



DULUTH PLAYHOUSE

# SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS

learn • grow • connect

DULUTH  
**PLAYHOUSE**  
AT THE NORSHOR

LEARN  
GROW  
CONNECT



**MISSION:**

The underlying goal of our educational programming is to use the framework of theatre and creativity as a way into developing both as a human and artist. We believe theatre education fosters the intrinsic understanding and practice of many vital and rarely deliberately taught ‘soft’ skills. Examples include using empathy as a lens

into processing the world around you, effective communication and collaboration, and developing deliberate intrapersonal (inside the self) awareness and intentionality. Education that prioritizes evolving its students into mature and reflexive artists is a primary guiding concept for our curriculum. Through a combination of teaching substan-

tial and well-researched theatrical techniques along with consistently exercising a spirit of openness, experimentation, and an attitude that don’t work as much as the things that do, we believe the Artist Mindset prepares students of all ages (adults too!) equally well for a life in the arts/theatre or any path

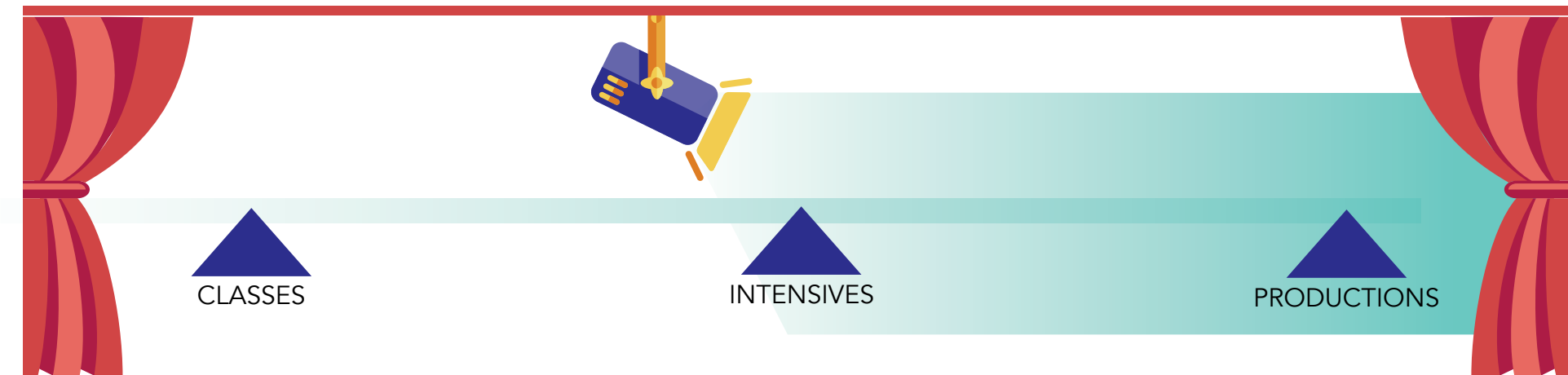
they choose to pursue. The way we teach theatre supports multiple modes of intelligence that don’t always get practiced through more traditional educational frameworks, including kinesthetic/spatial, musical/rhythmic, and making the interpersonal/intrapersonal explicit. In addition, logical/quantified and verbal

**PROCESS VS. PRODUCT CONTINUUM**

We prioritize learning along a spectrum from Process-Oriented to Product-Focused. Our main classes are process based, which allows for the building of new techniques and skills to remain primary. Our productions fall toward the other end of the spectrum—more performance based—and allow for students to implement the tools they’ve been developing in classes within the rehearsal process.

**PROCESS**

**PRODUCT**



intelligences are practiced and reinforced through the lens of critical thinking, experimentation, and creativity. We feel strongly that this process not only creates great theatre artists, but also bolsters aptitude and a sound foundation for all arenas of learning. In other words: theatre training makes for good lawyers, doctors,

scientists, and engineers just as much as it does for actors, writers, designers, and musicians. Our program emphasizes two core areas of in-depth training: Acting and Music Theatre. Additionally, multiple Special Topics will also be offered that allow for exploration into related disciplines. We also are working

hard to create opportunities for all types of theatre artists—designers, technicians, directors, choreographers, playwrights, just as much as actors, singers, dancers—to grow and learn. We also prioritize the importance of diversity of opinion, of identity, of background, and of experience within our classrooms and

rehearsal rooms. We know that the more varied the outlooks from individuals in our programs, the better the art we will make. We are working hard to find ways to reduce the barrier of entry to our programming, and want everyone to know they are invited not only to Duluth Playhouse, but also to theatre in a larger sense.

# SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS

## ACTING GENERAL

The acting curriculum at Duluth Playhouse trains students not only in the skills and techniques specific to performance onstage, but

also in broader concepts inherent within acting methodologies such as the structure and importance of storytelling, making the creative process explicit, critical thinking and problem solving, and exercising multiple types of communication.

Students will study and work on different established acting methodologies through text, physical and vocal expression, and improvisation. Emphasis in acting classes will be on *the process* (technique, experimentation, analysis, play) rather than *the product* (performance). Each class will culminate in an informal final showing allowing family/friends of students a sneak peek into where the classes are in their process and study. The skills exercised in these acting classes are cumulative (the more classes taken the stronger the skills will be) and can be directly applied when the student is participating in more specifically performance-oriented situations, such as being cast in plays or musicals.

All personality types bring strengths to the acting classroom and have a place to explore and grow within these classes.



## ACTING GENERAL

### LEVEL 1 • Grades K - 2

#### story/character structure, creative play, body awareness/control

This class uses the framework of the theatre informally as a way into building a strong foundation of creativity, playing, exploration, and imagination for the student. Concepts such as beginnings of character, story structure, body awareness/control, and the potential of the voice for expression will be introduced in a playful and open way. Students will also be developing social-emotional skills and building their identity with both individual and group exploration.

### LEVEL 2 • Grades 3 - 5

#### imagination as a skill, character analysis, build actors 'toolbox'

This class focuses on the process of imagination as a skill one can concretely practice. Students will learn to examine story and plot, begin the process of character analysis as well as begin work on character differentiation and specificity, use body/voice/imagination as the beginnings of their actor 'toolbox,' and start to build some work using more terminology specific to acting techniques (such as objective, tactic, obstacle). The interplay between interpreting work (text and characters given to an actor) versus generating work (students creating their own characters, story, and mode of expression) will be passively folded in to this curriculum, setting up the groundwork for more specific use of these skills in future classes.

### LEVEL 3 • Grades 6 - 8

#### movement training, rehearsal/vocal training, analysis performance

In addition to building on all objectives of Level 1-2 curriculums, students will be introduced to more formal ideas of story/plot structure (Freytag pyramid as well as some contrasting ideas) and character analysis (function, style, 'raising the stakes'). More codified practices of voice/body training will be folded in, including voice/diction work, proper warm-up procedure, and movement training and more advanced terminology will be taught and explored. Students will delve deeper into text, including reading a full-length play and working on both the analysis as well as performance of scenes within it. This class will model discussion of material as well as rehearsal expectations.

### LEVEL 4 • Grades 9 - 12

#### individual responsibility, performance, collaboration, analysis/research

Building from foundational acting concepts, this class will work to build a solid, confident, and educated actor comfortable in all classroom, rehearsal, and performance situations. Students will get focused work on monologues, a disciplined approach to warming up, and deepened exploration into training methodologies. Students will read a full play and gain the experience of discussing, analyzing, exploring, and performing it and the skills of understanding rehearsal expectations, making strong acting choices, working/collaborating with a director and fellow actors, and the process of evolving ideas productively are emphasized.

### LEVEL 1 OFFERINGS

GRADES K - 2

### LEVEL 2 OFFERINGS

GRADES 3 - 5

### LEVEL 3 OFFERINGS

GRADES 6 - 8

### LEVEL 4 OFFERINGS

GRADES 9 - 12

### CLASS: ACTING-LEVEL 1

AGES: Kindergarten-2nd grade

TIME: Monday, 4-5pm

DATES: January 9-February 27

#### DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to Acting basics including: exploration, imagination, and body/voice work.

Emphasis on building social-emotional skills both individually and within a group.

### CLASS: ACTING-LEVEL 2

AGES: 3rd-5th grade

TIME: Tuesday, 4-5:30pm

DATES: January 10-February 28

#### DESCRIPTION:

Story, Plot, and Character techniques/terminology will be explicitly taught as well as working to build their actor 'toolbox' (body/voice/imagination). In addition to interpreting work (traditional acting approach), students will also be introduced into generating their own material (some story and character creation).

### CLASS: ACTING-LEVEL 3

AGES: 6th-8th grade

TIME: Monday, 4-5:30pm

DATES: January 9-February 27

#### DESCRIPTION:

Formal techniques of story/plot structure as well as character are emphasized. More advanced levels and understanding of voice/body training are introduced, including proper warm-up techniques and self-reflection tools. Reading some dramatic literature and engaging script analysis/discussions will be introduced.

### CLASS: ACTING-LEVEL 4

AGES: 9th-12th grade

TIME: Saturday, 11:40am - 1:10pm

DATES: January 14-March 4

#### DESCRIPTION:

Curriculum is geared toward creating a confident and educated actor in all classroom, rehearsal, and performance situations. Strong focus on monologue work, warm-ups, and delving into specific acting methodologies. Analysis is an expectation as much as sharing performances of work.

