# **Jay Stratton**

## Theatre Professor, Director, Fight Choreographer

347-581-6468 1115 Mesita Dr. strattoncoach@gmail.com El Paso, TX 79902

Website: www.jay-stratton.com

## **SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS**

- ➤ **Innovative Director**: Demonstrated success creating groundbreaking theatre including immersive and devised theatre; also skilled in stage combat choreography.
- ➤ **Professional Roots**: Seventeen years of professional New York acting experience on stage, film, and television.
- ➤ **Embrace of Diversity**: Experience teaching at <u>three universities</u> with varied expectations and *diverse* student bodies including *Latinx* students and students of color.
- ➤ **Collaborative Contributor**: Strong service background including recruiting, curriculum reform, season selection, and more.
- Dynamic Instructor: Proven track record guiding students from diverse backgrounds to success; specialties include Audition Technique, Shakespeare, Stage Combat, and Directing.

## **Education**

Master of Fine Arts, Acting with a Shakespeare emphasis, University of Alabama through the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, 1998

Bachelor of Arts, Drama, University of Washington, 1994 Bachelor of Arts, Business/Finance, University of Washington, 1994

Ongoing Study and Training:

- Extensive **Stage Combat** training and experience.
- Voice and speech study including *Knight Thompson Speechwork* and personal instruction from **Catherine Fitzmaurice**.
- On-line teaching certification.
- Additional study includes Improv, Acting for the Camera, Audition technique, Dialect, Boxing, and Yoga.

#### **ACADEMIC POSITIONS**

### Assistant Professor of Theatre, University of Texas at El Paso\*#

Current (Fall 2016 through present)

\*Brookings Institution ranked #1 for research and social mobility 2017 #Promoted to Tier 1 Research University at end of 2018.

### Summary

This is my current position and my first tenure track posting. After demonstrating success as a visiting professor, UTEP offered me a Tenure seeking assistant professorship. I am currently in my third year. Consistent with the university's access mission, many UTEP students come from underserved populations. Most are **Latinx**, and some make the daily commute across the bridge from Juarez to study with us. I am very proud to work with this demographic and guide them toward excellence. Many of my students are now in top graduate schools around the country.

### Noteworthy

When I started at UTEP, we had no performance students in conservatory training programs. I immediately focused on changing this. Four years later, we have performance students training at UCLA, UCI, OU, and even Julliard.

### **Courses Taught**

Intro to Theatre	[Theatre 1313]
Acting Fundamentals	[Theatre 2303]
Scene Study I, II, III	[Theatre 3304, 3313, 4307]
Acting for the Camera	[Theatre 3314]
Audition Technique	[Theatre 3316]
Stage Combat	[Theatre 3324]
Directing I, II	[Theatre 3325, 4300]
Theatre History and Lit I, II	[Theatre 3351, 3352]
Practicum III-VI (Capstone)	[Theatre 4110-4113]
Acting Shakespeare I, II	[Theatre 4313, 4316]
Acting Genres	[Theatre 4317]
Special Topics in Acting	[Theatre 4331]

## Service (selected)

Curriculum Reform (including Performance Concentration, Musical Theatre BFA, and Theatre Minor), LACC and UGCC Liaison, Recruitment Committee, Season Selection Committee, Ad Hoc Space Committee, Orange and Blue day annual recruitment volunteer

Grant: NEA Big Read co-PI, Bless Me, Ultima, by Rudolfo Anaya

#### Interdepartmental Collaboration

**Acting for Opera Singers** 

Staffing and training of simulators for Masters of Social Work and Pharmacy skills training programs

### Stage Combat

Go to violence choreographer for all productions

## <u>Visiting Professor of Theatre, University of Texas at El Paso\*</u>

2015-2016

\*Washington Monthly top 10 National University 2014

#### Summary

Before beginning my tenure track, I spent one year as a visitor at UTEP. For more information, please see previous entry.

