

JENNA NEILSEN

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A theatre practitioner and educator with over 16 years of classroom and directing experience who specializes in actor training utilizing multiple methodologies.

ACADEMIC TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2007 – TO PRESENT

ASST/ASSOCIATE/FULL PROFESSOR OF THEATRE, ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY; SCHOOL OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

- Head of Performance Track in a theatre liberal arts program.
- Teach a wide range of performance and theatre courses from Beginning Acting to Advanced Acting Techniques, Improvisational Acting to Styles of Acting, as well as Play Direction and Costume Design.
- Direct student performances annually in the main-stage season.
- Have advised over 50 senior thesis projects, including directing, acting, designing, stage managing, and dramaturgy.
- Founded and now direct a highly active improvisational troupe, The Lost and Found
- Planned, organized, fundraised, and led week long improvisational acting immersions to Chicago to study with Second City (2014, 2016, 2018, 2020 postponed to 2022)
- Involved in all department and program revisions, including the recent restructuring of the theatre major to include 4 areas of emphases
- Actively involved in campus-wide committees and shared governance, including Faculty Senate as both a Senator and Vice President
- Actively involved in student recruitment, advisement, and retention
- Have received exemplary status (awarded by Dept. Chair, VPAA, and Board of Trustees) multiple times
- Awarded Meritorious Achievement in Direction from KCACTF- 2011 & 2015

2020 – TO PRESENT

COORDINATOR OF THEATRE, ADAMS STATE UNIVERSITY

- Oversee the production aspects of the theatre department, including season selection, scheduling, and senior thesis production assignments
- Determine, in consultation with the technical director, the annual production budget. Oversee production budget and credit card management/reallocations
- Manage approximately 25 work student students in all facets of theatre production, including the managerial aspects such as timesheet approval and budget allocation
- Secure rights for production season and negotiate contracts with playwrights of non-published works
- Serve as the “face” of Adams State Theatre’s production season

2005 – 2007

ADJUNCT INSTRUCTOR: ACTING & SPEECH, VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION

MAY 2007

MASTER OF FINE ARTS, VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Theatre Pedagogy: Performance

Thesis: *"The Art of Collaboration in the Classroom: Team-Teaching Performance"*

GPA: 4.0

Coursework was wide and significant in scope, preparing me to teach both applied (performance) and theoretical courses. I supplemented my course schedule with costume design and history courses.

MAY 2001

BACHELOR OF ARTS, OHIO NORTHERN UNIVERSITY

Major: Theatre/Psychology

Summa Cum Laude

A largely musical theatre program, my course and production work afforded me the opportunity to focus specifically on acting technique while gaining experience in both musical and non-musical performance.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

IMPROVISATIONAL INTENSIVES

- **SECOND CITY CHICAGO**

Intensives Levels 1A-3A, Long Form, Sketch Writing & Character Development

Instructors: Susan Messing, Rachel Mason, Jennifer Billings, Sean Cusick, Micah Philbrook, Anthony LeBlanc, Matthew Can Colton

- **CELEBRATION BARN THEATRE**

Improvisation Intensive

Instructor: Keith Johnstone

ACTOR TRAINING

- **INTIMACY**

- Foundations of Intimacy (level 1): Intimacy Directors and Coordinators (Nov. 2022)

- Foundations of Intimacy (level 2): Intimacy Directors and Coordinators (May-June 2023)

- Consent Forward Artist Certification: June 2023

- Intimacy in Performance: Foundations Workshop (2019)

Instructor: Siobhan Richardson

- **CHUBBUCK ACTING METHOD**

- Southwest Scene Works (2017)

Instructor: Rebekah Wiggins

- **INTERNATIONAL STUDY**

- Queen Margaret University College- Edinburgh, Scotland (1999)
Intensive Acting Training in a conservatory setting

