



JOHN ZISA

EDUCATOR. STAGE DIRECTOR. PERFORMER

Dynamic, passionate, empathetic and highly committed theater and music professional, with extensive teaching, directing, and performance experience across all areas of drama, theater, and music. Possesses a keen eye for detail with proven strategic organizational abilities. Stellar interpersonal and communication skills backed by years of leadership, and bringing creative visions and other projects to fruition. Strong attentiveness to the collaborative nature of production, and a commitment to inclusivity and anti-racist practices in the rehearsal space and in the classroom.

he/him

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SKILLS

- Superior knowledge of theater and musical theater pedagogy
- Familiarity with the competitive college BFA & conservatory landscape
- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively
- Excellent problem solving skills, leading with empathy and kindness
- Successful classroom management
- Leadership, collaboration & teamwork methods

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Head of Musical Theater Department

Hudson County Schools of Technology- Performing Arts Academy | September 2015-Current

- Developed and implemented a comprehensive musical theater curriculum, modeled after a college BFA musical theater program, in accord with state and school guidelines
- Audition and adjudicate over 100 students yearly for approximately fifteen freshmen seats
- Stage Director of all musical theater productions during the production season, overseeing and collaborating with creative team of professional designers and practitioners from pre-production to wrap (ANNUAL WINTER SHOWCASE, PIPPIN, ALAN MENKEN REVUE, IN THE HEIGHTS, DISNEY'S AIDA, STORY TO SONG, HAMILTUNES, EVITA, CHICAGO, A CHORUS LINE)
- Teach all four levels of musical theater, culminating with a senior showcase performed for invited industry professionals- classes include training in musical theater history, acting the song, dance technique, acting for the musical theater, music theory, and ensemble work
- Supervise adjunct faculty and monitor student progress
- Monitor students' progress and give individual feedback through appropriate assessments and other methods
- Prepare senior level musical theater students for college BFA and conservatory musical theater program auditions
- Regularly facilitate Master Classes and Workshops with Broadway professionals- performers include LaChanze, Jessica Lee Goldyn, Jon Rua, Kenny Leon, Jaime Lozano, Daniel Torres, Sharrod Williams, Jess Leprotto
- Arrange and facilitate field experiences; participating in workshops outside of the school and also regularly attending Broadway musicals and other live performances at theaters and local colleges for the arts
- Director & Arranger of *High Tech Musical Theater Voices*, Musical Theater Choral/Performance Ensemble

EDUCATION/AFFILIATIONS

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society

Associate Member 2019- Present

Sarah Lawrence College

Master of Fine Arts in Theater Candidate

Montclair State University

Master of Arts in Theater

Ramapo College of NJ

Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance

Director of Theater Arts Department

Hopewell Valley Regional School District | September 2012-June 2015

- Curated the theater season, casted and stage directed three annual productions- a fall play, a spring musical, and spring play. Created and maintained budget for production season (OUR TOWN, DISNEY'S BEAUTY & THE BEAST, FEED THE WHALES, BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS, A CHORUS LINE, STOP KISS, MACHINAL, BLOOD BROTHERS, GUYS AND DOLLS, A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, CLYBOURNE PARK)
- Supervised and collaborated with professional designers, music directors, and parent committees, from pre-production to wrap
- Taught theater arts classes to the general population of the high school, and created an audition only Honors Theater Course, for those students wishing to pursue undergraduate programs in theater or musical theater
- Prepared senior level theatre arts students for college BFA and conservatory program auditions
- Co-Advised International Thespian Troupe #7964
- Liaised between the school and the Music & Theater Parent's Association; securing grants, facilitating community relations, and managing all parent volunteer groups for theater arts events and productions
- Regularly facilitated Master Classes and Workshops with Broadway and other industry professionals.
- Arranged and facilitated field experiences; regularly visiting NYC and attending Broadway plays and musicals and also plays and musicals in Philadelphia and other live performances.
- Co-produced the annual "Hopewell's Got Talent" show, showcasing the school's diverse artistic and musical talents

ACHIEVEMENTS

- High Tech Musical Theater Voices performed in February 2024, on stage, of the Broadway musical, KIMBERLY AKIMBO, as part of high school musical theater night.
- High Tech Musical Theater Voices named winners of 2023 Star Choir Competition; Performed at "Christmas at Rockefeller Center" (NBC/Telemundo), and appeared on "The Kelly Clarkson Show" (NBC/Telemundo)
- 2019 Paper Mill Playhouse Rising Star Winner for Best Featured Actress in EVITA
- 2016 Paper Mill Playhouse Rising Star Nomination for Best Featured Actor in PIPPIN
- 2013 Montclair State University Foxy Award Winner for Best Comedy & Best Actor for BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS
- 2014 & 2015 National Qualification Invitation for International Thespian Conference

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Stage Directing

BROADWAY

MR. MAGOO'S CHRISTMAS CAROL- Associate Director (Gerald Lynch Theater)

OFF-BROADWAY

DRAMA LEAGUE DIRECTOR FEST- Associate Director (New Ohio Theater)

REGIONAL/COMMUNITY-

VIOLET- Stage Works Theater

ALL MY SONS- Star Royale Theater

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME- Rhino Theater

DON'T DRESS FOR DINNER- Rhino Theater

THE FULL MONTY- Old Library Theater

ANNIE- Rhino Theater

Performing- Musical Theater

KINKY BOOTS (Harry/Ensemble)- Pleasant Valley Productions

PARADE (Governor Slaton/Ensemble)- Old Library Theater

VIOLET (Monty)- Montclair Operetta Club

A MAN OF NO IMPORTANCE (Brenton Beret/Ensemble)- 4th Wall Theater

A CHORUS LINE (Zach)- Montclair State University

DESSA ROSE (Bertie/Ensemble)- 4th Wall Theater

BLOOD BROTHERS (Mickey)- Old Library Theater

Performing- Solo Concerts/ Cabaret

COMIN' HOME FOR CHRISTMAS- An Evening with John Zisa & Friends- December 2023/ The Green Room 42, NYC

BEING ALIVE- Solo Concert- November 2021/ The Green Room 42, NYC

SILVER MORNING- John Zisa Sings the Kenny Rankin Songbook- January 2019- The Triad, NYC

HOME AGAIN- Solo Concert- December 2016- The Metropolitan Room, NYC

OTHER NOTEABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Self Published Family Christmas Book, *The Very Patient Christmas Tree*, November 2023. Available on Amazon
- 2020 and 2021 Drama League Directing Fellowship; Semi-Finalist
- Self Arranged, Produced, and Recorded Music Albums available across Spotify, Apple Music, iheart media, and all streaming platforms
- Top 40 Contestant on Season 4, "American Idol"
- Top 10 Contestant, "Jim Brickman's Big Break", 2021
- Published Composer, GIA Publications
- Worked on creative projects alongside Rachel Zegler, Jonas Brothers, Carrie Underwood, Kerry Washington, Marvin Hamlisch, Melba Moore