

# Dr. Amanda Jane Olmstead

**Email:** amanda.j.olmstead@gmail.com  
**Phone :** (724) 422-6916  
**Address :** 244 Paul St  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15211

## Education

- Ph.D. Theatre & Performance Studies University of Pittsburgh 2021  
*Special Option:* Choreography  
*Dissertation:* *Who Tells The Story?: Andy Blankenbuehler's Choreography and the Ensemble Body on Broadway*  
*Committee:* Dr. Michelle Granshaw (Chair), Dr. Kathleen George, Dr. Cindy García, and Cynthia Croot.
- M.A. Performance Studies New York University 2014  
*Thesis:* "Walt Disney World's Choreography of Objects"
- B.A. Theatre Indiana University of Pennsylvania 2011  
*Emphasis:* Musical Theatre Performance  
*Minor:* Dance

## Teaching and Advising

**University of Pittsburgh: Lecturer IX (Fall 2022-present), Visiting Lecturer (Spring 2022), Adjunct Instructor (Fall 2021, Fall 2022)**

Enjoying Performances  
 (Fall 2018, Spring 2024, Spring 2025)

Enjoying Performances is an introductory level course that focuses on the field of performance studies.

Introduction to Performance  
 (Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025)

This will help students develop an introductory level of acting skill through the use of regular warm-ups, theater games, improvisation, and simple scene study.

Introduction to Dramatic Art  
 (Spring 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024, Fall 2025)

This course focuses on script analysis (the examination of how a dramatic text is put together). Exploring a diverse range of dramatic forms spanning histories and geographies, we will study how a play and its structural characteristics offer possible meaning on the page and on the stage.

**World Theatre II: 1640-1890**

(Spring 2022: one undergraduate section, one graduate section)

This installment of World Theatre explores dramatic forms, theatre practices, and performance from 1640-1890.

**World Theatre III: 1890-Present**

(Fall 2025: one undergraduate section, one graduate section)

This installment of World Theatre explores dramatic forms, theatre practices, and performance from 1890-present.

***Carnegie Mellon University: Adjunct Faculty (2019-present)*****Musical Theatre History**

(Spring 2020, Spring 2021, Spring 2022, Spring 2023, Spring 2024, Spring 2025)

This course has been designed as both a Special Topics class as well as a core component of the Musical Theatre Option curriculum. Students learn the foundational principles of musical theatre and track its development in relation to society from the 1800s to the present.

**Musical Theatre History & Repertoire**

(Fall 2020, Fall 2021, Fall 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024, Fall 2025)

This course has been designed as both a Special Topics class as well as a core component of the Musical Theatre Option curriculum. Students learn the foundational principles of musical theatre and track its development in relation to society from the 1800s to the present. Additionally, song repertoire will be integrated into content.

**Foundations of Drama II**

(Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020, Spring 2021, Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Fall 2025)

This course is designed as a core piece of the BFA curriculum. It provides the students with a survey of the history of theatre and performance globally.

**Graduate Colloquium: Play Analysis**

(Spring 2022)

Colloquium is a graduate level course in historical and theoretical concepts related to theater studies. Course topics vary by semester, and may include (among other topics) the study of foundational mythologies, the history of the canon, performance studies, visual literacy and media theory, and critical ideas from other disciplines. The course is primarily discussion based, and requires close reading of graduate level material as well as the completion of regular writing assignments.

***Golden Gate University: Adjunct Faculty (2022-present)***

College Writing

(Spring 2023, Summer 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Summer 2024, Spring 2025)

This course has been designed through the Outlier program to introduce college students to methodologies and practices of academic writing.

Media Communications

(Summer 2023, Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Summer 2024)

This course is designed to be a part of the Communications programming at GGU. Students will explore, analyze, and practice different methodologies of media-based communication.

***Fairmont State University: Adjunct Faculty (2018)***

Theatre Appreciation

(Fall 2018)

The objective of this survey course is to serve as an introduction to both traditional and contemporary performance practices around the globe.

***University of Pittsburgh: Teaching Fellow (2014-2020)***

Introduction to Performance

(Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Fall 2015, Spring 2016, Summer 2018, Spring 2019, Spring 2020)

This will help students develop an introductory level of acting skill through the use of regular warm-ups, theater games, improvisation, and simple scene study.

Enjoying Performances

(Fall 2018)

Enjoying Performances is an introductory level course that focuses on the field of performance studies.

