

Thomas B. Costello

Theatre & Performance Educator, Director, Designer, & Researcher

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Curriculum Vitae

Education

Ph.D. in Theatre & Performance, **University of Pittsburgh** (ABD, expected completion: 2012)

M.Phil. in Irish Theatre and Film, **Trinity College Dublin**, February 2006

B.A. in Theatre (Directing) & Psychology, Business Minor, **SUNY Geneseo**, May 2002

Professional Affiliations

- Association for Theatre in Higher Education
- International Federation for Theatre Research
- Society of American Fight Directors
- Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (Associate Member)
- American Society of Theatre Research
- Irish Society for Theatre Research
- American Conference for Irish Studies

Professional Theatre Production

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Parks

The Merry Wives of Windsor (Shakespeare) Director September 2011

Much Ado About Nothing (Shakespeare) Asst. Director September 2010

Cleveland Irish Cultural Festival

The Green, The White, and the Orange Producer July 2011

Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre (PICT)

Au Natural (Sloan MacRae) Director (reading) March 2010

Bakerloo Theatre Project

Much Ado About Nothing (Shakespeare) Scenographer June 2009

Gaelic Arts Society

The Only Jealousy of Emer (W.B. Yeats) Director (reading) April 2008

Echo Theatre, Pittsburgh

Blithe Spirit (Noel Coward) Asst. Director October 2007

DUBLIN, IRELAND

Painted Filly Theatre Co.

The Quarry (Ivy Alvarez) Director May 2006

Three Ring Circus (Ruth Pe Palileo) Director May 2006

100 Minutes, 10x10-Minute Plays Scenographer May 2006

Samuel Beckett Centre

Endgame (Samuel Beckett) Scenographer March 2006

PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

English Workshop Productions

The Zoo Story (Edward Albee) Director May 2003

Wenceslas Square (Larry Shue) Scenographer March 2003

Teaching Experience

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – Courses Independently Designed and Taught

Directing I challenges students with significant hands-on experience as they learn the craft of theatrical direction. This course covers all the fundamentals of directing for the stage, including working with designers, actors and production teams. Thorough script analysis is integral to the course, and students learn to read, screen, and pitch plays with directorial authority.

Theatre Criticism is an upper-level writing-intensive theatre class that investigates contemporary trends in theatre criticism, and requires students to see and critically review one live performance per week. The class is necessarily small, and students read and critique both their classmates' work as well as professional reviews of the same productions.

Intro to Shakespeare provides an introduction to the life and work of William Shakespeare from a decidedly theatrical perspective. Ten plays across all genres are investigated in detail, with a particular emphasis on production. Local productions are integrated into the syllabus, as are relevant film adaptations, so that students gain an appreciation of Shakespeare's contributions as they were intended to be consumed: in popular performance.

World Theatre 1890-1970+ is an advanced theatre history course aimed primarily at theatre majors/minors, and covers the highlights (and lowlights) of "modern" theatre. Using the titular dates as a rough guide, the course details the recent history of theatre and performance art in order to demonstrate how and why theatre has become what it is today.

Introduction to Performance provides students, often non-theatre majors or prospective majors/minors, with basic acting training. Through physical, mental, and emotional involvement students learn what it is to play a character and tell a story through action. A range of acting exercises is employed and students ultimately complete two scenes.

Basic Acting is the first of Pitt's upper level acting courses. It covers a broad range of approaches to acting, beginning with Stanislavski and including Stella Adler, Sanford Meisner, Uta Hagen, etc. Through both exercises and scenework, actors learn to employ their own tools - body, voice, mind, & personal experience - as they connect with others in dramatic action.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – Academic Guest Lectures

Staging Sarah Ruhl's *The Clean House* for the English Department's *Women, Comedy and Society Seminar*, Professor Marianne Novy. (presented annually)

Staging the Troubles for the History Department's *Northern Ireland*, Professor Tony Novosel. (I assist students in writing and staging short plays about the Troubles as their final project.)

From the Page to the Stage; the Making of *Merry Wives* for the Theatre Department's *Intro to Shakespeare*, Instructor David Peterson.

The Saville Inquiry In Fact and On Stage for the Department of Theatre Arts *Documentary Theatre Graduate Seminar*, Professor Attilio Favorini.

Friel's *The Freedom of the City* and *Bloody Sunday* in Practice for the Department of Theatre Arts *World Drama and Human Rights Graduate Seminar*, Professor Jay Ball.

ULRYCH, PRAGUE LANGUAGE STUDIO – Teaching English as a Foreign Language

From 2002-2003 I taught numerous courses in **English Composition**, **Business English**, **Reading Comprehension**, and **Test Preparation** to both business and private students, and also offered one-on-one tutoring and conversation lessons.

Specialized Pedagogical Training

Performance Pedagogy is a semester-long graduate seminar exclusively devoted to the teaching of Acting. Topics include both acting and educational theories and practices, as well as considerable practical work with undergraduates. From Meisner to Meyerhold, multiple strategies are considered to help keep the acting classroom a safe and productive place for students of all learning types.

