FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the MFA Theatre Program at Columbia University School of the Arts. As a young theatre maker aspiring to further your education, deepen your work and make a mark in the professional world, you have many options to consider for graduate training. I believe Columbia has the most dynamic, immersive and multifaceted offerings available. We have passionate, committed, world-class faculty in every discipline. Our students are motivated, entrepreneurial, and supremely inventive and come to us from all over the globe. The hive of theatrical activity that is New York City provides innumerable opportunities for our students to see the most exciting new work, interact with the most influential artists in the field, and build bridges into the professional world while they are still in school. Our alumni are finding great success in the professional world and defining theatre for the next generation of audiences. I hope that you will be inspired by the words of my colleagues as you look more deeply into the Columbia MFA program, and will apply to join us next year.

Christian Parker

The MFA Theatre Program at Columbia is international, collaborative and interdisciplinary. Named in honor of Oscar Hammerstein II, it is defined by its location in New York City, a global capital of theatre, and by the extensive network of Columbia alumni and faculty who run prestigious Broadway, Off-Broadway and regional theatres; direct and perform in Tony- and other award-winning productions; work in every level of the professional theatre world; and teach, mentor and engage with students on an ongoing basis.
DIRECTING

If you are looking for a rigorous training in Directing with an emphasis upon the collaborative process, in-depth critique and the requirement to regularly put work in front of an audience in a laboratory environment, Columbia's Directing concentration might very well be the place for you. Visit us, see the current directors' work and chat with them about their experiences at Columbia.

Anne Bogart, Directing

ACTING

Our Acting faculty is made up of active theatre professionals from all over the world. As teachers, we are united by a tremendous passion for theatre and actors. Our program offers rigorous “outer training” in body (the Wolcz method) and voice (the Linklater technique), but also intense “inner training” to develop feeling and imagination. Our work focuses on both classical and contemporary works, and methods from commedia dell’arte to those of Brook and Grotowski. Because our focus is on ensemble work as well as individual training, you can find a creative rhythm inside the group, and then develop it for your own professional career. We invite you to share in our knowledge and experience as you train with the next generation of actors.

Andrei Serban and Ulla Wolcz, Acting

Scene from the 2012 Directors' Thesis Production of Birthday Triage, written by Naïma Kristel Phillips '12, directed by Simón Hanukai '12. Photo by Carol Rosegg.
DRAMATURGY

The Columbia MFA in Dramaturgy empowers you with a kaleidoscopic way of looking at plays and theatrical events. We seek entrepreneurial, self-motivated, multi-disciplinary theatre artists who seek to deepen their understanding of the marriage of structure, form and content, and who will take these lessons into the world as generators of bold new stories in the theatre and other media. Our curriculum is infused with a rigorous mix of academic and practical courses designed to broaden your theatrical knowledge, challenge your presuppositions and biases, and activate a deep engagement in your own and your colleagues’ work.

Christian Parker, Dramaturgy and Program Chair

PLAYWRITING

Aeschylus, Shakespeare and Chekhov proved that there isn’t one way to write a great play, and so our program at Columbia is dedicated to helping playwrights develop their own unique voices. Our playwrights come from all over the globe to be immersed in the theatre world of New York. The program will take you from collaboration workshop in the first year with the actors, directors and dramaturgs, to your choosing your favorite playwright to serve as your personal mentor in writing and producing your thesis play in your third year.

Charles L. Mee, Playwriting
STAGE MANAGEMENT

The Stage Management concentration provides a contemporary approach for the career-focused student. Modern stage management requires its practitioners to be at the center of the organizational chart as a combination CEO/COO: setting the tone, driving the process and delivering results. You’ll get in-the-trenches classroom training from subject-matter experts in a multitude of disciplines: Broadway, institutional theaters, opera, dance, television and corporate events. You’ll get practical experience working on Columbia productions, outside internships and field studies that are specially designed for each student. The goal? To build your industry contacts and increase your skill set so you are firmly prepared to work as a leading-edge stage manager.

Michael J. Passaro, Stage Management

THEATRE MANAGEMENT & PRODUCING

We want to educate and inspire you. We also want you to stand out and land a job in this highly competitive environment. Our exceptional faculty of working professionals gives you an in-depth understanding of the big picture: the history of the industry, how the business operates today and what lies ahead. And, just as importantly, we help you build a network of fellow artists and professional contacts that will serve as the foundation for your career in the theatre.

Steven Chaikelson, Theatre Management & Producing

Hardy Pinnell ’13 and Nika Ezell Pappas ’13 in Cowboy Mouth, directed by Tyne Rafaeli ’13.
Photo by Matt Dunivan.
About the School

Columbia University School of the Arts awards the Master of Fine Arts degree in Film, Theatre, Visual Arts and Writing and the Master of Arts degree in Film Studies. The School is a thriving, diverse community of artists from around the world with talent, vision and commitment. The faculty is composed of acclaimed and internationally renowned artists, film and theatre directors, writers of poetry, fiction and nonfiction, playwrights, producers, critics and scholars. Every year the School of the Arts presents exciting and innovative programs for the public including performances, exhibitions, screenings, symposia, a film festival and numerous lectures, readings, panel discussions and talks with artists, writers, critics and scholars. For more information, visit arts.columbia.edu.

Visit arts.columbia.edu/theatre-brochure for application requirements and financial aid information.
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THE OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN II
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