Theatre MFA Cohort participated in six productions for audiences in the 2023-2024 academic year. Productions are directed by faculty members in Theatre and MFA Candidates in Directing. Playwrights served as dramaturgs for the works, actors rehearsed and participated in live performances and designers devised and created the worlds of the plays through costume, lighting and scenery.

- *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare
- *Witch* by Jen Silverman
- *Lungs* by Duncan Macmillian
- *The Prom*. Music by Matthew Sklar, lyrics by Chad Beguelin, book by Bob Martin and Beguelin.
- *Arkansas Moves* Dance Event featuring The Movement.
- *Solos, Original Works (in progress)*. Original pieces created by the MFA Acting, Directing and Playwriting Candidates with lighting by MFA Candidates in Lighting Design.