



THEATER DEPARTMENT

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024-2025

STRAZ CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
1010 NORTH W.C. MACINNES PLACE
TAMPA. FL 33602 813.222.6414
THEATER OFFICE 813.222.6459
WWW.PATELCONSERVATORY.ORG



** In addition to this handbook, theater students are responsible for adhering to all Conservatory policies as outlined in the Patel Conservatory Student Handbook. The Patel Conservatory Student Handbook is available online at www.patelconservatory.org **



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Introduction by Michelle Petrucci, Theater Department Chair

Welcome to the Patel Conservatory Theater Department. Thank you for choosing us to be your performing arts educators. Our goal is to provide the highest quality performing arts training while fostering a lifelong love and support of the arts. Students in our program are met with guidance, encouragement, and inclusivity as we work together to build a safe and supportive environment conducive to exploring new techniques, developing skills, risk-taking, sharing, and artistic growth. We strive to create strong, well-rounded, young artists as well as mindful and considerate individuals. We look forward to sharing this journey with you and thank you for trusting us to provide your students with the very best in arts education.

While reading through our Handbook Policies please read the word "parent" to include all stepparents, grandparents, guardians, and any other adult who actively participates at the Patel Conservatory.



DREAM. REACH. DISCOVER. CREATE.

OUR MISSION

The Patel Conservatory provides the finest performing arts training in an inspirational setting.

OUR VISION

The Patel Conservatory gives students the tools to: dream, reach, discover, and create the performing arts; integrate them into everyday life; and contribute to the community.

OUR HISTORY

Built on an abandoned gravel lot in a city that was lacking cultural offerings, the Straz Center began as the dream of a community. Today the Straz Center is the largest performing arts center in the Southeast and the only venue with an on-site performing arts Conservatory. The Straz Center was incorporated in 1980 and opened in 1987.

In the early 1990s, the Straz Center (known as Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center) established arts education as a community priority, working closely with area public, private and home school programs to enhance arts education for children throughout the seven-county Tampa Bay area. Outreach programs included curriculum connectors to Florida education standards and teacher study guides in print and online. The Straz Center's extended in-school artistic residencies, summer programs and after school offerings helped to fill the increasing gaps in arts education left by budget cuts.

The Patel Conservatory was built in 2004 in response to community need for high quality arts education programs. After a \$30-million capital campaign, the Straz Center constructed and opened the Patel Conservatory without debt. The Conservatory worked to develop a progression of arts education courses and programs, allowing students to advance from discovery to mastery of artistic skills.

In 2005 the Patel Conservatory received the Annual Future of the Region Award from the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, and became a member of the National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts.

The Patel Conservatory worked to establish affiliations with The Florida Orchestra, V.O.I.C. Experience, Orlando Ballet School and The Broadway League, bringing exceptional educational opportunities to pre-professional training programs at the Patel Conservatory.

In 2007, the Patel Conservatory formalized its extensive Arts Education School & Community Partnership program that continues to serve more than 40 Title I schools, shelters, service agencies and other community organizations throughout each season.

By the end of 2010, former Orlando Ballet School Director Peter Stark stepped into the role of Dance Department Chair at the Patel Conservatory and launched the new ballet company, Next Generation Ballet (NGB).

In 2012, the Patel Conservatory received accreditation through the Southern Association of College and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI) a division of AdvancED.

In 2015, the Patel Conservatory celebrated its 10th Anniversary, welcomed our new Dance Chair and NGB Artistic Director, Philip Neal, to lead our dance program. Straz Education was also reinvigorated with the naming of a Vice President of Education. The Patel Conservatory continues to be the physical location for delivering the bulk of onsite Straz Educational programming.



