

Bachelor of Arts Degree in ***THEATRE*** ***STUDIES***



DEGREE PROGRAM

The Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre Studies allows students to pair a traditional liberal arts education with a major emphasis in theatre. With a comprehensive curriculum examining all aspects of theatre, students receive a thorough grounding in theatre history, theory, and process. The mission of the Theatre Studies program is to give students an opportunity for studying all aspects of theatre and its relationship to other professional fields.

Kent State's School of Theatre and Dance offers comprehensive programs in theatre, leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Arts, Master of Fine Arts, and Master of Arts. The breadth of the program is suggested by its course offerings, which cover the areas of acting, directing, musical theatre, theatre history, criticism, script analysis, playwriting, technical production, scenery, lighting, costume design, make-up, and theatre management.

THEATRE CAREERS

Students who complete the Theatre Studies program may pursue careers in secondary education; go on to graduate study in theatre performance, design, management, or scholarship; or use their skills in a wide variety of complementary fields. This program serves students who seek a wider range of possibilities to fulfill individual creative goals, whether as theatre artists, scholars, educators, or contributors in related fields. Theatre Studies prepares students to apply their knowledge and skills to 21st-century career choices and in the process enrich their own lives in their chosen communities.

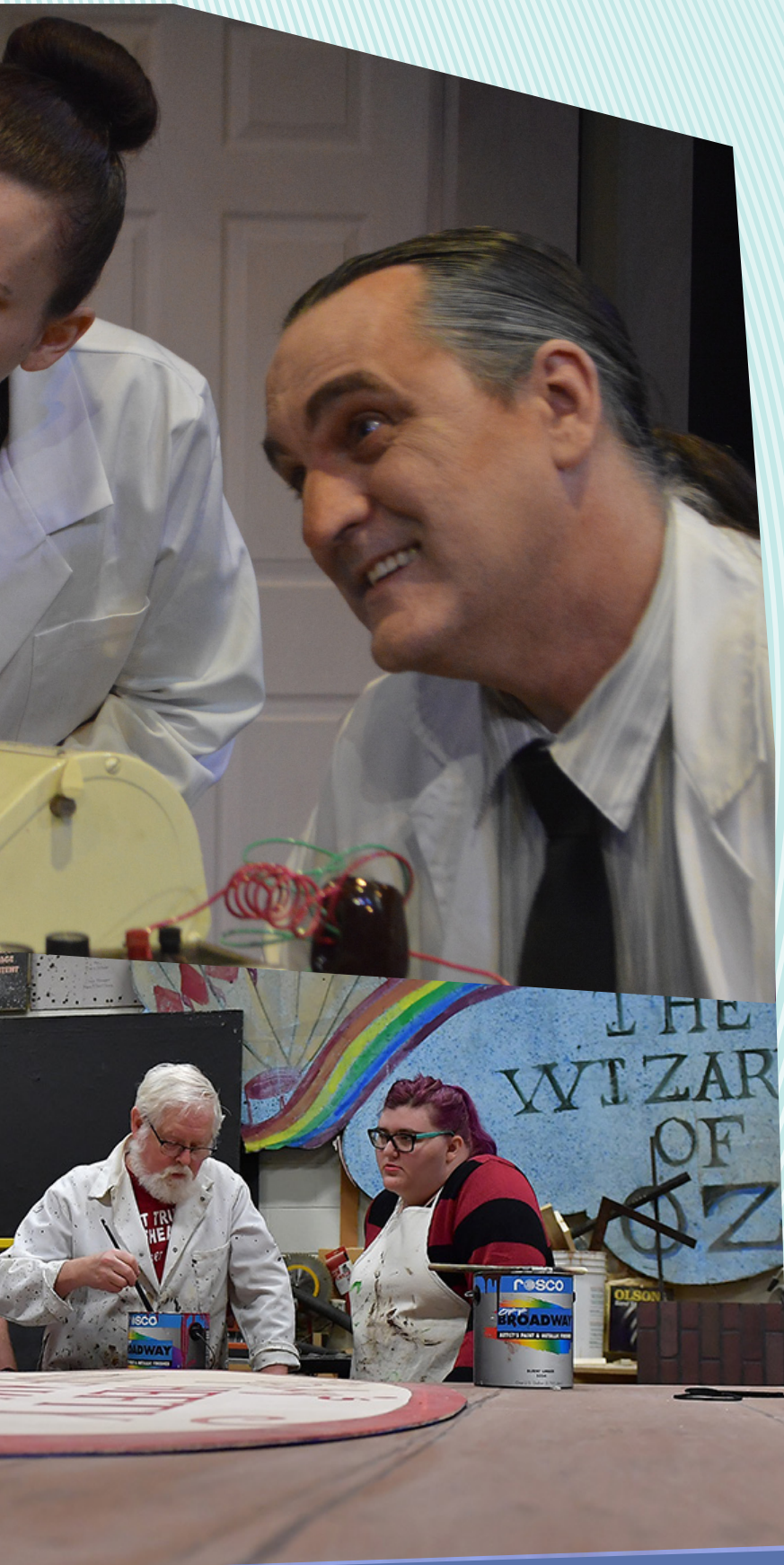
ACADEMIC SEASON

The Kent State Trumbull Theatre produces a full season of exciting shows during the academic year, generating rave reviews from both audiences and critics. Auditions are open to all, students and community artists alike. With three main-stage productions and the possibility of student-produced work as well, there are many opportunities to gain valuable performance and technical experience.

For more information about current shows, visit us at <http://www.kent.edu/trumbull/theatre>.



The theatre is local
students are offered
encourage attendance



SUMMER STOCK

In addition to the academic season (September-May), the theatre produces additional shows in the Summer Stock program (May-August), which includes an active youth theatre component. The program typically includes workshops for young artists (ages 8-15) that explore numerous techniques to unleash their creativity and polish their skills for their next show or audition! A typical Summer Stock season features a traveling troupe children's show, a featured performance by children, and a major musical production.

