Scenic Designer

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EDUCATION

Master of Fine Arts, California Institute of the Arts, 1999

Area of study: Scenic/Production Design for Theatre, Film/Television; Dramaturgy; Scenic Painting; Illustration.

Mentor: Chris Barreca

Bachelor of Arts, University of Michigan, 1996

Area of study: Cultural Anthropology, Primate Behavior, Archeology, and Linguistics; Theatre minor.

Honor's Thesis: "The Impact of Theatrical Training on Inner-City Youth in Detroit"

Mentor: Conrad Kottak

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Bard College at Simon's Rock, Adjunct Faculty & Scenic/Lighting Design, Fall 2023 - present

Responsibilities: Instructor for Introduction to Theatrical Design course and Guest Designer for Spring & Fall.

Course(s): THEA 115 Behind the Curtain; THEA 112 Production

University of Massachusetts Amherst, Theatre Department, Guest Scenic Design & Mentor, Fall 2023

Responsibilities: Guest Scenic Designer for Fall and Mentor MFA Scenic Design student in her last year.

Course(s): MFA Scenic Design Mentor, 2023-24, filling in for faculty on sabbatical

MCLA, Theatre Department, Scenic Designer & Instructor, Fall 2021 - Spring 2023

Responsibilities: Instructor for beginning level Scenic Design course and Guest Scenic Designer for Spring.

Course(s): THEA 310-01 Set Design and Scenic Painting Seminar.

Williams College Theatre Department, Scenic Design Mentor, Fall 2019 - Spring 2020

Responsibilities: Design Mentor for Senior Honor's Thesis projects; assisting 2 student designers.

Note: All projects shifted to an online presentation, which I facilitated using 3D computer modeling software.

University of Albany Theatre Department, Scenic Designer & Guest Lecturer, Fall 2016 - Spring 2018

Responsibilities: Scenic Designer for Main Stage productions; instructed students in QLab, projection design and sound design; gave lectures on Scenic Design and workshops in Scenic Painting to undergraduates.

Course(s): Guest Lecturer in Scenic Design for Introduction to Theatre class, THEATRE F100.

The Juilliard School, Scenic Designer & Guest Lecturer, Fall 2000 - Spring 2001

Responsibilities: Scenic Designer Opera/Theatre Dept productions; 2 seminars in Stage Design.

Course(s): Stage Design Seminar for Actors.

Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit, Technical Director, Scenic Designer & Instructor, 1993 - 1996

Responsibilities: design and construct main stage and touring productions, maintain budget, stage manage, and

instruct company members in Technical Theatre and Design.

Course(s): Stage Design, Set Construction, Scenic Painting, Props, and Stage Management.

SCENIC DESIGN

WAM The	eatre Comp	any (Berks	shires, MA)
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"Cadillac Crew"	Director: Taneisha Duggan	Shakespeare & Co.	October 2022
"The Thanksgiving Play"	Director: Talya Kingston	Digital Production	November 2020
"Roe"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Digital Production	October 2020
"Lady Randy"	Director: Jim Frangione	Bernstein Theatre	April 2019
"Ann"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven co-production, Dorset Theater Festival	Tina Packer Playhouse	Aug/Sept 2018
"The Last Wife"	Director: Kelly Galvin	Bernstein Theatre	October 2017
"Emilie du Chatelet"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Tina Packer Playhouse	March 2017
"Bakelite Masterpiece"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven co-production, Berkshire Theatre Group	Unicorn Theatre	October 2016
"Holy Laughter"	Director: Megan Sandberg-Zakian	Barrington Stage Co.	November 2015
"In Darfur"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Shakespeare & Co.	October 2014
"Emilie du Chatelet"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Barrington Stage Co.	November 2013
"The Old Mezzo"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Berkshire Museum	November 2012
"The Attic, The Pearls"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Barrington Stage Co.	November 2011
"Melancholy Play"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	New Stage	October 2010

The Arena Stage/Dallas Theatre Center (Washington DC/Dallas, TX)

"Ann"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Kreeger Theater	July/Oct. 2019
		Kalita Theater	

Great Barrington Public Theatre (Berkshires, MA)

"Night at the Speakeasy"	Director: Wendy Welch	McConnell Theater	July 2024
"Survival of the Unfit"	Director: Matthew Penn	McConnell Theater	July 2024
"Things I Know To Be True"	Director: Judy Braha	McConnell Theater	August 2022

Shakespeare & Company (Berkshires, MA)

"Hymn"	Director: Regge Life	Bernstein Theatre	July 2022
"The Waverly Gallery"	Director: Tina Packer	Bernstein Theatre	July 2019
"Heisenberg"	Director: Tina Packer	Tina Packer Playhouse	August 2018