## Visiting Professor of Acting, Miami University\*, Oxford Ohio

Fall 2013 through Spring 2014

Contact: Julia Guichard, 513-529-1517, guichajm@miamioh.edu

#### Summary

My first fulltime academic posting, I took a year away from my New York career to accept an assignment as the primary acting instructor for Miami's theatre department teaching both graduate and undergraduate students. I also worked for that year as the department's production vocal coach.

## **Courses Taught**

Intro to Drama and Script Analysis	[Theatre 101]
Acting for Non-Majors	[Theatre 123]
Principles of Acting for Majors	[Theatre 131]
Acting Shakespeare for Majors	[Theatre 432]
Audition Technique for Majors	[Theatre 437]
Acting Shakespeare for Grads	[Theatre 532]
Audition Technique for Grads	[Theatre 537]

## Miami University Main Stage Production Vocal Coach

**Voice and Dialect** coach for the Miami University main stage productions of *Macbeth, Gruesome Playground Injuries, Crumbs From the Table of Joy,* and *Peter Pan.* 

#### Service

Season Selection Committee, Recruitment Committee, Scholarship Committee, Curricular Development Advisor for 101 Coach for Irene Ryan Scholarship competition

<sup>\*</sup>Princeton Review best of 2014

### Adjunct Theatre Professor, Nassau Community College

Fall 2009 through Fall 2014

Contact: Victor Abravaya, 516-572-7509, Victor.Abravaya@ncc.edu

#### Summary

My first formal teaching experience, I started as a substitute and quickly became one of NCC's regular adjunct acting professors. This was a fantastic opportunity as I was able to teach while still working professional gigs in and around New York. The department chair, Victor Abravaya is still an invaluable mentor to me.

NCC serves a wide array of Long Island populations. Often from underserved or economically disadvantaged backgrounds, teaching the **diverse students** of NCC was a profound learning opportunity.

### Courses Taught

Beginning Acting [Theatre 103]
Intermediate Acting [Theatre 104]
Voice and Speech for the Stage [Theatre 120]

#### Service

New hire advisor, Season selection advisor, Curricular Development of Voice and Speech class

### **UPCOMING PROJECTS**

## <u>Director of A Flea in Her Ear</u>, Feydeau - (Ives Adaptation)

Lyric Repertory Theatre, Summer 2020

**Summary:** As part of my ongoing effort to maintain my professional skills and contacts, I have been asked to direct this classic French farce at this professional theatre in Logan Utah next summer. This is a professional project with equity performers.

## Director and Co-Adapter, The Taming of the Shrew (Bilingual)

UDLAP, Spring 2020

**Summary:** Universidad de las Americas Puebla has invited me to create and direct an bilingual version of Shakespeare's *The Taming of The Shrew* next spring.

## Director and Adapter, Bloody Shakespeare!

Austin High/UTEP Co-Production, Fall 2019

**Summary:** In an effort to create a bridge between UTEP and local schools, we will be co-producing a new, high school appropriate, version of *Bloody Shakespeare!* to mount at Austin High School this coming fall.

#### DIRECTING EXPERIENCE

Directing Portfolio Included at End of this Document

## Stage Director of Suor Angelica, Puccini (Opera)

UTEP school of Music, Spring 2019

**Summary:** Having seen a number of my successful large cast productions at UTEP, the music department asked me to direct their Spring opera. The final production was a specific and moving production of this Puccini classic.

**Takeaway:** My first time directing opera, rich and successful collaboration with music director and conductor.

### A Christmas Carol en la Frontera (Director & Co-Adapter)

Wise Family Mainstage, UTEP, Fall 2018

**Summary:** To serve the largely *Latinx student body* at UTEP, I and my team created a new version of Dicken's timeless classic. Our adaptation is bilingual and focuses on the rich heritage and culture of the Border region. The production was hugely successful, and the department has elected to make it our go-to holiday mainstage production for the foreseeable future.

**Takeaway:** Script creation, directing bilingual material, and managing a huge cast and production team.

## In The Next Room by Sarah Ruhl (Director)

Wise Family Mainstage, UTEP, Spring 2018

**Summary:** Primarily for educational purposes, we decided to produce this brilliant and challenging piece of feminist theatre on our mainstage. In my opinion, this is Ruhl's strongest play, but it is also a play that presents enormous challenges to a student cast – including our Catherine who was only a sophomore. The final product was funny, lyrical, and at times heartbreaking, but the real success was the growth of the young and talented cast.

