

# **Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts**



## **Department of Theatre Arts**

### **Information Package**

**450 Masten Avenue**

**Buffalo, New York 14209**

**(716) 816-4220**

# WELCOME!

**Dear Students and Parents:**

**We are so pleased that you have interest in being a part of the Theatre Program here at the Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts.**

**Everyone here at BAVPA strives to make our school a positive and exciting learning community, where creativity is emphasized in every classroom, not only in the arts.**

**The Theatre Department is an exciting place; on any given day you will find students engaged in a multitude of activities: rehearsing plays, writing scripts, creating improvisations and developing characters, attending performances in the theatre community, creating costumes, scenery and props, collaborating with other majors, and much, much more!**

**We hope that you will jump right in and get involved in everything that you possibly can! There is so much to do and learn, and we look forward to you becoming a part of our family!**

**Break a leg! We are waiting for you in the wings!**

**Best,**

Kelly M. Beuth

Connor Graham

**Theatre Faculty**

AT RIGHT: The Cast of: FOUR LITTLE  
GIRLS: BIRMINGHAM, 1963





# THE AUDITION

**In order to be accepted into the theatre program, each student must successfully complete an audition in front of two or more members of the theatre faculty. This audition should not be a frightening experience for you. It should be an opportunity for us to get to know you and why you want to be a theatre major at BAVPA, and for you to show us your talent!**

**This checklist will be useful to you so that you remember what to bring on the day of your audition:**

- **A memorized monologue (speech by one actor in a play) that is about 2 minutes long, and that you have prepared before your audition day. (Check out the library, internet or local bookstore for monologue ideas)**
- **Your application for admission to BAVPA**
- **Two teacher recommendations  
(forms included with application)**
- **Your transcripts from your current school**
- **A positive attitude and an open mind!**



**As auditioners, we are looking for many things when we choose new students that we feel will have success in BAVPA's Theatre Department.**

**When we watch your monologue, we will evaluate you on: voice, diction, movement, interpretation or characterization, concentration, memorization and creativity.**

**We will also look at...**

**Have you worked on the material prior to the audition?**

**Do you show a clear understanding of your piece?**

**Are you excited/enthusiastic about being a theatre major?**

**Don't be nervous! We are excited to meet you and WANT you to do a GREAT job!**

# STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

**There are a number of responsibilities that go along with being a theatre student at BAVPA. Listed here are some of the most important things that we will expect from you during your time with us, and will ensure your success as a student.**

- **Each student must demonstrate a consistently positive approach to work and study habits.**
- **Students must be available to participate in required performances and arts related projects. This includes after school and occasional Saturday rehearsals, and evening and weekend performances. Students and their families are responsible to provide transportation home in a timely manner following rehearsals and performances, or the student's role may be in jeopardy.**
- **Students are responsible for maintaining good attendance and keeping up with all academics at all times; students who do not remain current with work are not able to participate in extra-curricular activities.**
- **Students should wear comfortable clothing each day, as many classes require movement work.**
- **Students are required to attend professional theatre performances and write critiques based on what they have seen. Details are listed under General Course Requirements.**



AT LEFT: Middle School Students perform ONE CHILD, ONE TEACHER, ONE BOOK, ONE PEN, CAN CHANGE THE WORLD: THE STORY OF MALALA YOUSAFZAI as a part of National History Day 2017.



# MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

**Middle School Theatre Majors** experience a highly interactive, hands-on program with many opportunities to learn and grow as a performer and team player. The middle school program is highly ensemble oriented, with focus on improving group work and concentration. Many additional opportunities to perform and create exist for middle school students, including the middle school play, middle school musical, and special projects such as National History Day, Band Against Bullying and more. The following is an overview of the current program offerings, which vary slightly from year to year.

**GRADES FIVE AND SIX:** The 5/6 years are an introduction to the world of theatre and creativity! Through theatre games, creative dramatics, improvisation, mime, playwriting and storytelling, students will push the boundaries of their imagination, and develop basic performance skills. Special attention will be paid to developing theatrical vocabulary and familiarity with the theatrical venue both onstage and off. Special projects may be added to the curriculum, including collaborations with Shea's Performing Arts Center's LION KING EXPERIENCE, Band Against Bullying, Night of the Living Majors and more. Many performance opportunities will exist for the students both during school and after school.

BELOW: Applying the finishing touches on performance makeup!



ABOVE: SHREK the Musical

# MIDDLE SCHOOL CONTINUED

**GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT:** In grades seven and eight, students will build upon skills that they have already developed, and concentrate on improving stage presence, poise, volume and diction through monologue work, as well as listening, focus and ensemble skills through exercises in speaking, writing, and dramatic interpretation. Students participate in the district-wide Richmond Speaking Contest, and are required to attend live theatre and write critiques. Students develop dramatic presentations through the interpretation and adaptation of a variety of literary genres including autobiography, poetry, short stories, and folk tales. Students will begin to understand character analysis and development through pantomime, improvisation, and scene writing, culminating in workshop performances. Students maintain journals on their class experiences.



