



LISA CESNIK FERGUSON

THEATRE PROFESSIONAL AND EDUCATOR

PROFILE

Theater Educator, Actor, and Director with additional experience in Non-Profit Administration. Thrives in a growth mindset environment, leads by empowerment, collaboration and compassionate perseverance. Dynamic command of aesthetics and keen assessment skills.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Professor of Theatre, Gordon State College, Barnesville, GA 2015 – Present.

Director:

<i>Wait Until Dark</i>	Frederich Knott, adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher
<i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i>	Wendy Kesselman
<i>Honky</i>	Greg Kalleres
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>Fences</i>	August Wilson
<i>Antigone Sophocles</i>	adapted by Jean Anouilh
<i>The Giver</i>	Lois Lowry, adapted by Eric Coble
<i>Twelfth Night</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>The Laramie Project</i>	Moises Kaufman and Tectonic Theatre Project
<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>	Lorraine Hansberry
<i>Clybourne Park</i>	Bruce Norris
<i>The Tragedy of Macbeth</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>Our Town</i>	Thornton Wilder
<i>Some Mirth, and a Little Matter</i>	Laura King (new work)

Programs Hosted:

<i>The Bechdel Project</i>	Jens Rasmussen, Maria Maloney, Kimberly Hickman
<i>Improfusical</i>	
<i>On Camera Immersion</i>	Seminar with Carole Kaboya
<i>Lights, Camera...Highlanders</i>	Springer Film Institute S.F.I.
<i>Campus Footlights</i>	Dramatist Guild of America
<i>Sound and Fury: Stage Combat Intensive</i>	Scot Mann
<i>No Shame Theatre</i>	Todd Ristau, originator

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PROFESSOR OF THEATRE, GORDON STATE COLLEGE (CONT'D)

Classes Taught:

- Acting One: Meisner, Stanislavsky, Hagen, Boal
- Acting Two: Acting for Camera and Improvisational Games – Meisner and Spolin
- Voice and Diction: Linklater, Berry, Skinner and Stern for Dialects and IPA
- Directing
- Script Analysis
- Theatre Appreciation
- Practicum: Acting and Dramaturgy

Recruiting: Created “Page to Stage” school field trips programming in 2016, for the first time in GSC history, creating the largest ongoing campus recruitment tool in the process, serving hundreds of high school students each semester.

Partnerships: Began a partnership with (GFA) Georgia Film Academy.

Industry Exposure: Each semester, brought screen and stage professionals from Atlanta, Chicago and NYC to instruct students and create direct ties to the professional world. Initiated this programming in 2016.

New Works: Integrated a new play component into each academic year, from staged readings with the DGA and a 24 hour play festival to guest teachers from The Bechdel Project.

Producing Artistic Director of Rose of Athens Theatre, Inc. (501c3). Founder of the first professional theater company in Athens, GA.

2006 – 2015

Produced/Directed 32 productions in 8 seasons, including (selection):

<i>As You Like It</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>North Star Light: Pathways to Freedom.</i>	Russell Vandenbrouke
<i>Alice in Wonderland.</i>	L. Carroll, adapted by Ron Anderson
<i>James and the Giant Peach</i>	Roald Dahl, adapted by Richard George
<i>The Legend of Sleepy Hollow</i>	Washington Irving, adapted by C. Cartmill
<i>To Kill A Mockingbird</i>	Harper Lee, adapted by Christopher Sergel
<i>Huckleberry Finn</i>	Mark Twain, adapted by Timothy Mason
<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Charles Dickens, adapted by Shannon Rood
<i>A Christmas Memory</i>	Truman Capote
<i>Taming of the Shrew</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>The Tempest</i>	William Shakespeare
<i>The Lion The Witch and the Wardrobe</i>	C.S. Lewis, adapted by J. Robinette
<i>Frankenstein Lives</i>	Mary Shelley, adapted by Doug Jones
<i>Ramona Quimby</i>	Beverly Cleary, adapted by Len Jenkin
<i>Charlotte's Web</i>	E.B. White, adapted by J. Robinette
<i>Winnie the Pooh Christmas Story</i>	A.A. Milne, adapted by C. Sergel

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Rose of Athens (Cont'd)

Education: Developed the Rose of Athens Theatre Academy, teaching “Life Skills Through Stage Skills” and pioneered an artists-in-the-school initiative to bring young audiences closer to the theatre arts.