**Takeaway:** Mentoring student actors, especially when working with sensitive subject matter and delicate material.

## Love Is a Drag (Producer, Director, and Emcee)

UTEP Dinner Theatre, February 2018

**Summary:** This was a one night only, Valentine's themed benefit to raise money to send students to KC/ACTF to perform *Lydia\**. I selected and arranged all the acts, coordinated with the music director, performers, lights and sound tech. I also arranged a charity raffle for the same night including managing donations. During the event, I served as emcee (in full drag to fit the show's theme). The event was both entertaining and financially

successful raising more than \$2,500 for the students. Because of Love's success, there is discussion of it becoming an annual event.

\* - Winner 'Best Play' KC/ACTF Region 6 & National

**Takeaway:** Experience beyond direction as an event producer; management, collaboration, and fundraising.

### **Bloody Shakespeare!** (Director and Adapter)

UTEP Studio Theatre, Halloween of 2017 and 2015

**Summary:** When I arrived at UTEP, I decided to create a hybrid theatre piece and Halloween experience sourced from the most macabre material in Shakespeare. The result was a 30-minute immersive experience with a mobile audience traveling through eight spaces. Two years later, we remounted the production and expanded it in scope. Both years, the project was commercially successful and also served as an excellent teaching tool to introduce students to classical material.

**Takeaway:** Artistic innovation and commercial success; script adaptation and stage combat including special effects.

### The Good Doctor\* by Neil Simon

Monomoy Theatre, Late Summer of 2017 \*A Cape Cod Times "Favorite" of 2017

**Summary:** As part of my ongoing relationship with the Monomoy Theatre, I was asked to return and direct Neil Simon's *The Good Doctor*. The show is a comic and musical homage to Chekhov. The cast included both undergraduate and graduate students as well Equity guests. I also staffed three students to the theatre in paid positions for the summer.

**Takeaway:** A valuable ongoing professional relationship.

## Sister Act by Bill and Cherie Steinkeller & Alan Menken

UTEP Dinner Theater, Early Summer of 2017

**Summary:** The UTEP Dinner Theater is a beloved El Paso semi-professional theatre that produces Broadway style musicals. I coordinated with designers, music director, choreographer, and more than 20 cast members to produce a show that was both entertaining and moving. *Sister Act* was hugely successful, selling out every seat and extending its run.

**Takeaway:** Demonstrated success with a big cast musical.

### **Medea by Euripides**

Wise Family Mainstage, UTEP, Spring 2017

**Summary:** Because of my classical experience, I was asked to direct UTEP's mainstage production of *Medea*. I chose to add live percussion throughout and a choreographed dumbshow of the betrothal between Jason and Glauce. I also added an elaborate and stylized violence sequence to bring the climax of the show onstage.

**Takeaway:** Expertise and innovation with classical material; stage combat.

### Dead Man's Cell Phone, by Sarah Ruhl

UTEP Studio Theatre, Spring 2016

**Summary:** I directed this beautiful play by Sarah Ruhl in my visiting year at UTEP. While much of my directing work can be quite muscular, this play required a more subtle guidance, while still demanding high stakes and energy.

Takeaway: Embrace of feminist themes; stage combat.

## Christmas Carol, Adaptation by Chuck Gordon

Wise Family Mainstage, UTEP, Late Fall 2015

**Summary:** I had been a visiting professor for only 3 months when our chair dismissed the director of *Christmas Carol* and asked me to take over two weeks before opening. The show was technically ambitious, cast morale was low, and the rehearsal process was considerably behind. In a very short time, I energized the cast and brought the play back to the Dickens story at its heart.

**Takeaway:** Effective work under time pressure and work prioritization.

## Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (Adapted by Jon Jory),

Monomoy Theatre, Summer of 2015

**Summary:** This technically ambitious adaptation of Austen's novel had 18 actors playing 26 characters in over 50 locations. The cast included undergraduate and graduate students, local community members, and Equity guests. Because we had only two weeks to rehearse, I continuously returned the production's focus to the potent and still relevant themes of Austen's classic novel.

