



Theatre & Dance

Theatre and dance students critically reflect on a broad range of literature, theatrical forms, and techniques in order to promote an active engagement with the foundations of our culture and to promote character formation that reflects the faith and justice mission of Gonzaga University. The intended outcome of this study and reflection is to provide service to an audience and the broader community, to promote the search for social justice, and to prepare for a profession in the performing arts. Young artists hoping to apply disciplined training and thoughtful work in pursuit of these goals are encouraged to complete a major or minor in Theatre Arts or a minor in Dance at Gonzaga.

THE PROGRAM

The Theatre and Dance Department at Gonzaga University is committed to training and developing artists who confront the important issues of our lives through their engagement with the art forms of theatre and dance. Gonzaga provides excellent training for students in theatre performance, technical theatre, and dance. The **major in Theatre Arts** (45-47 credits) offers courses in all aspects of theatre production: acting, directing, dance, theatre history, technical theatre, stagecraft, and scene, costume, and lighting design. It also gives students the ability to specialize with either a performance or technical theatre endorsement. The **Theatre Arts minor** also offers a far-reaching curriculum, but requires fewer courses and has only one required course at the 300-level or higher. The **Dance minor** enables students to study a variety of dance and movement styles, as well as dance history, choreography, and dance instruction. The Dance minor pairs with many different types of majors to create training towards a career in multiple fields.

Theatre and Dance students develop an attitude of professionalism and leadership through their classroom training and through interaction with local theatre professionals.

Internships are encouraged with local theatre and film companies. Guest artists have included professional actors, dance professionals, fight choreographers, directors of training institutes in London and New York City, casting directors, and Hollywood screenwriters. To promote the combination of service and theatre, main-stage productions have included performances for high school and elementary schools of underserved areas, and students in the program have taught theatre and dance for local schools. The program hosts **professional workshops** in acting, dance, and technical theatre.

PERFORMANCES

The season includes two **main-stage theatrical productions**, one dance concert, and the student-directed Second Stage reader's theatre series.

The Theatre and Dance program stages a wide range of productions from modern scripts (*You Can't Take It with You*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Three Musketeers*) to classical plays (*Romeo and Juliet*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Life is a Dream*), from children's plays (*The Crane Wife*) to musicals (*A Chorus Line*, *Urinetown*, *Chicago*).

The Department seeks to produce works that **connect with and serve audiences from both the Gonzaga and Spokane communities**.

- One of our own professors, for example, translated the 17th century Spanish play, *The Force of Habit*, into English for a recent GU theatre production. The performances included a series of post-show talks with invited speakers from across the University.
- GU theatre students presented a production of *A Streetcar Named Desire* in celebration of great American playwright Tennessee Williams's 100th birthday.
- Another recent GU production, *Weaving Our Sisters' Voices*, formed a collaboration of Gonzaga faculty across multiple disciplines.
- Linda Schearing, Professor of Hebrew Scriptures and chair of Gonzaga's Religious Studies Department, wrote the play. Robert Spittal, Associate Professor of Music, composed original music for it. Suzanne Ostersmith, Director of GU's Dance program, directed and choreographed the play. This production was performed as a fundraiser for Our Place Community Ministries, a non-profit agency that serves the West Central neighborhood of Spokane with much needed food, clothing, and other services.

Dance performances include the Annual Spring Dance Concert, Student Choreography Concert, presentations at the American College Dance Festival, musicals, and various student-led performances.

In addition, **Gonzaga University Theatre Sports (GUTS)**, a student improv comedy club, practices twice a week and performs once a month. Boundless Dance Club, another student club, offers numerous dance classes throughout the year.

FACILITIES

Gonzaga's Magnuson Theatre is a 218-seat modified thrust stage. Magnuson's stage allows for close interaction between performer and audience. Students also acquire experience in the design and creation of scenery, lights, sound, and costumes in Magnuson's shops. Since students fill all crew positions for shows and design many of the productions, majors and non-majors alike have numerous opportunities to apply their skills.

The Theatre/Dance Studios located on the west end of campus are the home of acting, directing, dance, and design classrooms. The acting studio is a free space designed for explorations in scene study. The dance studio is fully equipped for all classes from ballet to hip hop with a sprung floor, mirrors, barres, and a sound system.

OUTCOMES

Our graduates go on to a variety of fields:

- Erin (2014) is a directing intern with the Playwrights' Forum Festival at the Spokane Civic Theatre.
- Anthony (2014) is attending the New York Film Academy in Los Angeles

and completing an M.F.A. in Film Directing.

- Madeline (2013) is a public relations intern for the Seattle Children's Theatre.
- Brittany (2013) is pursuing a master's degree to teach English as a Second Language.
- Katie (2011) works at Village Theatre in Issaquah, WA.
- Geoff (2011) is earning an M.A. in acting from the International Acting School East-15 in London. Geoff also studied during his junior year at the London Dramatic Academy.
- Rachael (2009) received her M.A. in Theatre and Dance with a concentration in Dance History and Criticism from the University of New Mexico.
- Ellen (2009) received her M.F.A. with a concentration in Stage Management from Columbia University in 2013. Ellen is the stage manager for Shen Wei Dance Arts and will return for her 3rd year at Music@Menlo (CA) as Production Manager of the Chamber Music Festival.
- Katie (2009) earned an M.F.A. in 2012 in lighting design at University of California, Irvine.
- John (2008) completed an M.F.A. in 2011 from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in acting. John is an equity actor, and in 2012, he starred in Red by John Logan at Berkeley (CA) Repertory Theatre.
- Jeff (2008) booked his first role in the independent feature film Norman. He now lives in LA and is a member of SAG. He has guest-starred on Friday Night Lights and Modern Family.

THE PEOPLE

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