Chester Theatre Company (Chester, MA)

"Circle Mirror Transformation"	Director: Daniel Kramer	Main Stage	August 2023
"Pride@Prejudice"	Director: Daniel Kramer	Main Stage	June 2022
"Title & Deed"	Director: Keira Naughton	Hancock Village	June 2021
"The Niceties"	Director: Christina Franklin	Hancock Village	July 2021
"Tiny Beautiful Things"	Director: Daniel Kramer	Hancock Village	August 2021

Chester	Theatre	Company	(Chester,	MA)	cont'd
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"Curve of Departure"	Director: Keira Naughton	Main Stage	August 2019
"Disgraced"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Main Stage	July 2018
"I And You"	Director: Kristen van Ginhoven	Main Stage	July 2017

University of Albany Theatre Department (Albany, NY)

"Hair"	Director: Chad Larabee	Main Stage	May 2018

"A Doll's House" Director: Karla Kash Studio Theater November 2017
"Water by the Spoonful" Director: Kim Stauffer Studio Theater November 2016

Kickwheel Theatre Ensemble (Berkshires, MA)

"Passage" Director: Sara Katzoff Shire City Sanctuary July 2016

Theatre Institute at Sage (Troy, NY)

"Rhinoceros"	Director: David Baecker	Meader Theater	October 2024
"She Kills Monsters"	Director: David Baecker	Meader Theater	October 2023
"Wait Until Dark"	Director: Leigh Strimbeck	Schacht Theater	October 2015
"Spring Awakening"	Director: Leigh Strimbeck	Meader Theater	April 2015

Adirondack Theatre Festival (Glens Falls, NY)

"The Whale" Director: Kristen van Ginhoven C. R. Wood Theater July 2014

The Acting Company (New York, NY)

"A Taming of the Shrew"	Director: Eve Shapiro	National Tour	2001-02
"Pudd'nhead Wilson"	Director: Walter Dallas	National Tour	2001-02

The Juilliard School (New York, NY)

"Richard II"	Director: Eve Shapiro	McClelland Theater	April 2001
"La Cenerentola"	Director: Eve Shapiro	Sharp Theater	October 2000

Present Company Theatre (New York, NY)

"A Word to No One"	Director: Julia Barclay	SITI Company	September 2002
"A Place Like This"	Director: CJ Hopkins	PC Theatorium	July 2001

"The Mermaid" Director: Amantha May NY Fringe Festival August 2000

Echo Theatre Company (Los Angeles, CA)

"Uncle Vanya"	Director: Chris Fields	24th Street Theater	April 2003
Ojai Playwrights Conference	Concept Design for 6 New Plays	Ojai Playwrights	August 2000
"Wild Life"	Director: Chris Fields	Power House Theater	June 2000
"Ghosts in Cottonwoods"	Director: Chris Fields	24th Street Theater	May 2000

Scenic Designer

California Institute of the Arts (Valencia, CA)

"Don Juan"	Director: Alina Szpak	Modular Theater	May 1999
"Tom Thumb"	Director: Roman Paschka	Studio Theater	October 1998
"After Dinner Joke"	Director: Amantha May	Black Box Theater	May 1998
"The Brontë Sisters"	Director: Leah Mercer	Modular Theater	October 1997
"In-Her City"	Director: Amantha May	Black Box Theater	May 1997

Mosaic Youth Theatre Detroit (Detroit, MI)

"Recycled"	Director: Rick Sperling	Copenhagen, Denmark	September 1996
		World Fest Children's Theat	tre

"Who Killed Johnny Maze"Director: Rick SperlingTouring Show1995-96"Crossing 8 Mile"Director: Rick SperlingTouring Show1994-95"What Fools...Mortals Be!"Director: Rick SperlingAttic Theater & 1993-94

Touring Show

PRODUCTION DESIGN

OutPost TV (Berkshire, MA)

Commercial	"Harney & Sons Tea	ıs" Production Designer	November 2021
Commercial	Harney & Sons lea	is Production Designer	inovember 2

Larry Eisenberg Films (Pasadena, CA)

Film, "David Proshker" Production Designer June - August 1999

TNT Productions (Los Angeles, CA)

TV Series, "Babylon 5" Art Department Assistant Oct. 1998 - May 1999

BBC One (London, UK)

TV Series, "Bugs" Art Department Assistant June - August 1998

Paramount Studios (Los Angeles, CA)

TV Series, "Star Trek Voyager" Production Design Internship June - August 1996
Film, "Star Trek NG: First Contact" Property Department Internship June - July 1995

TEACHING/AREAS OF INTEREST

Scenic Design

What is the importance of "place" in a story? How do scenic designers convey a location to an audience in a live performance? Exploring the emotional impact of the environment on an audience is crucial to understanding the field of Scenic Design. Script analysis, visual research, collaboration, and identifying the ideas with the most impact are the skills of a successful designer. Sketching, computer rendering, drafting, and model building are the tools used to communicate a design. Assisting young artists with mastering these abilities and skills has been a long-term interest.

