

# Sam Nelson

Theatre Generalist. Scholar. Teacher. Artist.  
Curriculum Vitae

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## OHIO UNIVERSITY PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR

2023 – Present

### THAR 4720 – Global Theories of Performance (Forms of Drama)

Aiming to expand horizons beyond the West, this seminar examines key theoretical questions and debates from modern and contemporary Southern Africa, North Africa, the Middle East, Oceania, Latin America, East Asia, the Caribbean, and India. The course also incorporates readings in dramatic literature to present these theories in their respective historical, cultural, and theatrical contexts. Issues in postcolonialism, aesthetics, globalization, and interculturalism are also explored in this class in search of a genuinely global understanding of theatre and performance.

### THAR 4720 – Acting as Research: Embodied Imagination (Forms of Drama)

This practice-based seminar investigates contemporary understandings and assumptions of the actor's art through methods of Practice as Research. In applying an interdisciplinary approach, the perspectives explored belong to theorists from theater studies, literature, philosophy, and aesthetics. Students learn to raise new critical questions in acting, why it is important to do so, and how social, cultural, and aesthetic ideas shape acting practice. The course culminates with a final performance of scene and/or monologue work that demonstrates how critical inquiry informs students' personal approaches to dramatic acting.

### THAR 4710 - History of Acting Theory (Seminar in Theatre History and Drama)

This seminar investigates the development of ideas concerning acting from Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe, spanning from antiquity to the present day. Students work towards developing a systematic understanding of the concepts and issues that informed ideas of what acting is, has been, or should be.

### THAR 4700/5700 – Practicum in Dramaturgy

Practical experience as a dramaturg on School of Theater productions, including historical, textual, and biographical research, as well as audience outreach activities.

## Education

### PhD – Interdisciplinary Arts (April 2025)

Scholar/Artist Track: Theatre & Performance Studies  
Ohio University

Dissertation: "The Language of Embodied Imagery: An Examination of Aesthetic Rhetoric in American Acting Theory" (*Defended April 25, 2025*)  
Committee: Daniel Dennis, Garrett Field, Matthew Cornish (Chair)

### Master of Fine Arts – Acting (May 2021)

The University of Alabama

### Bachelor of Arts – Theatre Arts (May 2017)

Furman University

## Research & Teaching Interests

Actor training and pedagogy, voice and movement training for performance, history of acting theory, practice as research, interdisciplinary research, dramatic theory & criticism, practical dramaturgy, Shakespeare, *Commedia dell'Arte*, mask design & construction, mask performance, aesthetics & philosophy of art, postcolonial theatre, feminist theatre, and applied theatre.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

### PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR

2018 – 2021

#### TH 141 – Acting I

This course explores the study and practice of basic principles of realistic acting, voice, and movement as outlined by Stanislavski and other theatre methodologies. Work centers on modern scene study, exercises, literature, and observation.

#### TH 115 – Beginning Acting (for Non-Majors)

Training in the basic elements of the actor's craft. This class explores the study and practice of basic principles of realistic acting, centering on modern scene study, exercises, and observation.

#### TH 114 – Introduction to Theatre (Online & In-Person)

Students are guided through a survey of plays, stage histories, practitioners, dramatic structure, and production styles to develop an appreciation for theatre arts. This course also provides strategies for critical assessment as well as an introductory overview of acting, directing, design, and the technical elements of production.

## GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

### Ohio University: 2021 – 2022

#### THAR 2710 – Theatre and Performance History I

Primary Instructor: Dr. Shane Breaux

Primary Instructor: Dr. Matthew Cornish

#### THAR 2711 – Theatre and Performance History II

Primary Instructor: Dr. Shane Breaux

## GUEST LECTURER

### Ohio University: 2021 - Present

#### THAR 2710 – Theatre and Performance History I

Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, *El Divino Narciso*

#### THAR 2710 – Theatre and Performance History I

The *Commedia dell'Arte*: Style, Masks, and Characters

#### THAR 2711 – Theatre and Performance History II

Dario Fo's Italian Marxist Theatre

#### THAR 2711 – Theatre and Performance History II

Theories of Acting in the Age of Enlightenment

#### FAR 1500 – Viewing the Arts

Acting and Viewing Acting Performances

### The University of Alabama: 2018 – 2022

#### TH 452 – Theatre History II

Primary Instructor: Dr. Steve Burch

#### TH 445 – Acting V: Acting Shakespeare

Primary Instructor: Seth Panitch

#### TH 442 – Careers in Professional Theatre

Primary Instructor: Seth Panitch

### The University of Alabama: 2018 – 2022

#### TH 422 – Careers in Professional Theatre

Working as a Scholar/Artist – Merging Scholarship with Creation, Theory with Practice

#### TH 452 – Theatre History II

The African Grove Theatre Company

Romanticism, Melodrama, and the Well-Made Play

The History and Legacy of American Minstrelsy

Theatre of Cruelty, *Jet of Blood*

#### TH 114 – Introduction to Theatre

Theatre's Origins

Ancient Greek and Roman Theatre

Medieval European Drama

The *Commedia dell'Arte* and The Italian Renaissance

Kathkali and Ancient Sanskrit Drama in India

Chinese Xiqu

## ACTING COACHING

### 2018 - Present

#### Audition and Repertoire Coaching

Working with professional, student, and amateur actors, focusing on intention, emotion, impulsivity, and connection. Guiding audition monologue repertoire selection.

