MFA in Theatre Management & Producing at Columbia University

2020 Online Q&A
Steven Chaikelson
Professor
Theatre Management & Producing
Concentration Director

Victoria Bailey
Adjunct Professor
Theatre Management & Producing
Concentration Advisor

President
Snug Harbor Productions

Executive Director
Theatre Development Fund
• Film
• Theatre
• Writing
• Visual Arts

Dodge Hall – 116th Street and Broadway
Theatre Program
The Oscar Hammerstein II Center for Theatre Studies

Offering MFA Degrees in:
• Acting
• Directing
• Dramaturgy
• Playwriting
• Stage Management
• Theatre Management & Producing
• Joint JD/MFA with Columbia Law School
Why an MFA?

• The Big Picture and In-Depth Study
• Expand Your Toolkit
• Colleagues
• Networking
• Teaching
• Inspiration

Class of 2017 at the Shubert Archive
Theatre Management & Producing Program Summary

- 8-10 Students per year
- 3 Year Program
- 60 Credits over the first 2 years / 4 semesters
- Producing/Management Requirement
- 3 Internships
- Collaboration Weekend
- Crew Assignment
- Free Tickets
- Thesis

Class of 2022 – Collaboration Weekend
Faculty
Working Professionals

- Victoria Bailey (Theatre Development Fund)
- Renee Blinkwolt (Ars Nova)
- Jeremy Blocker (New York Theatre Workshop)
- Gigi Bolt (Arts Consultant)
- Chris Boneau (Boneau/Bryan-Brown)
- Chris Burney (New York Stage & Film)
- Carolyn Casselman (Davis Wright Tremaine)
- Steven Chaikelson (Snug Harbor Productions)
- Ellen Dennis (Producer)
- Nick Falzon (Disney Theatrical Group)
- Charlie Flateeman (Shubert Organization)
- Robert Fried (Withum)
- Sue Frost (Come From Away)
- Barry Grove (Manhattan Theatre Club)
- Justin Karr (Jujamcyn Theaters)
- Karen Kowgios (Withum)
- Dessie Moynihan (Shubert Organization)
- Michael Naumann (Theatre Development Fund)
- Amanda Pekoe (The Pekoe Group)
- Lisa Poyer (Company Manager)
- Darren Robertson (Lincoln Center)
- Thomas Schumacher (Disney Theatrical Group)
- Rachel Sussman (Independent Producer)
- Donna Walker-Kuhne (Walker International Communications)
Students
Diverse Backgrounds and Experiences

• Columbia University:
  • One of the largest international student populations in the USA

• School of the Arts:
  • 28% of the student body is international
  • Students from 50 countries

• Theatre Management & Producing
  • 35% of the current student body is international
  • Students from 6 countries
New York City is your classroom
Individualized and Balanced Curriculum

- Individualized Program
- Commercial and Not-for-Profit (subsidized)
- Management/Administration and Producing/Entrepreneurship
- Building Skills and Tackling Industry Issues
- Industry History, Best Practices and New Frontiers
- National and International

Class of 2021 – Field Trip to The Lion King
Areas of Study

• Accounting and Finance
• Budgeting
• Contracts
• Creative Development
• Equity, Diversity and Inclusion
• Fundraising and Development
• History and Theory
• International Production
• Labor Relations
• Management and Administration
• Marketing and Audience Development
Courses

First Year

• Theatre Management & Administration I and II
• Budgeting and Reporting
• Accounting for the Theatre
• Fundraising & Marketing
• Advertising for the Theatre
• Press & Publicity
• History and Theory of Theatre
• Issues in the National Not-for-Profit Theatre
• Seminar in Law & Theatre (at Columbia Law School)
• Legal Writing Practicum
• Labor Relations & Collective Bargaining

Second Year

• The Development Process
• Advanced Seminar in Theatre Management
• Theatre Practicum: Ticketing, Pricing & Inventory Control
• International Touring and Festivals
• Not-for-Profit Producing Partnerships
• Company Management
• The Role of the Producer I and II
• Creative Producing
• NEW Digital Producing
• NEW Reimagining American Theatre
• NEW Critical Issues in Theatre Producing: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Arts
Electives

- Theatre Program
- Film Program
- Arts Administration
- Columbia Business School
- Columbia School of Law
- Other Areas of the University
Columbia University / Stage One Exchange Program

- London participants to NYC for 1 week
- Columbia students to London for 1 week
- Learn about different business practices
- Build relationships
Internships
a selection of companies where students recently interned