STUDY ABROAD

The Trumbull Theatre department offers a number of opportunities to study overseas. Professor Eric Kildow has created the exciting "Theatre and Society in the Czech Republic" program, examining the pivotal role theatre played in the transition from communism to democracy, all while studying in a beautiful city in the heart of Europe. Other faculty members offer courses in Florence, and additional opportunities are always being explored.

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ed free or reduced admission to
ance at all productions.



10 WAYS BEING A THEATRE MAJOR

by Tom Vander Well

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I have a confession to make. I was a theatre major in college (yes, complete with the snooty but appropriate “re” spelling). I’ll wait for you to stop snickering. Judson University (it was Judson College when I attended), the small liberal arts college outside of Chicago labeled the major course of studies as “Communication Arts” which is what I tend to put on resumes and bios because I realize that “theatre major” tends to elicit thoughts such as “Do you want fries with that?”

When I chose my major, I had no pipe dreams about becoming a professional actor. I did it because more than one wise adult had advised me that my actual major in college would have less impact on my eventual job search than having the actual degree. “Study what you love” I was told, “not what you think will get you a job.” I listened for once and chose theatre because I’d done it all through my secondary education, I had relative success doing it, and because I simply loved being a part of it. Fortunately, my parents gave me absolutely no grief about my choice (unlike most of my fellow majors. Thanks mom & dad!)

Fast forward 25 years and, like many people, I am nowhere near the waypoint on life’s road I envisioned I’d be back in college. Almost 20 years as a business consultant and now a business owner with a modestly successful track record in my business and blogging, I realize how much being a theatre major set me on the road towards success. Here are 10 ways that being a theatre major helped me succeed:

Improvisation

The great thing about the stage is that when it’s live and you’re up in front of that audience anything can, and does, happen. Dropped lines, missed entrances, or malfunctioning props require you to improvise while maintaining your cool. Theatre taught me how to focus, think quickly and make do while giving the impression that you’ve got it all under control. It’s served me well when clients, airlines, coworkers, or technology wreak unexpected havoc at the worst possible moment.

