



**MISSISSIPPI THEATRE ASSOCIATION**  
**2023 ANNUAL THEATRE FESTIVAL**  
**Workshop Schedule**  
**Link Centre**  
January 12-14, 2023  
**12/21/22 - Subject to Change**

**Thursday, January 12, 2023**

**7:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

**Interactive Improvisational Theatre Experience**

Location: Link Centre, Concert Hall

TBD

Come participate in an interactive, entertaining, and educational improvisational experience.

**Friday, January 13, 2023**

**2:30 p.m.**

**Wait, what?! Why are they singing????**

Location: Link Centre, Black Box Theatre

Katrina Ploof, AACT Representative

Description: Based upon the work of David Ball presented in his book Backwards & Forwards this workshop is for directors and actors alike who find themselves scratching their heads whilst unraveling the mysteries of character and motivation in musical theatre. In this workshop we will use Ball's techniques and suggestions to answer such pressing questions as: "why does Donkey love Shrek, despite how badly he's treated??" and "can someone tell me how to make sense of the 20 seconds it takes Cossette and Marius to fall in love?" Come learn how to put both lyrics and dialogue to the test that can reveal honesty and depth in even the most ludicrous of situations.

### **Special Effects Makeup**

Location: Link Centre, Library – Room 109  
Matthew Grant, Cleveland High School

Description: Students will have the opportunity to learn some basic theater special effects makeup tricks like bruises, cuts, wrinkles, etc...

### **Weeding Your Garden: Uprooting White Supremacy Culture**

Location: Link Centre, Room 216  
Esther Margaret, Teacher, Activist, MTA EDI Committee Member

Description: Join theatre teacher, activist, and MTA EDI Committee Vice-Chair Esther Margaret as they lead an intergenerational discussion and collective imagining around what a multi-racial, multi-cultural beloved community of love and justice in Mississippi can look like. We will discuss and visualize (via pen/marker and paper) the values and mission of MTA's EDI committee to see what resonates with attendees. Then, drawing on Tema Okun's influential essay "Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture", participants will identify which characteristics they feel most affected by and discuss how they show up in their life. We will then use art-making to imagine what it might look or feel like to uproot this self-identified "weed" from both their individual "garden" and our collective garden. Please join us in this collective art-making activity!

### **The Team Effect**

Location: Link Centre, Room 200  
Kay Armstrong, Adjudicator

Description: An open discussion: Whether director, music director, costumer, tech designer, performer, board operator, or volunteer with a hammer or paintbrush: YOU are a part of a TEAM to successfully accomplish the production....from earliest stages to opening night. Sharing and overcoming the challenges of working through the emotional and ego conflicts as well as the sharing of goals.

### **Setting the Scene: Staging a Theatrical Beginning to a Play**

Location: Link Centre, Room 206  
Emma Denson, Adjudicator

Description: One of the most important jobs of the director is to invite the audience into the world of the play. This workshop will take participants through the process of establishing the world of the story from the beginning of the play, sometimes creating a theatrical event before the dialogue even starts. They will then be divided into groups, and each group will be given a different opening to a play. The groups will then work together to pitch a staging of their opening scene, using the components discussed in the first part of the workshop. The workshop will end with a feedback session from the other groups.

### **Theatre Knot Tying 101**

Location: Link Centre, Room 119  
Jesse Wade, Mississippi State University

Description: Join us for this hands-on workshop to learn effective theatre knot tying techniques.

### **Character Choices**

Location: Link Centre, Room 105

Layla Young, StoryWorks Theatre Company

Description: Layla Young, Lead Teaching Artist for StoryWorks Theater Company, will provide tips and tools for actors when making choices for their character. Through a series of activities and exercises participants will think about their character's objective and tactic(s) used to reach the objective. By the end actors will be able to make choices that are intentional and grounded in their character.

### **Saturday, January 14, 2023**

**9:00 a.m.**

### **Working as a Professional Theatre Artist ~ A Conversation**

Location: Link Centre, Black Box Theatre

Marianne Savell, Adjudicator

Description: As a long time professional actor, director, teacher/professor and playwright I love to share information that will help theatre makers get where they want as an artist and citizen of the world. Engaging with their dreams and their humanity we will discuss nurturing their art, determining where to live and how to pursue a life in the theatre.

### **Theatre Knot Tying 101**

Location: Link Centre, Library – Room 109

Jesse Wade, Mississippi State University

Description: Join us for this hands-on workshop to learn effective theatre knot tying techniques.