Theatre History, Literature, and Criticism Pedagogy was a unique opportunity for graduate students and faculty to investigate current trends in interdisciplinary higher education pedagogy. The seminar encouraged teachers to look outside the world of theatre scholarship for new and effective ways to transform the classroom into a dynamic learning environment.

Faculty Development is a seminar designed for new faculty and graduate students with teaching appointments. It covers current advances in interdisciplinary teaching theory as well as important strategies for effective syllabus planning, student feedback, and classroom control.

A **Teaching English as a Foreign Language Certificate** is an internationally recognized certification to teach English. Emphasis is placed upon effective communication strategies that respect cultural differences while encouraging language development. Although geared toward teaching abroad, TEFL certification is increasingly important as our classrooms grow more diverse.

Educational Theatre Production

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Repertory Theatre - Mainstage

<i>Lovesick, The After Dinner Joke,</i> & <i>This is a Chair</i> (Caryl Churchill)	Director	February 2011
<i>The Clean House</i> (Sarah Ruhl)	Director	October 2008

Repertory Theatre - Laboratory

<i>Gas Masks</i> (in new English Translation)	Director	October 2009
<i>Eight Times</i> (New Play Practicum)	Director	February 2008
<i>The Chairs</i> (Eugene Ionesco)	Scenographer	December 2007
<i>Family Stories</i> (Biljana Srbljanović)	Scenographer	February 2007

Redeye Theatre Project, Pittsburgh

Advisor 2006 - 2011

The Redeye Theatre Project (RTP) is Pittsburgh's 24-hour play organization. During each festival, eight short plays are written, rehearsed, and produced within 24-hours. I was elected Playwright-in-Residence in 2007, responsible for the creation of prompts, playwright mentoring, and advising the undergraduate membership through 2011.

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK - GENESEO

Mainstage Theatre

<i>Hot N' Throbbing</i> (Paula Vogel)	Asst. Director	November 2001
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Student Organized Undergraduate Productions

<i>Freedom of the City</i> (Brian Friel)	Director	February 2002
<i>The Spinning Wheel One Act Festival</i>	Artistic Director	March 2001
<i>American Welcome</i> (Brian Friel)	Monologue Coach	March 2001

Experimental Lab Theatre

<i>The Breasts of Tiresias</i> (Apollinaire)	Director	November 2000
<i>Mostellaria</i> (Plautus)	Director	September 2000
<i>Counting the Ways</i> (Edward Albee)	Director	December 1999
<i>Foreplay</i> (David Ives)	Director	October 1999

Publications and Conference Presentations

- *Theatre Turbocharged: Collegiate 24-Hour Theatre Festivals*. Association for Theatre in Higher Education: Chicago, August 2011. [Conference session organizer and chair.]
- *Local No More: The Returned Emigrant in Irish Theatre*. American Conference for Irish Studies: Madison, April 2011. [Conference Paper]
- *Landscape Displaced: O'Neill's Desire Under the Elms and its Irish Underpinnings*. American Society for Theatre Research: Seattle, November 2010. [Conference Paper]
- *Showing Through Telling: Mark O'Rowe's Howie the Rookie and Dublin's Dark Diegetic Narrative*. Association for Theatre in Higher Education: Los Angeles, August 2010. [Conference Paper]
- *Sundays at the Abbey: Engaging with Bloody Sunday and the Troubles at the Abbey Theatre*, American Conference for Irish Studies: State College, May 2010. [Conference Paper]
- *The American Hyphen in Modern Irish Theatre: Irish-, Academic-, and American-Americans in the Plays of Brian Friel and Beyond* in The American as Foreigner on Stage: Portraits of the United States in International Drama, edited by Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr. 98-118. (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2009) [Article in Book]
- *The Long Shot: Emigration and the Prospect of Return in Irish Diasporic Film*, American Society of Theatre Research Conference, Phoenix: November 2007. [Conference Paper]
- *Framing America: Locating the Foreigner in Contemporary Irish Drama* presented in the panel "America the Foreigner", American Society of Theatre Research Conference, Phoenix: November 2007. [Conference Paper]
- *The Abbey Theatre and its Place within Irish Theatre* at The Gaelic Arts Society, Pittsburgh: April 2007. [Public Lecture]

Academic Service

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH – THEATRE ARTS

Committees: Curriculum and Assessment, Mainstage Season Selection, Budget, Undergraduate Lab Production Selection, Faculty Meeting Representative

President – Duse Society (Theatre Arts Grad Organization), also served in all VP posts.