**Takeaway:** Demonstrated large cast success with time pressure; female centered story telling.

## Pride@Prejudice adapted by Daniel Elihu Kramer,

NCC Mainstage, Fall of 2014

**Summary:** This version of Austen's novel is performed by six actors each playing multiple roles. My cast reflected the broad diversity of NCC's population. Because many had little to no experience, I mentored them closely and functioned as the show's dialect coach.

**Takeaway:** Effectiveness as a teaching director and dialect coach.

### See Rock City by Arlene Hutton, Chester Theatre Company

Chester Theatre Company, Summer of 2010

**Summary:** Chester Theatre Company did all three plays in Arlene Hutton's Nibroc cycle and asked me to direct the middle segment. This was a professional production with an all Equity cast. Because the entire trilogy happened on a single flexible set, I had to work closely with two other directors as well as the design team.

**Takeaway:** Professional experience and close collaboration with other directors and designers.

### Suburbia by Eric Bogosian, NCC Mainstage

Fall of 2012

**Summary:** For my first collegiate directing experience, I was asked to helm NCC's mainstage production of *Suburbia*. So that I could utilize the broad range of **ethnic diversity** at NCC, I chose to modify the script to allow for the casting of black actors in my male lead roles. The show was successful and reflected the demographics of the NCC student body.

**Takeaway:** Diversity focus and stage combat.

## **Director & Dramaturge, Gateway Outreach Program**

Winter 2008 through Winter 2010

**Summary:** The Gateway Outreach was an educational program I participated in through the Chester Theatre Company. We worked as mentors to young playwrights around age 12 to help craft a 10-minute play. We then directed those plays with professional actors as a single evening of theatre. The effect on the young playwrights of seeing their stories brought to life in the theatre was overwhelmingly positive.

**Takeaway:** Working with children and putting their vision first.

#### COMBAT CHOREOGRAPHY

I certified as an actor-combatant at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival in 1998. As a professional actor, stage combat was a skill I utilized frequently. In 2015, when UTEP hired me, I identified stage combat as a gap in the faculty skill-set. Since then, I have worked to sharpen my abilities to teach and direct stage violence by taking master classes and attending SAFD intensives across the country.

### Carmen (Opera)

Early Spring 2016, El Paso Opera (dir. Susan Payne O'Brien)

- → Incidental violence including one unarmed group fight
- → One underscored knife fight with traditional Spanish Navaja blades

### **Bloody Shakespeare!**

Halloween 2015, 2017, UTEP Studio Theatre

- → Significant unarmed combat and incidental violence
- → Stylized strobe combat sequence with musical underscore
- → Numerous kills and blood stunts including cut off hand, ripped out tongue, throat slit with bleed out, and stomach stab, all in close audience proximity

### The Importance of Being Earnest

Fall 2017, UTEP Wise Mainstage Theatre (dir. Kim McKean)

→ One comedic cane duel between Jack and Algernon

### Sister Act

Summer 2017, UTEP Dinner Theatre

→ One underscored comedic chase sequence with vaudevillian violence including travel through audience

#### Medea

Spring 2017, UTEP Wise Mainstage Theatre

→ One elaborate filicide sequence involving four women and two children

#### <u>Lydia\*</u>

Spring 2017, UTEP Studio Theatre (dir. Kim McKean)

- → Incidental and unarmed violence including one domestic abuse sequence \* KC/ACTF National winner "Best Play"
- KC/ACTF National Willief Dest Play

## House on Mango Street

Fall 2016, UTEP Wise Mainstage Theatre (dir. Rebecca Rivas)

→ Domestic Abuse Sequence

### Dead Man's Cell Phone

Spring 2016, UTEP Studio Theatre, Co-fight director

→ One elaborate unarmed two person fight with close audience proximity

#### SELECTED PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

Proud Member of Actor's Equity Association since 1998 Professional Headshot, Acting Resume, Reel, and Reviews available upon request

