

Tony Vezner

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Education

M.F.A. - Directing, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana

B.A. - English and Theatre Arts, University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky (cum laude)

Certificate, University of Birmingham at Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Centre, Stratford-on-Avon England

Employment History

2007- Associate Professor, Department of Theatre, Concordia University, Irvine, CA

This four person department offers a major with a three-fold emphasis: acting & directing, technical and design, and history, literature, and criticism. The department has thirty majors and mounts a season of five productions in its black box space and 700 seat amphitheatre. Promoted to the rank of associate professor in 2011.

Curriculum and Instruction responsibilities have included:

- Teaching the following courses in the curriculum:
 - THR 101: Experiences in Theatre (general education)
 - THR 251: Introduction to Theatre (dramatic literature/general education)
 - THR 262: Acting II (period styles including Greek and Comedy of Manners)
 - THR 351: Directing I
 - THR 371: Acting III (Shakespeare, Chekhov, Beckett, Pinter, Mamet)
 - THR 443: Contemporary Theatre and Culture (dramatic literature/theory)
 - THR 451: Directing II
 - THR 452: Advanced Script Analysis
 - WRT 337: Writing for the Stage and Screen (team taught)
- Mentoring senior directing projects (THR 498 – Theatre Showcase, a 3 credit hour individual study course) which culminate in full productions of one-act plays:
 - One Egg by Babette Hughes (2007) directed by Dominick Holland
 - The Actor's Nightmare by Christopher Durang (2009) directed by Andrew Eddins
 - All About AI by Cherie Vogelstein (2010) directed by Drew Williams
 - The American Dream by Edward Albee (2010) directed by Hannah Welter
 - The Whole Shebang by Rich Orloff (2011) directed by Naomi Rogers
- Mentoring a senior playwrighting projects (THR 498 – Theatre Showcase, a 3 credit hour individual study course) which culminated in staged readings of the plays:
 - Supporting Characters by Chad Biar (2008)
 - Last Laugh by Brock Powell (2011)
- Developing new courses for the curriculum (THR 443, 452)
- Presenting guest lectures in other University courses (THR 261, ENG 466)

Additional duties include

- Directing 1-2 productions annually for the program
- Recruiting new students for the Theatre Program and the University.
- Serving as an academic advisor for theatre majors
- Preparing students for the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival Irene Ryan competition.
- Serving as a colleague respondent for Region 8 of KCACTF.
- Directing drama ministry teams (1997-98) called ACTS ("Acclaiming Christ in Theatre and Service"). The groups tour to churches and schools with Christian themed dramas.
- Helping direct and emcee the Theatre Program's 2007 fundraiser *Coffeehouse on Broadway*.
- Developing a departmental E-newsletter for prospective students highlighting productions and student work.
- Enlarging the Theatre Program's presence on the university's website by posting material such as production photos, faculty bios, and profiles of alumni. In 4 years we added 5 pages and 800 photographs.

2004-2006 Producing Artistic Director, New American Theatre, Rockford, IL

New American Theater operated on an Equity (SPT 7) contract with a 280 seat thrust theater on a budget of one million dollars with a full-time staff of ten, producing a five-show season.

Responsibilities

- Season selection and rights negotiation/acquisition
- Casting for all productions including contract negotiation
- Direct 4-5 productions a season (see "Creative Accomplishments – Directing" below)
- Hiring and supervising guest directors and designers
- Selection and supervision of full-time design and technical staff
- Represent the theater to the public at community events, fundraisers, and in the media
- Creating and managing all production budgets
- Work in cooperation with the board of directors to secure corporate and individual donor support
- Oversee all marketing efforts and collaborating on images for brochures and newspaper ads. Cooperate with local television media to create television commercials

Accomplishments

- Reinvigorated the theater's artistic profile - emphasizing newer works and literary classics while receiving excellent reviews for our work.
- Reduced the theater's debt from \$800,000 to \$625,000 in two and a half years
- Created partnerships with Northern Illinois University and other groups to create a summer season increasing the theater's offerings and bringing in additional income.
- Brought Ben Cameron, executive director of Theatre Communications Group to Rockford to speak to local political leaders, the media, and donors.
- Managed the remodeling of the administrative offices, rehearsal spaces, and theatre space

1998-2004 Artistic Director, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL

The Theatre of Western Springs is a well-established community theatre with a reputation for exploring the classics. It attracts 19,000 patrons per season on a budget of \$740,000. TWS houses a 415 seats main stage and a 126 seat black box where it produces a seven-play season. TWS also has a children's theatre school that serves 400 students and produces a four-show season and two touring shows. During my tenure the theatre's work was recognized the Illinois Theatre Association (see "Distinctions" below) and was profiled on Chicago Public Radio, in the Chicago Tribune and the Reader Arts Magazine.