Partnerships: Developed partnerships with the Hot Corner Celebration, a festival celebrating the historically African American center of commerce in Athens, GA, as well as creating an Oral History Project to tell the history of this unique part of the community.

Director, Springer Opera House (State Theatre of Georgia), Columbus, Georgia. 2003 – present

<i>The Bible: The Complete Word of God (Abridged)</i>	Reduced Shakespeare
<i>The Complete History of America (Abridged)</i>	Reduced Shakespeare
<i>Barefoot in the Park</i>	Neil Simon
<i>The Odd Couple</i>	Neil Simon
<i>Crimes of the Heart</i>	Beth Henley
<i>Tartuffe</i>	Moliere
<i>Moonlight and Magnolias</i>	Ron Hutchinson
<i>Winnie the Pooh</i> (twice)	Joseph Robinette
<i>The Borrowers</i>	Charles Way

Instructor and Assistant Director, Springer Opera House THEATRE ACADEMY, Columbus, Georgia 2003 – 2015

- Wrote curricula, mentored teaching assistants and interns, taught and co-taught classes.
- Served approximately 500 students each summer, aged 5-18
- Performed Academy Director duties when Director not present.
- Created study guides
- Led classes in Classical Scene Study and Scene Study, worked as a substitute teacher in several other classes.
- Directed Company Class (the advanced intensive) for two summers.

Director, Randolph Macon College, Lynchburg, VA 2011, 2012

- Directed *Extremities* by William Mastrisimone (Guest artist engagement)

Adjunct Professor and Director, Piedmont College Department of Drama 2008, 2009

- Conducted Master Workshops on Shakespeare, Demorest, Georgia campus
- Directed *As You Like It*, Demorest, Georgia campus
- Instructor, Theater Appreciation course, Athens, Georgia campus

Director, University of Georgia, Department of Theatre and Film Studies, Athens, Georgia 2009, 2010

- Directed *The Shape of Things* by Neil Labute (Guest artist engagement)

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Assistant Professor, Columbus State University, Columbus, Georgia
2003-2005

Classes Taught:

- **Voice and Dialects for the Stage**
- **Acting Two:** The American Teachers
- **Acting Three:** Styles of Acting
- **Acting Four:** Post-Modern Styles of Acting
- **Script Analysis**
- **Audition Technique**
- **Theatre Appreciation**
- **Acting for Non-Majors**
- **Guest Lecturer:** Senior Seminar "Working in Chicago"

Director:

Lysistrata Aristophanes
Rumors Neil Simon

Coaching:

Coached 53 performance majors in preparation for GTC, SETC, and ACTF

Service:

- Recruiting at SETC and GTC. Increased enrollment in BFA Performance by 50%
- Served on nationwide search committee for full time faculty person in the performance area.
- Served on play selection committee for the Larry Corse New Play Contest.

Director and Performer/Dramaturg, Carpenter Science Theatre Company, Richmond, Virginia
2002-2005

Director:

Shakespeare and Galileo Grant Mudge (New Work)
That Old Wind Bag Doug Jones (New Work)

Developer/Performer:

Alice Evans The Science Museum of Minnesota (New Work)

Artistic Associate, Chattahoochee Theatre Ensemble (now Sherlock's Mystery Dinner Theatre),
Columbus, Georgia
2003, 2004

- Created an ensemble oriented theatre in the Chattahoochee Valley Area
- Developed Education strategies

Performer:

