

Spotlight On MSSU Division of Theatre

July 2025 Edition

As summer heats up, the Missouri Southern State University Division of Theater is reflecting on a dynamic and inspiring season, while also gearing up for an exciting new year on and off the stage. Whether you're a devoted season ticket holder, a proud Lion alum, or a first-time visitor to Taylor Auditorium, we welcome you to this month's spotlight!

Season in Review: Standing Ovarions and Milestones

The 2024–2025 academic year was one for the books! We proudly produced four main stage plays, three student productions, and a series of class-directed studio projects that gave our students the chance to flex their creative muscles and grow as emerging artists.

We ended the season on a high note with *August: Osage County* by Tracy Letts. This powerful production was completely student-directed and designed, marking a tremendous milestone for our department. It featured a brilliant collaboration of MSSU faculty, alumni, current students, and members of the Joplin-area theater community.

Other standout productions this season included:

- *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde – A witty, elegant comedy that delighted audiences.
- *Salt-Water Moon* by David French – An intimate Canadian love story, brought to life on our stage.
- *Schoolhouse Rock Live!* – A musical explosion of nostalgia and energy that seated over 2,000 children, teachers, and parents in Taylor Auditorium during our beloved children's theatre event.

Welcoming New Faculty

This year, we were thrilled to welcome Shirley Gollhofer to the MSSU Theatre adjunct faculty. Shirley serves as our new Costume Mistress and teaches a variety of hands-on courses in costume design and construction. Her creativity, dedication, and attention to detail have already made a lasting impression both on stage and in the classroom.

Community Connections

In addition to our campus productions, MSSU partnered with Stones Throw Dinner Theatre in Carthage, Missouri, to present a New Year's Eve Murder Mystery. This unique collaboration brought together our students and local professionals for an immersive night of mystery and fun—and the community responded with enthusiasm! We're excited to share that we've been invited back for another New Year's Eve event in December 2025.

Looking Ahead: 2025–2026 Season Announcement Coming Soon!

We're putting the final touches on our 2025–2026 theatrical season, and we can't wait to share it with you. This upcoming season will be a heartfelt tribute to the spirit and stories of Missouri—featuring local playwrights, regional folklore, and the larger-than-life characters who shaped our state's history and culture.

Stay tuned for the official announcement and mark your calendars—you won't want to miss what we have in store!

Stay Connected

Want to stay in the loop? Here's how:

- Follow us on social media
- Visit www.mssu.edu/theatre for ticketing, auditions, and news
- Join our mailing list by emailing theatre@mssu.edu

Thank you to our incredible students, faculty, supporters, and audience members. Your energy, applause, and commitment to the arts make our work possible. We'll see you at the theater!

With gratitude,

The MSSU Theatre Division