Program Description

Degree Awarded: MFA Theatre (Directing)

The MFA in theatre with a concentration in directing is a program for students who demonstrate serious purpose, professional aspirations, theatrical daring and the desire to explore new work in collaborating with playwrights and in the devising and creation process. Respect for fellow artists and a desire to learn about how all the parts fit together are essential qualities in the successful candidate and the successful director.

Students are introduced to varied critical viewpoints from select artists and scholars. A hands-on, mentor-student approach is emphasized, with the intent of developing the skill, artistry and communication skills required to be an excellent professional director.

At a Glance

- College/School: Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts
- Location: Tempe campus

Degree Requirements

60 credit hours including the required applied project course (THP 693)

This is a three-year program culminating in an applied project. Practical directing and directing classes are approximately 50 percent of the coursework. Classes also include:

- acting: viewpoints and composition
- assistant directing for a professional or faculty director working on the main stage
• design collaboration
• directing the new play
• dramatic theory and criticism
• dramaturgy
• performance technology
• projects in community-based drama
• re-envisioning
• research methods
• solo performance
• theatre for social change
• theatre history and literature
• theatre organization and management

MFA directors will direct a new work every year. Major assignments may include:

• creating and directing an adaptation of an existing work
• directing a new play by a Master of Fine Arts playwright
• directing one applied project in the main-stage season
• guiding an ensemble in the devising process and directing the resulting devised piece

Directing faculty mentor all student projects. Academic and artistic progress is evaluated at the end of each semester by a faculty committee. Program continuation is contingent upon a successful review. A professional internship is required for each Master of Fine Arts director.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree in a related field from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum of a 3.00 cumulative GPA (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum of a 3.00 cumulative GPA (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. statement of purpose
4. current resume
5. written directorial approach to a play selected by the reviewing committee
6. three letters of reference from professionals familiar with the student's work
7. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information
An applicant whose native language is not English (regardless of current residency) must provide proof of English proficiency.

A personal interview is required. Interviews via phone or campus visit are available by appointment.

Admission to the directing, performance and performance design concentrations is cohort-based, and the program recruits every three years. The next round of applications will not be due until early 2020. Interested students should check back for updates.

Students should see the program website for application deadlines and admission terms.

Contact Information

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