

Jess Shoemaker

Director | Playwright | Educator

712-899-6725

jess.m.shoemaker@gmail.com

www.yesandperhapsastory.com

EDUCATION

The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Theatre and Dance | 2020

- MFA, Directing

Webster University, Conservatory of Theatre Arts | 2010

- BFA, Acting and Minor, English Literature
- Graduated Magna Cum Laude with Departmental Honors

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Webster University

Adjunct Professor, English Department

2023

Global Dramatic Literature (1 semester)

A literature course in which undergraduate students studied significant works of dramatic literature that spanned an array of cultures and time periods, from ancient Greece to 1870s Ghana to contemporary North Korea. Through class discussions, interactive learning, and written essays, students analyzed and interpreted scripts through literary and performance lenses.

Adjunct Professor, English Department

2022 – 2023

Playwriting Workshop (3 semesters)

A hands-on workshop course for undergraduate students, focusing on the fundamentals of writing for the theatre, including structure, dramatic tension, character development, and active dialogue. Over the course of the semester, students practiced specific skills through exercises and writing drills, responded to one another's work, and developed their own one act plays.

Adjunct Professor, Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts

2022 – 2023

Text Analysis (1 semester)

A class for first year acting and directing students focused on the basics of literary analysis for practical application in a production setting. Working from a variety of scripts, students learned how to use the text to research and ideate. They analyzed and built characters, explored and concretized the given circumstances, and identified beats and objectives. Assignments were divided between traditional literary analysis and exercises designed to apply learned skills in a practical setting.

Saint Louis University

Adjunct Professor, Prison Education Program

2023

Introduction to Theater (1 semester)

A workshop course for incarcerated men working towards an Associate of Arts degree, this class served as a general introduction to theater and the creative process of acting. Students watched, read, and discussed plays; participated in ensemble building and creative drama exercises; kept journals, and learned and practiced the fundamentals of acting. Designed with the mission of the program in mind, this course sought to "foster human connection, an appreciation for the arts, and [offer] resources for personal growth."

The University of Texas at Austin

Assistant Instructor, Department of Theatre and Dance

2019 – 2020

Fundamentals of Acting (3 semesters)

I developed and taught the curriculum for this course independently, but under the general supervision of the department. This course was geared towards non-majors with a focus on the basics of acting, including the development of skills like careful listening, detailed observation, the beginnings of breath and movement work, creative play and ensemble building – as well as creative practice through improvisation, monologue and scene work.

The University of Texas at Austin (cont.)

Teaching Assistant to KJ Sanchez, School of Undergraduate Studies Spectacle as a Political Tool (2 semesters)	2018 – 2019
Teaching Assistant to Kirk Lynn, School of Undergraduate Studies The Performance of Prayer (2 semesters)	2017- 2018
Guest Lecturer, Department of Theater and Dance <ul style="list-style-type: none">Introduction to Theatre: "The Crucible and Realism"Performance as Public Practice: "Emotional Safety and the Rehearsal Process"Performance as Public Practice: "12 Ophelias: Directing and Acting Nonrealism"Introduction to Theatre: "The Director's Practice"	2017 – 2019

UNIVERSITY SERVICE

Webster University

Surfacing New Works Festival – Faculty Advisor and Producer	2023
---	------

The University of Texas at Austin

Cohen New Works Festival – Head of Season Selection Committee	2018 - 2019
Studio Season – Season Selection Committee Member	2017 - 2018

PROFESSIONAL TEACHING ARTIST PRACTICE

Octopus Theatricals

Lobby Display Consultant and Content Creator All the Devils are Here Collaborated with Patrick Page and producing team on developing a lobby display for <i>All the Devils are Here</i> .	2023
---	------

Curriculum Consultant and Content Creator Hadestown Education Initiative Created lesson plans about theater-making and mythology for classroom teachers in middle and high schools across the country to support and enrich their students' experience attending <i>Hadestown</i> .	2021 - 2022
---	-------------

Great River Shakespeare Festival

Co-Program Director, Lead Teacher Apprentice Actor Training Program Served as program director and lead teacher for the GRSF Apprentice Acting Program, a summer internship program designed to teach classical acting skills to actors at the BA, BFA or MFA level. As part of my tenure, I completely redesigned the curriculum, and collaborated on a massive overhaul of the program structure and recruitment process.	2015 - 2020
---	-------------

Teaching Artist Shakespeare in the Schools Residency Directed and taught as part of a months-long school residency. Developed curriculum to deepen students' relationship to classical text within the context of an English classroom and led an ensemble of high school students in a full-length production, teaching the basics of acting, including a classical acting skillset and rehearsal etiquette.	2015 – 2017
---	-------------

