

MARISSA BARNATHAN

mbarnathan@rockford.edu

(610) 585-5056

www.marissabarnathan.com

EDUCATION

Arizona State University

M.F.A. in Directing (Theatre)

Tempe, AZ

May 2024

Washington University in St. Louis

B.A. in Drama and Psychology with a Ballet Minor

St. Louis, MO

May 2012

Related Professional Development:

- **Intimacy Direction** with Rachel Finley (Tempe, AZ)
- **Theatre for Living**, Levels 1 & 2, with David Diamond (Vancouver, Canada)
- **Theatre of the Oppressed** with Just Act (Philadelphia, PA)
- **Anti-Racist Theatre: A Foundational Course** with Nicole Brewer (Online, via Zoom)
- **Shakespeare Performance and History**, Shakespeare at the Globe Program (London, England)
- **Musical Theatre Performance**, University of the Arts Summer Institute: Musical Theatre (Philadelphia, PA)

UNIVERSITY TEACHING

Rockford University, Assistant Professor of Musical Theatre (tenure-track)

Rockford, IL

Fall 2026 MUSC 356/357: Musical Theatre Studio II/III

Fall 2026 THEA 335: Directing I

Fall 2026 THEA 105: Introduction to Acting

Spring 2026 DANC 241: Choreography I

Fall '25, '26 FYS 101: First-Year Seminar

Fall '24, '25 DANC 214: Tap I

Fall '24, '25 DANC 101: Introduction to Dance

Fall '24, '25 PFMA 495: Senior Seminar

Spring '25, '26 PFMA 395: Business of the Business

Spring 2025 THEA 286: History of Musical Theatre

Spring 2025 DANC 211: Ballet 1

Spring 2025 DANC 311: Ballet 2

Spring 2025 DANC 411: Ballet 3

Spring 2025 PFMA 495: Senior Seminar

Fall 2024 THEA 284: Theatre History I

Arizona State University, Instructor of Record

Tempe, AZ

Spring 2024 THP 218: Introduction to Directing

Fall 2023 THF 101: Acting Introduction

Spring 2023 THP 218: Introduction to Directing

Fall 2022 THP 218: Introduction to Directing

Spring 2022 THP 218: Introduction to Directing

Fall 2021 THF 101: Acting Introduction

Rutgers University – Camden, *Part-Time Lecturer*

Camden, NJ

Spring 2021 50:203:249 Ballet I
Fall 2020 50:203:201 Musical Theater Dance
Spring 2020 50:203:227 Jazz Dance
Fall 2019 50:203:201 Musical Theater Dance

GUEST LECTURES & WORKSHOPS

Arizona State University, *Guest Lecturer* Tempe, AZ
2024 “Guns, Art-Making, and Truth” Humanities Lab
2024 Theatre of the Oppressed Workshop
2023 Image Theatre Workshop
2023 Musical Theatre Audition Technique Workshop
2023 Musical Theatre Dance Workshop

TEACHING ARTISTRY, Adult

Theatre Ariel, *Teaching Artist* Bala Cynwyd, PA
2018-2020 Acting

TEACHING ARTISTRY, K-12

Rockford Dance Company, *Teaching Artist* Rockford, IL
2025 – present Ballet

Music Theatre Philly, *Teaching Artist* Philadelphia, PA
2022-2023 Acting
 Voice
 Musical Theatre Dance

The Creative Living Room, *Teaching Artist* Swarthmore, PA
2022-2023 Acting

ZoomDance, *Teaching Artist* Philadelphia, PA
2016-2023 Ballet
 Creative Movement

People’s Light & Theatre Company, *Teaching Artist* Malvern, PA
2019-2021 Acting
 Storytelling

Virtual Babysitters Club, *Teaching Artist* New York, NY
2020-2021 Music Fundamentals

Walnut Street Theatre, *Teaching Artist* Philadelphia, PA
2013-2020 Introduction to Musical Theatre
 Intermediate Musical Theatre

Lantern Theatre Company, Teaching Artist	Philadelphia, PA
2014-2020	Acting Shakespeare <i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i> Drama Residency
Theatre Horizon, Teaching Artist	Norristown, PA
2015-2020	Acting Dance
Take the Lead Dance Project, Teaching Artist	Philadelphia, PA
2019-2020	Social Dance: Merengue, Foxtrot, Tango, Salsa, Bachata, Swing, and Waltz
Wolf Performing Arts Center, Teaching Artist	Bryn Mawr, PA
2008-2019	Acting Shakespeare Musical Theatre Jazz Dance Hip-Hop Choreography
Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, Teaching Artist	Philadelphia, PA
2016-2018	Acting Shakespeare: <i>Macbeth</i> , <i>Hamlet</i> , and <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