SELECT COURSES TAUGHT

- Improvisational Acting (Created Course)
- Beginning Acting
- Advanced Acting Technique (Scene Analysis)
- Physical Acting (Movement for the Actor)
- Styles of Acting (Greek, Shakespeare, Moliere)
- Voice for Performance
- Directing
- Improvising the Found Play
- Women and Drama
- Public Speaking for Business Professionals
- Acting for Non-Majors
- Business of Theatre (Created Course)
- Costume Design
- Senior Thesis
- Playwriting
- Writing the 10 Minute Play
- Oral Interpretation of Literature
- Speech Fundamentals
- First Year Seminar: Cultivating Creativity
- Modern Theatre (Literature and History)
- Creative Dramatics (Drama for/with children)
- Guided Autobiography

SELECTED RELATED PERFORMANCE- ACTING

<i>I Am a Ghost Haunting Myself</i>	Creator/Performer	Xperimental Theatre (George McConnell)
<i>13 Love Songs: Summer's End</i>	Creator/Performer	Rino Rooftop, Denver
<i>13 Love Songs: Time After Time</i>	Creator/Performer	SquarePeg, Alamosa
<i>Ripcord</i>	Colleen	Creede Repertory Theatre (Billie McBride)
<i>Boomtown Improv</i>	Troupe Member	Creede Repertory Theatre
<i>You Can't Take It With You</i>	Penny (understudy)	Adams State (John Taylor)
<i>Arcadia</i>	Lady Croom	Adams State (Paul Newman)
<i>My Name is Rachel Corrie</i>	Rachel Corrie	Adams State (Paul Newman)
<i>Laramie Project: 10 Years Later*</i>	Multiple Roles	Adams State (John Taylor)
<i>Lee's Miserables **</i>	Molly	Sycamore Rouge Theatre
<i>Stories I Ain't Told Nobody Yet</i>	Multiple Roles	Sycamore Rouge Theatre
<i>Obscura*, **</i>	Rachel	Virginia Commonwealth U.
<i>Love Labor's Lost</i>	Moth	Theatre on the Square (Indianapolis, IN)
<i>Equus</i>	Jill Mason	Theatre on the Square

*-denotes Staged Reading

**-denotes World Premiere

SELECTED RELATED PERFORMANCE- DIRECTING

<i>Tiny Beautiful Things (Vardalos/Strayed)</i>	Adams State University (Forthcoming)
<i>Little Women (Hamill)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Clyt: or the Bathtub Play (Speckman)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Wonderland: A Socially Distanced Adventure with Alice (devised)</i>	Adams State University (co-directed with George McConnell)
<i>Treasure Island (Ludwig)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind</i>	Adams State University
24 Hour Play Festival (2019)	Adams State University
Adams State Improv Troupe (2011-present)	Adams State University
<i>Dracula (Dietz)</i>	Adams State University
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream (Shakespeare)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Good Kids (Iizuka)</i>	Adams State University
<i>The Snow Queen (Nicol)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Marat/Sade (Weiss)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Amazing Food Detective</i>	Kaiser Permanente
<i>Getting Out (Norman)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Robin Hood (Banks)</i>	Adams State University
<i>A Flea in Her Ear (Feydeau)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Two Rooms (Blessing)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (Carroll)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Bright Ideas (Coble)</i>	Adams State University
<i>Pleasure Cruise (Obolensky)</i>	Virginia Commonwealth University
<i>We All Want (devised)</i>	Virginia Commonwealth University
<i>The Problem (Gurney)</i>	Virginia Commonwealth University
<i>Road to Ruin (Dresser)</i>	Virginia Commonwealth University
<i>North Star Light: Pathways to Freedom (Asst. Director)</i>	Carpenter Science Theatre

SELECTED RELATED PERFORMANCE- COSTUME DESIGN

Available upon request.

PUBLICATION

- "Captive Audience: Theatre Presentations at Johnson's Island Federal Prison Camp." Enacting Nationhood; Identity, Ideology and the Theatre, 1855-99, Ed. Scott Ireland. Cambridge Scholars Press, 2014, 43-57.

PRESENTATIONS/CONFERENCES

- Colorado High School One-Act Play Festival, "Make 'Em Laugh: Secrets to Immediately Improv Your Comedy Improvisation Skills", Workshop Presenter, April 2024 (forthcoming).