I Do! I Do! Agnes Dir: JJ Musgrove

Instructor, University of Georgia, Department of Theatre and Film Studies, Athens, Georgia
1998-2001

Classes Taught:

- **Foundations of Acting** (majors)
- **Introduction to Acting** (non-majors)
- **Appreciation of Dramatic Art**

Guest Lectures

- **Scene Study**
- **Freshman Honors Seminar**
- **The Unseen Art, Directing**
- **Introduction to Drama**

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Coaching

- Coached dozens of UGA undergraduate actors in preparation for SETC and U/RTA auditions
- Graduate Acting Company member

Teacher/Performer at the Lilly Theatre. Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana

1992-1998

- Lead Teacher at Lilly Summer Theatre Camps.
- Performed a multitude of lead roles in the Lilly Theatre mainstage.
- Interactive Theater Performer for youth volunteers and visitors in the galleries.

What If? Interactive Theatre Incorporated, Indianapolis

1997 – 2001

- Performed instructive interactive theatre at retreats, schools and in jails. Used Augusto Boal Forum Theatre style to educate about drugs, sex, and domestic violence.

Kid Connection, Indianapolis Civic Theatre (now Booth Tarkington Civic Theatre), Indianapolis

1994 - 1995

- Toured for two years, 300+ shows a year, to elementary schools all over the state of Indiana and sometimes, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois. Educational musicals about self-esteem.

Director of Theatre Department, Pine Forest Camp in Pocono Mountains, Pennsylvania

1989.

- Taught and directed hundreds of campers from self generated performing arts curriculum.

Director:

Charlotte's Web
Variety Show

EDUCATION

- **Masters of Fine Arts in Drama: Performance University of Georgia 2001**
 - MFA Thesis: "Revealing Mrs. Malaprop: The Power of Comedy"
 - Thesis Committee: Dr. Freda Giles, Professor Ray Paolino
 - Overall GPA: 3.95
- **Meisner Technique/Neighborhood Playhouse Technique – Two Year Intensive**
 - Martha Jacobs (Indiana University Professor) Bloomington, Indiana 1994-1996
- **BS Theater and Dance: Directing, Stage Management Ball State University 1991**

AWARDS

- Excellence in Teaching Award UGA 2001
- Teaching Assistant Award UGA 2000
- Penrod Arts Prelude Award, Acting Finalist Indianapolis, IN 1985

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PUBLISHED WORKS

“Filling Seats: Study Finds Quality Children’s Education Program is Key to Attracting New Audiences to the Theater” Southern Theatre Magazine, Spring 2009

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Powerful Partnerships: Positive collaborations between a historic theater (The Morton Theatre) a new organization (Rose of Athens Theatre) and a traditional festival (Hot Corner Celebration), Georgia Applause Symposium, Statesboro, Georgia, March 2008

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND RELATED EXPERIENCE

- G.R.E.A.T Fellow for Georgia Theatre Conference (GTC)
- FY12 Grant Selection Committee Member for Georgia Council for the Arts (GCA)
- Phi Kappa Phi, Honors Fraternity – Member since 2001
- Morton Theatre Corporation – Board of Directors Executive Committee, 2007 – 2010.
- American College Theater Festival (ACTF) – Respondent 2005, 2009
- International Museum Theater Alliance (IMTAL)

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

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|--|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Georgia Film Academy Certification | Pinewood Studio | 2020(in progress) |
| • Julian Boal Master Class | UGA | 2019 |
| • Audience Development Symposium | CSU/Springer Opera House | 2019 |
| • Georgia Applause Symposium (Georgia Tourism) | Statesboro, Georgia | 2007 |
| • Shakespeare in the World Workshops. | Court Theater Chicago, Illinois | 2002 |
| • Theatre of the Oppressed– Week of Master Classes | Brecht Forum NYC, New York | 2002 |
| • Theater of the Oppressed– Master Classes, w/Augusto Boal | UGA | 2001 |

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