

Curriculum Vitae

Stephanie M. Hart, PhD.
Assistant Professor of Movement
Department of Theatre
Virginia Commonwealth University

GENERAL INFORMATION

Personal Information

Stephanie Marie Hart
Office: 221 N. Shafer Street, #205, Richmond, VA 23284
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Certifications

2022 - Adult Mental Health First Aid, National Council for Wellbeing
2021 - Stepping into a Future Free of Historical Trauma, Arizona Trauma Institute
2021 - Trauma and the Sensory System, Arizona Trauma Institute
2020 - Certified Trauma Support Specialist, Arizona Trauma Institute

Education

2025 - PhD Theatre and Performance of the Americas, Arizona State University
2015 - MA Speech/Theatre, Louisiana Tech University
1990 - BA Speech/Theatre, Louisiana Tech University

Academic Appointments

2023 - Present	Assistant Professor Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA Department of Theatre
2121-2023	Adjunct Professor Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA Department of Theatre
2021-2022	Adjunct Professor Brightpoint Community College, Midlothian, VA Department of Theatre
2019-2020	Adjunct Professor Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ Department of Theatre

Professional Affiliations

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society
Association of Theatre Movement Educators
Association of Theatre in Higher Education
Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas

POSTDOCTORAL TRAINING OR SPECIAL EXPERIENCE AND HONORS RECEIVED

Training

2024 - Atelier Mask Movement Theatre Workshop, San Miniato, Italy
2024 - Frantic Assembly - Los Angeles Residency
2023 - Association of Mental Health Coordinators - Artistic Mental Health Practitioner
2023 - Frantic Assembly - New York Residency
2022 - Black Acting Methods Studio - Acting Methods for the 21st Century
2020-2023 - Intimacy Directors and Coordinators – The Dramaturgy of Intimacy, Consent in Academia and University, Foundations of Intimacy Level 1, Building Closure Practices
2022 - Theatrical Intimacy Educators – Staging Sex: Intercourse, Staging Sex: Outercourse, Modesty Garments, Barriers, and Masking, University Theatre Curricula, Consent in the Acting Classroom, Intimacy Coordination, Intimacy Choreography, Foundations of Race, Intimacy and Consent, Intimacy in COVID-19, Best Practices
2022 - LABAN/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies – Embodied Meaning: A Course in Expressive Performance

Work Experience

June 2021-August 2022 - Festival Manager, Richmond Shakespeare Festival, Richmond, VA. Managed staff of five, coordinated with vendors, and served as a liaison between the performance space (Agecroft Hall) and the performing company (Quill Theatre). Trained staff on in-house box-office software.

2018-2020 - Assistant Artistic Director – CaZo Dance Theatre, Mesa, AZ – Served as dramaturg, acting coach, and company photographer for one of Arizona's premier professional dance theatres. Developed storylines for shows with the Artistic Director. Staged all transitions. Taught company acting classes. Helped organize annual fundraiser. Created video content for social media.

2018-2019 - Assistant Artistic Director – Mesa Encore Theatre, Mesa Encore Theatre Black Box, Mesa, AZ – Helped with season selection, photographed promotional images, and designed marketing materials, supported Artistic Director in matters of administration.

2013-2015 - Box Office Manager – Howard Center for the Performing Arts, Ruston, LA, Supervised staff of 3-5 student workers. Managed 840-seat auditorium as well as a 100-seat Black Box space. Trained staff on in-house box-office software.

Professional Practice

2021 - <i>4000 Days</i> Intimacy Director	Richmond Triangle Players, Richmond, VA Director: Lucien Restivo
2020 - <i>Reefer Madness</i> Director/Choreographer	Mesa Encore Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director: Stephanie Hart
2019 - <i>Lone Star/Laundry and Bourbon</i>	Mesa Encore Theatre Black Box, Mesa, AZ Director: Stephanie Hart
2019 - <i>You Are Not Alone</i> Intimacy/Transition Director	CaZo Dance Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director/Choreographer: Bridgette Borzillo
2019 - <i>Orange Flower Water</i> Intimacy Consultant	Tempe Center for the Arts, Tempe, AZ Director: Ralph Remington