World Theatre II: 1640-1890

(Fall 2017: one undergraduate section, one graduate section)

This installment of World Theatre explores dramatic forms, theatre practices, and performance from 1640-1890.

Contemporary Global Stages: Dance Worlds

(Spring 2017)

Dance Worlds will focus on dance histories and aesthetic practices on a global scale.

***University of Pittsburgh: Teaching Assistant (2014-2020)***

New Play Practicum

(Spring 2020) Professor: Kathleen George

This course focuses on developing new plays written by students into fully realized stage productions.

#### Musical Theatre

(Fall 2015) *Instructor: Robert Frankenberry*

This course focuses on proper vocal technique and developing character within musical numbers. Students will have the opportunity to work individually on vocal technique and movement technique with the instructor and teaching assistant throughout the semester.

#### World Theatre III: 1900-present

(Fall 2016) *Instructor: Vicki Hoskins*

This installment of World Theatre explores dramatic forms, theatre practices, and performance from 1900-the present.

#### Enjoying Performances

(Spring 2018) *Instructor: Courtney Colligan*

In this class we will define performance as a practice, a theory, and a discipline.

### ***University of Pittsburgh: Teaching Assistant (2014-2020)***

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***Graduate Advising and Mentorship***

Carnegie Mellon University, Secondary MFA Thesis Advisor

Allie Baylock: "Theatre in Wartime" (April 2024)

Kolton Cotton: "In the Palm of Our Hands: Examining Materiality and Embodiment through Media Design for Theatre" (April 2024)

Zhengdao (Ernest) Wan: "Staging Echoes: The Role of Scenography in Modern Theater's Societal Critique" (April 2024)

***Undergraduate Advising and Mentorship***

Musical Theatre Club Graduate Advisor

(2014-2019)

The University of Pittsburgh's Musical Theatre Club is a student-run organization working under the support of the Theatre Arts Department. Producing musical theatre productions, cabarets, a 24-hour musical, and workshops. My role as the graduate advisor is to support and mentor the students and their various projects. This includes conducting workshops, obtaining funding, aiding in marketing, and advising on auditions and show processes.

Student Mentorship

Jared Donelson, Stage Management, Spring 2022-2023

Jessica Israel, Theatre Pedagogy, Spring 2019

Jessica Israel, Choreography, 2015

Harry Hawkins, Choreography, 2015

Gabe Freedman, Vocal and Music Direction, 2014-2016

Honors College Research Mentor:

Lauryn Thomas, Dance and Narrative, 2017

***Shady Side Academy***

Acting One: Substitute Teacher: Senior School

(2021)

Instructed students on improvisation and monologue techniques.

Spotlight Specialist: Camp Ren

(2015-2016)

Theatre and dance instructor for middle school students during summer camp. Coached students in monologues, scene study, and improvisation.

Introduction to Drama Substitute Teacher: Senior School

(2013)

Instructed lectures on dramatic structure and play analysis.

**New York Film Academy**

Teaching Assistant  
(2014)

Assisting instructors with both acting and film courses. Coached actors on how to act in front of the camera and how to approach an on-camera audition.

*Michael Laibson (Acting for Film)*

*Renée Wilson (Improvisation and Audition Techniques)*

*Ryan Pomeranz (Film Techniques)*

**Footlight Players**

Music and Dance Intern  
(2011)

Assistant Music Director, Rehearsal Accompanist, Vocal Coach for two productions of *Annie*, Beginning Tap and Jazz Assistant, Assistant to the Director for *We are Antigone* and *The Broken Lamp*.

**Piano and Voice**

(2009-2016)

Taught middle and high school students private piano and voice.

**Jumpstart, AmeriCorp Member**

Jumpstart Leader  
(2013-2014)

Taught 3-5 year old students at a Lower East Side preschool. Worked to increase literacy and prepare young children within the New York City communities for school and life skills.

