

THEATRE

What is Theatre? (from <http://www.uncwil.edu/stuaff/career/Majors/theater.htm>)

“In the theatre we see men and women in action—what they do and why they do it—and we discover insight about our world by seeing through others’ eyes. Theatre is a major form of human expression, taking place in the present, but connecting us to other times and places. Through characterization, design and technology, theatre artists provide a window into the human condition. Theatre is both visual and aural, a shared experience between audience and performers. The study of theatre embraces a broad range of skills, including acting, directing, design and construction, as well as the subjects it refers to, such as history, politics and psychology. Theatre is a dynamic art form, constantly changing to include current issues and new media.

It is the imitation/representation of life, performed for other people; the performance of dramatic literature; drama; the milieu of actors and playwrights, the place that is the setting for dramatic performances.”

What is this career like? (from <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos093.htm>)

“Actors, producers and directors express ideas and create images in theater, film, radio, television and other performing arts media. They interpret a writer’s script to entertain, inform or instruct an audience. Although many actors, producers and directors work in New York or Los Angeles, far more work in other places. They perform, direct and produce in local or regional television studios, theaters or film production companies, often creating advertising or training films or small-scale independent movies.

Actors perform in stage, radio, television, video or motion picture productions. They also work in cabarets, nightclubs and theme parks. Actors portray characters, and, for more complex roles, they research their character’s traits and circumstances so that they can better understand a script.

Producers are entrepreneurs who make the business and financial decisions involving a motion picture, made-for-television feature, or stage production. They select scripts, approve the development of ideas, arrange financing, and determine the size and cost of the endeavor. Producers hire or approve directors, principal cast members, and key production staff members. They also negotiate contracts with artistic and design personnel in accordance with collective bargaining agreements. They guarantee payment of salaries, rent and other expenses.

Directors are responsible for the creative decisions of a production. They interpret scripts, audition and select cast members, conduct rehearsals, and direct the work of cast and crew. They approve the design elements of a production, including the sets, costumes, choreography and music. Assistant directors cue the performers and technicians, telling them when to make entrances or light, sound or set changes.”

From <http://www.utexas.edu/cofa/career>

“*Playwrights* are responsible for writing the script for a theatrical production. Playwrights should have excellent writing skills and a good command of the English language.

Stage Managers take over the responsibilities of the director when his/her job is completed. There are many duties involved, including scheduling and planning rehearsals, making sure that actors and actresses are there on time, updating the script as changes are made, blocking the show, and calling cues during the run of the show. A stage manager must know at least a little about everything in the theatre: acting, directing, set design, lighting and costuming. The more knowledgeable the stage manager, the more successful s/he will be in the job.

The *Dramaturg/Literary Manager* serves as a researcher, advisor, writer and editor for a production. Some of the more common tasks performed by a dramaturg are analysis of the text/story, research into prior productions and historical context, preparing notes for the director, advising the director and cast, and writing the audience guide to the play. A distinction made between a dramaturg and literary manager is that a dramaturg has duties related to a specific show. A literary manager (resident dramaturg) has ongoing duties with the theatre company, including review and selection of scripts.

Theatre Teachers instruct or coach students in the techniques of acting, directing, playwriting, script analysis, and the history of theatre. They help students acquire confidence, assurance, speaking skills and timing. They encourage students in their work, direct rehearsals, and guide them in their roles. At the same time, they instruct students in backstage work, including set design, production organization, set building, stage lighting and sound, properties, costuming and makeup. You must have a teaching certificate in order to teach in public schools. To teach in higher education, it is necessary to have a master's degree, at least. But, you need not limit yourself to teaching in formal schools. Many theatre educators find work in professional theatres, often working in outreach programs. It is important that you have a passion for teaching young people. So, it is a good idea to only go into this field if you really love teaching, instead of using it as just something to do until your "big break" comes.

Drama Therapists usually work closely with a consultation team of medical professionals to treat and rehabilitate people with physical, mental and emotional disabilities. Using the creative processes inherent in drama, therapists conduct individual or group sessions to determine the underlying causes of some problems and help patients achieve therapeutic goals. This type of therapy has proven to be effective in treating a variety of conditions. A master's degree and certification are usually required. Graduate programs in drama therapy prepare students to use drama as a therapeutic tool in working with all clients—children, adolescents and adults. Admission to these graduate programs usually requires the equivalent of a double major in theatre and psychology, or a major in one with considerable coursework in the other. This career requires paid work experience in addition to a clinical internship. Drama therapists must have artistic ability, an understanding and appreciation for theatre, a good sense of humor, patience, tact and stamina, and the ability to build rapport with others.

