

The Art of **TEACHING** the Arts

Program 2: Developing Students as Artists

Theatre

SEGMENT 2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Peter Lynch

11 years teaching

About the School

Denver School of the Arts
Denver, CO

Type:
Urban/Arts-focused

Grades:
6-12

Students:
900
Very mixed socio-economic status

Majors:

Creative Writing, Dance, Theatre,
Instrumental Music, Stagecraft & Design,
Video & Cinema Arts, Visual Art, and
Vocal Music

About the Stagecraft & Design Program

Faculty:

2 design and costume + 1
paraprofessional technical director

Students:

110 majors + 100 taking electives

Facilities:

Above Average in the area

- 6 performance venues
- Full light grid
- Sound system with 48-channel board
- 1 classroom
- Costume shop
- Metal shop (shared with Visual Arts)
- Construction and paint areas
- Dressing rooms
- Storage for props, costume, and scenery

Required Courses:

Skill-level courses on Materials and
Construction, Design-Styles Course, 15
hours of production, and community work

- Ninth-graders design and produce all music department productions
- Tenth-graders design and produce all dance department productions
- Eleventh-graders design and produce all theatre department productions
- Twelfth-graders produce an independent senior project and/or stage manage at least one main stage production

Elective Courses:

Lighting, Make-up, Costume, Stage
Construction, Sound Production, Design,
Invention Design, and Historical Periods

Audition:

Portfolio showing and paper-based
design assignment. Returning students
must audition annually, at the end of the
fall semester. The audition accounts for
one third of their semester grade.

About the Featured Class

Sophomore Stagecraft & Design:

Tenth-graders spend a semester
working in a specific production
area, mostly lighting and costuming,
as those areas pertain to dance.

Student Motivation:
High

Preparations/Prerequisites:

- Two years spent in the production department
- Intermediate students have worked on at least 24 productions

In the Teacher's Words

What safety precautions do stagecraft and dance students take for the aerial work?

Because the individual handling the aerial line shares a connection to the person hanging on the other end, they work together to make sure each person feels safe with what he or she is doing. To reinforce this relationship, students often verbalize their responsibilities, for example, saying: "I will be ready at this cue."