**Workshops****Workshops Taught**

*Musical Theatre Club*

Sight Reading When You Don't Read Music (Spring 2017)

Dance for the Actor (Spring 2016)

Expanding Your Vocal Range (Spring 2015)

Musical Theatre Audition Techniques (Fall 2014, Spring 2015, Fall 2015)

Acting the Song (Fall 2015)

Connecting with Your Music (Fall 2015)

*Guest Instructor: University of Pittsburgh*

Audition Techniques: Passing the Dance Audition (Spring 2016)

Acting One: Coloring Your Monologue (Spring 2015, Fall 2015)

Stage Combat: Dance Movement for the Actor (Spring 2015)

Musical Theatre: Scoring your Song (Fall 2015)

Musical Theatre: Choreography for the Non-Dancer (Fall 2015)

***Workshops Organized***

Council of Three Rivers American Indian Center (Spring 2017)  
Nrityamala: Classical Indian Dance (Spring 2017)

***Publications***

*Andy Blankenbuehler: a critical companion.* Methuen Drama. TBD 2025.

"Dance as Narrative." *Dance in Musical Theatre : A History of the Body in Movement.*  
Edited by Dustyn Martincich and Phoebe Rumsey. Methuen Drama. 2023.

"Développé: Katherine Dunham's Diasporic Dance." *Studies in Musical Theatre.* Intellect, Ltd. 4.27.2018.

***Conference Papers and Participation***

"A Part of the Play: Integrating Dance and the Chorus as a Narrative Tool." Association for Theatre in Higher Education. Virtual Conference. August 2021.

"Blankenbuehlerizing Broadway: Methods of Creating and Analyzing Choreography in Musical Theatre" Orlando, FL. August 2019.

"Zumanity: Performing Utopia, Performing Fetish." American Society for Theatre Research. San Diego, CA. November 2018

"Emotion Boxes." Association for Theatre in Higher Education. Boston, MA. August 2018

"Body/Dance Dramaturgy in Educational Theatre." Approaching Dance. City University of New York. New York City, NY. May 2017.

"Développé: Katherine Dunham's Diasporic Dance." Association for Theatre in Higher Education. Las Vegas, NV. August 2017.

"Disney's Cinematic Adaptations into an Environmental Theatrical Stage" New England Theatre Conference. Boston, MA. October 2015.

"Walt Disney World's Choreography of Objects" New York University Graduate Symposium. New York City, NY. May 2014.

***Honors and Awards***

Outstanding Adjunct Award (Golden Gate University, 2024)

Council of Graduate Students/ ProQuest Distinguished Dissertation Award (University of Pittsburgh, Theatre Arts Nominee, 2021)

Arts and Sciences Summer Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh (2018)  
 Arts and Sciences Conference Travel Funding, University of Pittsburgh (Fall 2015, Spring 2018)  
 Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences Graduate Student Organization Travel Grant (2015, 2017, 2018)  
 Elizabeth Baranger Excellence in Teaching Award, University of Pittsburgh  
 Nominated ('14-'15, '15-'16, '16-'17, '17-'18)  
 Honorable Mention ('14-'15)  
 Bruce Kirle Memorial Emerging Scholarship Panel, Association for Theatre in Higher Education (2017)  
 Segal AmeriCorps Education Award (2014)

### *Professional Affiliations*

Association for Theatre in Higher Education (2014-Present)  
 American Society for Theatre Research (2018-Present)  
 City Theatre (2021-Present)  
 Dance Studies Association (2014-Present)  
 Hillman Center for Performing Arts, Staff and Box Office Manager (2012- 2018)  
 Hillman Center for Performing Arts, Interim Managing Director (2015-2016)  
 Hillman Center for Performing Arts, Theatre Productions Intern (2012-2013)  
 Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Events Coordinator (2009-2011)  
 Literary Managers and Dramaturges of the Americas (2010-2019)  
 New England Theatre Conference (2014-Present)  
 Shady Side Academy, Camp Ren Director (2022-Present)  
 Shady Side Academy, Assistant Camp Ren Director (2017-2021)  
 Shady Side Academy, Camp Ren Staff (2015-2016)  
 University of Pittsburgh, Research Assistant (2014-2016)  
     *Michelle Granshaw (2015-2016)*  
     *Kathleen George (2014-2015)*  
 Walt Disney World, PhotoPass Photographer (2012-2014)

### *Service*

#### *Professional*

Association for Theatre in Higher Education  
 Musical Theatre and Dance Focus Group Graduate Representative (2018-2019)

#### *University*

Musical Theatre Club Advisor (2014- 2019)  
 Department Website Contributor (2017-2018)  
 Student Production and Department Events Photographer (2014-2019)  
 Curriculum Committee (2016-2017)  
 Special Option Revision Committee (2016-2017)



Faculty Search Committee, Musical Theatre Faculty (2014-2015)  
Marketing Staff (2014-2016)