Arts Management/ Arts Administration. Arts organizations, like most for-profit companies, have a number of administrative, business or management functions. These roles require people with creativity and an understanding and passion for the arts as well as skills in a range of areas from finance and marketing to education. Arts management and arts administration are interchangeable terms. Some people draw a distinction between them, using administration to mean the more bureaucratic, operational side, and management to mean the more creative, strategic side of the field. However, that distinction is not widely made. In fact, some of the oldest and most respected programs train arts administrators. The specific positions available at an arts organization will depend on what the organization does and how large its budget and staff are. Since arts managers are needed in virtually every arts organization from theatre companies to museums, many opportunities exist in this field. For example, a museum is likely to have staff members in education that work with school groups to introduce children to the exhibits. A gallery needs employees with good organizational and

computer skills to coordinate exhibits and work with artists to track various art submissions. An opera company, concert hall or theatre needs box office and front-of-the-house workers to manage ticket sales, write press releases, market the productions in the community, and create visibility. Some theatre companies need general managers to schedule tours, monitor union agreements, and run the business side of performances. Over the last decade, arts management has become a growing field with increasing specialization and training. A number of new graduate training and certification programs have emerged. These programs may be useful, depending on your interests and goals. Some arts managers, for example, suggest eventually pursuing a business degree with a specialization in nonprofit management. Almost without exception, however, arts managers advise getting work-related experience first and considering graduate study later on. If you decide to investigate graduate study, begin by asking professionals which programs they think are valuable and respected in the field. Do not just ask one or two people and assume that their opinions are representative.”

For additional career information, refer to www.bls.gov/oco.

What are the career opportunities for a theatre concentrator?

Related Career Titles

Acting Coach	Costumer	Media Planner
Actor	Critic	Media Salesperson
Actress	Customer Service Manager	Mediator
Admissions Director	Development/Fund Raiser	Mime
Advertising/Marketing	Director	Model
Agent	Drama Coach	Movie Theater Manager
Amusement Park Entertainer	Drama Therapist	Narrator
Animal-Talent Coordinator	Equipment Operator	Negotiator/Mediator
Announcer	Facilities Manager	
Audience Relations	Foreign Correspondent	Playwright
Art Director	Health Educator	
Arts Council Director	Human Resource Specialist	Press Agent
Arts Fundraiser	Impersonator	Producer
Arts Manager/Administration	Instructor, Theater Arts	
Booking Manager	Labor Relations Specialist	Program Assistant
Box Office Manager	Lighting Designer	Prop Manager
Broadcast Journalist	Lighting Operator	Public Affairs Officer
Business Manager	Literary Agent	Public Relations Specialist
Buyer	Magician	Puppeteer
Casting Director	Make-up Artist	Radio/TV Announcer
Communication Technology	Faux Painter	Recruiter
Community Affairs Officer	Rigger	Sales Representative
Copy Writer	Student Affairs Specialist	Scenic Artist or Designer
Costume Designer	Stunt Coordinator	Teacher

Exhibit/Display Designer	Stunt person	Theater Manager
Sound Designer	Talent Manager	Ticket Sales Coordinator
Script Coach	Talent Scout	Tour Guide
Script Manager	Writer/Editor	Tourism Director
Special Events Coordinator	Stage Manager	Training & Development Dir.

How do you get ready? (from <http://career.utk.edu/students/majors/pdf/theater.pdf>)

- Complete an internship or an apprenticeship with a local theater. Participate in summer stock.
- Network: Talk with people working in the field to find out about jobs and opportunities.
- Read newspapers and periodicals related to the theater to keep up with new developments. Read the "trades" --magazines and newspapers that report events in the entertainment industry. Read the "Theater" section of daily newspapers to find out about upcoming productions.
- Get your foot in the door and get involved with productions any way you can. Be prepared to do various tasks assigned by stage managers or producers.
- Join professional groups as an opportunity to make contacts.
- Volunteer with fundraising efforts for the arts.
- Most theatre professionals should have an agent. Agents find jobs for performers. In return, they receive a commission for each job they find, usually paid out of the performer's salary. Be aware of scams. Check out the legitimacy of agencies and companies before paying any fees.
- Be prepared to move to a metropolitan area where more opportunities exist.
- A career in the arts takes patience, dedication and luck!
- Have a back-up plan. Be aware that the unemployment rate for actors hovers around 85%. Develop skills that qualify you for other jobs while you wait for opportunities in acting. Consider pairing theater with another career interest or major to open up more job opportunities.
- Theater helps students develop verbal and written communication, public speaking, and teamwork skills. These transferable skills are valued by many types of employers.
- There are many ways to be involved in the theater while pursuing other career options.