#### **NEW YORK CITY THEATRE**

#### Peccadillo Theatre

(With Jim Brochu and Cady Huffman, New York Times Reviewed) 2011 Man Who Came to Dinner Bert Jefferson

#### 59E59

(American Premier, New York Times Reviewed)

2009 The Dishwashers Emmett

#### Red Bull Theatre

(Directed by Jesse Berger, with Patrick Page and Gareth Saxe)

2010 The Duchess of Malfi Ensemble

#### The Pearl Theater

(Major Off-Broadway classical theatre)

2008 Twelfth Night Antonio
2007 The Oedipus Cycle Oedipus

2002 She Stoops to Conquer Tony Lumpkin

2002 Nathan the Wise Templar (understudy, went on)

#### Midtown International Theatre Festival

(Directed by Michael Bush)

2009 Psycho Therapy Dorian

## American Globe Theatre, 46th Street

(Directed by John Basil)

2010 Much Ado About Nothing Benedick

#### REGIONAL THEATRE

### Repertory Theatre of St. Louis

(LORT B – St. Louis' premier regional theatre, connected to Webster University)

2015 The Winslow Boy Sir Robert Morton

2015 The Full Catastrophe Dan

2013 Venus in Fur\* Thomas Novachek

2005 Bug Peter Evans

\*Broadway World nominee for Best Actor and Best Drama

## **A Contemporary Theatre**

(LORT B – One of Seattle's two major regional houses)

2018 People of the Book\* Jason

\*New play workshop directed by John Langs

#### Shakespeare Festival of St. Louis

(Major outdoor Shakespeare Festival, connected to Webster University)

2015 Antony and Cleopatra\* Antony \*Broadway World nominee for Best Ensemble

#### Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park

(LORT B - Tony Award winning regional theatre)

2011The PavilionPeter Mollberg2007RecklessTom, Tom Junior2005Christmas CarolNephew Fred2004Christmas CarolNephew Fred

#### The Denver Center

(LORT B – Tony Award winning regional theatre)

2007 Pride and Prejudice Wickham

### The Pittsburgh Public

(LORT B – Pittsburgh's premier regional theatre, directed by Ted Pappas)

2006 Oedipus the King Oedipus

### Pioneer Theatre

(LORT B – Salt Lake City's premier regional theatre, connected to U of Utah)

2013 Philadelphia Story George Kittredge

2000 View From the Bridge Rudolpho 2000 R & G are Dead Hamlet

### **Know Theatre of Cincinnati**

(Equity Guest Appearance – Cutting Edge Cincinnati theatre)

2013 Bull Tony

## **Chester Theatre Company**

(Highly innovative, contemporary summer theatre in the Berkshires)

2014 A Number\* Bernard 1, Bernard 2, Michael Black

2011 Running Stephen

2010 Pride@Prejudice Fitzwilliam Darcy and others

2008 The Dishwashers\*\* Emmett 2007 Grace Sam 2006 Two Rooms Michael

\* Berkshire Eagle 'Best of 2014' and 'Notable Performance'

\*\* Transferred to Off-Broadway contract

## **Hudson Stage Company**

(Westchester's premier regional theatre, New York Times reviewed)

2012 Stones in His Pockets | Jake

## <u>Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre</u>

2010 Othello Cassio

### Playmakers Repertory Theatre

(LORT D – Regional theatre attached to UNC with strong educational mission)

2004 Caesar and Cleopatra Apollodorus

### Two Rivers Theatre

(LORT D - New York Times reviewed)

2003 Salome' John the Baptist2003 Florentine Tragedy Prince Bardi

### **Indiana Repertory Theatre**

(LORT C - Indianapolis's premier regional theatre)

2003 Private Lives Victor

### **Syracuse Stage**

(LORT C – Connected to Syracuse University)

2003 Private Lives Victor

### **Monomoy Theatre**

(URTA Summer Theatre attached to the Hartt school; Monomoy has a strong educational mission and prioritizes active mentorship)

2013 Death of a Salesman
2013 Arsenic and Old Lace
2012 The Crucible
2012 1776
2003 Biloxi Blues
Ben
Jonathan Brewster
John Proctor
Thomas Jefferson
Sergeant Toomey

