

# **Annual Academic Assessment Report**

## **Department of Theatre**

**2025**

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 Fall 2023, the Department of Theatre at the University of Arkansas welcomed its second full cohort of MFA students, continuing an enrollment model initially piloted with the 2020 cohort. That inaugural implementation yielded promising results, prompting further exploration of its long-term viability. A committee of tenure-track faculty is currently evaluating the effectiveness and sustainability of the full cohort model and is expected to present its findings in Fall 2025. While no immediate changes to the MFA Assessment Plan are anticipated, the committee is actively considering whether a return to a rotation-based admission model may better serve the program's goals and resource allocation.

### **Current MFA Cohort**

#### **MFA in Theatre – Acting**

Harrison Baxley

Marjorie Gast

Sean Ryan

Selena Mykenzie Gordon

Gabbay Madu

P. Rob Brown  
Bellah Crawford

MFA in Theatre – Directing

Sarah Behrend-Wilcox  
Claire Wewers

MFA in Theatre – Playwriting

Connor Johnson  
Basil Parnell

MFA in Theatre – Costume Design

Samuel Danquah  
Randy Olarté

MFA in Theatre – Lighting Design

Julian Jenney  
Oliva Mack  
Faith Spencer

MFA in Theatre – Scene Design

Gabby Mason  
Jamie Spillars

As of 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.
- Riles Newsome is working in Chicago 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 Lighting Supervisor for TheatreSquared in Fayetteville, AR
- Callie Lythgoe is teaching at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania.
- Adrienne Dawes has just written and filmed a short film named *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.