- Adams State University ArtsXtravaganza, presenter of multiple workshops multiple years, 2015-present.
- Adams State University Theatre Scholarship Audition Day, presenter of workshops multiple years, 2008-present.
- Panel Presentation. "COVID as Collaborator: A Roundtable Discussion Reimagining the Challenges and Benefits of In-Person Theatre in Fall 2020" Panel Coordinator and Co-Presenter on *Wonderland: A Socially Distanced Adventure with Alice*, ATHE Annual Conference Virtual Event, August 2021.
- Raton Community Theatre, Three Part Acting/Directing Workshops working with Raton Community Theatre, Raton, NM, Jan-March 2020.
- Faculty Representative. AAC&U Institute on Integrative Learning and Signature Work, July 2018, Boston, MA.
- "Herding Cats: Organizing & Leading a Comedy Improv Troupe," presented at 2014 High Desert High School Theatre Festival, 2014.
- "Character through Viewpoints," presented at 2014 High Desert High School Theatre Festival, 2014.
- "Make' Em Laugh: An Introduction to Comedy Improvisation," presented at 2014 High Desert High School Theatre Festival
- "It Takes a Village: The Pleasures & Perils of Academic Parenthood" Panel Member at Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Washington, DC, 2012.
- "Trench Comedyfare: Lessons Learned Organizing A University Comedy Improv Troupe," presented at Kennedy Center for American College Theatre Festival, Region 7, Boulder, CO, 2012.
- "Go Ahead! Make me Laugh: The Basics of Comedy Improvisation," presented as part of Adams State University Lecture Series, 2011.
- "Go Ahead! Make Me Laugh: A Brief Introduction to the Improvisation Techniques of Keith Johnstone," presented at Rocky Mountain Theatre Festival, Cheyenne, WY, 2011.
- "A Brief Introduction to Anne Bogart's Physical Viewpoints," presented at Rocky Mountain Theatre Festival, Durango, CO, 2009.
- "A Brief Introduction to Anne Bogart's Physical Viewpoints," presented at Colorado Thespian Conference, Denver, CO, 2008.
- "A Brief Introduction to Anne Bogart's Physical Viewpoints," presented at Alliance for Colorado Theatres, Denver, CO, 2008.
- "Captive Audience: An Examination of Theatre Presentations at Johnson's Island Federal Prison Camp," presented on "Theatre of the Underdog" panel at South Eastern Theatre Conference, Atlanta, GA, 2007.
- "Team Teaching in the Acting Classroom," presented on "Adventures in Pedagogy: Changing the Way We Teach Acting in Higher Education" panel at Mid-America Theatre Association Conference, Minneapolis, MN, 2007.

- “Captive Audience: An Examination of Theatre Presentations at Johnson’s Island Federal Prison Camp,” on “Empowering Performance in 19th Century America” panel at Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference, New Orleans, LA, 2007
- “Yes-And Improvisation for Instructors,” Co-presenter, at Southeastern Theatre Conference, Orlando, FL, 2006.
- “Yes-And Improvisation for Students,” Co-presenter, at Southeastern Theatre Conference, Orlando, FL, 2006.
- “Hartford Circus Fire 1944” on “Riots, Politics, and Fire: Interrupted Theatre Events” panel at South Eastern Theatre Conference, Orlando, FL, 2006.

AWARDS

- Terri McCartney Faculty Award 2018 (Awarded to a faculty member to pursue advanced training in their discipline)
- Exemplary Status 2012-2013, 2016-2017, 2019-2020, 2022-2023 Academic Years (Teaching, Service, & Scholarly/Creative Work) Adams State University as Recommended by Department Chair, Awarded by Peer Recognition Committee
- Certificate of Merit: Direction of Marat/Sade. Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Meritorious Achievement Award. 2015
- Certificate of Merit: Direction of A Flea In Her Ear. Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Meritorious Achievement Award. 2012
- Show Case Production- Two Rooms- Rocky Mountain Theatre Festival o Cheyenne, WY, 2011.
- Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) Fellowship, Adams State University, 2008.
- Graduate Thesis Fellowship, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2007
- Graduate Teaching Assistantship, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2006
- School of the Arts Tuition Scholarship, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2005
- Theatre Performance Scholarship, Ohio Northern University, 1997-2001

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Safe Zone Training 2015, 2019, 2023.
- Book Study/Learning Community, *Teaching Across Cultural Strengths: A Guide to Balancing Integrated and Individuated Cultural Frameworks in College Teaching*, summer 2021.