ARTISTIC PHILOSOPHY

At the Patel Conservatory:

- We will provide a place where creativity is celebrated, honored and revered.
- We will respect traditional performing arts as well as new forms.
- We will encourage students to experience all artistic disciplines in developing their own unique style.
- We will listen to our students and help them to realize the practical steps necessary to make their visions a reality.
- We will instill in our students a sense of pride that accompanies disciplined work habits and self-determination.
- We will offer arts opportunities for all ages and interests.
- We will provide a safe space for exploration and development.
- We will reinforce the guiding principle that artistic growth never ends, and unrealized ideas are natural components of artistic growth.
- We will develop a common artistic vocabulary so that we can communicate across disciplines.
- We will reinforce the principle that art is process, not product.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Address

Patel Conservatory Theater Department
David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Performing Arts
1010 N W.C. MacInnes Place
Tampa, FL 33602

General Contact Information

Patel Conservatory Admissions Office	admissions@strazcenter.org	813.222.1040
Music Department	musicprogram@strazcenter.org	813.222.1273
Theater Department	theaterprogram@strazcenter.org	813.222.6414
Dance Department	danceprogram@strazcenter.org	813.222.1079

Fax 813.222.6459

Website: www.patelconservatory.org



THEATER STAFF AND FACULTY

Michelle Petrucci, Theater Department Chair | michelle.petrucci@strazcenter.org | 813.222.1073

Ryan Began, Theater Department Manager | ryan.began@strazcenter.org | 813.202.1520

Jacqueline Jansen, Theater Program Coordinator | jacqueline.jansen@strazcenter.org |
813.222.6414

Jessica Rhodes, Theater Faculty | jessica.rhodes@strazcenter.org | 813.222.6413

Cory Kennedy, Theater Faculty | cory.kennedy@strazcenter.org | 813.222.6426

School-Year Classes

Intro to Musical Theater, Theater Faculty

Musical Theater 1, 2, & 3, Jessica Rhodes, Jamie Lynn Gilliam & Theater Faculty

Musical Theater Dance 1, Jacqueline Jansen

Musical Theater Dance 2, Michelle Petrucci

Musical Theater Tap, Michelle Petrucci

PCT Ensemble, Michelle Petrucci

Homeschool Theater, Jessica Rhodes

Homeschool Musical Theater Movement, Jamie Lynn Gilliam

Acting 1, 2, & 3, Cory Kennedy

Improv, Cory Kennedy

Scene Study, Jessica Rhodes

Patel College Prep, Michelle Petrucci

Patel Conservatory Theater Productions

Much Ado About Nothing, Cory Kennedy

Elf the Musical, Jr., Ryan Began, Michelle Petrucci, Jacqueline Jansen

Little Women, Jessica Rhodes

The Magic Treehouse: Pirates Past Noon, Jamie Lynn Gilliam



GENERAL POLICIES

COMMUNICATION

Communication between the Patel Conservatory and parents/students predominately occurs through **email** and phone calls. For this reason, we ask that you maintain current email and phone number information with our Admissions Office. We use this information to communicate with you regarding your household account, registration information, and reminders for upcoming events.

WEBSITE

We encourage parents to explore the Patel Conservatory website for the most up to date information. You may register online for select courses, access the Conservatory calendar, and purchase tickets to Straz Center & Patel Conservatory events. You may also login to your account to access your student's class schedule and update your contact and billing information 24 hours a day. Please note that your login credentials may differ from your Straz Center account.

CONSERVATORY CALENDAR

The Patel Conservatory offers two sessions each year: School Year and Summer.

- School year classes are offered from September through May.
- Summer camps and classes are offered from June through August.

Session dates are posted on the digital school-year calendar and our website.

ACCREDITATION & MEMBERSHIP

The Patel Conservatory has received accreditation status from the Southern Association of College and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS-CASI) under the division of AdvancED. Maintaining accreditation status allows the Conservatory to advance in the pursuit of performing arts education excellence and deepen the fulfillment of the mission for all students.

The Patel Conservatory is a member of the following organizations:

National Guild for Community Arts Education

Florida School Music Association

ORIENTATION

Orientation sessions are offered twice a year, at the start of the School Year and before Summer, to review important policies and procedures. Orientation dates are posted on our website and are mandatory for all new families and strongly encouraged for returning families.