(PBK) Phi Beta Kappa, *Rockford University Chapter Member*
 (IFTR) International Federation for Theatre Research, *Music Theatre Working Group Member*
 (ATHE) Association for Theatre in Higher Education, *Directing Focus Group Communications Officer*
 (MTEA) Musical Theatre Educators Alliance, *Member*
 (MTDA) Music Theatre Dance Association, *Member*
 (DG) Director's Gathering, *Member*
 (AEA) Actor's Equity Association, *Equity Membership Candidate*

PUBLICATIONS

Book Review of Jake Johnson's *Lying in the Middle: Musical Theater and Belief at the Heart of America*. *Theatre Annual*. In process. (expected release: 2026)

"#ENOUGH: Confronting Gun Violence through Community-Engaged Theatre Practices." *ArtsPraxis*, 12 (1). June 2025.

"Miss You Like Hell: Exploring the Impacts of Socially Conscious Musical Theatre on Audience Attitudes." *Musical Theatre Educators Alliance Journal*. February 2025.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"Real Talk: Developing Resilient and Sustainable Careers as Junior Faculty." Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) 2025 Annual Conference. Co-presenter. July 2025.

"Making the Utopian Real: Strategic and Structural Change to Performing Conditions." Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) 2025 Annual Conference, sponsored by the Music Theatre Dance Association (MTDA). Co-presenter. July 2025.

“Rooting and Routing: Navigating Change, Trust, and Community Building as Junior Faculty.” International Drama in Educational Research Institute (IDIERI) Annual Conference. Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Co-presenter. June 2025.

“What Do You Do with a BFA in Musical Theatre?” Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) 2024 Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia. Panel sponsored by the Music Theatre Dance Association (MTDA). Co-presenter. August 2024.

“*Miss You Like Hell*: Exploring the Impacts of Socially Conscious Musical Theatre on Audience and Artists.” Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) 2024 Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia. Directing Focus Group’s (DFG) Directing Program Debut Panel. August 2024.

“*Miss You Like Hell*: Exploring Community Engagement through Musical Theatre.” Musical Theatre Educators’ Alliance (MTEA) 2024 International Conference, London, England. July 2024.

“Leading the Arizona Premiere of *Miss You Like Hell*.” Music Theatre Dance Association (MTDA) Winter Symposium. February 2024.

“Using Critical Race Theory to Hold Musical Theatre Accountable.” Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (LMDA) Digital Conference. February 2024.

“The Musical Myth: Colorism, Classism, and Colonialism in *Once On This Island*.” International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) World Congress, Accra, Ghana. July 2023.

“‘Dramacracy’ in Action: Measuring the Impacts of Community-Based Theatre on Civic Participation.” Co-presenter with Sam Briggs. University of California – Los Angeles (UCLA) Graduate Student Conference entitled “In Cahoots: Disciplinary Crossings & a Future for Performance Studies.” February 2023.

“Musical Theatre and Civic Engagement in the United States.” International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR) World Congress, Reykjavik, Iceland. June 2022.

“Flipping the Script: Anti-Racism and Equity in Theatre Spaces.” Co-presenter with Sam Briggs and Zoe Tyler. Children, Youth, and Performance (CYP) Conference, Online and Toronto, Canada. June 2022.

DIRECTING/CHOREOGRAPHY

THEATRE & OPERA

SHE LOVES ME (<i>upcoming, April '27</i>)	Director/Choreo.;	Rockford University
	Intimacy Director	
ONCE ON THIS ISLAND	Intimacy Director	Starlight Theatre
RIDE THE CYCLONE	Director/Choreo.;	Rockford University
	Intimacy Director	
JOSEPH...DREAMCOAT	Choreo.	Rockford University
THE PROM	Director/Choreo.;	Rockford University
	Intimacy Director	
25 th ANN. PUTNAM CO. SPELLING BEE	Director/Choreo.	Rockford University
HOUSE OF DESIRES	Director	Southwest Shakespeare Company
PIPPIN	Intimacy Director	Arizona State University dir. Toby. Yatso
DEAR DAUGHTER...	Choreographer	Arizona State University dir. Gio Ferreira
MISS YOU LIKE HELL	Director/Choreo.	Arizona State University
REHEARSAL FOR THE REVOLUTION	Director/Joker	Arizona State University

THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY
THE RAKE'S PROGRESS

SAFE AT HOME

THE WOLVES

LA COMEDIA OF ERRORS

HEALING WARS

B(EARTH)DAY PARTY

CYCLES

RANKED

BROTHERS GRIMM

ANYTHING GOES

TEATRO ESPERANZA (perf. in Spanish)

THE MUSIC MAN, JR.

