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Creative Enrichment

Theatre arts director and teacher Roxane Caravan is proud of the drama department at Lakewood Ranch High School (LRHS). Roxane, co-lead teacher of the LRHS Academy of the Arts, teaches drama, acting, musical and technical theatre, stagecraft, and humanities. She is a strong advocate for providing students with the opportunity to explore their own sense of self, their cultures, and the world in which they live.

“People in the arts are welcoming, open-minded, and accepting. We are a community here,” Roxane says. “Students find their way here where they can develop and showcase their talent and skills at district, state, national, and even international levels.”

“My mission,” Ms. Caravan continues, “is to enrich students’ lives through performance and theatre education with challenging learning activities that engage their minds, hearts, and bodies. Students learn to appreciate and understand the role and influence of the performing arts on culture and society. Through this enrichment they can attain higher levels of academic achievement while gaining self-esteem and higher levels of empathy and tolerance for others.”



InnoVators

The Technical Art of Stagecraft

Have you ever gone to see a play? Although much work goes into producing a film or TV show, theater has the added pressure of a live audience. There can be no mess-ups or re-takes, and no one yells, “Cut!” In order for the production and performances to go smoothly, teams of people are involved in the technical aspects of theater, also called *stagecraft*. These teams focus on the practical side of theater production; they build and arrange scenery, rig lights, create costumes and wigs, obtain props, and record and mix music and other sound effects.



Aspects of stagecraft have been around for a while. Even the ancient Greeks used a mechanical effect called *deus ex machina*, literally “god from the machine,” where an actor playing a god would be lowered onto the stage by a type of crane in order to resolve a conflict. Today’s theaters obviously utilize more advanced technology, and stagecraft is broken into sub-groups of responsibilities. Each team works to make a successful production.

- **Lighting.** A lighting designer (LD) works with the director to rig a lighting system which will create the best visibility. The LD considers a light’s shape, color, and brightness, keeping cost and safety in mind. During technical rehearsals, actors must pause for a while as the crew focuses and changes the light to best suit the scene.
- **Mechanics.** This involves the engineering and design of scenic elements. Many professional productions use a *fly system*, or an assortment of ropes, pulleys, and counterweights which allows stagehands and tech crews to quickly move performers or pieces of scenery on and off the stage.
- **Cosmetics and wigs.** Cosmetics are important additions to stage production, as an actor’s face can look washed-out while on stage and in bright light. Wigs help create the character’s overall look.
- **Scenery.** Productions with hefty budgets, such as those on Broadway, employ scores of skilled carpenters, painters, electricians, and others to build scenery and create special effects, including weather-related effects such as wind, rain, fog, and snow.
- **Sound.** Directors and stage managers use music in creative ways. Maybe a character listens to the radio in one scene or has a dream with a certain song. Music can be added to give a message or add emotion. The sound crew records and mixes music, sound effects, and voices whenever needed.
- **Props.** Slightly different from scenery, this category includes furniture and smaller items necessary for a scene. Someone has to get the dishes for Scene Two, the book thrown across the room in the last scene, and that bouquet of flowers...
- **Wardrobe.** Costumes are crucial to a stage production; someone needs to obtain, design, create, wash, and at times repair one or multiple costumes for every character on stage.

Watching a live theater production from the audience is an enjoyable experience, but it’s easy to forget how much work goes on behind the scenes. Next time you see a play, try to observe the different techniques used. Pay attention to costumes, lighting, special effects, the scenery, and the props. If you enjoy this type of work, try to get involved in the plays put on by your school; it will help your career get its start.

KIDZ
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Working Hard...and Loving It

Lakewood Ranch High School senior John Marano knows his way around the theatre. At the tender age of seven, John performed in a production of *Carmen* which proved to be the catalyst for his future.

“The arts are about doing what you love to do,” John shares. “You can find yourself and learn what your true passion is. You can set goals and grow your talent. You can create your own sanctuary and community where you can develop a sense of ‘let me just be with my art.’”

John perfects his craft through hard work and lots of practice. He is a member of the drama club where his ability to communicate well with sponsors and patrons has garnered him much respect and support. He studies opera with a voice coach, performs with Sarasota’s Key Choral and the Sarasota Youth Opera, and is a member of the International Thespian Society. John’s plans include attending a music conservatory upon graduation.

DISCOVER the Future



Regional Careers: Related occupations and current wages in the Suncoast Workforce Region.

Occupational Title	Entry Level	Experienced
Minimum wage	\$7.25	—
Art Directors	\$21.73	\$36.79
Arts, Design, and Entertainment Occupations	\$12.41	\$28.16
Graphic Designers	\$15.11	\$23.61
Media and Communication Workers	\$10.51	\$23.48
Producers and Directors	\$12.26	\$32.89
Writers and Authors	\$15.68	\$28.21

Source: <http://fred.labormarketinfo.com>
FL Labor Market Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics & Wages Program

Career Pathway: Students desiring a career in any of these areas can find related educational programs at these schools*:

Lakewood Ranch High School, Manatee Technical Institute, State College of Florida—Sarasota/Manatee, University of South Florida

*Other Manatee schools may offer similar programs. Listed schools are related to today’s issue.

WEB Wise

Check out the following websites:

- www.broadwayworld.com
- www.theatermania.com
- www.ibdb.com
- www.edta.org

Explore



Write your First Play

1. Start by writing a character sketch. Choose a picture of a person or group of people from a magazine or newspaper and write an imaginary description of their personality, background, and other character traits.
2. Write a short story that supports the visual look of the picture. Write a beginning to introduce the story, a middle that allows the main character to overcome an obstacle or solve a problem, and an ending that summarizes the story.
3. Edit your story, layering it with details. Include the *who, what, when, where, and why* of the story.
4. Convert your story to a play. Use characters’ dialogue to tell the story. You’re on your way to writing the script for your play.



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