Responsibilities

- Season selection for seven show season (in cooperation with a committee)
- Casting and director selection (in cooperation with a committee)
- Directing 3-5 productions each season (see "Creative Accomplishments – Directing" below)
- Overseeing the theater's Director's Workshop in which fledgling directors direct one-act plays.
- Overseeing and teaching in the theatre's other educational efforts (see "Courses Taught" below)
- Overseeing the theatre's technical staff
- Creating and administering the theatre's production budget
- Creating and managing outreach efforts to the community
- Administering the theatre's course in theatre appreciation and teaching one lesson each session.
- Representing the theater to the public at speaking engagements and in the media

Accomplishments

- Directed Chicago premieres of four plays including Tom Stoppard's adaptation of *The Seagull*
- Created a lecture series featuring professionals like Steppenwolf dramaturg Michelle Volansky, Chicago Tribune critic Richard Christiansen, and puppeteers from Chicago's Defiant Theatre
- Created a workshop series taught by professionals including improvisation (with instructors from Second City), mime, stage combat, Feldenkreis movement, and dialect work.
- Formed a play development program to cultivate new work. Playwrights involved included Gretchen Smith, Head of Playwrighting at SMU and Hurt MacDermott, Jeff Citation winner.
- Developed a dramaturgy program to better inform the production process and the audience. Dramaturgical articles became features in our programs and on our website
- Helped the theatre achieve a 41% increase in single ticket revenue while maintaining an 85% subscription retention rate. During my tenure TWS's cash assets increased by a full third.

Employment History – Theatre of Western Springs (continued)

- Created a set of acting and directing courses which I taught. All courses 6 weeks unless noted:

Realistic Acting One	Directing Seminar – Basics (8 weeks)
Realistic Acting Two	Directing Seminar – Actor Coaching (8 weeks)
Acting Moliere Verse	Directing Seminar – Advanced Work (8 weeks)
Shakespeare and Verse	Directing Seminar – Shakespeare (8 weeks)
Character Physicalization	Samuel Beckett and Performance Art
Studio 1 – Acting Intensive (2 weeks)	Studio 2 – Shakespearean Acting (2 weeks)

1998-2000 Co-Artistic Director, Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL

Circle is an ensemble-based non-equity professional theatre outside of Chicago with two theatres spaces - one seating 60 the other 90. Circle produces a 7 show season emphasizing new plays and premieres.

Responsibilities

- Season selection, hiring guest artists, and leading the theater's 15 company members
- Directing one production per season (see "Creative Accomplishments – Directing" below)
- Supervision of the theater's finances
- Overseeing the theater's educational program for youth
- Representing the theatre to the media and the community

Accomplishments

- Circle garnered 7 Joseph Jefferson nominations and 6 citations in 2000 (see JeffAwards.org)
- Hired the theater's first literary manager to aid script development
- Produced the first off-Broadway production of the Tony-award winning *The Life*
- Eliminated the theatre's debt of just over \$20,000 (or 20% of the annual budget) in 18 months
- Expanded the theatre's facility by one third providing more dressing rooms and rehearsal space
- Expanded grants and sponsorships three-fold while creating the theatre's first board directors

1992-98 Adjunct Instr, Dept. of Communications & Theatre, Concordia Univ. River Forest, IL

Courses Taught

CTH 4420 Acting and Directing Studio
CTH 4428 Contemporary Theatre – Dramatic Literature of the past 20 years
CTH 110 Speech Communication

Other Responsibilities

- Artistic director (1992-1994) of Concordia's drama ministry team, Players INC. ("In the Name of Christ"). The team performed at chapel, outreach functions, and Christian drama festivals.
- Served on the department's accreditation committee

1994-96 Adjunct Instr., Dept. of Theatre, Moraine Valley Community College, Palos Hills, IL

Courses Taught

THR 105 Introduction to Theatre

1990-92 Associate Instr., Dept. of Theatre and Drama, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

Courses Taught

T121 Acting One

Distinctions

- 2011 Excellence in Education Award, Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival, Region 8.
- 2011 A scene from Hamlet invited to the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival, Region 8.
- 2010 Nomination, Garland Award for Excellence in Direction for The Seagull, Chance Theater, Anaheim Hills, CA

Distinctions (continued)

- 2003 Illinois Theatre Assoc. Award, Theatre of Western Springs, "Outstanding Contribution to Community Theatre"
2000 Joseph Jefferson Recommendation for American Buffalo at Circle Theatre, Forest Park, Illinois.
2000 Illinois Theatre Assoc. Nomination, Theatre of Western Springs, "Community Theatre of the Year"
1997 Joseph Jefferson Recommendation, Principia Scriptoriae at Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL.
1989 Boyd Martin Award, "Outstanding Contribution to the Theatre program, University of Louisville".
1987 English-Speaking Union Overseas Scholarship, University of Birmingham, Stratford-on-Avon, UK

