

Theatre and Dance

“Very few liberal arts colleges offer courses in devised theater, and an even smaller number offer it to any student who wants to take it. In our program, all are welcome, no matter their prior theatre experience.”

Janeve West, Associate Professor of Theatre

The Cornell College Department of Theatre and Dance combines rigorous pre-professional training in the performing arts with a solid grounding in the liberal arts. The department offers a major and minor in theatre, and students frequently develop independent, interdisciplinary majors in more specialized areas, such as playwriting, arts administration, or theatre as social change.

Department faculty are all experienced and active theatre professionals. Their aim is to serve two constituencies—the theatre student preparing in a focused way for the profession or for graduate education, and the traditional liberal arts student committed to exploring the range of human knowledge and activity.

Cornell theatre courses offer scholarly and experiential training in a wide range of theatre arts, including playwriting, acting, directing, stage management, devised theatre, and more technology driven fields including costume, scenery, lighting, projection, and sound design.

Theatre coursework extends beyond the classroom by applying subject material from each course to the production schedule throughout the year. By participating in several productions, students take what they learn in their coursework and apply it to the stage.

The college has exceptional facilities, with two well-equipped theatre spaces. Theatre and dance scholarships are available, and students can also apply for a \$1,000 stipend to enable travel to a workshop or fund a project.

BENEFITS OF ONE COURSE AT A TIME GUEST ARTIST PROGRAM

The department regularly brings in guest artists and instructors for a block or more, teaching courses and working on productions. Some of the guests we’ve

recently had on campus include:

- The Mad Ones, a New York City theatre company.
- New York City’s award-winning company, The Puppet Kitchen.
- Leda Hoffmann, director from Milwaukee Rep.
- Playwright Jennifer Fawcett, co-founder of Working Group Theatre in Iowa City.
- Tim Slover, playwright, screenwriter, and novelist from the University of Utah.
- Amy Barr, dancer and choreographer from Philadelphia.
- Dave Upton, professional lighting designer from New York City.
- Chris Clavelli, professional actor, director, and playwright from New York City and Florida Rep.
- The Sacred Heart Archive, professional company from Arizona.

OFF-CAMPUS STUDY

Cornell’s One Course At A Time curriculum allows courses to travel off-campus for an entire block. Courses are regularly held in New York City where students attend a wide variety of theatre productions—ranging from Broadway to small experimental shows—and to Chicago where students stay at the college’s McLennan Center. Options for Chicago experiences include a block-long course where students see 20 plays in 20 days and meet with theatre professionals from around the city to discuss their careers, as well as courses that include shorter, week-long trips for festivals or museum visits.

CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

BFA IN MUSICAL THEATRE

Cornell’s BFA program guides students to immerse themselves in all aspects of musical theatre through intensive production-focused courses covering singing, acting, dance, private voice study, music theory, and theatrical history and literature. The program

Faculty Bios & Courses

SCOTT OLINGER

Professor of Theatre

Teaches courses in scenic, lighting, and projection design. His work has been seen at Burning Coal Theatre, Riverside Theatre, Pennsylvania Center Stage, Penn State Altoona, Theatre Cedar Rapids, Cedar Rapids Opera Theatre, Juniata College, and on DirecTV’s Nick and Artie Show/The Dan Patrick Show. M.F.A., design, Penn State University.

CAROLINE PRICE

Assistant Professor of Theatre

Teaches courses in basic and advanced acting such as Shakespeare in Performance, Auditioning, and Career Management. She has extensive professional experience as an actor and joined the faculty in 2016 after serving as assistant professor of performance at Jacksonville State University in Jacksonville, Alabama. M.F.A., acting, Wayne State University.

JANEVE WEST

Associate Professor of Theatre

Teaches courses in theatre history, devised theatre, and directing. She spent three years as a director and actor for the Omaha Theatre Company, and has directed a variety of world premieres, devised pieces, and fully scripted productions for The Llano Estacado Institute for the Performing Arts, Theatre Cedar Rapids, and at multiple other venues. M.F.A., theatre with a dual emphasis in directing and acting, Texas Tech University.



culminates in the student's capstone performance in front of professional casting agents and directors in Chicago.