- 101 Productions
- Ars Nova
- Atlantic Theatre Company
- Bespoke Theatricals
- Broadway and Beyond Theatricals
- Broadway Brands/Broadway Briefing
- Brooklyn Academy of Music
- Daryl Roth Theatrical Management
- En Garde Arts
- Irish Rep
- Junkyard Dog Productions
- Jujamcyn Theatres
- Manhattan Theatre Club
- Maximum Entertainment
- MCC Theatre
- New York Stage and Film
- New York Theatre Workshop
- RCI Theatricals
- Roundabout Theatre
- Signature Theatre
- Situation Interactive
- Stage Directors and Choreographers Society
- Thompson Turner Productions
- Theatre Development Fund (TDF)
- The Nederlander Organization
- The New Group
- The Play Company
- The Shubert Organization
- Walt Disney Theatrical Productions
- Williamstown Theatre Festival

Students and Alumni on the job at 101 Productions
Collaboration

• Collaboration Weekend
• Classroom Projects
• First and Second Year Productions
• Third Year Mainstage Productions and Festivals
• Extracurricular production on and off campus
Manhattanville and the Lenfest Center for the Arts

Our new theatre opened in Fall 2017
Thesis

• 3rd Year
• 50-100 Pages
• Make an Argument
• Interviews
• Faculty and Outside Advisors
Complete the JD and MFA in Theatre Management & Producing in 4-5 years. Applicants must apply separately to each school.
Theatre Accountability Project

Fall 2020: We created a weekly webinar series on the business of theatre in partnership with Black Theatre Coalition

Spring 2021: Producing students will join The Theater for Change: Reimagining Justice Through Abolition, Columbia Law School’s partnership with Broadway Advocacy Coalition
T Fellowship for Creative Producers

Current Mentors
Kristen Caskey
Sue Frost
Thomas Schumacher
Jeffrey Seller
David Stone
Orin Wolf
Financial Aid

• Need-based and Merit-based awards available
• Financial Packages for Years 1 and 2
• Additional opportunities for student coordinator employment in Year 2
• Fellowships generally range from $10,000 to $30,000 per year
• Shubert Internship Stipend in Year 3
Admissions

- What kind of students are we looking for?
- No GRE Required
- Creative Materials
- Application Deadline: **January 5, 2021**
- Admissions Committee and Interviews

Application available at [https://apply.arts.columbia.edu/apply/](https://apply.arts.columbia.edu/apply/)

For more information:
  - Website: [https://arts.columbia.edu/theatre/](https://arts.columbia.edu/theatre/)
  - Email: SOAadmissions@columbia.edu
  - Phone: (212) 854-2134
Alumni

a selection of alumni accomplishments

- Renee Blinkwolt (Managing Director): Ars Nova
- Jeremy Blocker (Managing Director): New York Theatre Workshop
- Susan Booth (Associate Professor): Eastern Michigan University
- Thom Clay (Director of Theatre Management): The Nederlander Organization
- Beth Dembrow (General Manager): MCC Theatre
- Kelvin Dinkins (General Manager/Ast. Dean): Yale Rep/School of Drama
- Andy Donald (Assoc Artistic Director): American Conservatory Theatre
- Steve Dow (Chief Administrative Officer): Roundabout Theatre Company
- Dave Ehle (Company Manager): Come From Away
- Jamie Forshaw (Executive Producer): MWM Live / Madison Wells Media
- Temple Gill (Director of Marketing): Huntington Theatre Company
- Jill Jefferson (Director, Advertising & Promotions): NYC Ballet
- Jessica Jenen (Senior General Manager): Broadway Asia
- Brandon Kahn (General Manager): Alley Theatre
- Danielle Karliner Naish (General Manager): RCI Theatricals
- Justin Karr (Vice President of Ticketing Operations): Jujamcyn Theaters
- Kappy Kilburn (Executive Director): Human Race Theatre
- Allie Lalonde (Producing Director): The TEAM
- Eric Louie (Producing Director): La Jolla Playhouse
- Hal Luftig (Producer): Kinky Boots, American Utopia
- Stacey McMath (Program Specialist): NYC Department of Cultural Affairs
- David Manella (Associate): Loeb & Loeb LLP
- Adam Miller (Associate General Manager): The Book of Mormon
- Faye Rosenbaum (General Manager): Martha Graham Dance Company
- Stephen Sosnowski (VP of Media and Account Services): SpotCo
- Michael Stotts (Managing Director): Paper Mill Playhouse
- Joel Szulc (Director of Finance): Theatre Under the Stars
- Halla Tryggyvadottir (Performance Marketing Coordinator): Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts
- Barbara Whitman (Producer): 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Fun Home, Oh, Hello, Fully Committed
Class of 2015 at Graduation

Class of 2018 with Professors Robert Fried and Karen Kowgios

Hamilton Opening Night in Chicago
Thank you for joining us for this session!

Any Questions?