

CURRICULUM VITAE

Rachel Wells, MFA

Technical Director

Scene Shop Supervisor

Adjunct Professor

Northern Michigan University - Department of Theatre and Dance

Education

2024 M.F.A. Theatre Technology, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

2021 B.F.A. Theatre Design and Technical Production, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

Academic and Professional Appointments

2024-present, Technical Director, Scene Shop Supervisor, Adjunct Professor, Northern Michigan University, Department of Theatre and Dance, Marquette, MI

Supervising Associate Scene Shop Supervisor, Paint/Props Supervisor, and 12+ student staff in the University Scenic Studio. Managing a \$60,000 labor and \$50,000 materials budget across 16 productions annually, including musicals, dramas, dance, youth theatre, and fundraisers. Creating construction drawings and build calendars; leading shop staff through build, load-in, and strike. Overseeing stage, rigging, and tool maintenance. Hiring and training shop staff; collaborating with all departments. Contributing to season selection and department meetings, advocating for more sustainable production timelines. Participating in a redesign of the curriculum to add a TD/PM focus and expand course offerings to support well-rounded theatre artists. Participating in student juries and curriculum development.

Courses Taught

TH 295: Special Topics: Theatre Graphics

TH 331: Advanced Stagecraft

2021-2024, Graduate Assistant, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN

Teaching Assistant for Entertainment Technology. Technical Director for six productions, budgets ranged from \$1,500 to \$3,500. Responsibilities included: producing construction drawings, supervising scenic construction, and leading shop staff of 15 during build and strike. Carpenter for all other productions in an 8-show season.

Courses Taught

T-350 Entertainment Technology (Teaching Assistant)

Guest Lectures

T-100 Introduction To Theatre "What is a Technical Director?"

T-100 Introduction To Theatre "The Technical Director as a Collaborator"

2022-2024, Various, Indiana University Summer Theatre, Bloomington, IN

Assistant Technical Director

Assisted the Festival Technical Director in mentoring and passing institutional knowledge onto the Production Technical Director. Created Standard Operating Procedures regarding the transportation, load-in, strike, limitations, and

troubleshooting of the annual summer shell. Recreated missing documents vital for understanding the opportunities and constraints of utilizing the shell.

Festival Technical Director

Budgeted, drafted, and managed the build, load-in, and strike for the 2023 season. Led an 8-person shop staff of varying skill levels. Altered and loaded in the \$50,000 summer season shell.

Production Technical Director

Assisted the Festival Technical Director with the load-in of the \$50,000 summer season shell

Budgeted, drafted, and managed the build, load-in, and strike of two shows in repertory. Led a 5-person shop staff of varying skill levels. Successfully led a 45-minute changeover nightly with a crew of 3.

2022-2024, Overhire Worker, Indiana University Auditorium, Bloomington, IN

Assisted with load-in and load-outs of various touring groups.

2018-2021, Shop Assistant, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

Shop assistant in the WMU Scene Shop building and supervising students for 9 shows a year. Construction needs included welding, carpentry, and overhead rigging. Technical Director for two productions, including one devised piece. Duties included budgeting, generating build drawings, and managing build, load-in, and strike.

Courses Taught

THEA 2301 Computer-Aided Theatrical Design (Teaching Assistant)

THEA 1310 Theatrical Drafting (Teaching Assistant)

2018, Carpenter, Pacific Conservatory for the Performing Arts, Santa Maria, CA

Built scenery for four productions over a single summer season, working collaboratively in a fast-paced scenic shop environment. Executed construction from drafted plans under the supervision of the technical director, maintaining quality and safety standards. Assisted with packing, transporting, and loading scenic elements between the shop and two performance venues. Participated in efficient one-day load-outs and load-ins between venues, supporting rapid turnarounds and adapting scenery for multiple spaces.

