WHAT CAN I DO WITH A MAJOR IN … THEATRE/DESIGN FOR PERFORMANCE

OCCUPATIONAL OVERVIEW:
According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, “Actors express ideas and portray characters in theater, film, television, and other performing arts media. They also work at theme parks or other live events. They interpret a writer’s script to entertain or inform an audience (2014).”

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS:
The University of New Mexico’s Department of Theatre & Dance website describes a degree in Theatre as: “The Theatre Training Program offers a dynamic combination of the practical (performance) and academic (classroom) courses. Many performance experiences are available on and off campus, on stage and on camera, in schools and in the community organizations for actors, singers, directors, stage managers, writers, teachers, and dramaturges (2014).” UNM also offers a Bachelor of Arts in Design for Performance which is described as “The Design for Performance program of The Department of Theatre and Dance prepares students for advanced study or professional careers in design and technical production across the spectrum of the performing arts. Our offerings lead to career paths in Theater, Dance, Opera, Film, Television, Gaming and Interactive Environments, the new Digital Media, and related areas. Students receive a good liberal arts education and general training in design as well as specialized training in areas of their particular interest. Design and production areas offered include the traditional areas of Scenic, Costume, Lighting, and Sound Design for the Theatre, Dance, Opera, and Musical Productions, as well as offerings in Art Direction/Production Design for Film and Television, new Digital Media, and Interactive Art and Environments. (2014)”

EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS:
A bachelor's degree is typically the minimum formal education required.

INDUSTRY OPTIONS:

COMMON GRADUATE SCHOOL OPTIONS FOR THEATRE / DESIGN FOR PERFORMANCE MAJORS:
MFA in choreography, performance or MA in dance scholarship, therapy, teaching, history, criticism, arts management
An undergraduate dance degree can also lead to such professional programs as Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Counseling, Law or an MBA, amongst others.

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES:
- Develop an online presence documenting your performances for better marketability.
- Gain related professional experience through involvement in internships, apprenticeships.
- Audition, audition, audition! Get fantastic head shots!
- Students who are interested in graduate school should maintain a high undergraduate GPA and develop relationships with faculty and community leaders.
- Shadow professionals in the field to gain a better understanding of the options available and to build relationships with professional mentors.
- Build your network and get involved on campus through student organizations and campus events.
- Speak with and develop relationships with mentors and faculty about career opportunities.
- Performance leads can be found on your department’s website, list-servs, newsletters, and social media sites.

COMMON GRADUATE SCHOOL OPTIONS FOR THEATRE & DESIGN FOR PERFORMANCE MAJORS
MA (Theatre History, Theory/Criticism, Dramatic Literature), MFA (acting, directing, theatre for young audiences, playwriting, theatrical design, theatre management) or PhD (typically preparation for college level teaching). An undergraduate theatre/design degree can also lead to such professional programs as Law, Arts Management, and MBA, amongst others.
STATE & NATIONAL WAGES:
Adapted from CareerOneStop (2013)

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<th>Location</th>
<th>10%</th>
<th>25%</th>
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INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES:

- American Association of Community Theatre: http://www.aact.org/index.htm
- Screen Actors Guild: http://www.sag.org/
- Entertainment Careers.net: http://www.entertainmentcareers.net/
- Showbiz Jobs.com: http://www.showbizjobs.com/
- Backstage Jobs.com: http://backstagejobs.com/
- Playbill: http://www.playbill.com/jobs/find/
- Prop People.com: http://propppeople.com/jobboard.htm
- Arts Lynx: http://www.artslynx.org/jobs.htm#Theatre
- Stage Manager’s Association: http://www.stagemanagers.org/
- Educational Theatre Association: http://www.edta.org/
- Arts Opportunities: http://www.artsoopportunities.org/
- Society of Stage Directors & Choreographers: www.ssdc.org
- Shakespeare Theatre Company: http://www.shakespearetheatre.org/about/opportunities/index.aspx

OTHER INFORMATIONAL WEBSITES:

http://online.onetcenter.org    http://www.bls.gov/oco/

REFERENCES


University of New Mexico, Department of Dance (2014). Retrieved from http://theatre.unm.edu/academics/dance/