Creative Accomplishments – Directing - University

- 3/11 The Arsonists by Max Frisch, translated by Alistair Beaton, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
9/10 Hamlet by William Shakespeare, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
3/10 The House of Blue Leaves by John Guare, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
1/09 Metamorphoses by Mary Zimmerman from Ovid, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
2/08 Dancing at Lughnasa by Brian Friel, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
10/93 A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare, Concordia Univ. River Forest, IL
3/93 The World on the Street by Shakespeare, adapted Tony Vezner Concordia Univ. River Forest, IL
4/92 Blood Relations by Jaci Stephen, adapt. Tony Vezner (one act), Indiana Univ. Bloomington, IN
10/91 Ghosts by Henrik Ibsen, translated by Rolf Fjelde, Indiana Univ. Bloomington, IN
2/91 The Marriage of Bette and Boo by Christopher Durang, Indiana Univ. Bloomington, IN
4/90 Real Estate by Louise Page, Indiana Univ. Bloomington, IN
2/90 Light Up the Sky (asst. director under Ken Costigan) by Moss Hart, Indiana Univ. Bloomington, IN
2/89 The Good Doctor by Neil Simon, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY
10/88 3 Bears in Search of an Author by Dan Greenberg (one act), adapt Tony Vezner, Univ. of Louisville
10/87 Punishment Without Crime by R. Bradbury (one act) adapt. Tony Vezner, Univ. of Louisville

Creative Accomplishments – Directing – Professional and Community

- 9/09 The Seagull by Anton Chekhov, adapt. Richard Nelson, Chance Theater, Anaheim Hills, CA
11/08 Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol by Tom Mula, Chance Theater, Anaheim Hills, CA
10/06 Sherlock's Last Case by Charles Marowitz, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
9/06 Bad Dates by Theresa Rebeck, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
6/06 The Mayor's Arts Awards, Rockford Area Arts Council, Coronado Theater, Rockford, IL
6/06 A Place Called Home, multimedia reading by Don Moore, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
4/06 Tommy by Des McAnuff and Pete Townshend, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
1/06 A Midsummer Night's Dream by William Shakespeare, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
11/05 Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll, adapt. Tony Vezner, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
9/05 Over the Tavern by Tom Dudzick, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
4/05 The Taffetas by Rik Lewis, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
3/05 Five Women Wearing the Same Dress by Alan Ball, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
1/05 Around the World in 80 Days by J. Verne, adapt. J. Hildreth, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
12/04 A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens, adapt. J. Mortimer, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
9/04 The Guys by Anne Nelson, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
6/04 Ten Little Indians by Agatha Christie, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
4/04 Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy, adaptor Helen Edmundson, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL

Creative Accomplishments – Directing – Professional and Community (continued)

- 2/04 The Laramie Project by Moises Kaufman, etc., Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 10/03 Around the World in 80 Days by J. Verne, ad. J. Hildreth, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 9/03 On Golden Pond by Ernest Thompson, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 6/03 Grace and Glorie by Tom Ziegler, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 4/03 The General From America by Richard Nelson, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 2/03 Five Women Wearing the Same Dress by Alan Ball, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 10/02 The Tempest by William Shakespeare, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 9/02 Charley's Aunt by Brandon Thomas, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 5/02 Dearly Departed by David Bottrell and Jesse Jones, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 4/02 The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 2/02 Tartuffe by Moliere, translated by Richard Wilbur, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 10/01 As Bees in Honey Drown by Douglas Carter Beane, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 9/01 The Last Night of Ballyhoo by Alfred Uhry, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 5/01 Pride's Crossing by Tina Howe, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 4/01 Kindertransport by Diane Samuels, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 2/01 The Winter's Tale by William Shakespeare, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 10/00 Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen, ad. Christina Calvit, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 9/00 The Nerd by Larry Shue, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 6/00 American Buffalo by David Mamet, Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL
- 4/00 A Life in the Theatre by David Mamet, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 3/00 Showstoppers of the Century, Musical Revue, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 2/00 Endgame by Samuel Beckett, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 10/99 The Seagull by Anton Chekhov, ad. by Tom Stoppard, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 9/99 The Visit by Friedrich Durrenmatt, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 6/99 Wait Until Dark by Frederick Knott, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 4/99 S'Marvelous - The Work of George & Ira Gershwin Revue, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 2/99 Inspecting Carol by Daniel Sullivan, Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL
- 1/99 The Cover of Life by R.T. Robinson, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 10/98 An Inspector Calls by J.B. Priestley, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 5/98 I Hate Hamlet by Paul Rudnick, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 9/97 Principia Scriptoriae by Richard Nelson, Chicago Area Premiere, Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL
- 1/97 Rumors by Neil Simon, Stage Right Dinner Theatre, Wood Dale, IL
- 10/96 All in the Timing by David Ives, Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL
- 8/96 The Duck Variations (one act) by David Mamet, The Stronger (one act) by August Strindberg
English Made Simple (one act) by David Ives, 2 Guys and a Bench Prod., River Forest, IL
- 4/96 The Lost Weekend (Co-Director) adapted from the movie, WNEP Theatre, Chicago, IL
- 10/95 Standing On My Knees by John Olive, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 11/94 The Ping-Pong Players (one act) by William Saroyan, Bailiwick Director's Festival, Chicago, IL
- 1/94 The Innocents by William Archibald from Henry James, Oak Park Village Players, Oak Park, IL
- 12/89 There Is No Present by Barbara Blumenthal, Bloomington Playwright's Project, Bloomington, IN
- 6/88 Amazing Grace (asst. dir. under David McManus) by Bob Blue, New Stage Rep., Louisville, KY

