TheWesternStage

Props Artisan

The Western Stage (TWS) is a theatre program in residence at Hartnell Community College in Salinas, CA. We produce 6 shows annually between April/May and November/December each year. We are not a union theatre, but we do engage professional guest artists (including AEA actors) who work beside community and student talent. We best serve the next generation of theatre artists, especially folx who are seeking CV building opportunities. We strive to mirror the rich diversity of theatre artists that enrich our profession and we encourage applicants of all ethnicities, gender identities, and ages, as well as with disabilities, to submit their interest & application.

**As TWS strives to broaden its reach into the diverse communities in Monterey County, all departments will also diversify its members so our teams reflect the audiences we are working to attract and welcome, many of whom will have a first experience of theatre/live performance at Western Stage.*

Employment is as a part-time, seasonal Hartnell College Adjunct Faculty Member and/or Professional Expert Employee, and is directly supervised by TWS' Resident Scene Shop Staff and generally by TWS Managing Artistic Director.

Position Overview

TWS Prop Designs require in-depth research, planning, budgeting, resourcing, creativity and hands-on practical experience in scenic design & construction. The ideal candidate is equally able to work with the professional design and creative teams involved in the production, as well as the non-professional community volunteers and college students who work in the on-site scene shop.

Principal Responsibilities:

Design & Conception: Collaborate with show director and scenic designer to establish visual aesthetic consistency.

- Designs (or assists a props designer) in the artistic iteration of production props to ensure quality is at the standard for TWS productions. This may include but is not limited to:
    - Ensuring that communication regarding props between Show Director & Stage Manager are received and understood by regularly checking the online, shared Props Lists to keep current of additions, deletions, and changes
    - Making alternate suggestions about the most efficient/effective way to iterate the design if the work is beyond the capacity of the props artisans.
    - Alerting the Guest Designer if Supplies/Materials budget will not support the design early in the design process.
    - Staying within the given show budget and adhering to Hartnell College Purchasing Processes
- Sets the standard for properties design and design in general at The Western Stage in collaboration with TWS Resident Scenic Designer & TWS Artistic Director.

Construction & Fabrication:: Build specialized props

- Ensures that artistic parameters are adhered to, including but not limited to
    - the philosophy of re-use, re-purpose, and use of existing stock **before** purchases are made;
    - a high level of visual storytelling that serves the production director's concept; elements are able to be built completely, safely & well with the shop hands and schedule available;

    - that all designs reflect TWS' expectation for excellence of construction, period-accuracy, and that is something unique to TWS.
    - that all properties, especially those purchases are stored and kept in a manner that ensures longevity, efficient locating, and use beyond the one production

Budget Management: Adhere to strict financial show budgets & college purchasing processes.

Maintenance & Tracking: Provide, create, construct, repair Rehearsal and Performance props, both practical and consumable (Tech Week Only, with flexibility for additional rehearsals if the consumables affect the timing/pacing).

- Keeps props area, supplies,materials, and tools organized and inventoried to prevent double purchases and loss
- Serves as mentor to early-career and student props craftspersons in safe fabrication, storage, and tracking..
- Attends production meetings and evening rehearsals as necessary to represent the resident scenic staff so the team has personal knowledge of the direction of the production.
- May provide informational workshops to Hartnell Tech Students about PropsDesign and Properties as a possible career track..

Schedule:

- Seasonal schedule is 8-9 months during the production season (Mar/Apr - Nov/Dec)
- Includes combinations of days (shop calls & production meetings), evenings (designer runs) and weekends (tech rehearsals). Flexible schedule is based upon production needs and availability of build personnel.
- TWS scene shop schedule is currently 9:00/9:30- 4:00/4:30p, Monday - Friday. Weekends as necessary for individual season design assignments.
    - Flexibility with daytime schedule is required to accommodate attendance in evening rehearsals for designer run-throughs, tech rehearsals (2-3 to watch how props are being set out, used, and to ensure deck crew are apprised of appropriate storage, check in/out and reports for weekly repair.
    - Individual Production Strikes follow directly after the closing Sunday performance.

Knowledge/skills:

- Computer facility/literacy. MS Word, Excel; email; Zoom/Hangout for Hybrid Production Meetings;
    - facility with CAD & other design software highly valuable
- Professional resume that reflects extensive experience with properties design, construction, and actor safety
- Professional experience and facility in several different properties fabrication methods & materials such as:
    - Paper/Printing/graphic design
    - Plastic, silicon, clay, papier mache, resin etc. : molding, sculpting, carving
    - Fabric: softgoods repair, repurpose, re-cover, alteration, creation

    - Metalwork, Claywork, Costume Jewelry
    - Paint: faux finishes
    - Woodwork, refinishing
- Competencies necessary to work with developing or new theatre students & community volunteers.
- High level of creativity, dedication, discretion, professionalism.
- High level of organization, attention to detail, and ability to follow-through completely and meet hard deadlines.
- Ability to work lengthy hours and to manage an irregular schedule that include weekends and/or holidays occurring within the period of residency.
- Must follow all of TWS and Hartnell College health protocols (LINK).

Physical Environment:

- TWS resides in a performing arts venue that was built in 1974. While the renovated Center for Performing Arts is accessible, the distance between house seats and the stage is accessed by stairs in both theaters.
- The flooring in the performing arts venue is a combination of linoleum, tile, wood and cement; the surfaces of the two stages are painted masonite and may be uneven.
- The floor of the scene shop is cement and the build yard is outdoors with asphalt surface.
- The HVAC system was updated when the building was renovated in 2023, but the temperature inside is centrally controlled and can fluctuate.
- The scene shop is a large space with a high ceiling and a rolling metal door to the build yard. The space can be very hot or cold, depending on the weather. Salinas summers are foggy and chilly.
- Because of the nature of power and hand tools, the sound level in the scene shop/build yard can be loud for several hours.
- Because of the nature of theatre production, the sound level in rehearsals and performances may become loud and there may be flashing lights and stage fog/haze.
- Lighting in the building is primarily overhead fluorescent fixtures.
- Backstage areas are dark, and at times dimly illuminated.
- Construction materials & stock, supplies & materials may weigh up to 35 or more pounds and may be stored in overhead bins/shelves that require ladders.

Compensation: Compensation is based on previous professional experience and seasonal design assignments. $2000-$3000/show, depending on the complexity of the production needs.

Application Process: Please send resume/CV/portfolio to Production@hartnell.edu

No phone calls, please. Interviews will be over Zoom. Please indicate the show(s) you are interested in and available for. Reference Check required. Open until filled. For more information on The Western Stage, please visit our website at www.westernstage.com