THEATER CLASSROOM AND REHEARSAL POLICIES

Auditions

Select classes and productions require auditions for placement. Auditions are by reservation only, as walk-ups cannot always be accommodated. Please visit www.patelconservatory.org to find out when the next audition round is for audition-based classes, productions, and for audition requirements. For more information, please e-mail theaterprogram@strazcenter.org.

Rehearsal and Production Etiquette

Students are expected to be on time and prepared for all rehearsals. Students and parents are required to commit to the following when participating in a Patel Conservatory Production.

Student Agreement

- 0 Attends every rehearsal, dress rehearsal, and performance
- 0 Arrives on time to every rehearsal and performance
- 0 Turns off cell phones for the duration of rehearsal
- 0 Always brings their script to rehearsal (\$10 replacement fee if lost)
- 0 Brings a pencil (not a pen) and notebook for each rehearsal to write in blocking and take notes
- 0 Assures they are dressed appropriately for rehearsal: comfortable clothing for movement (no jeans, mini- skirts, etc.) and appropriate footwear (no flip-flops, sandals, crocs, heels, etc.)
- 0 Listens and adheres to instruction from the Director, Music Director, Choreographer, or TA's
- 0 Asks helpful and specific questions
- 0 Works productively on their own lines/blocking/music/choreography while others are rehearsing
- 0 **Takes their work home to retain** blocking, choreography, music, and direction from one rehearsal to the next
- 0 Memorizes all lines, song lyrics, and blocking by the "off-book" date
- 0 Respects props, costumes, set pieces, lighting and sound equipment, and the dressing room that I will be using
- 0 Assures that I dispose of my trash and maintain cleanliness of the workspace
- 0 Understands that if these rules are not adhered to, or if behavior is not respectful to fellow actors, our creative team, and instructors, they may be asked to leave the production at any time

Parent Agreement

- 0 Supports the artistic decisions of the Director (including casting, character development, and overall production vision)
- 0 Assists with homework: line/lyric and blocking/choreography/music memorization
- 0 Assists with character research and development
- 0 Strictly adheres to the attendance policy
- 0 Assures that their child brings their script to every rehearsal (replacement scripts are \$10)
- 0 Reinforces the importance of teamwork and good behavior - there are no small parts, only small actors - all are integral to storytelling



- 0 Assures that their child is dressed appropriately for rehearsal: comfortable clothing for movement (no jeans, mini-skirts, etc.) and appropriate footwear (no flip-flops, sandals, crocs, heels, etc.)
- 0 Provides their child with a water bottle for all rehearsals
- 0 Assures that their child has a notebook and pencil (not a pen) for all rehearsals
- 0 Directs all questions regarding the rehearsal and production process through the Theater Department Chair
- 0 Buys tickets to the show!

Rehearsal Preparation

Students are expected to prepare all required materials, participate in all rehearsals and performances, and work on their material at home. Students are expected to show respect for adults and fellow students and to comply with all behavior policies.

Attendance

*****The performing arts are collaborative. Each person's contribution directly affects classroom experiences, the rehearsal process, and the success of performances. To achieve and maintain the highest caliber of student experience, mandatory attendance is expected. Absences negatively impact individual and collective program experiences and progress. Parents and students should review their school and club calendars carefully before signing up for classes or committing to a production.*****

Attendance at performances and dress rehearsals is mandatory. Students may not have two unexcused absences in a class per semester before being asked to consider leaving the class. Please understand that if you have excessive absences from classes that meet year long, you may be excluded from participating in the end of session performances and may be dropped from the class.

Parent/guardians are responsible for notifying the Conservatory if their child is going to be absent or late for class. Please call the Conservatory at 813.222.1040 or email the instructor before the class begins to report an absence. Lateness may be counted as an absence.

Copyright Policy

The Patel Conservatory and the Straz Center for the Performing Arts strictly adhere to all copyright laws. Students and teachers are expected to abide by copyright laws regarding the photocopying, use and distribution of resource materials.

Age Requirements

Placement in all theater-based classes, camps, and productions are dependent on age or grade level. Students must be the appropriate age for the desired program by September 1st of the school-year. Students may be denied placement in a program if they do not meet the age requirement.