#### Showcase Scene Coaching

Preparing high school and college seniors for acting showcase events through coaching of individual scenes aimed at best highlighting individual strengths.

#### Private Dialect Coaching

Working with professional and amateur actors, focusing on shaping the voice and speech of a character by exploring the phonetics of stage dialects through drills and exercises.

Working with ESL students to strengthen their General American dialects for class presentations and other public speaking events.

## HONORS AND AWARDS

#### SheNYC Summer Theatre Festival

Best Overall Production for *Sheepwell* by Margaret Caterisano (2022)

#### Ohio University

Graduate Teaching Assistantship (2021 – Present)

#### The University of Alabama

Graduate Teaching Assistantship (2018 – 2021)

Marian Gallaway Award for Distinguished Graduate Acting (2019)

#### Furman University

James B. Duke Scholarship Recipient (2013 – 2017)

## MASTERCLASS INSTRUCTOR

#### Ohio University: 2022

Introductory Physical and Character Half-Mask Performance Techniques

#### Mill Mountain Theatre: 2022

Mask Design and Construction Techniques

## PRESENTATIONS AND SERVICE

#### Ping Institute for the Humanities

Served as a panelist for a discussion of Shakespeare's dramaturgy for High School drama teachers (2023)

#### Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine

Performed in scenarios for admissions interviewer implicit bias training (2022)

#### The Mid-America Theatre Conference

"Counter-Hegemonic Interpretation: Dario Fo's Characterization and Satire Through Intersemiotic Translation" (2022)

#### The Southeastern Universities Graduate Research Symposium

"The Commedia dell'Arte as a Weapon of Cultural Warfare" (2020)

#### The Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Conference

Adjudicated four undergraduate research presentations (2019)

## PROFESSIONAL ACTING CREDITS

<i>Sheepwell</i>	Thomas	Broomstick Theatre Co. (NYC)	Margaret Caterisano
<i>Miss Julie</i>	Jean	Guerrilla Shakespeare Co. (SC)	Caroline Davis
<i>Bull</i>	Tony	Guerrilla Shakespeare Co. (SC)	Robert Fuson
<i>Hamlet</i>	Grave Digger, et al.	Guerrilla Shakespeare Co. (SC)	Crystal Stewart
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Paris	Guerrilla Shakespeare Co. (SC)	Robert Fuson
<i>Footloose</i>	Coach Dunbar	Theatre West Virginia	Ashley Meyer
<i>Ring of Fire: Music of Johnny Cash</i>	Sam	Theatre West Virginia	Neil David Seibel
<i>Hatfields and McCoys</i>	Tolbert McCoy	Theatre West Virginia	Jason Adkins
<i>The Addams Family</i>	Ensemble	Theatre West Virginia	Dan Henthorn

## ACADEMIC ACTING CREDITS

<i>See Rock City</i>	Dempsey	Ohio University Theatre	Steven Strafford
<i>John Proctor is the Villain</i>	Mr. Smith	Ohio University Theatre	Sarah Curtis
<i>Antigone</i>	Creon	University of Alabama Theatre	Matt Davis
<i>Shooting Star</i>	West	University of Alabama Theatre	Seth Panitch
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	Antonio	University of Alabama Theatre	Reid Watson
<i>Legally Blonde</i>	Callahan	University of Alabama Theatre	Stacy Alley
<i>The Pirates of Penzance</i>	Major-General Stanley	University of Alabama Theatre	Alex Ates
<i>The River</i>	The Man	University of Alabama Theatre	Reid Watson
<i>Gnit</i>	Moynihan, et al.	University of Alabama Theatre	Alex Ates
<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>	Falstaff	University of Alabama Theatre	Seth Panitch
<i>The Christians</i>	Elder Jay	University of Alabama Theatre	Alex Ates
<i>Danny and the Deep Blue Sea</i>	Danny	Furman University Theatre	Carol Sutton
<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>	Lord Capulet	Furman University Theatre	Maegan Azar
<i>Kappa Kappa Scream</i>	Chet	Furman University Theatre	Jay Oney
<i>The Birthday Party</i>	McCann	Furman University Theatre	Rhett Bryson
<i>Arcadia</i>	Hannah Jarvis	Furman University Theatre	Jay Oney
<i>Rumors</i>	Lenny Ganz	Furman University Theatre	Carol Sutton
<i>The Pillowman</i>	Katurian	Furman University Theatre	Robert Fuson
<i>The Threepenny Opera</i>	Macheath	Furman University Theatre	Maegan Azar
<i>The Imaginary Invalid</i>	Thomas Diafoirus	Furman University Theatre	Rhett Bryson
<i>These Shining Lives</i>	Tom	Furman University Theatre	Maegan Azar
<i>Pomp &amp; Circumstance</i>	Wyatt	Furman University Theatre	Jay Oney
<i>Gruesome Playground Injuries</i>	Doug	Furman University Theatre	Callie Nestleroth

## NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT/STAGED READINGS

<i>The Model Congressman</i>	(Dramaturg)	Ohio University Theatre	Steven Strafford
<i>Life After Exorcism</i>	Jason	Guerrilla Shakespeare Co. (SC)	Robert Fuson
<i>Though the Heavens May Fall</i>	Judge Horton	Dr. Steven Burch	Steven Burch
<i>A Christmas Memory</i>	Narrator	Tuscaloosa Public Library	Alex Ates
<i>Armed</i> (Devised)	Sam	GLOW Lyric Theatre	Jenna Tamisiea
<i>Death at Downton</i>	Robert Squally	Furman University Theatre	Randall David Cook
<i>In a Town Near Faith</i>	Hank	Furman University Theatre	Randall David Cook

## DIRECTING CREDITS

<i>Twelfth Night</i>	Asst. Director, Dramaturg, Text Coach	Tantrum Theater	2023
<i>Squeakers</i> *World Premiere	Director	Ohio University Theatre	2023
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Asst. Director, Text Coach	Ohio University Theatre	2022
<i>... "Iron" Mike Malloy</i> *World Premiere	Director	Ohio University Theatre	2022
<i>Miss Samantha</i> (Audio Play)	Director	The Flourish	2020

## DIALECT COACHING CREDITS

<i>Tipping the Velvet</i>	Standard British (RP) & Cockney	Ohio University Theater	Caitlin Lopez
<i>John Proctor is the Villain</i>	American Southern	Ohio University Theatre	Sarah Curtis

## TECHNICAL THEATRE CREDITS

### Technical Director and Production Manager, Tryon Fine Arts Center (2018)

Edwin McCain, Indie Rock Concert	Lighting Designer, Stage Manager	Tryon Fine Arts Center	
Christopher Titus's <i>Amerigeddon</i> , Stand-up Comedy Show	Lighting Designer, Stage Manager	Tryon Fine Arts Center	
Destiny Stone's <i>Nina Now</i> , Nina Simone Tribute Concert	Lighting Designer, Sound Engineer, Stage Manager	Tryon Fine Arts Center	
<i>Best of Enemies</i> (Play)	Lighting Designer, Sound Designer, Stage Manager	Tryon Fine Arts Center	Robin Edgar
<i>Pure Poetry</i> , Poetry Readings Featuring Various Artists	Technical Director	Tryon Fine Arts Center	
<i>John Lennon, the Mobster and the Lawyer</i>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	Dark Horse Theatre Project	

<b>Dan Keller Jazz Trio</b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Tryon Fine Arts Center</b>	
<b><i>Zoe &amp; Cloyd, Americana Duo</i></b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Tryon Fine Arts Center</b>	
<b>William Florian, Country Soloist</b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Tryon Fine Arts Center</b>	
<b><i>Brother Bluebird, Folk Duo</i></b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Tryon Fine Arts Center</b>	
<b>Fassoux Mclean &amp; Brandon Turner, Country Duo</b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Tryon Fine Arts Center</b>	
<b>Lightwire Theatre's <i>Moon Mouse: A Space Odyssey</i></b>	Stage Manger, Technical Director	<b>Super Saturday Children's Theatre Festival</b>	
<b><i>Rhythm Dances from Around the World</i></b>	Stage Manager, Technical Director	<b>Super Saturday Children's Theatre Festival</b>	
<b><i>Windsync, Wind Quintet</i></b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Tryon Concert Association</b>	
<b>Benefit Variety Show</b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Foothills Parkinson's Support Group</b>	
<b>Polk County Early College Graduation Ceremony</b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Polk County Public Schools</b>	
<b><i>Celebrating Nina Simone, Tribute Performances by Various Artists</i></b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Tryon Fine Arts Center</b>	
<b><i>James and the Giant Peach</i></b>	Lighting Designer, Technical Director	<b>Tryon Little Theatre</b>	Chris Tinkle

## Technical Theatre Internship Supervisor, Tryon Fine Arts Center (2018)

Provided supervision, guidance, and feedback for Technical Theatre interns. Delegated meaningful work assignments to help foster learning and skill development.