Certifications

Genie Lift Pro Certification 2024

Grants & Awards

Invited Participating Production, ACTF Region 3 2025

Ctrl+Alt+Delete; Technical Director

Best Design Documentation by the Stage Machine Design Competition 2022

SETC Design Competition Award, Technical Direction - 2nd Place 2023

Presentations

Marist College, Guest Lecturer, The Role of a TD - What do we Actually Do? 2024

Professional Development & Membership

Member, USITT, United States Institute for Theatre Technology, 2023-present

Member, USITT, United States Institute for Theatre Technology - Midwest Chapter, 2023-present

Attendance, USITT National Conferences, 2023-present

University & College Committees & Service

Member, Occupational Safety Committee, Northern Michigan University, 2024-present

Departmental Committees & Services

Sponsor and Faculty Mentor, USITT Student Chapter, Northern Michigan University, 2024-present

Member, Season Selection Committee, Northern Michigan University, 2024-present

Resident Technical Director for 16+ stage productions annually, Northern Michigan University, 2024-present

Member, Design and Technology Committee, Northern Michigan University, 2024-present

Recruiter, NMU Theatre and Dance Recruitment, Northern Michigan University, 2024-present

CREATIVE VITAE

Theatre Technology and Production - as of January 2026

2025-2026

Tragedy Sound, Technical Director, North Coast Theatre and Dance Festival

9 to 5, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

A Streetcar Named Desire, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Cupid's Cabaret, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

The Little Mermaid, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance + Superior Arts Youth Theatre

Love is a Burning Thing, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, Advising Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Spongebob: Youth Addition, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance + Superior Arts Youth Theatre

Ctrl+Alt+Delete, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

The Rocky Horror Show (Annual), Scenic Designer/Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Into the Woods, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Wildcat Theatre Follies, Scenic Coordinator, NMU Theatre and Dance

2024-2025

North Coast Dance Festival, Technical Director, North Coast Theatre and Dance Festival

Love Letters, Technical Director, North Coast Theatre and Dance Festival

Dancing with Our Stars, Scenic Coordinator, North Coast Theatre and Dance Festival

Drag Cabaret, Technical Director, North Coast Theatre and Dance Festival

Six Men Dressed Like Joseph Stalin, Technical Director, North Coast Theatre and Dance Festival

NMU Theatre and Dance Alumni and James Awards, Scenic Coordinator, NMU Theatre and Dance

Theatre and Dance Senior Showcase, Scenic Coordinator, NMU Theatre and Dance

Jesus Christ Superstar, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Much Ado About Nothing, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

The Wizard of Oz, Advising Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance + Superior Arts Youth Theatre

Alice and Wonderland: An Immersive Experience, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Holiday Soiree, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Home for the Holidays, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Frankenstein, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

The Rocky Horror Show, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Cabaret, Technical Director, NMU Theatre and Dance

Wildcat Theatre Follies, Scenic Coordinator, NMU Theatre and Dance

Forever Plaid, Technical Director, Indiana University Summer Theatre

Dial M For Murder, Technical Director, Indiana University Summer Theatre

2023-2024

Head Over Heals, Assistant Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
Pipeline, Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
Faculty Dance 2023, Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
Into the Woods, Technical Director, Indiana University Summer Theatre

2022-2023

Something Rotten!, Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
Natasha, Pierre, and the Great Comet of 1812, Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
Everybody, Assistant Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Technical Director, Indiana University Summer Theatre
The 39 Steps, Technical Director, Indiana University Summer Theatre

2021-2022

Carrie: The Musical, Performer Flight Operator/Technician, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
At First Sight: Bowling for Beginners, Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
At First Sight: Uncle Play, Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance
The Threepenny Opera, Assistant Technical Director, IU Theatre, Drama, and Contemporary Dance

2020-2021

Timoramino Immersion: Viscera Exposed, Technical Director, Western Michigan University

2019-2020

Tribes, Technical Director, Western Michigan University
Gem of the Ocean, Paint Charge, Western Michigan University

2018-2019

The Dancing Granny, Properties Master, Western Michigan University
The Lady in Question, Assistant Technical Director, Western Michigan University