DANCE MINOR

In 2016 the department added an artist-in-residence in dance and movement who, in addition to teaching courses, directs and choreographs productions.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

All theatre majors complete a capstone experience, which may take the form of an advanced project, a production assignment, an internship, or some other substantial endeavor taking place on or off campus. Recent examples include: a student working as the generative artist, guiding collaborator, and director to write and produce a community-based devised theatre production; a student directing a full-length production; and a student writing a full-length production that was chosen by a local theatre as part of an Underground New Play Fest.

FACILITIES

Kimmel Theatre boasts a 265-seat auditorium and the most current technology in theatre production. Key features include a full rigging system, LED and automated lighting, color-mixing scrollers, LCD projection, and a state-of-the-art sound system with wireless body mics. The department is housed in the adjacent Armstrong Hall, which includes a black-box performance space along with modern classrooms and spacious scene and costume shops.

PRODUCTIONS

MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS

Each year the department stages three to four main productions. Students tackle a broad range of performances from classics and musicals to contemporary and new works. Students are involved in every stage of the process, from directing and acting to stage managing, costume creating, and set construction.

STUDENT PRODUCTIONS

The department sponsors student-directed productions and an occasional special project, such as a staged reading. The Student Theatre Council offers several projects each year including Play-In-A-Day, The New Play Festival, and Rock The Block. It also sponsors two improv groups.

THEATRE AWARDS

Theatre and dance awards are available for up to \$5,000. After completing the fine arts scholarship application, students need to complete an audition (actors and dancers) or interview (technicians, directors, and playwrights) by March 1. On-campus

appointments must be scheduled two weeks in advance.

INTERNSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS

Students are strongly encouraged to pursue internships. The department's relationships with professional theatre companies around the country allow students to not only gain experience, but also accumulate working hours toward membership in the Actors' Equity Association.

Recent internship locations include:

- First Stage Theatre, Tyson's Corner, Virginia.
- Glimmerglass Festival, New York City, New York.
- New London Barn Playhouse, New Hampshire.
- Touchstone Theatre, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.
- Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival, Cleveland, Ohio.
- Puppet Kitchen, New York City, New York.
- Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Creede Repertory Theatre, Creede, Colorado.

AFTER CORNELL

ALUMNI CAREERS

Technical assistant, BML-Blackbird, Secaucus, New Jersey (Class of 2018)

Technician, The Neo-Futurists, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2017)

Stage management apprentice, Serenbe Playhouse, Palmetto, Georgia (Class of 2017)

Patron services associate, Creede Repertory Theatre, Creede, Colorado (Class of 2016)

Operations manager, Orchestra Iowa, Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Class of 2015)

Actor and director, Missoula Children's Theatre, Missoula, Montana (Class of 2014)

Technical director, Westford Academy Theater Arts, Boston, Massachusetts (Class of 2014)

Audience services manager, Windy City Playhouse, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2014)

Lighting and controls project manager, BMI Supply, Queensbury, New York (Class of 2014)

Marketing associate, Victory Gardens Theatre, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2013)

Light-board programmer, Broadway/TV, New York City, New York (Class of 2012)

GRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED

M.F.A., design, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa (Class of 2014)

M.F.A., acting, Case Western Reserve University-Cleveland Playhouse, Ohio (Class of 2013)

M.F.A., costume design, University of Cincinnati-CCM, Cincinnati, Ohio (Class of 2011)

JENNY NUTTING KELCHEN

*Costume Shop Supervisor
and Lecturer in Theatre*

Teaches costume design, stage makeup, and costume construction. She has performed costume work for The University of Iowa, Old Creamery Theatre, Coe College, Grinnell College, and Riverside Theatre. M.F.A., costume design, University of Iowa.

ALVON REED

Artist-in-Residence

Teaches classes in dance and movement-based acting, as well as Cornell's new performance ensemble. Reed has extensive professional dance experience and was an Alistair Fellowship Recipient at The Ailey School, the official school of the world renowned Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre, located in midtown Manhattan. M.F.A., dance with emphasis in choreography, University of Iowa.

DON SCHNEIDER

*Technical Director and
Lecturer in Theatre*

Teaches courses in stagecraft and sound design. M.F.A., theatre technology, University of Wisconsin-Madison.