Teaching Artist Shakespeare for Young Actors Taught as part of a summer intensive for high school students interested in Shakespeare, focusing on teaching the basics of scansion and rhetoric.	2015 – 2016
---	-------------

Shakespeare Festival St. Louis

Teaching Artist and Performer Educational Tour Performed in short plays designed specifically for area schools and facilitated anti-bullying workshops for K-12 audiences.	2011
--	------

Grandstreet Theatre

Teaching Artist

2011

Summer Theater School

Developed and implemented curriculum for directing and acting classes at the high school level, aimed at training fundamental skills in young theatre-makers.

LAMB Theater

Teaching Artist

2008

LAMB Ewe-niversity

Developed and implemented curriculum for creative drama and improvisation, teaching K-12 students with a focus on engaging in basic collaboration and improvisation. Worked with students classified at risk of dropping out of high school to offer initial arts exposure opportunities.

PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE: DIRECTING

1877		2023
by <i>Colin McLaughlin*</i>	Bread and Roses Missouri – St. Louis, MO	
Maddi's Fridge		2023
by <i>Anne Negri</i>	Metro Theatre Company – St. Louis, MO	
Sueño		2022
by <i>José Rivera</i>	Webster University – St. Louis, MO	
Seedfolks		2022
by <i>Paul Fleischman</i>	Metro Theatre Company – St. Louis, MO	
HOMES		2022
by <i>Delaney Piggins*</i>	Staged Reading, Confluence Writers Project – St. Louis, MO	
Little Women		2021
by <i>Kate Hamill</i>	Grandstreet Theatre – Helena, MT	
Romeo & Juliet		2021
by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN	
Tjjetir		2020
by <i>I.B. Hopkins</i>	UT New Theatre – Austin, TX	
The Battlefields of Clara Barton		2019
by <i>Suzan Zeder and Jenn Hartmann Luck*</i>	Workshop and Staged Reading – Austin, TX	
12 Ophelias		2019
by <i>Caridad Svich</i>	University of Texas – Austin, TX	
Flora Circular		2019
by <i>Thom May*</i>	UT New Theatre – Austin, TX	
(& Medea)		2018
by <i>Jess Shoemaker</i>	University of Texas – Austin, TX	
Venus in Fur		2018
by <i>David Ives</i>	Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN	
Loverboy		2018
by <i>Drew Paryzer*</i>	UT New Theatre – Austin, TX	
Big Iron Fires		2018
by <i>Greg Romero*</i>	Frontera Fest, Best of Fest – Austin, TX	
Dye House		2017
by <i>Minghao Tu*</i>	Workshop and Staged Reading – Austin, TX	
The Crucible†		2017
by <i>Arthur Miller</i>	University of Texas – Austin, TX	
One Minute Play Festival		2017
curated by <i>Dominic D'Andrea*</i>	Scriptworks and Salvage Vanguard Theatre – Austin, TX	
50 Shades of Shakespeare		2017
adaptation by <i>Jess Shoemaker</i>	LA New Court Theatre, Hollywood Fringe – Los Angeles, CA	
The Winter's Tale – Shakespeare in the Schools		2016
by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN	

* New work collaboration

† Co-directed with Robert Ramirez

A Midsummer Night's Dream by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	2016 Grandstreet Theatre – Helena, MT
A Midsummer Night's Dream – Shakespeare in the Schools by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	2015 Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN

PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE: PLAYWRITING

(& Medea) directed by <i>Jamie McKittrick</i>	2023 Staged Reading, Muhlenberg College – Allentown, PA
Looking for Ithaca directed by <i>Gaby Rodriguez</i>	2023 Asolo Repertory Theatre – Sarasota, FL
The Book of Orpah directed by <i>Andrea Hart</i>	2020 Staged Reading, UT New Theatre – Austin, TX
(& Medea) directed by <i>Jess Shoemaker</i>	2018 Studio Production, University of Texas at Austin – Austin, TX
Jason (& Medea) directed by <i>Beth Lopes</i>	2015 Hollywood Fringe, LA New Court Theatre – Los Angeles, CA
Jason (& Medea) directed by <i>Amy Hayes</i>	2015 Wisdom Tooth Theatre Project – Indianapolis, IN
50 Shades of Shakespeare directed by <i>Matt Wills</i>	2014 (re)discover theatre – Chicago, IL
Jason (& Medea) directed by <i>Janet Howe</i>	2013 (re)discover theater – Chicago, IL
Flesh & Bone devising process led by <i>Jess Shoemaker</i>	2012 (re)discover theater, St. Louis Fringe – St. Louis, MO

PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE: ASSISTANT DIRECTION

The Emporium Assistant to <i>Kirk Lynn and Christian Parker</i> by <i>Thornton Wilder</i> , adaptation by <i>Kirk Lynn</i>	2019 Workshop and Staged Reading, UT Austin – Austin, TX
You Are Here Assistant to <i>KJ Sanchez</i> by <i>KJ Sanchez</i>	2019 Workshop Production, Guthrie Theatre – Minneapolis, MN
The Monster Builder Assistant to <i>Art Manke</i> by <i>Amy Freed</i>	2017 SDCF Observer - South Coast Repertory Theatre – Santa Ana, CA
The Crucible Assistant to <i>Paul Mason Barnes</i> by <i>Arthur Miller</i>	2016 The Arkansas Repertory Theatre – Little Rock, AR
As You Like It Assistant to <i>Doug Scholz-Carlson</i> by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	2016 Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN
Macbeth Assistant to <i>Paul Mason Barnes</i> by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	2015 Chesapeake Shakespeare Company – Baltimore, MD
King John Assistant to <i>Rick Barbour</i> by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	2015 Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN
Much Ado About Nothing Assistant to <i>Jim Edmonson</i> by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	2015 Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN
Troilus & Cressida Assistant to <i>Rick Barbour</i> by <i>William Shakespeare</i>	2014 Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN

PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE: TEXT, DIALECT & INTIMACY COACHING

Dialect Coach, UT New Theatre

Tjipetir by *I.B. Hopkins*

2019

directed by *Jess Shoemaker*

University of Texas at Austin – Austin, TX

Sow and Suckling by *Dan Caffrey*

directed by *Liz Fisher*

Intimacy Coach, The Women of _____ (a song not song)

2019

by *I-Chia Chiu*

University of Texas at Austin – Austin, TX

directed by *kt shorb*

Text Consultant, Merchant of Venice

2018

by *William Shakespeare*

University of Texas at Austin – Austin, TX

directed by *Adam Sussman*

Dialect Coach, Shipwrecked!