Creative Accomplishments - Adaptation

- 11/05 Alice in Wonderland from Lewis Carroll, New American Theater, Rockford, IL
10/92 The World on the Street from Shakespeare, Concordia Univ. River Forest, IL
4/92 Blood Relations adapted from Jaci Stephen (one act), Indiana Univ. Bloomington, IN
10/88 3 Bears in Search of an Author from Dan Greenberg (one act) Univ. of Louisville, Louisville, KY
4/88 Punishment Without Crime from Ray Bradbury (one act), Univ. of Louisville, Louisville, KY
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Creative Accomplishments - Design

- 3/11 Projections Co-Design, The Arsonists, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
10/10 Sound Design, A Year With Frog and Toad, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
5/10 Projections Design, The American Dream Concordia University, Irvine, CA
10/03 Scenic Design, Around the World in 80 Days Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
10/02 Scenic Design, The Tempest Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
10/01 Scenic Design, As Bees in Honey Drown Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
10/96 Scenic Design, All in the Timing Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL
10/93 Scenic Design, A Midsummer Night's Dream Concordia University, River Forest, IL
3/93 Scenic Design, The World on the Street Concordia University, River Forest, IL
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Creative Accomplishments – Directing – Staged Readings

- 10/11 Last Laugh by Brock Powell, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
4/08 Supporting Cast by Chad Biar, Concordia University, Irvine, CA
2/02 Lily by Gretchen Smith, Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
1/98 The Hostage by Steven Danzis, Chicago Writers Bloc at the Theater Building, Chicago, IL
10/97 The Hostage by Steven Danzis, Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL
7/92 Yellow Violets by Madge Dishman, Phoenix Theater, Indianapolis, IN
11/89 Lily by Gretchen Smith, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN
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Related Experience

- 2004 Consultant Member, Doctoral Committee, Joan E. Kole, Union Institute & University
2001 Member, Thesis Evaluation Committee, Janel Horvath, Columbia College, Chicago, IL
1997 Member, Regranting Review Committee, Hinsdale Center for the Arts/Illinois Arts Council
97-00 Company Member, Circle Theatre, Forest Park, IL
95-98 Member, Board of Directors, Oak Park Festival Theatre, Oak Park, IL
97-04 Member, Chicago Director's Forum, Chicago, IL
89-90 Media Liaison, Dept. of Theatre and Drama, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN
1989 Stage Management Intern, Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, Louisville, KY
85-86 Company Member, Louisville Experimental Theater Co., Louisville, KY
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Workshops and Speaking Engagements

- 6/08 "Building a Character's Body - Character Physicality", C.I.T.A. National Conf., Azusa Pacific Univ.
10/00 "The Art of Collaboration: The Director/Designer Process", Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
7/00 Director's Roundtable, Bailiwick Director's Festival, Bailiwick Theatre, Chicago, IL
6/00 Producer's Panel Discussion, Director's Forum, The Theatre Building, Chicago, IL
11/00 "Arts Accessibility in the Western Suburbs" – Committee of 100, Hindsale, IL

Workshops and Speaking Engagements (continued)

- 6/99 Advanced Acting Workshop, C.I.T.A. Midwest Conference, Milwaukee, WI
- 6/99 "All the World's A Stage" - Panel Discussion, Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, WI
- 4/97 "Getting Actors into Action", C.I.T.A. Midwest Conference, Bethel College, South Bend, IN
- 10/95 "Standing On My Knees - A Panel Discussion", Theatre of Western Springs, Western Springs, IL
- 9/94 "Audition Techniques", Concordia University, River Forest, IL
- 4/92 "Auditioning for the University and Professional Stage" Black Culture Center, Indiana Univ., Bloomington, IN
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Memberships

- 2009 Theatre Communications Group
- 2008 Association of Theatre in Higher Education
- 2008 Christians in Theatre Arts national networking organization
- 1989 Mortar Board National Honor Society
- 1987 English-Speaking Union