All students enrolling in Young Performing Arts must also be toilet-trained and be able to express fundamental communication skills.



Classroom and Rehearsal Attire

The majority of our theater classes require movement. Therefore, students must wear comfortable clothes that allow them to move freely. Depending on the class, there may also be specific shoe requirements. Students must respect the dress code established by their instructor or director at the beginning of each session and rehearsal process. Below are general attire guidelines and suggestions for specific theater programs.

Patel Conservatory Productions, Musical Theater, Musical Theater Dance

- 0 Hair should be pulled back and out of your face.
- 0 Black jazz shoes
- 0 Workout attire
 - o Shirt
 - o shorts or pants

Acting

- 0 Hair should be pulled back and out of your face.
- 0 Close-toed shoes or sneakers
- 0 Workout attire
 - o Shirt
 - o shorts or pants

On Screen and Adult Classes

- 0 Hair should be pulled back and out of your face.
- 0 Close-toed shoes or sneakers
- 0 Street clothes that you can move freely in

Young Performing Arts

- 0 Hair should be pulled back and out of your face.
- 0 Sneakers
- 0 Comfortable clothes that you can move in
- 0 No dresses or skirts without leggings



PERFORMANCES

Check In

As the Straz Center is a large performing arts venue with multiple stages. Students must be dropped off at the door indicated by the instructor for that performance or rehearsal. A staff member or volunteer will be assigned to that door with a master student check in list. All students are to sign in as they arrive, and then go directly to their assigned backstage area ready for the rehearsal or performance to begin.

Backstage Policies

Once students have checked in for a production, they must stay in their designated area backstage. To ensure the safety of all students, only parents who have officially volunteered as chaperones and have gone through the Straz Center's background check, may be in the backstage area with the students. Students are to remain in the backstage area for the entire duration of the rehearsal and performance unless previously arranged with the Theater Department. Volunteers and theater staff will supervise the students in their dressing rooms on the day of the dress rehearsal and performance. In the case of an emergency, parents may find one of these people as a resource. Students will be released once the performance has finished.

Check Out

After the performances, students will be escorted to the lobby to meet their parents/guardians. A staff member will be assigned to sign out each performer. Students unaccompanied by an adult are still required to sign in and out with the theater staff. Students are required to remain for the entire performance and may not leave early.

Tickets

Tickets for all Patel Conservatory performances are sold through the Straz Center Ticket Sales Office, either online or at the ticket window. Patel Conservatory students may purchase a half-price ticket to most Patel Conservatory productions by purchasing in-person, with Student ID, at the Straz Center's ticket Sales Office. Conservatory students receive discount ticket offers to select performances at the Straz Center. Offers are posted as they become available. *Pursuant to s.817.36, Florida Statutes, no Straz Center ticket may be offered or resold for more than \$1 over the face value of the ticket.

PRIVATE COACHING

The Patel Conservatory Theater Department offers private coaching in acting, musical theater, and college audition prep. Our faculty brings decades of professional and educational experience to each lesson. The teachers and staff of the Conservatory make every effort to accommodate lesson schedules and requests, yet still provide high-quality instruction for every student.

The following policies have been designed to emphasize respect for the student, teacher and the learning process. Please feel free to discuss any questions you have with your instructor or the Theater Department Chair.



Student Responsibilities

- 0 Bring a notebook and take detailed notes. Use these notes as a practice guide.
- 0 Complete all lesson assignments and keep a list of questions to ask your teacher at your next lesson.
- 0 Maintain a regular practice schedule. The Conservatory recommends that each student practice six (6) days per week for the amount of time recommended by the teacher. It is important to have one day of rest from practicing each week.
- 0 Talk with your teacher! The relationship between a private teacher and student is a special one where great growth can happen when the student takes an active role in the learning experience.

Parent Responsibilities

- 0 To protect the safety of all our students, the Patel Conservatory does not permit parents to observe classes and lessons. A parent may be present at lessons only with the permission of the instructor.
- 0 Ensure that your child is on time for lessons.
- 0 Educate yourself about the material your student is working on so you can play a supportive part in their learning experience.
- 0 Provide your child with adequate time and space in which to practice.

