

UA's Story Behind the Story: Q&As with The Philadelphia Story Faculty

📅 February 13th, 2017

Faculty from The University of Alabama's department of theatre and dance will help guide students as they bring to life "The Philadelphia Story" with opening night slated for Valentine's Day.

Set in 1930s Philadelphia, the romantic comedy follows the privileged daughter of the Lord family who created quite the scandal, divorcing her husband and arranging to remarry. While theatergoers will get to know the characters being portrayed on stage, we'd like to take you behind-the-scenes for a deeper look into the faculty who helped inspire the students provide the magic seen on stage.

Kelley Schoger, movement director for "The Philadelphia Story"

**Assistant Professor of Acting and Movement
Second year on faculty at UA**

Q. What led you to teaching?

A. Teaching combines my love of theater and the craft of acting with my desire to pass this love on to aspiring performers. I was inspired by many teachers that changed my life and I wish to give back in the same way. Through teaching I continue to grow in my craft, find creative ways to re-examine theater, as well as empower and nurture young talent. Teaching theater in and of itself is such a creative act and it's a privilege to be doing it everyday.

Q. What did you do before teaching?

A. I lived in New York for over a decade working as a performer, as well as performing and teaching regionally. I also spent three years working toward my national certification in the Alexander Technique, which is the foundation for most of my teaching.

Q. What do you enjoy most about theater?



Kelley Schoger is an assistant professor of acting and movement and serves as the movement director for "The Philadelphia Story."

A. I absolutely love immersing myself in the stories of others, delving into the psyche of characters and finding out what makes them tick, as well as examining myself in the act of preparing a role. It's an empowering feeling to find your voice and strength on the stage. As a performer and an audience member, one's world view and perspective on life is expanded and challenged. The theater is a powerful tool.

Q. Out of all student productions you've been involved with at UA, what has been your favorite and why?

A. Being fairly new to UA, this is my second production. I performed the role of Mrs. Alving in last year's production of Ibsen's "Ghosts." I adore Ibsen and I also loved working alongside graduate and undergraduate students whom I teach. With "The Philadelphia Story," I am very much enjoying collaborating with new faculty member and the director of the show, Annie Levy. I am able to provide period movement direction for the cast, as well as create several choreographed movement-scapes if you will, based on Annie's vision of stylized movement for the show. It's been wonderful!

Q. What is the most important thing you hope your students take away from their participation in each production?

A. Working on a production gives the student actor an opportunity to apply what they are learning in class, and learning about themselves, to an actual production experience. Working on a production, to me, is like a creative laboratory where theory is applied, creativity expanded and also students learn the skills of collaboration and discipline required for a life and career in the performing arts.

"The Philadelphia Story" runs Feb. 14-18 with a 7:30 p.m. showtime and a 2:30 p.m. matinee on Feb. 19 at the Marian Gallaway Theatre. For more info, visit <https://theatre.ua.edu/productions/the-philadelphia-story/> (<https://theatre.ua.edu/productions/the-philadelphia-story/>).

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DID YOU KNOW?

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