- Diversity Advocate Training, a series of online trainings to become a Diversity Advocate at Adams State University specifically for hiring and promotion committee work, The Office of Equal Opportunity and the Inclusive Excellence, summer 2018.

SERVICE

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- President: Rocky Mountain Theatre Association, 2011-2012. Vice-President: Rocky Mountain Theatre Association, 2010-2011.
- Respondent: Western State Colorado University's production of Talking With, Kennedy Center American College Festival, 2013.
- Respondent: Colorado State University's production of The Christmas Story, Kennedy Center American College Festival, 2012.
- Adjudicator: Pueblo Community College's production of Rosencrutz & Guildenstern are Dead, Rocky Mountain Theatre Association, 2010.
- Adjudicator: Adams State University's production of Little Match Girl, Rocky Mountain Theatre Association, 2010.
- Judge: Community and Youth Acting Competition, Rocky Mountain Theatre Festival, Durango, CO
- Adjudicator: Adams State University's production of The Witness & Rome, Inc, Rocky Mountain Theatre Association, 2007.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- Member: Search Committee for University President, 2022-2023
- Faculty Senate Vice President 2021-2022.
- Department Faculty Senator 2014-2017, 2019-2022.
- Peer Recognition Committee. 2021-2022.
- Diversity Advocate, Faculty Search, Tenure, and Promotion, 2018-present.
- Attendant: High Impact Practices Title V Winter Retreat, 2022.
- First Year Seminar Panelist, ePortfolio: The Common Thread of the Adams Experience Retreat, Center for Teaching, Innovation, and Research, January 2019.
- Member & Grant Recipient: Early ePortfolio Adaptors/Co-Faculty Mentor, 2019-present.
- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Sculpture. 2023.
- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Painting. 2023

- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Theatre: Technical. 2023.
- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Sculpture. 2022.
- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Theatre: Performance. 2018.
- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Art: Graphic Design. 2018.
- Member, Full Professor Promotion Committee. 2018-2020.
- Member, General Education Committee: 2018- present.
- Representative, AAC&U Institute on Integrative Learning and Signature Work Conference, July 2018.
- Attendant: Refocus Equity Retreat, Title V, August 2017.
- Member: HIPS Research Committee- Senior Thesis Projects. Summer 2017
- Chair: Search Committee for visiting assistant professor position in Theatre. Dec. 2016 to Spring 2017
- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Theatre. Oct. 2015 to Spring 2016.
- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Art: Ceramics. Oct. 2015 to Spring 2016.
- Member: Search Committee for tenure-track position in Mass Communication (Video Production). Nov. 2013 to April 2014.
- Member: Higher Learning Commission Criterion 3 Committee, 2014-2015.
- Chair. Curriculum Review Committee, 2012.
- Co-Chair, Curriculum Review Committee, 2011-2012.
- Member, Curriculum Review Committee, 2009-2011.
- Department Recruitment. Travel for recruitment, co-organize and run ASU Theatre Scholarship Days, etc, 2007-Present.
- Advising, serve as academic advisor, 2007-Present.
- Director/Liaison, Fundraising Partnership with La Puente, local homeless shelter & service provider, to coordinate opening night performances as fundraisers for their organization. Each opening night performance raised in excess of \$50,000, the largest non-appropriated donation the shelter received each year, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2023.
- Facilitator, Adams State Day of Reflection, 2009.
- Presenter, Adams State University Arts Extravaganza, 2007-2016

UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONS

- Faculty Advisor/Sponsor/Founder: The Lost and Found, Adams State University's Comedy Improv Troupe, 2009-Present. The troupe performs both on campus and regionally. I organized a trip for 8 students and myself to study in the spring of 2014, 2016 and 2018 at Second City Chicago in a private long form intensive. The trip was solely my initiative and required a huge amount of time and fundraising. The trip will be repeated, COVID permitting, 2022. The troupe has performed over 120 times, both on campus and within the community. The troupe's work can be seen, in part, on their YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC42ye5cTN94JeuZ0RJqAjqQ>

REFERENCES:

Available upon request.