Graduate Teaching Mentor – 2010/2011

Advisor and Playwright-in-Residence – Redeye Theatre Project, 2008-2011

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

Beckett School Representative – Graduate Students' Union

SUNY GENESEO

President – *Alpha Psi Omega* (National Theater Honor Society)

President – Veg. SOUP (Student Organized Undergraduate Productions)

Vice President – Cothurnus (Student Theatre Club)

MISCELLANEOUS

Theatre Adjudicator – Fairchild Performance Challenge at Phipps Conservatory, October, 2011

Presentation Judge – Pitt Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Grad Expo, 2009-2011

Theatre Adjudicator – Regional high School Theatre Competition, 2002

Honors / Awards

Current	Andrew Mellon Predoctoral Fellowship & Tuition Waiver
2010	University of Pittsburgh Summer Research Fellowship
2010	<i>Glór na nGael</i> Recognition of Global Irish Competition, Fourth Prize
2009	Theatre Arts Department "Best Graduate Director" for <i>The Clean House</i>
2008	KCACTF Certificate of Merit for Excellence in Directing <i>The Clean House</i>
2006	Full Teaching Fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh (5-year position)
2002	Robert Sinclair Scholarship for Excellence in Directing Theatre, SUNY Geneseo
2002	Academic Dean's List - cumulative over four years at SUNY Geneseo
2002	Geneseo Foundation Student Undergraduate Research Grant for production of <i>Freedom of the City</i> and corresponding panel discussion on the Troubles.

Additional Work Experience

Deputy Manager - *Gaiety Theatre Dublin*. Manage box office and telephone sales teams in a large, 1200 seat professional receiving theatre. Oversee 15+ staff, liaise with producers and monitor sales. (June 2005 – May 2006)

Assistant Brewer/Distiller & Server - *Dogfish Head Distillery & Brewpub, Rehoboth Beach, DE*. By day: Assist in the distilling of rum and gin as well as collaborate in the creation of specialty beers in an experimental seven barrel brewhaus. By night: Serve the same. (May 2004 – September 2004)

Film Archivist & Intern - *Rehoboth Beach Film Society*. Screen and categorize film submissions based on genre, subject matter, and quality. (May 2004 – August 2004)

English Teacher - *Via Langua International, Western Africa*. Lead a group of 16 international TEFL professionals through Morocco, Western Sahara, Mauritania, Senegal, and The Gambia in order to survey, research, and develop English programs. (December 2003 – March 2004)

Truro Hostel General Manager - *Hostelling International, Cape Cod*. Manage all aspects of a medium-sized seasonal hostel, including hiring and training staff, maintenance, financial management, customer service, etc. (June 2003 – September 2003)

Wildlife Videographer - *In The Wild Productions, Provincetown, MA*. Film whales and other sea-life in the open North Atlantic for stock footage and sale. (July 2003 – September 2003)

English Teacher & Tutor - *Ulrych, Prague Language Studio*. Teach all levels of English in both classroom and business settings throughout Prague. (December 2002 – June 2003)

Program Director & Hostel Staffer - *Hostelling International Martha's Vineyard Hostel*. Develop and coordinate educational and environmental outreach programs for visiting groups, hostellers, and the surrounding community. (May 2002 – September 2002)

Technical Assistant - *Theatre Scene Shop, SUNY Geneseo* (Work-Study) Assist Technical Director and labor in all facets of theatrical production: Carpentry, construction, painting, lighting, sounds, electrics, special effects, etc. for two producing theatre spaces. (August 2000 – May 2002)

General Manager - *Thousand Island Park Marina, NY*. Fully manage small marina, including gas dock and marine store. Hire and train employees, maintain records, communicate with vendors, etc. (Seasonal, May 1998 – September 2000)

Ph.D. (University of Pittsburgh)

DISSERTATION

Staging Ireland's Yanks: Americans and Hyphens in Contemporary Irish Theatre

An invigorating look into the role that American characters play in recent Irish theatre. This dissertation demonstrates how Irish playwrights and production companies use American characters to interrogate and reflect on the three major socio-political paradigms of the 20th century: Emigration, The Troubles, and the Celtic-Tiger.

ACADEMIC COMPONENTS

Comprehensive Exam Areas

Textual Discourse: Shakespeare

Historical Discourse: Contemporary Irish Theatre

Theoretical Discourse: Cognitive Science

Preliminary Exam Concentrations

Contemporary European & American Theatre (1940-Present)

Modern European Theatre (1880-1939)

Medieval Theatre

Greek & Roman Theatre

Foreign Language Competency

Gaeilge (Irish - Written and Spoken)

TEACHING FELLOWSHIP WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant

Assist Bruce McConachie in preliminary research for a forthcoming book on Performance and Cognitive Studies.

Prop Shop Supervisor

Supervise undergraduates, design and build props for shows, manage loans and rentals from a 2500 sq. ft. prop shop tightly packed with properties of all kinds.

Scene Shop Assistant

Assist in the construction of sets and scenery for mainstage shows.

Marketing Assistant

Creatively market productions to students and public. Assist in grant-writing, outreach programs, website design, photography, and other public relations work.

Box Office Staff / House Manager

Sell tickets to productions in three theatre spaces, manage online ticketing systems, run front-of-house operations.

TA – Theatre History III

Assist Professor Lisa Jackson-Schebetta during her first term teaching for Pitt. (I had previously designed and taught this class alone.)

TA – Directing I

Co-Teach Directing I during a term when Professor Stephen Coleman was required to miss a considerable amount of class due to acting in a production at the Public Theatre. As seen under “teaching experience” I redesigned the course and taught it the next term.