Project Management

A stage production is basically a business project. You have teams of people making up one team working to successfully accomplish a task on time, on a budget in such a way that you earn the applause and an occasional standing ovation. Being taught to stand at the helm of a theatrical production was a project management practicum.



OR PREPARED ME FOR SUCCESS



Working with a Limited Budget

Everybody who has worked on stage knows that it's not the road to fortune. Most plays (especially small college shows) are produced on a shoestring budget. This forces you to be imaginative, do more with less and find creative ways to get the results you want without spending money. Ask any corporate manager and they'll tell you that this pretty much describes their job. Mine too.

Dealing with Very Different Human Beings

The theatrical community is a mash-up of interesting characters. It always has been. From fringe to freakish to frappuccino sipping socialites and everything in between, you're going to encounter the most amazing and stimulating cross-section of humanity when you work in theatre. In my business career, I have the unique and challenging task of walking in the CEO's office in the morning to present our findings in an executive summary presentation and to receive a high-level grilling. I will then spend the afternoon presenting the same data to overworked, underpaid, cynical front-line employees and get a very different grilling. Theatre taught me how to appreciate, understand and effectively communicate with a widely diverse group of human beings.



Understanding the Human Condition

Most people have the mistaken impression that acting is all about pretending and being "fake" in front of others. What I learned as a theatre major was those good actors learn the human condition intimately through observation and painfully detailed introspection. The better you understand that human being you are portraying from the inside out, the better and more authentic your performance is going to be. In my business I am constantly using the same general methods to understand my clients, their customers as well as myself and my co-workers. I believe that having a better understanding of myself and others has ultimately made me a better (though far from perfect) employee, consultant, employer, and ultimately a friend. I didn't learn methods of observing and understanding others in Macro Econ, I learned it in Acting I & Acting II.

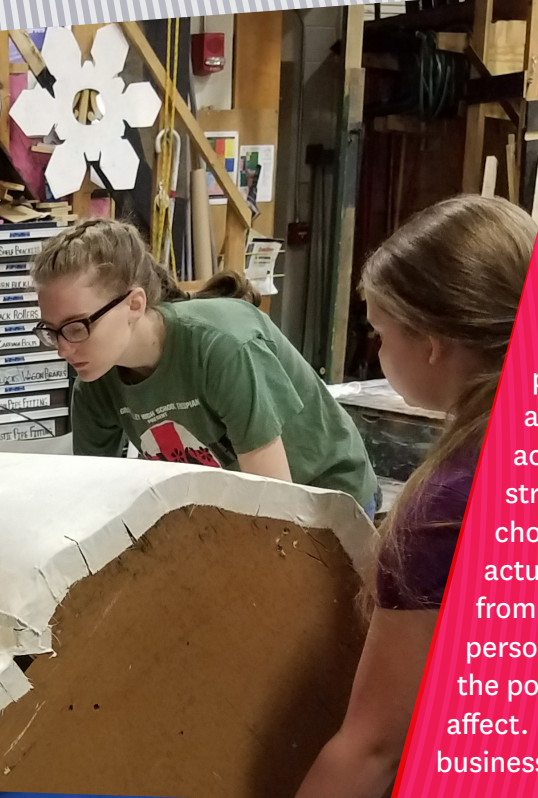
Doing Whatever Needs to Be Done

When you're a theatre major at a small liberal arts college there is little room for specializing within your field. You have to learn to do it all. Light design, sound engineering, acting, directing, producing, marketing, PR, set design, set construction, ticket sales, budgeting, customer service, ushering, make-up, and costuming are all things I had to do as part of my college career. Within our merry band of theatre majors, we all had to learn every piece of a production because at some point we would be required to do what needed to be done. I learned that I can capably do just about anything that I need to do. I may not love it and I may not be gifted or excellent at it, but give me a task and I'll figure it out. I now work for a small consulting firm that requires me to do a wide range of tasks. The experience, can-do attitude and indomitable spirit I learned in the theatre have been essential to success.