**10:00 a.m.**

### **"But You Don't Understand"**

Location: Link Centre, Library – Room 109

Richelle Putnam, Adjudicator

Description: In this monologue workshop, attendees write and perform a short monologue. Attendees draw from the "writing Prompt" box a scenario from which they will create their convincing monologue, which will begin with "But you don't understand ..." This is a fun workshop with lots of audience interaction.

### **Lab Rats Comedy Improv**

Location: Link Centre, Black Box Theatre

Mississippi State University Lab Rats Improvisational Troupe

Description: This workshop introduces players to the basic rules of improv, and fundamental performance techniques. The second half of the workshop is comprised of a mock audition process, to give players a feel for what collegiate and professional improv troupe auditions might entail. Students will be participating in scenes with workshop leaders, and with one another, as well as doing group warmups and activities.

### **Vital Part of the Process: The Playwriting Workshop**

Location: Link Centre, Room 115

Sarah Grammar, MTA Adult Playwriting Chair

Description: So you've written a play (or part of a play): now what? One of the most vital parts of the playwriting process is the workshop, where actors read the script with minimal direction or none at all. This crucial step allows the playwright to hear their words aloud and gives life to emerging work. In this session, participants will learn about the play workshoping process, how to cultivate a constructive workshop audience, and what to do with a script after the workshop concludes. Attendees are encouraged to bring a hardcopy of an original scene suitable for a mixed age audience.

**11:00 a.m.**

### **Life as a Working Theatre Artist**

Location: Link Centre, Library – Room 109

Shameca Freeman, Adjudicator

Description: This workshop is for those that plan on having a career in the entertainment industry. We will discuss choices that theatre artist have to take to make it in the industry, as well as, how to support yourself financially.

### **Theatre Creation: Making New Work**

Location: Link Centre, Black Box Theatre

Joseph Frost, The Floodlight Theatre Company

Description: Interested in learning to collaborate in making a new play? We'll learn to use devising techniques to build and assemble small moments into short pieces for performance - good for students, teachers, or any community interesting in making new things together.

**1:00 p.m.**

### **Ludus: More than ticketing (focus on fundraising, marketing, classes and collections)**

Location: Link Centre, Room 106

Kagen Miller, Ludus

Description: The business part of Theatre doesn't have to be difficult. Teachers and directors will learn how to run their ticketing, fundraising campaigns, marketing emails, classes, and trip payments all in one easy platform! Ludus will keep everything organized and offer you more time to focus on the fun stuff! Product Specialist Kaghen

Miller will discuss ways for directors/boosters/box office staff to fill their seats while making it easy for patrons! He will also discuss ways to increase sales and profits!

### **Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Bard**

Location: Link Centre, Room 115

Amile Wilson, MS Shakespeare Festival

Description: Shakespeare doesn't have to be scary! Learn tools and tips to help perform, direct, and design Shakespeare and other classical works!

### **Fill Your Teaching Toolbox with GAMES!**

Location: Link Centre, Library – Room 109

Sarah Bartos, St. Martin High School

Description: How many GAMES can we get through?? WHO KNOWS! Come see how you can fill your teacher toolbox with games to develop skills in a fun, engaging way.

We have games to get class started. Games to develop an ensemble. Games to practice improv skills. Games to get those creative juices flowing. PLUS games that are just downright fun and will bring your class to tears with laughter.

Come watch a team of high school students demonstrate as many games as possible in the time allowed. You'll see oldie but goodie games plus new games as well. You will go home with all of the games described, instructions on how to make them work in your class, and a newfound love of all GAMES!

### **The Penguin Project**

Location: Link Centre, Room 105

Kristy Meanor, SETC Representative

Description: Come and learn more about The Penguin Project, a special needs outreach program of the Wetumpka Depot Players.

**2:00 p.m.**

### **Script Analysis That Helps**

Location: Link Centre, Room 115

Amile Wilson, MS Shakespeare Festival

Description: How do you dive in and start to imagine words on a page coming to life?

Learn a variety of tools to help analyze scripts and make your performances come alive!

### **Introduction to Long-Form Improv**

Location: Link Centre, Concert Hall

Anubis Improv

Description: Improvised creativity comes so naturally to us as children, but we often lose sight of its value as adults. Improv comedy training can help us begin to once again work out those creative "muscles", leading to more confident social interactions, stronger professional and personal relationships, and a regular outlet for joy in our lives. Drawing from eight years and thousands of hours of teaching and coaching experience,

this workshop will introduce the fundamentals of long-form improv, including "Yes, and...", "If this, then what", and The Formula of Improv.

**3:00 p.m.**

**Lab Rats Comedy Improv**

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