

SOA Theatre Department History & Overview

When the Charleston County School of the Arts began in 1995 there were only two grades (6th & 7th). Each year a new grade was added resulting in a school that now spans 6th through 12th grade. The department has been part of this evolution becoming one of the most unique and productive theatre programs to be found for grades six through twelve in the Southeastern USA.

As a program centering on the **Actor and Story**, the department aims to facilitate a level of competency that allows students to utilize the knowledge and skills acquired through SOA Theatre Major studies for life's challenges.

For in the final analysis, whatever new technologies, experiments, trends, designs, personalities or ideas that may come to the Theatre World, everything ultimately depends on the story being told about the human condition. As Shakespeare says:

"to hold, as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure" -Hamlet. III.2.

Each grade level performs every nine weeks resulting in over 100 performances a year in a wide variety of theatrical styles not looked at in traditional programs such as: student created productions, musicals, improv shows, full length plays, edutainment outreaches, Shakespeare, comedies, clowning, dramas, physical theatre, experimental work, ensemble created pieces, original plays, scene and monologue showings, children's theatre and one-person shows.

We strive to give every student many opportunities to grow their potential. To use a sports phrase, we work to develop a deep bench.

In addition, we strive to be efficiently productive with energy, time, monetary investment and health. These guidelines decide production choice: skill development, potential, scheduling, skill levels, tech demands, faculty experience, logistics, diversity of styles/themes and burnout prevention. The year is seen as a demanding marathon where all can finish strong.

This makes SOA Theatre a very busy program that has a focused environment on learning by doing format while our students work collaboratively. Our students are sought after because they can think, reason, create and adapt to life's challenges.

We want students to have not hopes of "stardom" as they leave the program but usable skills, resulting from experiences with elevated standards in creativity, intellect, work ethic and collaboration.

SOA Theatre in Universities

SOA Theatre Majors have been accepted and/or pursued further studies at the following Colleges, Universities, Academies and Theatre Training Programs:

American Academy of Dramatic Arts, American Musical and Dramatic Academy (AMDA), American University, Bard College, Boston University, Brigham Young University, Brevard College, California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), Carnegie Mellon University, Catawba College Chicago Art Institute, Columbia College Chicago, Columbia University (New York City), DePaul University, Drexel University, Elon University, Emory University, Emerson College, Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech), High Point University, Howard University, Illinois State University, Indiana University, Loyola University New Orleans, Marymount Manhattan University, Morehouse College, New York University (NYU), North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA), NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Occidental College, Oglethorpe University, Oklahoma City University, Pace University, Penn State (Pennsylvania State University), Princeton University, Roosevelt University, Rutgers University, Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), Spelman College, SUNY New Paltz, The New School, Tulane University, University of Colorado Boulder, University of Georgia, University of Illinois, University of Montevallo, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of Pennsylvania (UPenn), University of Pittsburgh, University of San Francisco, University of Southern California (USC), University of Virginia, University of Washington, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Vassar College, Washington and Lee University, Wesleyan University, William & Mary along with full rides and partial scholarships to such South Carolina Institutions as Citadel, Clemson Honors, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston Honors, Columbia College, Converse College, Furman, Lander, MUSC (Medical University of South Carolina), Newberry, South Carolina Honors, South Carolina State, USC Aiken, USC Beaufort, USC Upstate, Winthrop and Wofford.

Faculty Bios

Audrey Black

Audrey Black holds her Bachelor's of Art in Theatre Performance and Master's of Art in Teaching for Performing Arts Education from the College of Charleston. An Atlanta native, Audrey has been seen on stages across Charleston as an actor and stage manager for the last five years. Her passion for fostering the next generation of artists has led her to become an educator. She completed her clinical internship at School of the Arts, and looks forward to learning and growing alongside the Theatre majors this year!

Shannon Horn

Originally from the Midwest, Shannon has been a passionate arts educator and advocate for 25+ years. She has a Master of Arts in Theatre Production and her Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance and Education. During her tenure as an educator, she has been fortunate to direct over 100 productions. Some of her favorite SOA shows include: *The Elephant's Graveyard*, *The Book of Everything*, *Alice by Heart*, *The Insanity of Mary Girard*, *Peter & the Starcatcher*, *The Awesome 80s Prom* and so many more! She serves on the national Advocacy Leadership Network board and works with politicians and lawmakers to advocate for arts education. Locally she is on the Board of Directors for the Footlight Players and VP of the Palmetto Dramatic Association. Shannon has been recognized as the SCTA *Outstanding Theatre Educator*, EdTA's *Volunteer of the Year*, SCSTA's *Communication Arts Teacher of the Year*, and as a SCISA *Master Teacher*. Affiliations: SCTA, EdTA, SC Thespians, PDA, SETC & NEA.

George Younts

George has credits as a director, designer, producer, playwright, actor, singer and technician. He was at the BAK Middle School of the Arts in West Palm Beach, FL before SOA and is an *Outstanding Theatre Educator* recipient. An Illinois Wesleyan graduate, he has run summer theatre camps, edutainment outreaches, prison workshops and improv troupes, festivals and competitions. Credits include: *Hamlet*, *The 39 Steps*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Macbeth*, *Grease*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Dracula* and comedic revues. Annually he tours in a one-man *Christmas Carol*, teaches stage tech and is an award-winning magician. Affiliations: AEA, NEA, SCTA, SETC, SC Thespians & IBM.