Master of Music in Conducting – Music Direction for Theatre

The Master of Music in Conducting with an emphasis in Music Direction for Theatre is geared toward aspiring conductors with strong keyboard or piano skills who are eager to learn the wide range of skills necessary for a successful career as a professional music director, particularly in the realm of professional musical theatre. This competitive program admits only one student per year and includes study of both opera and musical theatre repertoire. Students in this program must conduct two productions during their studies at ASU. Since 1991, the graduates of this program have had a remarkable record of success, whether working in academia, pursuing further conducting study, or as professional music directors on or off Broadway and the world over. While students have the opportunity to work with multiple faculty members, primary conducting studies are with Brian DeMaris, whose former students have led multiple productions on Broadway, on national tours and in opera houses around the world.

Training

- Individual study (classical or jazz piano, or voice).
- Individual and small group conducting study.
- Advanced Music Theatre Performance (dance/acting/scenes).
- Conducted main-stage productions.
- Musical Theatre and/or Opera History and Repertoire.
- Required theory, history, composition courses.
- Technical production courses.
- Elective courses in orchestration/arranging, music technology, pedagogy, jazz studies, various theatre courses, and modern languages.

Additional opportunities

- Assist on professional productions in formal collaboration with Phoenix Theatre.
- Participation in off-campus productions and performances is encouraged.
- Student workshop performance, in which students may serve in leadership roles such as directing, stage management, scenic/sound/costume design and more.
- Countless other opportunities within the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts and offerings across the 83,000-member ASU campus in metropolitan Phoenix.

Teaching assistantships

Music Direction Teaching Assistants team-teach undergraduate musical theatre courses with faculty, coach and prepare students for rehearsals and performances, and serve as pianists on productions and culminating class performances and showcases. The Teaching Assistantship amounts to 10 hours of work per week. Teaching Assistants receive:

- Tuition remission covering the non–resident portion of tuition.
- 50% reduction in the resident portion of tuition, plus scholarship available.
Faculty

Brian DeMaris – Artistic Director, Opera and Music Theatre, Conducting and Music Direction
Jeffery Meyer – Director of Orchestras
Jason Caslor – Director of Wind Ensembles
David Schildkret – Director of Choral Activities
Dale Dreyfoos – Associate Artistic Director, Opera and Music Theatre, Acting and Stage Direction
Molly Lajoie – Music Theatre, Dance and Movement
Robert Mills – Vocal Coach
Toby Yatso – Music Theatre Coordinator, Music Theatre, Acting and Stage Direction

About ASU Music Theatre and Opera

The Music Theatre and Opera program in the School of Music, Dance and Theatre at Arizona State University's Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts is committed to preparing outstanding opera and musical theatre artists for professional careers in the 21st century. Our program is distinctive in that it combines training in both opera and musical theatre. Serving approximately 100 undergraduate and graduate opera and musical theatre majors as well as students in dance and theatre, we currently produce five fully staged and costumed opera and musical theatre productions each year in its own 450-seat Evelyn Smith Music Theater, all supported with full orchestras from ASU's nationally renowned instrumental ensemble program. It boasts a significant team of faculty directors, conductors, designers, voice teachers, coaches and support staff, along with regular guest artists and other faculty from the School of Music, Dance and Theatre. The program also features formal collaborations and professional performance and study/cover opportunities with Arizona Opera and the Phoenix Theatre.

In addition to productions, we offer a comprehensive series of classes in voice, acting and dance, along with new works workshops, opera scenes programs and two musical theatre showcases each year. The quality and scope of our program is demonstrated by our professionally active faculty, as well as the success of our alumni who are performing in major opera houses, on Broadway, television and film, in national touring companies, regional theaters, and teaching in university programs throughout the United States and the world.

Required Courses

For a list of required courses, please see the GRADUATE CHECK SHEET.

Learn more at musicdancetheatre.asu.edu or contact Brian DeMaris, Artistic Director of Music Theatre and Opera at briandemaris@asu.edu.