## MUSIC THEATRE GENERAL

The music theatre curriculum at Duluth Playhouse centers around the idea that although acting, singing, and dance need to be studied as independent disciplines in order to be a well-rounded music theatre performer, it is just as necessary to study the techniques that meld them together into one form. In these classes, students will be building ways to explore narrative and character within text, music/rhythm/sound, and movement/physicality/dance. Although technique specific to acting, singing, and dance will be taught, the emphasis will be on how to connect all three disciplines within the context of the larger story being told.

Because of the nature of song and dance being incorporated into the story, the music theatre curriculum organically trains students along the spectrum from more realistic to more abstract. This process of interpreting an emotion/idea through stylistically changing frameworks exercises a student's ability to think outside the box, creatively problem solve, and think critically about the efficacy of their choices.



## MUSIC THEATRE GENERAL

### **LEVEL 2** • Grades 3-5: **acting, singing and dancing groundwork**

This class will lay the groundwork of centering narrative and character within acting, singing, and dancing technique. Basic acting concepts (objective, stakes, process of character development, etc), vocal technique (harmony, placement, dynamics, rhythm, etc), and dance/movement methodology (body awareness/control, basic steps, unison moving, physical expression and deliberateness, etc) will be introduced. These concepts will always circle back to the fundamental of music theatre training—which is using different disciplines to express both story concerns as well as character specificity.

### **LEVEL 3** • Grades 6-8: **musical theatre styles /periods, physical theatre, solo and ensemble work**

In addition to building upon the foundations laid out in the Level 1 course, students will begin to explore different styles and periods of musical theatre (for instance, golden age vs. contemporary, traditional vs. pop, book musical vs. sung-thru) and the different corresponding techniques. Physical theatre (as opposed to more traditional examples of 'dance') will be introduced as well as beginning to differentiate solo performance from ensemble work. Students in this class will also start to research/learn about the performance history of the material they are working on.

### **LEVEL 4** • Grades 9-12: **thoughtful exploration of ensemble vs individuals, ownership of the character/materials**

This upper level class will use techniques detailed in the previous levels to build a more advanced understanding of the scope of what it means to be a music theatre performer. Students will more thoughtfully explore the role of the ensemble vs. individual characters and take more ownership in the research and study of the material and characters they are working on with the goal of being a fully participatory presence and voice in the artistic direction and attitude of the room. Additionally, deeper study of the scene-to-song transition as well as relevant dramaturgical techniques will be emphasized.

### **LEVEL 2 OFFERINGS** GRADES 3 - 5

#### **CLASS: MUSIC THEATRE-LEVEL 2**

AGES: 3rd-5th grade

TIME: Thursday, 4-5:30pm

DATES: January 12-March 2

DESCRIPTION: Lays the groundwork of centering the story and character whenever we are acting, singing, or dancing (or all 3!). Basic concepts of the 'triple threat' disciplines (acting, singing, dancing) will be introduced.

### **LEVEL 3 OFFERINGS** GRADES 6 - 8

#### **CLASS: MUSIC THEATRE-LEVEL 3**

AGES: 6th-8th grade

TIME: Saturday, 11:40am-1:10pm

DATES: January 14-March 4

DESCRIPTION: Techniques within acting, singing, and dancing continue to be emphasized, always within the framework of telling the story. Different styles of musical theatre will be introduced along with a beginning knowledge of physical theatre and solo vs. ensemble work.

### **LEVEL 4 OFFERINGS** GRADES 9 - 12

#### **CLASS: MUSIC THEATRE-LEVEL 4**

AGES: 9th-12th grade

TIME: Saturday, 10-11:30am

DATES: January 14-March 4

DESCRIPTION: Curriculum is geared toward creating a confident and educated music theatre actor in all classroom, rehearsal, and performance situations. In-depth work is done in solo, small group, and ensemble scenarios and students will be taught how to dig into the research and analysis of the material they are working on.







INSTRUCTORS



**COURTNEY LAINE SELF**

has recently joined the Duluth Playhouse staff as the Director of Education and Children's Programming. She has an MFA in Directing from Southern Illinois University, a BFA in Music Theatre from The Hartt School, and has taught for age groups anywhere from pre-K through adults. For the past decade, she lived in NYC and freelance directed/choreographed around the country.



