Kristen Kochanik Garza

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Professional Summary

Creative and results-driven production leader with extensive experience in themed entertainment, theatrical design, and project management. Proven ability to guide multidisciplinary teams through all phases of design, production, and installation, ensuring creative intent and guest experience are achieved at the highest standards. Skilled in managing complex schedules, budgets, and documentation, with a strong focus on safety, quality, and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders. Adept at developing and implementing creative strategies, sourcing and managing resources, and maintaining conformance with brand and quality standards throughout the project lifecycle.

Education

- Crosby Rigging Certification
- OSHA 30 Hour
- Masters of Arts in Career and Workforce Education
  University of South Florida- FL 2019
- Bachelor of Arts in Theatrical Design
  University of South Florida – FL 2009

Skills

- PROJECT/PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT
- CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT & ART DIRECTION
- ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS/EXTERNAL VENDOR MANAGEMENT
- SCENIC DESIGN & PRODUCTION DESIGN
- LEADERSHIP & TEAM MANAGEMENT
- BUDGET CREATION & REPORTING
- SCHEDULE DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT
- PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
- CARPENTRY & CUSTOM FABRICATION
- ENTERTAINMENT RIGGING
- SCENIC PAINTING
- COMPUTER AND HAND DRAFTING
- FORK/SCISSOR LIFT OPERATION
- CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
- CPR/FIRST AID
- HEALTH & SAFETY COMPLIANCE

Work Experience

Technical Director/Production Manager 08/2025 - Present
Yale College Arts

- Advise and oversee 200+ student productions annually, ensuring creative vision and guest experience are realized across all projects.
- Serve as primary technical advisor for the Yale Dramatic Association, collaborating with creative teams to maintain design intent and production quality.
- Manage fire inspection schedules, pre-inspections, and compliance with safety standards for all undergraduate productions.

- Develop and lead workshops on production topics, supporting the growth and development of creative and technical teams.

Technical Director 05/2025 - 09/2025
The Cape Cod Playhouse

- Led technical direction for five full-scale Broadway musicals on a rotating schedule, collaborating with designers, actors, and production management to achieve creative goals.
- Produced technical drafting for scenic elements, ensuring alignment with design intent and production requirements.
- Managed shop schedules, staffing, and payroll, maintaining a safe and efficient work environment.
- Provided mentorship and training to shop staff, supporting professional development and adherence to safety protocols.

Scenic Paint Foreman/Assistant to Art Director 06/2024 - 05/2025
The Companies of Nassal/PCL

- Collaborated with project management, vendors, and creative teams to produce theme park elements and show set pieces for multiple venues nationwide.
- Developed and documented paint techniques, ensuring clear communication and execution of creative intent.
- Managed schedules, attended buy-off meetings, and coordinated with art directors to achieve final creative outcomes.
- Supported the realization of creative vision through effective resource management and quality control.

Production Shop Manager/Assistant Technical Director/Assistant Professor 08/2023 - 06/2024
University of Central Florida

- Partnered with technical and production management to construct, install, and maintain scenery for multiple performance spaces, ensuring creative and safety standards were met.
- Led painting and scenic element creation, instructing student and over-hire crews on best practices and installation techniques.
- Developed curriculum and maintained health and safety inventory, upholding OSHA entertainment standards.

Production Shop Manager/Adjunct Professor 07/2021 - 08/2023
Savannah College of Art and Design

- Collaborated with technical directors and students to deliver high-quality scenic elements across multiple venues, maintaining creative intent and safety compliance.
- Developed and delivered curriculum in scenic design, supporting student growth and creative development.
- Maintained accurate records and safety standards within performance spaces.

Technical Theatre Director/Teacher 08/2014 - 06/2021
Blake High School

- Produced large-scale, professional-caliber shows in a high school setting, collaborating with instructors and contracted professionals to achieve creative objectives.
- Supported over 20 performances annually, guiding students in technical aspects and ensuring production quality.
- Coordinated with external vendors for private rentals, ensuring client vision and brand standards were met.

Scenic Artist 04/2013 - 06/2014
Feld Entertainment, Palmetto FL Palmetto, FL

- Collaborated with scenic artists and designers to create props and scenery for multiple arena shows, ensuring creative direction was achieved.
- Painted and fabricated props, maintained equipment, and supported the realization of creative concepts in large-scale productions.