2003 Twelfth Night Orsino

1995 Numerous roles Graduate Company Member in Training

## Shakespeare on the Sound

(Connecticut Summer Shakespeare Theatre attached to SUNY Purchase)

2005 The Tempest Sebastian 2002 As You Like It Oliver

## Virginia Stage

2002 Christmas Carol Fred, Young Scrooge, Ensemble

## Shakespeare in The Park, Westerly, Rhode Island

2000 Henry IV part i Prince Hal

#### Asolo Theatre

(LORT C – Regional theatre attached to FSU with strong educational mission)

2001 Cat on a Hot Tin Roof Brick

2001 The Voysey Inheritance Edward Voysey2001 I Hate Hamlet Andrew Rally

## <u>Charlotte Repertory Theatre</u>

1999 Gross Indecency Narrator

### **Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival**

(New York Times reviewed)

1999 Titus Andronicus Lucius1999 Twelfth Night Ensemble

### Fulton Opera House

1999 The Grapes of Wrath Al Joad

### Colorado Shakespeare Festival

1996 Midsummer Night's Dream Lysander1996 Othello Montano

### Alabama Shakespeare Festival

MFA student from 1996-1998 appearing in over a dozen productions.

#### **FILM**

Motel Aqua, Feature (Mexico City), Supporting What We Were, Independent Feature, Supporting Lead I See a Darkness, Independent Feature, Supporting Simon Says, Independent Short, Lead The Institute, Independent Pilot, Supporting Lead Part Time Boyfriend, NYU Blood is Thicker Together, Miami University The Funeral Parlor, Alex Lobera Student Film

#### **TELEVISION**

What Would You Do? 'Build the Wall', ABC, Lead RedRum Episode 312, Investigative Discovery, Lead Discovery Channel, Mysteries of the Museum As the World Turns, Day Player Commercials (Various)

#### **VOICE TALENT**

Extensive web content voiceover work with CMA Enterprises Inc.

## **Master Classes and Workshops**

Stage Combat Masterclass
Universidad de las Americas Puebla (Mexico)
March 2019, 2018

Othello: Examining Race in Shakespeare Osher Life Long Learning Institute Summer 2019

Intro to Stage Combat Master Class Shakespeare on the Rocks April 2019

National Society of Arts and Letters - Consult El Paso Chapter September 2018

Something Wicked: Six week series on Macbeth in performance Osher Life Long Learning Institute Summer 2018

Twelfth Night in performance, Guest Lecture, UTEP English Department June 2018

Stage Combat, Shakespeare, and Monologue Technique, Centenary College's Regional High School Festival Fall 2017

Shakespeare's Verse for Actors, KC/ACTF region 6 Spring 2017

Acting for Opera Singers, UTEP Music Department Spring and Fall 2017

Arthur Miller and Death of a Salesman Guest Lecture UTEP English Department Fall 2016

Adjudicator, Drama Competition, National Society of Arts & Letters February of 2015

Shakespeare Bootcamp, Miami University Fall 2013

Master Class: Business of Acting, Webster Conservatory Winter 2015, Fall 2005

Master Class: Auditions, Saint Louis University Winter 2015

Guest Performer and Mentor, Monomoy Theatre, Cape Cod, Summers 2003, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016

Master Class: Business of Acting, Utah State University January 2013

Audition Technique, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park March 2007

Audition and Monologue Technique, Xavier University Winter 2007

Artist Outreach: Pittsburgh Public Theatre Fall 2006

Mentor and Guest Faculty, UNC at Chapel Hill Spring 2004

## **Professional Memberships**

Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) Voice and Speech Trainers Association (VASTA) National Society of Arts and Letters (NSAL) Consultant

Founding Board Member and Secretary of non-profit: 'Write Across Borders' Board Member of El Paso Opera

Member of **Actor's Equity Association** since 1998 Recognized SAFD Actor-Combatant, 1998

Client with Dulcina Eisen Associates (Legit NYC Theatrical Agency) Client with Heyman Talent (Commerical, Industrial, and Print Agency