CLOCKWISE:

BAND AGAINST BULLYING 2017

Zazu from THE LION KING

BAND AGAINST BULLYING 2016

AMAZING GRACE AND HER JELLY-BEAN TREE

IN-CLASS REHEARSAL



# HIGH SCHOOL CURRICULUM

**High School Theatre Majors experience a rigorous, hands-on program encompassing all areas of theatre arts, designed to provide progressive development as an actor. Focus on improving group work and concentration continues at a higher level, and performance opportunities challenge the young actor and stretch him/her to new heights. Students work with a group of their peers from their cohort over their four years of high school, and work hard to form a very tight acting ensemble. Many performance and technical opportunities exist for the high school thespian, and students are highly encouraged to seek work in the local theatre community as well. An analytical eye is also developed, as students are taught to think critically about not only their own work, but that of others as well.**

**Students will receive education in all areas of theatre, but their top focus will be acting. Areas of study include a large focus on scene and monologue work, character development, as well as strict development of actors' tools through improvisation, theatre games, and ensemble building. Emphasis will be placed on specific acting techniques and practitioners, and students will be encouraged to discover his or her own preferred method of character development. Students are expected to audition for mainstage productions in order to further hone their craft. Many opportunities will exist for students to perform both during school and after.**



**THEATRE HISTORY:** Taken during senior year as a full-year course, and using the Samuel Brockett text and teacher made materials, origins and development of drama are studied through dramatic theme and cultural growth. Emphasis is on the relationships between the need for drama and societal road blocks and avenues. Assessment is based on reflective and analytical discussion, quizzes, research projects, tests and projects.

LEFT: A lesson in Italian Commedia Dell'arte!

# GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

There are several general course requirements that each theatre student, grade nine through twelve should expect to accomplish each and every year of his/her career at BAVPA. Please read carefully, as leaving one of these incomplete can have a serious impact on your final grade.

**JOURNALS:** Although content requirements vary among courses, consistency of entry and submission is mandatory. Late journals do not afford full credit, and theatre journals should be only used for theatre. Journal entries must not be submitted on loose paper, and will not be given credit, unless specifically requested in that format.

**PROFESSIONAL PLAY ATTENDANCE/CRITIQUE:** A minimum of two critiques from every ninth through twelfth grade theatre major are required each semester. Grades five thru eight requirements vary as per instructor. One may review a current BAVPA mainstage or black box theatre production or a professional production in Buffalo or elsewhere. Failure to submit a critique will result in five points deducted from the semester's average.

**MID-TERM JURIED MONOLOGUE:** Students in the high school program are required to independently prepare a monologue for department adjudication at mid-year. A written character analysis will be included, and the student is expected to read the entire play from which the monologue came. Full written instructions, guidelines, and due dates are given in the fall.

**FINAL JURIED SCENE:** High school theatre majors are required to work in pairs to prepare scenes for departmental review and assessment at year's end. Written character analyses and verbal defense of artistic jury decisions will be included in the evaluation. Scenes will be evaluated using a rubric similar to the one used for BAVPA auditions. Full written instructions, guidelines, and due dates are given in the fall. Deadlines are strictly adhered to with strong point deductions for lateness.



ABOVE: IVY AND BEAN, 2016



# PRODUCTION EXPECTATIONS

The best way in which to learn theatre is by **DOING** theatre! Therefore, we have included a mandatory production element to our department. **ALL** high school theatre majors are **REQUIRED** to participate in an extra-curricular theatrical production, either onstage or backstage, to the minimum total of twenty hours per semester (a semester being twenty weeks). This factors into the student's grade for the second and fourth marking periods.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This does **NOT** mean that one can assume the role of stage manager for a given production, and then drop the responsibility once the twenty hour minimum is met. Theatre is about **COMMITMENT** and **RESPONSIBILITY**, and we hammer that home to our students each and every day. Theatre can only be created if **ALL** of the given entities live up to their commitment to the group, and therefore we expect that when a student accepts a responsibility, he or she will follow through.

Check out some pictures of our past productions below!



# TOP NOTCH THEATRE RESOURCES

Many of these are available at Barnes and Noble or online at Amazon

**THE TECHNIQUE OF ACTING** by Stella Adler

**AUDITION** by Michael Shiurtleff

**IMPROVISATION FOR THE ACTOR** by Viola Spolin

**AN ACTOR PREPARES** by Konstantin Stanislavski

**RESPECT FOR ACTING** by Uta Hagen

**STRASBERG'S METHOD** by Loraine Hull (advanced)

**DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DRAMA** by Brian Way (advanced)



---

**Read plays of all kinds from all eras!**

**Your theatre teacher and media specialist can guide you!**

**Barnes and Noble, Talking Leaves and Amazon are excellent sources as well!**

**The BAVPA Media Center is helpful, and the Buffalo Public Library has an extensive collection of plays and videotaped recordings of plays!**

**Stay informed about what is happening in theatre by reading**

**THE PUBLIC and ARTVOICE!**

**Auditions and other theatre news is listed in the Thursday GUSTO of**

**THE BUFFALO NEWS!**





# TIPS FOR SUCCESS!

**See any and all plays you can! Artvoice and Gusto have complete listings!**

**Many have Pay What You Can nights or offer to usher.**

**Audition for everything you can! The more you practice, the better you get at it!**

**Keep up with projects and stay ahead of deadlines in ALL your subjects.**

**Keep your eyes and ears open...be observant! Keep a journal for observations and random thoughts, even if not required for class.**

**Be flexible in all that you do.**

**Once you make a commitment, honor it!**

**Organize and write down assignments and due dates when you get them,,, keeping a calendar is a HUGE help!**

**Take notes in all your classes...no one can remember everything.**

**Listen to yourself.**

**Always have a pen or pencil.**

**Keep chewing gum out of the classroom.**

**Learn the difference between homework and studying. DO your homework ahead of time. Homework is what is assigned. Studying is really learning what you've been taught...take initiative...it will pay off! Spend at least fifteen minutes per class each night on review. Review each day's notes and make sure that you understand. If you are unsure, don't be afraid to ask questions the next day while it is fresh in your mind.**

**Cooperate...the class and the Theatre Department are a family.**

**Find the enjoyment of learning...it will come if you let it!**

**IF YOU ARE A DILIGENT STUDENT AND TAKE YOUR EDUCATION SERIOUSLY...  
IN A FEW YEARS, THIS WILL BE YOU!**