Teacher Responsibilities

- 0 Create a safe and healthy learning environment.
- 0 Show respect for students and parents.
- 0 Constantly strive to improve teaching methods.
- 0 Be consistent with rules/policies.
- 0 Foster a lifelong love for the performing arts.

Materials

- 0 Notebook and pencil (not pen)
- 0 Script, monologue, other materials
- 0 Device for recording your lesson and doing in lesson research

Parent Conferences

If at any point you have questions regarding individual practice or lessons, please contact the teacher at a mutually agreed upon time outside of the lesson. Lesson time is extremely important for student learning, and as such, should be used as efficiently as possible. Since multiple students' lessons may be scheduled back-to-back, there may not be sufficient time for questions immediately before or after the lesson.

If you have questions regarding billing, parking, or other Conservatory policies, please stop by our Admissions Office to discuss this.

Scheduling and Payment

All private coaching sessions must be reserved through our Theater Department and Admissions Office and paid in advance. Please make every effort to attend all lessons as all lessons are non-refundable. While we strive to provide make-up lessons whenever possible, no refunds or credits are given for missed lessons. Make-up lessons are a courtesy, are subject to availability, and are not guaranteed.



All requests to cancel or re-schedule a lesson must go through our Theater Department, not the instructor. If given more than twenty-four (24) hours' notice, make-up lessons may be provided based on space and instructor availability but are not guaranteed. Requests to reschedule must be made at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance. Failure to provide at least twenty-four (24) hours' notice will result in a charge for the full cost of the lesson and no make-up lesson will be considered.

All payments must be handled through the Admissions Office; no payment may be given directly to an instructor at any time.

Tuition for private lessons may be paid in full at the time of registration or paid monthly by automatic draft from a bank account or credit card. Automatic payments are drawn on the 20th of each month for the following month. For example, payment for November lessons is drawn on October 20. Overdue balances will be charged a \$25 late fee.

Discontinuing Lessons

In order to discontinue lessons and stop automatic payments, students must complete a drop request through our Admissions Office. Requests to stop lessons and payment must be received by the 10th of the month. No refunds or credits will be given for discontinuation of lessons during a month that has already been paid for.



CURRICULUM

Standards

Patel Conservatory Theater courses address the following National Core Arts Standards:

Creating

- 1) Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work
- 2) Organize and develop artistic ideas and work
- 3) Refine and complete artistic work

Performing/Presenting/Producing

- 4) Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation
- 5) Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation
- 6) Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work

Responding

- 7) Perceive and analyze artistic work
- 8) Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work
- 9) Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work

Connecting

- 10) Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art
- 11) Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding



IMPORTANT DATES

Auditions

PCT Ensemble – Friday, August 23, 2024

Much Ado About Nothing Initial Auditions – Friday, September 6, 2024, and Saturday, September 7, 2024

Elf, Jr. Initial Auditions – Wednesday, September 4, 2024, and Saturday, September 7, 2024

Much Ado About Nothing & *Elf, Jr.* Callbacks – Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Little Women Initial Auditions – Saturday, November 2, 2024, and Monday, November 4, 2024

Little Women Callbacks – Saturday, November 9, 2024

Magic Treehouse: Pirates Past Noon Initial Auditions – Saturday, February 1, 2024

Magic Treehouse: Pirates Past Noon Callbacks – Saturday, February 9, 2024

Performances

Much Ado About Nothing – November 21-24, 2024

Elf, Jr. – December 12-15, 2024

Little Women – February 20-23, 2024

PCT Ensemble Showcase – April 1, 2024

Magic Treehouse: Pirates Past Noon – May 1-4, 2024

Open Classroom Week(s)

December 16-21, 2024

May 12-16, 2024

“The knowledge that every day there is something more to learn, something higher to reach for, something new to make for others, makes each day infinitely precious.”

– Uta Hagen, *A Challenge For The Actor*