2017

by *Donald Margulies*

Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN

directed by *Rick Barbour*

Text Coach, Comedy of Errors

2017

by *William Shakespeare*

Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN

directed by *Melissa Rain Anderson*

Text Coach, Macbeth

2015

by *William Shakespeare*

Chesapeake Shakespeare Company – Baltimore, MD

directed by *Paul Mason Barnes*

Text Coach, King John

2015

by *William Shakespeare*

Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN

directed by *Melissa Rain Anderson*

Text Coach, Much Ado About Nothing

2015

by *William Shakespeare*

Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN

directed by *Jim Edmonson*

Text Coach, Troilus & Cressida

2014

by *William Shakespeare*

Great River Shakespeare Festival – Winona, MN

directed by *Rick Barbour*

Text Coach, Twelfth Night

2014

by *William Shakespeare*

The Framework – Chicago, IL

directed by *Dylan Roberts*

Text Coach, King Lear

2013

by *William Shakespeare*

The Framework – Chicago, IL

directed by *Juli Kleist-Mendez*

Text Coach, The Tradgedie of Hamlet

2012

by *William Shakespeare*, adaptation by *Jess Shoemaker*

(re)discover theatre – Chicago, IL

directed by *Matt Wills*

PRODUCTION EXPERIENCE: ACTING

The Hamlet Project – Rosencrantz/Guildenstern

adaptation by *Beth Lopes*

2014

under the direction of *Shannon Ferrara*

The Hamlet Project: Chicago – Chicago, IL

50 Shades of Shakespeare - Actor

by *William Shakespeare*, adaptation by *Jess Shoemaker*

2014

under the direction *Matt Wills*

(re)discover Theatre – Chicago, IL

Twelfth Night – Maria by <i>William Shakespeare</i> under the direction of <i>Dylan Roberts</i>	2014 The Framework Theatre – Chicago, IL
The Hamlet Project – Host/Bernardo/Osric adaptation by <i>Beth Lopes</i> under the direction of <i>Beth Lopes</i>	2013 The Hamlet Project: Chicago – Chicago, IL
As You Like It - Rosalind by <i>William Shakespeare</i> , adaptation by <i>Jess Shoemaker</i> under the direction of <i>Matt Wills</i>	2013 (re)discover theatre – Chicago, IL
King Lear – France/1st Servant by <i>William Shakespeare</i> under the direction of <i>Juli Kleist-Mendez</i>	2012 The Framework Theatre – Chicago, IL
Not I - The Mouth by <i>Samuel Beckett</i> under the direction of <i>Matt Wills</i>	2012 (re)discover theatre – Chicago, IL
Hamlet - Laertes by <i>William Shakespeare</i> , adaptation by <i>Jess Shoemaker</i> under the direction of <i>Matt Wills</i>	2012 (re)discover theatre – Chicago, IL
Into the Woods – Stepmother by <i>James Lapine</i> and <i>Stephen Sondheim</i> under the direction of <i>Marianne Adams</i>	2012 Grandstreet Theatre – Helena, MT
Shrew in a Few – Bianca adaptation by <i>Chris Limber</i> under the direction of <i>Chris Limber</i>	2011 Shakespeare Festival St. Louis – St. Louis, MO
A Christmas Carol – Nell Dilber adaptation by <i>Charles Jones</i> under the direction of <i>Lara Marsh</i>	2010, 2011 NTC Productions: East Coast Tour – Omaha, NE
Wisewrite Play Fest – Actor scripts by <i>elementary school students</i> in St. Louis region under the direction of <i>Mark Chaitin</i>	2010 Repertory Theater of St. Louis – St. Louis, MO
Cloud 9 – Edward/Betty by <i>Caryl Churchill</i> under the direction of <i>Jef Awada</i>	2010 Webster Conservatory – St. Louis, MO
The Winter’s Tale – Paulina by <i>William Shakespeare</i> Under the direction of <i>Tim Ocel</i>	2009 Webster Conservatory – St. Louis, MO
Hamlet – Horatio by <i>William Shakespeare</i> under the direction of <i>Rick Barbour</i>	2009 GRSF Apprentice Project – Winona, MN
Cabaret – Fraulein Kost by <i>John Kander, Fred Ebb, and Joe Masteroff</i> under the direction of <i>Kat Singleton</i>	2009 Webster Conservatory – St. Louis, MO
Stepping Out – Mrs. Fraser by <i>Richard Harris</i> under the direction of <i>Lara Teeter</i>	2008 Webster Conservatory – St. Louis, MO

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Muny

2023

Co-Head of Transportation (summer contract)

An outdoor summer theater with an 11,000 seat house, The Muny is located in St Louis, Missouri. Each summer, the theater stages seven large-scale musicals with some of Broadway's most notable directors, choreographers, designers and performers.

- Managed a team of 10+ drivers and 3 vans, responsible for transporting 50+ artists, 7 days per week
- Managed maintenance and oversaw rentals/returns for 30 bicycles, available to guest artists during their stay
- Overhauled all scheduling and communication processes within the department for a substantial increase in driver consistency and responsiveness
- Organized and maintained the office space, including maintaining inventory of all department supplies
- Reorganized and maintained data on multiple technological platforms
- Scheduled all appointments with IT department and worked with IT staff to resolve technology issues
- Hired and trained drivers, set employee expectations, managed conflicts and gave feedback as necessary
- Created monthly schedules and managed last-minute staffing changes for sick or injured drivers
- Managed travel paperwork and communication for hundreds of guest artists
- Coordinated with production and stage management as needed to support sick and injured artists, and delivery of personal and/or production materials
- Met the needs of an exceptionally demanding, and ever-changing production schedule

Nextions LLC

2020 – 2021

Project Manager and Research Specialist

2012 – 2015

A consulting firm catering to primarily Fortune 500 companies, major legal firms and nonprofits. Our team offered presentations, workshops and assessments focused on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the workplace.

- Managed assessment clients, oversaw client goal setting, strategic planning, proposal and agreement process
- Communicated regularly with clients about their needs and progress of complex projects
- Designed and conducted qualitative interviews to assess and evaluate individual workplace experiences
- Scheduled a high volume of meetings and interviews with clients and assessment subjects
- Turned hundreds of pages of interview notes into 15-20 page impactful summary reports
- Collaborated on presentations and proposed strategies for setting and meeting EDI goals
- Facilitated meetings and trainings for both clients and our team
- Developed and implemented an educational branch of the company catering specifically to e-learners
- Produced a weekly podcast, including content development and guest booking
- Supported research, citation and marketing for two books by Dr. Arin N. Reeves
- Performed administrative tasks, including management of travel, maintenance of a large contact database, applying for industry-specific accreditation across numerous states, developing research studies, long-form transcription and the creation of client resources