Related Major Skills (from <http://www.uncwil.edu/stuaff/career/Majors/theater.htm>)

Imagination & creativity	Strong communication skills
Flexibility	Basic reading, writing and editing skills
Attention to detail	Interpersonal skills
Appreciation of aesthetics	Analyzing and Interpretive skills
Ability to maintain composure when faced with the unexpected	Adaptability
Self-discipline	Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines
Interact with colleagues in a team setting	Good work ethic
Presentation, public speaking skills	Problem solving

What about the future? (from <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos093.htm>)

“Employment of actors, producers and directors is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations. Competition for jobs will be keen. Although a growing number of people aspire to enter these professions, many will leave the field early because the work—when it is available—is hard, the hours are long, and the pay may be low.”

For additional job outlook information, refer to www.bls.gov/oco.

Available at Albright College Career Development Center’s Resource Library

- [Great Jobs for Theater Majors](#), by Jan Goldberg
- [Career Opportunities in Theater and the Performing Arts](#), by Shelly Field
- [Careers for Class Clowns and Other Engaging Types](#), by Jan Goldberg
- [Careers for Color Connoisseurs and Other Visual Types](#), by Jan Goldberg
- [Careers for Competitive Spirits and Other Peak Performers](#), Jan Goldberg
- [Careers for Culture Lovers and Other Artsy Types](#), by Marjorie Eberts and Margaret Gisler
- [Careers for Extroverts and Other Gregarious Types](#), by Jan Goldberg
- [Careers for Fashion Plates and Other Trendsetters](#), by Lucia Mauro
- [Careers for Film Buffs and Other Hollywood Types](#), by Jaq Greenspon
- [Careers for High - Energy People and Other Go - Getters](#), by Marjorie Eberts, Margaret Gisler, and Maria Gisler
- [Careers for Kids At Heart and Others Who Adore Children](#), by Marjorie Eberts and Margaret Gisler
- [Careers for Night Owls and Other Insomniacs](#), by Louise Miller
- [Careers for Talkative Types and Others with the Gift of Gab](#), by Marjorie Eberts and Margaret Gisler
- [Careers for the Stagestruck and Other Dramatic Types](#), by Lucia Mauro
- [Opportunities in Entertainment Careers](#), by Jan Goldberg
- [Opportunities in Performing Arts Careers](#), by Bonnie Bjorguine Bekken

Disclaimer

Links to Internet sites are provided for your convenience and do not constitute an endorsement by Albright College or the Career Development Center.

Links found at <http://www.uncwil.edu/stuaff/career/Majors/index.htm>

Job and Internship Search Links

- Theatre Communications Group – Arts Search <http://www.tcg.org>
(Contact Career Development Center or access Resource Library on Ask JIM for username and password)
- International Arts Resources from Artslynx <http://www.artslynx.org>
- Association of Performing Arts Presenters
<http://www.artspresenters.org/networking/JobAvailableList.cfm>
- Backstage Jobs <http://backstagejobs.com>
- Entertainment Careers <http://www.entertainmentcareers.net>
- Entertainment Employment Journal <http://www.eej.com>
- The Biz – Entertainment & Media Jobs <http://www.thebiz.variety.com>

- Playbill Casting & Jobs <http://www.playbill.com>
- Shakespeare Festival Links <http://www.staaonline.org/memberindex>
- PropPeople Jobs <http://proppeople.com/jobboard.htm>
- Theater Services Guide <http://www.theaterservicesguide.com/home.asp>
- Theatre Jobs <http://www.theatrejobs.com>
- Showbiz Jobs <http://www.showbizjobs.com/>
- Lincoln Center Directors Lab <http://www.lct.org/directorsLabMain.htm>
- International Film and TV production resources <http://www.mandy.com>
- New York Foundation for the Arts <http://www.nyfa.org/>
- National Performance Network <http://www.npnweb.org/>
- Playwright Development Program <http://newdramatists.org>
- Southeastern Theatre Conference, Inc. Job Contact Service <http://www.setc.org/jobcontact/jcb/jcb.asp>
- The Playwrights Center <http://www.pwcenter.org>

Professional Association Links

- American Association of Community Theatre <http://www.aact.org/>
- Clarkstown Summer Theatre – Program for High School Students in NY <http://www.summertheatrefestival.com>
- Conference of Drama Schools <http://www.drama.ac.uk/>
- Institute of Outdoor Drama <http://www.unc.edu/depts/outdoor/>
- International Playback Theatre Network <http://www.playbacknet.org>
- League of American Theatres and Producers <http://www.broadwayleague.org/>
- Actors' Equity Association <http://www.actorsequity.org/>
- Actor's Fund <http://www.actorsfund.org/>
- American Alliance for Theatre and Education <http://www.aate.com/>
- Association for Theatre in Higher Education <http://www.athe.org>
- Literary Manager and Dramaturgs of America <http://www.lmda.org/>
- Screen Actors Guild <http://www.sag.org>
- University/Resident Theatre Association <http://www.uerta.com/>
- United States Institute for Theatre Technology (Design, Production and Technology Professionals in the Performing Arts and Entertainment Industry) <http://www.usitt.org>