## ***Production Experience***

### ***Choreography***

*Head Over Heels*, University of Pittsburgh (Upcoming Spring 2026)  
*On the Town*, Montour High School (Upcoming Spring 2026)  
*Anything Goes*, Shady Side Academy (Upcoming Spring 2026)  
*Elf Jr*, Montour Middle School (Upcoming Fall 2025)  
*As You Like It*, University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2025)  
*Little Mermaid*, Montour High School (Spring 2025)  
*We Will Rock You*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2025)  
*Newsies Jr*, Montour Middle School (Fall 2024)  
*Zombie Prom*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2024)  
*Chicago*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2023)  
*Pippin*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2022)  
*Now. Here. This.*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2021)  
*The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2020)  
*Last Five Years*, Concept Project; University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2017)  
*Hair*, University of Pittsburgh (Fall 2016)  
*Urinetown*, University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2015)  
*A Tribute to the Beatles*, Show Choir; United High School (Fall 2015)  
*A Country Christmas Carol*, United High School (Fall 2014)  
*South Pacific*, Blairsville High School (Spring 2013)  
*Annie*, United High School (Fall 2012)

### ***Assistant & Associate Choreography***

*Bright Star*, Front Porch Theatricals (Associate Choreographer: Spring 2019)  
*Big Fish*, University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2015)  
*West Side Story*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2013)

### ***Directing***

*Last Five Years*, Concept Project; University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2017)  
*High School Musical*, 24-Hour Musical; University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2016)  
*Pins and Needles*, Staged Reading; University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2015)  
Freshman Showcase, Co-Director, University of Pittsburgh (Fall 2015)

### ***Assistant Directing***

*On the Town*, Montour High School (Upcoming Spring 2026)  
*Elf Jr*, Montour Middle School (Upcoming Fall 2025)  
*Little Mermaid*, Montour High School (Spring 2025)  
*Newsies Jr*, Montour Middle School (Fall 2024)  
*South Pacific*, Blairsville High School (Spring 2013)

***Vocal Direction and Vocal Coaching***

*Now. Here. This.*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2021)

*Urinetown*, University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2015)

*Big Fish*, University of Pittsburgh (Spring 2015)

*South Pacific*, Blairsville High School (Spring 2013)

*West Side Story*, Shady Side Academy (Spring 2013)

*Annie*, Footlight Players Academy (Summer 2011)

***Accompanist***

*Annie*, United High School (Fall 2012)

Bethel Cemetery Church (2005-2012)

Musical Theatre Workshop Class, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (Fall 2011)

Voice Lessons, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (Fall 2009-Spring 2010)

*Bat Boy the Musical*, Keystone Repertory Theatre (Summer 2010)

***Production Dramaturgy***

*Cabaret*, Theatre Now New York (2013)

*Jesus Christ Superstar*, Keystone Repertory Theatre (2013)

*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shady Side Academy (2012)

*West Side Story*, Shady Side Academy (2013)

Resident Dramaturg, Hillman Center for Performing Arts (2012-2013)

## *References*

### **University of Pittsburgh Faculty**

Address: University of Pittsburgh  
Department of Theatre Arts  
1617 Cathedral of Learning  
4200 Fifth Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Dr. Michelle Granshaw

Position: Associate Professor  
Relationship: Professor, Dissertation Chair  
Phone: (631) 513-9099  
Email: [mkg31@pitt.edu](mailto:mkg31@pitt.edu)

Dr. Kathleen George

Position: Professor  
Relationship: Professor, Dissertation Committee  
Phone: (412) 860-9886  
Email: [georgeke@pitt.edu](mailto:georgeke@pitt.edu)

Annmarie Duggan

Position: Associate Professor  
Relationship: Teaching Mentor, Production Manager, Colleague  
Phone: (718) 812-8983  
Email: [duggan@pitt.edu](mailto:duggan@pitt.edu)

### **Shady Side Academy**

Address:  
423 Fox Chapel Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15238

Dek Ingraham

Position: Director of the Hillman Center and Performing Arts Chair  
Relationship: Director, Colleague  
Phone: (412) 721-4784  
Email: [dingraham@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:dingraham@shadysideacademy.org)

Nathan Verbanets

Position: Director of Programs  
Relationship: Summer Camp Supervisor  
Phone: (412) 447-2230  
Email: [nverbanets@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:nverbanets@shadysideacademy.org)