ONCE UPON A MATTRESS°

JAMES & THE GIANT PEACH, JR.

MEAN GIRLZ

STINKYKIDS: THE MUSICAL

ROMEO & JULIET

ANNIE, JR.

CHICAGO

THE ADDAMS FAMILY

INTO THE WOODS, JR.

SEUSSICAL, JR.

SEUSSICAL, JR.

I NEVER SAW ANOTHER BUTTERFLY

HONK, JR.

TIME WARP

BRAND NEW DAY

CINDERELLA (G2K)

ONCE UPON A MATTRESS (G2K)

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

° = Live Production was postponed due to COVID-19

Intimacy Director
Asst. Director; Choreo.;
Intimacy Director

Choreographer

Director

Asst. Director; Choreo.

Associate Director

Director/Producer

Choreographer

Director/Choreo.

Director

Choreographer

Asst. Dir./Joker

Director/Choreo.

Director/Choreo.

Director/Choreo.

Director/Choreo.

Choreographer

Choreographer

Choreographer

Choreographer

Director/Choreo.

Director/Choreo.

Director/Choreo.

Director

Director

Choreographer

Choreographer

Choreographer

Choreographer

Choreographer

Tour Director

Arizona State University | dir. Saylem Dupont
Arizona State University | dir. David Lefkovich

Arizona State University | dir. Jack Reuler

Arizona State University

Arizona State University | dir. Ricky Araiza

Arizona State University | dir. Keith Thompson

Arizona State University

Arizona State University

Friends Select School

Friends Select School

Rutgers University – Camden | dir. Ken Elliott

CoLab Arts | dir. Tanaquil Marquez

Walnut Street Theatre

Friends Select School

Friends Select School

Walnut Street Theatre

Walnut Street Theatre | dir. Damon Bonetti

Media Theatre | dir. Bill Van Horn

Wolf Performing Arts Center

Friends Select School | dir. Noah Herman

Friends Select School

Friends Select School

Friends Select School

Wolf Performing Arts Center

Friends Select School

Wolf Performing Arts Center ('13,'17)

Germantown Friends School

Germantown Friends School

Wolf Performing Arts Center

Wolf Performing Arts Center

Prairie Fire Children's Theatre

STAGED READINGS/CABARETS

THE EPIC 80s

ENOUGH! PLAYS TO END GUN VIOLENCE

MY MAN GODFREY

PETALS FALL

ESSENTIALS

ESPERANZA FOR THE BATS

FRINGE SECTS

LISTEN TO VANESSA NAKATE

MISS CAST 9 (LIVES)

CELEBRATING VISIBILITY

VIRTUAL BENEFIT CABARET

Choreographer

Director/Producer

Asst. Director

Director

Director

Director

Director

Director

Director

Director/Producer

Director/Producer

Rockford University

Rockford University ('25)

Prism Theatre Company ('22-'23)

Arizona Theatre Company | dir. Matt August

Arizona State University

Arizona State University

Arizona State University

Arizona State University

Climate Change Theatre Action

Mauckingbird Theatre Co.