Computer Rendering and Drafting

Imaging and drafting software have become vital tools for theatre designers. Learning to use graphic design programs, such as Adobe Photoshop, and CAD programs like Vectorworks, are essential for theatre designers. These skills bring communication and realization of visual ideas to a whole new level of clarity and impact. It's critical for young theatre artists to be proficient with these tools. I've enjoyed using them in my own work, as well as teaching others.

Scenic Painting

In addition to teaching the techniques of scenic painting, exploring the history and its evolution in modern theatre can provide a strong foundation for the practice. Learning to achieve effects like trompe l'oeil, faux textures, translucent dyes, and blending sprays, are essential skills in scenic painting. Many of these techniques are still being used in theaters today. Being a skilled scenic painter is a valuable tool for a Scenic Designer and I've enjoyed passing this on.

Props

Property Design is a creative opportunity for young theatre artists to develop skills in research and reproduction. The examination of furniture and objects from specific time periods and places taps into my love of History, Archeology, and Anthropology. Creating "props" from scratch requires an imaginative, engineering ability and a mastery of basic carpentry and painting skills. It's a wonderfully challenging area of design that I enjoy sharing with students.

Site-specific Theatre

Exploring the emergence of using a non-traditional theater space for live performance provides a fascinating window into the social value and impact of Theatre. By investigating the history of site-specific performance, the inspiration that moved theatre into parks, streets, garages, warehouses, and anywhere else you can imagine, is revealed. What impact did this relocation have on performance culture and stage design? The effect on an audience of seeing a play in a non-traditional space is fascinating, and something I continue to research and explore.

Video in Scenic Design

Since around the mid-20th century, moving images have been projected onto surfaces in live performances. What inspired Scenic Designers to use moving images in their theatrical work, and how did they achieve these effects? The impact of Film on Theatre is a complex subject, and exploring the visual element on stage is just one layer of the puzzle. As the technology for filming and projection developed, so did its role on stage. Understanding the effect of using two-dimensional moving images, and how projection is achieved, are crucial tools for modern theatre artists.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

When I started teaching in Detroit, I quickly learned that I needed to set goals for my students that were clear, steady and achievable. They responded more to explanations that were straight forward and didn't drown them in lots of details. They needed energetic engagement and active learning through hands-on projects. It deepened their understanding of new ideas and tested their collaboration skills. Each success they achieved inspired them to accept bigger challenges moving forward.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY cont'd

As a young teacher, I discovered the power that encouragement had on my students. When they knew I believed they could succeed, they did. Twenty years later, many of those students have careers in theatre, film, and education. One of my former students is an Emmy-nominated production designer. She told me recently that she was inspired to pursue her career after seeing me, a young female theatre artist, leading a technical crew and working in a male-dominated field. That experience showed her that she could do that too, and she did. In Mosaic Youth Theatre, we had a saying that became a group cheer over the years, "only the best...nothing less." It meant that you always brought the best version of yourself to any challenge. I've carried that mantra with me in my work as a professional theatre artist.

In an undergraduate theatre program, working on productions, from concept to stage, allows students to gain practical knowledge and valuable skills. Through the development process, students can explore culture, history, spacial design, sound and light, construction, and project management, just to name a few. Undergraduate theatre students should leave their programs with confidence in their knowledge of the process, and armed with experience that can prepare them for the challenges of working in smaller, community theatre companies, or excelling in internships at larger professional companies.

A professional internship can have a huge impact on a motivated student's academic experience. Their knowledge and skills can be refined through expert-guided exploration in specific fields. Assisting a professional theatre artist allows students to see the practical application of the concepts they've learned, as well as discovering the newest techniques in the industry. Students can build confidence in themselves working with a great mentor, and it provides connections to local companies that can lead to future employment. Working with a professional theatre company on their productions can be an amazing experience for a young theatre artist.

As a teacher, I like to get students on their feet from day one, offering instruction and guidance as they try new techniques. I like to put tools in their hands and challenge them to create something. Theatre is an energetic discipline and this energy should be part of the classroom. There's nothing like seeing the moment when a student "gets it;" the wide-eyed realization that all those little pieces fit together into a new concept or skill. Comprehension is a magical process that I enjoy facilitating. It's why I challenge myself to be an instructor. At this point in my career, sharing my knowledge and experience with the next generation of theatre artists is incredibly rewarding. I love inspiring students to be the best version of themselves. It's all in that chant from Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit: only the best, nothing less.