**PHILLIP FAZIO**

is the Producing Artistic Director at Duluth Playhouse. He earned a BFA in Musical Theatre from The Boston Conservatory and a MFA in Directing from Pennsylvania State University. Phillip lived and worked in NYC for nine years and has been an assistant for Tony Award winner Christopher Ashley and Tony Award nominee



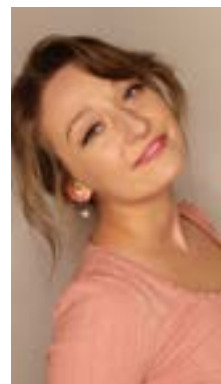
**ALYSON ENDERLE**

has had the pleasure to work on several Playhouse productions (*Once, Ragtime, Little Women, The Musical*), and has performed at several theaters in the Twin Cities (Artistry, Lyric Arts, Daleko). She graduated from the University of Minnesota-Duluth with a BFA in Musical Theater in 2018, and is looking forward to collaborating with future young artists.



**NAOMI CHRISTENSON**

has always loved dancing and is passionate about bringing quality dance opportunities to adults. She holds a BFA in art, design and dance from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and she has studied tap online with Demi Remick, Sarah Reich, Kaleena Miller, Andrew Nemr and Lisa LaTouche.



**RYLEE KUBERRA**

grew up in Duluth and earned her BA in Theatre Arts & Psychology from Flagler College in St. Augustine, FL. Her teaching artist experience extends into typically underserved groups including the deaf/blind community and the elderly community. Her hope is to aid in the development of upstanding youth citizens who will have a better sense of who they are through the tools of theatre!



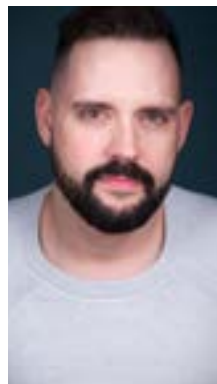
**JONATHAN MANCHESTER**

has been teacher theatre at the Duluth Playhouse for over a decade now. He makes use of that theatre degree most weekends with Renegade Improv. Along with teaching for the Playhouse, Jonathan and Christina Stroup Manchester work with students heading off to college.



**CHERYL SKAFTE**

is a local theater educator and performer. She has taught with the Duluth Playhouse since 2005. Most recently she played Viola in Wise Fool Theater's production of Twelfth Night. When she isn't at the theater, she spends her time working her day job for the City of Duluth, reading, running and thinking about summer.



**WES DRUMMOND**

is the Executive Director at Duluth Playhouse. He earned a BFA in Musical Theatre from Western Kentucky University and an MFA in Directing From Pennsylvania State University. Directing in Chicago, NYC and regionally, Wes has been an assistant to Tony Award winner Matthew Warchus and Tony Award nominees Michael Greif and Susan H. Schulman.

COURTNEY'S CONSIDERATIONS



**COURTNEY LAINE SELF**  
[cself@duluthplayhouse.org](mailto:cself@duluthplayhouse.org)

I hope you enjoy our new roster of classes and special topics. I want to create a system for growing our theater base here rooted in strong fundamentals and exceptional class experiences.

This Winter, the Education Department will be offering several one-day workshops focusing on a variety of techniques and offered to a range of ages—adults included!

Participate in as many as you like :)

These offerings will always be open to a full range of experience levels—from total beginner to experienced—and will be structured to provide instruction that meets each participant where they are. You can think of these workshops as a way to gain an introduction into new skills in order to gauge future interest. Or—if you already have a working knowledge of the discipline—these workshops are a way to keep exercising those 'muscles' and stay connected with the Playhouse family.

I like QR codes, I don't have to remember where I need to go to get information. Scan here for latest updates on workshops and classes.

WORKSHOPS

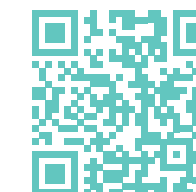
Check out the upcoming offerings below! If there's something else you're interested in exploring, we'd love to hear from you! Feel free to email me, Education Director, Courtney Self, for more info: [cself@duluthplayhouse.org](mailto:cself@duluthplayhouse.org)

For this Winter, offerings may include:

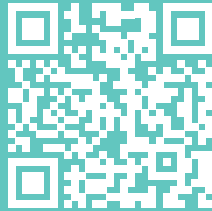
- Clowning
- Physical Theatre
- Acting the Song
- Playwriting
- Theatre Devising
- Acting Master Class

This year, we will be offering another session of classes in Spring from April 24th-June 3rd!

Please keep an eye out in the new year for our Spring session and for the announcement of our Summer Camps!







Please visit our website for scholarship information.

[www.duluthplayhouse.org/education](http://www.duluthplayhouse.org/education)

Register for two or more classes per family unit  
this winter session you qualify for one comp ticket  
to any performance  
of your choice this season!

DULUTH  
PLAYHOUSE

211 E Superior St - Duluth, MN 55802 • 218.733.7555

Duluth Playhouse prioritizes creating a welcoming space in our classrooms for peoples of all abilities, race, ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Our programs include need-based scholarships and collaborative staff to work with students' individual learning and social needs.