Mauckingbird Theatre Co./Nightcap Cabaret

Human Rights Campaign/Biden Victory

PERFORMANCE

THEATRE

ALADDIN: A MUSICAL PANTO	Intern Moesha**	People's Light & Theatre Co. Pete Pryor
THE THREE MUSKETEERS	Apomado	People's Light & Theatre Co. Pete Pryor
ARTHUR & THE TALE...	Morgana Lefay	People's Light & Theatre Co. Pete Pryor
WEST SIDE STORY	Rosalia	The Media Theatre Dann Dunn
ROMEO & JULIET	Lady Montague, Chorus	The Media Theatre Bill Van Horn
1776	Martha Jefferson	The Media Theatre Jennie Eisenhower
THE CAT IN THE HAT	Sally	Arden Theatre Co. Steve Pacek & Doug Hara
A CHRISTMAS CAROL	Mrs. Fezziwig, Mrs. Dilber*	Walnut St. Theatre Ellie Mooney
A CHRISTMAS CAROL	Mrs. Cratchit*	Walnut St. Theatre Bill Van Horn
SKIPPYJON JONES	Poquito Tito	Walnut St. Theatre Ashley Kerns
THE MUSIC MAN	Ensemble	Walnut St. Theatre Marc Robin
VINCENT IN BRIXTON	Anna u/s	Walnut St. Theatre Kate Galvin
BABY SHOWER	Mother	Arizona State University Jared Sprowls
THE F WORD	Tori	Radiant Bloom Productions Meredith Beck
TESLA'S DREAM	Electricity*	The Franklin Institute David Wrigley
RESPECT	Ingenue*	Penn's Landing Playhouse Sarah Shahinian
BURT & ME	Mrs. Bernstein (Lacey u/s)	Delaware Theatre Company Larry McKenna
FIDDLER ON THE ROOF	Hodel	The Candlelight Theatre Bob Kelly
A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM	Puck	Prairie Fire Children's Theatre (Tour)
THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR	Anne Page	St. Louis Shakespeare Todd Pieper
BEEHIVE	Janis Ian & others	The Eagle Theatre Ed Corsi
SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ	DeLee	The Eagle Theatre Ed Corsi
SPAMALOT	Ensemble*	Muhlenberg Summer Music Theatre Jim Peck
FOOTLOOSE	Ensemble (Ariel u/s)	The Eagle Theatre Dann Dunn
CATCH ME IF YOU CAN	Ensemble	The Eagle Theatre Ted Wioncek, Dann Dunn

*served as Dance Captain

**served as Dance Captain and Fight Captain

READINGS/CABARETS

TO TURN TO SALT	Lot's Wife	Chicago Danztheatre dir. Jared Sprowls
AN AMERICAN PLACE	Dorothy Norman	People's Light & Theatre Co. dir. Ed Sobel
JEWISH AMERICAN PAGEANT	Aunt Sarah	Arizona State University dir. Clara Kundin
KINGDOM	Queen Sue; Holly	Arizona State University dir. Clara Kundin
CABARET LECH LECHA	Featured Vocalist	Theatre Ariel mus. dir. Charis Duke
MUSICOLAB SALON	Multiple Roles	MusiCoLab mus. dir. Steven Gross
LEAVES FROM THE GARDEN	Lilith & others	Theatre Ariel dir. Deborah Baer Mozes
SECRET THINGS	Delia	Theatre Ariel dir. Deborah Baer Mozes
HANDLE WITH CARE	Ayelet	Theatre Ariel dir. Deborah Baer Mozes
CABARET MIDDOT	Featured Vocalist	Theatre Ariel mus. dir. Katie Horner
TRAYF	Leah	Theatre Ariel dir. Deborah Baer Mozes
CHAI/LIFE CABARET	Featured Vocalist	Theatre Ariel mus. dir. Amanda Morton
BOXES OF SOMEDAY	Benigna Brennan	The Eagle Theatre dir. Ed Corsi
THE INVASION OF SKOKIE	Debbie Kaplan	Theatre Ariel dir. Deborah Baer Mozes

TV/FILM

RENT	Girl in Subway	1492 Productions dir. Chris Columbus
BRAIN GAMES	Librarian	National Geographic Channel
VARIETY	Girl #2	His & Her Productions dir. Elisha Jachetti

HONORS & AWARDS

2024	Drama League FutureNow Stage Directing Fellowship Semi-Finalist
2024	Congressman Ed Pastor Civic Leadership Award
2023-2024	Spirit of Service Scholarship, Arizona State University, Watts College of Public Affairs
2023	Teaching Excellence Award, Arizona State University, Graduate & Professional Student Association
2023	University Graduate Fellowship
2022	Best Teaching Assistant, Arizona State University, Theatre Department
2019	Theatre Ariel Emerging Artist Honoree
2012	Margaret Ewing Prize for Acting, Washington University in St. Louis, Performing Arts Dept.
2012	Phi Beta Kappa Inductee, Washington University in St. Louis
2008-2012	Dean's List (all semesters), Washington University in St. Louis