Hard work

I remember creating a tree for one of our college shows. We had no idea how we were going to do it, but we made an amazing life-like tree that emerged from the stage and looked as if it disappeared into the ceiling above the theatre. My team mates and I cut out each and every leaf and individually hot-glued them to the branches of the tree. Thousands upon thousands of them glued on while standing precariously on a rickety ladder high enough above the stage that it would make an OSHA inspector soil his boxers. Sleepless nights, burnt fingers and a few brushes with tragedy were needed to get that tree done. But, we got it done. It was fabulous. And a few days later we tore it down, threw it out, and got ready for the next production. C'est la vie. In business I have periods of time with unbelievable workloads in which there are sleepless nights, seemingly endless days and tireless work on projects that will be presented and then will be over. The report will be archived and I'm onto the next project. C'est la vie. I learned all about that as a theatre major.





Making Difficult Choices

You've got four parts and twenty-four schoolmates who auditioned. Some of them are your best friends and fellow theatre majors. Do you choose the unexperienced jock because he's best for the part or the friend and fellow theatre major who you fear will never talk to you again if you don't cast him? My senior project was supposed to be performed outside in the amphitheater but the weather was cold, windy and miserable. Do I choose to stick with the plan because it's what my actors are comfortable with and it's what we've rehearsed and it will only stress out the cast and crew to change the venue at the last minute? Or, do I choose to think about the audience who will be more comfortable and might actually pay attention and appreciate the performance if they are inside away from the cold, the wind and possible rain? [I changed the venue]. Any business person will tell you that difficult decisions must sometimes be made. The higher the position the harder the decisions and the more people those decisions affect. Being a theatre major gave me a taste of what I would have to digest in my business career.



Presentation Skills

Okay, it's a no brainer but any corporate employee can tell you horror stories of having to endure long training sessions or corporate presentations by boring, unprepared, incompetent or just plain awful presenters. From what I've experienced, individuals who can stand up confidently in front of a group of people and capably, effectively communicate their message while even being motivating and a little entertaining are among the rarest individuals in the business world. Being a theatre major helped me be one of them.

Doing the Best You Can With What You've Got

Over the years I've told countless front line service reps that this is rule #1 of customer service. You do the best you can with what you've got to work with. I remember an Acting I class in college in which a pair of students got up to present a scene they'd prepared. They presented the scene on a bare stage with no lighting, make-up, costumes, props or set pieces. It was just two students acting out the script. It was one of those magic moments that happen with live theatre. The rest of the class was transfixed and pulled into the moment, reacting with surprising emotion to what they witnessed. You don't need Broadway theatrics to create a magical theatrical moment on stage. You don't even need a stage. The same is true of customer service. You don't always need the latest technology, the best system, or the greatest whiz-bang doo-dads. A capable CSR doing the best they can and serving a customer with courtesy, empathy, friendliness and a commitment to resolve can and does win customer satisfaction and loyalty.



Tom Vander Well graduated from Judson University with a degree in Speech/Theatre in 1988. He is currently partner and Vice-President of c Wenger group, a consulting firm specializing in customer satisfaction research and call-quality assessment (e.g. "your call may be monitored to ensure quality service") where Tom has worked for over 20 years. Tom has been "waiting for Guffman" for the over ten years and served as President of Union Street Players, the award-winning community theatre in Pella, Iowa for a decade. There he has been producer, director, actor and writer. He has also performed for Central College, the Pella Opera House, and the Pella Shakespeare Company. His play Ham Buns and Potato Salad was presented at the Missouri Playwrights Workshop at the University of Missouri and an April 2014 premiere in Pella has been followed with subsequent area productions.

KENT STATE TRUMBULL THEATRE

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www.kent.edu/trumbull/apply