## The Flourish: A BIPOC Student Arts Organization (2020)

<b><i>Return Sender Return</i> (Audio Play)</b>	Audio Editor Audio Engineer	<b>The Flourish</b>	Christian Tripp
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## Furman University (2014-2017)

<b>2014-2017 Season Productions</b>	Costume Shop Assistant	<b>Furman University Theatre</b>	Margaret Caterisano
<b><i>The Woman of Lockerbie</i></b>	Stage Manager	<b>Furman University Theatre</b>	Jayce Tromsness
<b><i>Durang/ Durang</i></b>	Master Electrician	<b>Furman University Theatre</b>	Rhett Bryson
<b><i>Hair</i></b>	Publicity Crew Head	<b>Furman University Theatre</b>	Maegan Azar
<b><i>God of Carnage</i></b>	Assistant Stage Manager	<b>Furman University Theatre</b>	Rhett Bryson



## EDUCATION – COURSES COMPLETED

### PhD – Interdisciplinary Arts

Ohio University

Performance of Black Thought	Dr. J� Hooper
Dramaturgies of Comedy	Dr. Shane Breaux
Theatre and Ethics	Dr. Matthew Cornish
Dance Ethnography	Dr. Zelma Badu-Young
Dramaturgy	Tyler Adams
Directing	Dr. Daniel Dennis
Chekhov Technique	David Haugen
Suzuki Method	Dr. Daniel Dennis
Viewpoints	Dr. Daniel Dennis
Stage Combat	Brian Evans
Unarmed & Single Sword	
History of Aesthetics	Dr. Vladimir Marchenkov
Contemporary Aesthetics	Dr. Vladimir Marchenkov
Critical Theory and the Arts	Dr. Erin Schlumpf
Transnational and Global Theories	Dr. Daniel Spencer
Text, Translation, and the Arts	Dr. Charles Buchanan, Dr. Garrett Field
Feminism and the Arts	Dr. Charles Buchanan, Dr. Erin Schlumpf
Research and Writing Skills	Dr. Charles Buchanan
Pedagogy and the Arts	Dr. Andrea Frohne

### MFA – Acting

The University of Alabama

Acting Shakespeare	Seth Panitch
Graduate Acting Studio – Scene Study	Seth Panitch
Acting for the Camera	Seth Panitch
Styles of Shaw, Ibsen, & Chekhov	Seth Panitch
Stand-up Comedy,	
Styles of Coward, & Wilde	Seth Panitch
Alexander Technique	Kelley Schoger
Styles of Restoration Comedy	Allison Hetzel
Rodenburg & Fitzmaurice Vocal Training	Allison Hetzel
Dialects & Accents	Allison Hetzel
Acting Pedagogy	Allison Hetzel
Private and Studio Singing Training	Dr. William Martin
Graduate Theatre History I	Dr. Steve Burch
Graduate Theatre History II	Dr. Steve Burch
Dramatic Theory & Criticism	Dr. Steve Burch
Playwriting	Dr. Steve Burch
Script Analysis	Dr. Steve Burch

**BA – Theatre Arts**Furman University

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<b>Acting I</b>	Maegan Azar
<b>Acting II: Characterization</b>	Maegan Azar
<b>Acting III: Period Styles</b>	Maegan Azar
<b>Movement for the Actor</b> Laban & Suzuki	Maegan Azar
<b>Advanced Movement Techniques</b> Commedia dell'Arte, Mask, Clowning	Maegan Azar
<b>Directing</b>	Maegan Azar
<b>Playwriting</b>	Randall David Cook
<b>Theatre History I</b>	Dr. Jay Oney
<b>Theatre History II</b>	Dr. Jay Oney
<b>Stage Makeup</b>	Margaret Caterisano
<b>Costume Crafts</b>	Margaret Caterisano
<b>Modern British &amp; American Drama</b>	Margaret Caterisano
<b>Fashion History for Costume Design</b>	Margaret Caterisano
<b>Advanced Rendering</b>	Will Lowry
<b>Lighting Design</b>	Rhett Bryson
<b>Stage Craft</b>	Rhett Bryson
<b>Private Singing Coaching</b>	Gail Schoonmaker



## REFERENCES

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### **Dr. Matt Cornish**

Associate Professor, Theater History—Director of Studies, Honors Tutorial  
College Programs in Theater  
Ohio University School of Interdisciplinary Arts  
31 S. Court St. Athens, OH 45701  
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### **Dr. Dan Dennis**

Associate Professor of Instruction, Head, BA Theater  
Ohio University School of Theater  
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### **Mr. Christian Tripp**

Actor, Playwright, Director  
Former Head of Performance at the University of Memphis  
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