GRANTS

2025, '26	Faculty Development Grant, Rockford University
2025, '26	Individual Faculty Grant, Rockford University
2023	Applied Project Funding Recipient, Arizona State University, School of Music, Dance, and Theatre
2023	Individual Travel Grant Recipient for IFTR 2023 World Congress in Accra, Ghana, Arizona State University, Graduate & Professional Student Association
2023	Travel Grant for IFTR 2023 World Congress in Accra, Ghana, Arizona State University, School of Music, Dance, and Theatre
2023	Jumpstart Research Grant for Sustainable Theatre Research, Arizona State University, Graduate & Professional Student Association
2022	Individual Travel Grant Recipient for IFTR 2022 World Congress in Reykjavik, Iceland, Arizona State University, Graduate & Professional Student Association
2022	Travel Grant for IFTR 2022 World Congress in Reykjavik, Iceland, Arizona State University, Graduate & Professional Student Association
2020	Theatre Philadelphia Emergency Relief Grant Recipient, 2020

SERVICE

Jane Addams Center for Civic Engagement (JACCE)	Rockford, IL
<i>Board Member</i>	Aug 2025 – present
Attend monthly meetings and support the ongoing civic engagement programming	
Theatre Ariel	Bala Cynwyd, PA
<i>Board Member, DEI Co-Chair</i>	Aug 2020 – present
Create and facilitate cultural competency sessions, focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion	
Washington University in St. Louis Alumni and Parents Admission Program	St. Louis, MO
<i>Alumni Volunteer</i>	Sept 2012 – present
Interview and evaluate prospective students and report back to Admissions staff	
IDEA Student Committee, ASU School of Music, Dance, & Theatre (MDT)	Tempe, AZ
<i>Co-President</i>	May 2022 – May 2024
Lead initiatives focused on inclusion, diversity, equity, and accountability for MDT students and faculty	
Arizona Women's Collaborative (AWC)	Tempe, AZ
<i>Leadership Team Member</i>	Aug 2022 – Apr 2024
Plan and organize an annual concert celebrating and featuring women and non-binary artists	
Music Theatre & Opera Student Leadership Team, Arizona State University	Tempe, AZ
<i>Graduate Student Representative</i>	Jan 2022 – 2024
Guide undergraduate Music Theatre & Opera students in planning fundraisers and concerts	
Season Selection Committee, ASU School of Music, Dance, & Theatre (MDT)	Tempe, AZ
<i>Graduate Student Representative</i>	Aug 2021 – Apr 2024
An elected position; read, discuss, and select plays for the upcoming Theatre seasons	
Human Rights Campaign: Greater Philadelphia Region	Philadelphia, PA
<i>Political Action and Community Engagement Co-Chair</i>	Dec 2016 – May 2021
- Guided the local steering committee to consistently evaluate our work through a lens of equity and inclusion - Cultivated and nurtured relationships with community partners and local politicians - Organized fundraising efforts for each election cycle (i.e., in 2020, I raised over \$6,000 for the Biden campaign)	

RELATED PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Drexel University: College of Nursing and Health Professions	Philadelphia, PA
<i>Standardized Patient</i>	Sept 2014 – July 2021
Acted as a patient in simulations for nursing students, helping them develop their interpersonal skills	
University of Pennsylvania	Philadelphia, PA
<i>Irvine Associate and House Manager</i>	Sept 2014 – May 2020
Supervised front desk, answered patron questions, and house managed events at Irvine Auditorium	
ZoomDance	Philadelphia, PA
<i>Camp Director</i>	Aug 2017
Managed and instructed weeklong dance camps for students ages 2-7	
Prairie Fire Children's Theatre	Barrett, MN
<i>Tour Director & Manager</i>	May – Sept 2012
- Coordinated all aspects of an adapted musical version of Shakespeare's <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> - Managed sales of production merchandise; maintained costumes and set pieces; organized all tour expenses	

Edison Theatre

St. Louis, MO

Technical Crew

May 2011 – May 2012

- Served as Spotlight Operator, Soundboard Operator, Fly Rail, and Deck Crew for several productions
- Assisted Technical Director with load-ins, hanging and focusing lights, and strikes

Upstream Theater

St. Louis, MO

Intern

June – Aug 2011

- Collaborated with the Artistic Director on projects in development, marketing, and office organization

Circus Flora

St. Louis, MO

Box Office Assistant

June 2011

- Facilitated patron ticket orders via phone and in person for the 2011 show *Vagabond Adventures*

RELATED SKILLS

Movement: Suzuki/Viewpoints, Stage Combat (Hand to Hand, Rapier), Yoga

Dialects: English (RP, Estuary, Cockney); American Midwest, Southern & New York; Israeli; French; Scottish (Highlands); Northern Irish

Languages: Spanish (Intermediate), Hebrew (Beginner)

Software Proficiencies: Zoom, Microsoft Office, Google Suite, Canvas, Canva, Qualtrics, Social Media, & VAN