2019 - <i>Tough As Nails</i> Intimacy/Transition Director	CaZo Dance Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director/Choreographer: Bridgette Borzillo
2018 - <i>She Kills Monsters</i> Fight Director/Choreographer	Mesa Encore Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director: Van Rockwell
2018 - <i>Kiss of the Spider Woman</i> Intimacy Consultant	Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ Director: Guillermo Reyes
2018 - <i>The Dutchman</i> Asst. Fight Director/Intimacy Consultant	Tempe Center for the Arts, Tempe, AZ Director: Ralph Remington
2018 - <i>Into the Woods</i> Choreographer	Mesa Encore Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director: Rita Liegl
2019 - <i>Fate</i> Intimacy/Transition Director	CaZo Dance Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director/Choreographer: Bridgette Borzillo
2017 - <i>Boy Gets Girl</i> Intimacy Director	Mesa Encore Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director: Van Rockwell
2017 - <i>Good Friday</i> Assistant Fight Choreographer/Intimacy Consultant	Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ Alexis Green
2017 - <i>The Lion in Winter</i> Fight Choreographer	Mesa Encore Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director: JP Clemente
2017 - <i>Legally Blonde</i> Choreographer	Mesa Encore Theatre, Mesa, AZ Director: JP Clemente
2015 - <i>25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee</i> Choreographer	Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA Director: Cherie Sciro

CONTINUING SCHOLARSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

VCU Funding, Grants, and Awards (\$14,000+)

- 2026 - VCU Humanities Research Center Grant - \$900
- 2025 - Faculty Travel Grant - IUGTE Conference Presentation, \$1915
- 2025 - Global Learning Program Development Award - Edinburgh Fringe Festival, \$2000
- 2025 - Faculty Travel Grant - Adelaide Fringe Festival, \$1800
- 2025 - VCU Global Education Office Grant, \$1800
- 2024 - Dean's Summer Research Grant - IUGTE Conference Presentation, \$995
- 2024 - Faculty Travel Grant - Frantic Assembly Training, \$2000
- 2023 - VCUArts Adjunct Grant for Research, Creative Work & Professional Development, IUGTE, \$2000
- 2022 - VCUArts Adjunct Grant for Research, Creative Work & Professional Development, Theatrical Intimacy Education (TIE) Intimacy Training, \$603
- 2022 - VCUArts Adjunct Grant for Research, Creative Work & Professional Development, Tourist Trap Stage Combat & Stunt Workshop, \$900

Significant Creative or Scholarly Achievements

- 2025 - Invited to work with professional dance theatre company, CaZo Dance Theatre, on the restaging of *You Are Not Alone*, as Intimacy Director and Emotional Dramaturg. This performance needs particular care as the story is about high school bullying, sexual awakenings, abuse, and teen suicide, which is already deeply traumatic work. Additionally, the piece is dedicated to one of our dancers who, last summer, chose to leave us. It is imperative that emotional dramaturgy is applied throughout the entire process to address the mental health issues that may arise in this process.
- 2025 - Completion of Dissertation "Emotional Dramaturgy: Invitation to a Brave Space."
- 2025 - Proposal submission to Routledge Publishing for publication of Dissertation
- 2024 - Begin work on *Silence Emerging*, an international collaboration with Christie Koope of Sydney, Australia. The work will include performers from England and a producer and a composer from the United States. It will have three weeks of creation/rehearsal in London in July of 2027 and one week of performances as a "Work in Progress" at Edinburgh Fringe Festival. This will also be connected to a VCU Study Abroad session where students will join the process for the last week of rehearsals and the week of performances, serving as ASM, Assistant Producer, Assistant Lighting Designer, Assistant Company Manager, Assistant Marketing Manager, and other roles.

Articles and Reviews

- 2024 - *Supporting Staged Intimacy: A Practical Guide for Theatre Creatives, Managers, and Crew*, Review for *Voice and Speech Review*

RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY

Conference Presentations

Invitation to a Brave Space: Incorporating Emotional Dramaturgy into Actor Training and Performance, INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FOR GLOBAL THEATRE EXPERIENCE Conference, Graz, Austria, 2025 - At this conference I was able to present my research on Emotional Dramaturgy. The response was overwhelming and the feedback I received was invaluable. I sent a form to the participants to gauge the interest in turning the research into a book and whether there was international appeal. Not only was the answer unanimously "yes", but I have offers for translations into Croatia and Romanian already. I was also able to connect with a performer based out of Birmingham, UK, who wants to be a part of *Silence Emerging* as well as Ji Won Jeon of Michigan State University who has asked that we collaborate on her work *Silent Clamor* about Korean Comfort Women.

Push, Pull, Fly: Investigating text through partner work, IUGTE International Conference, Graz, Austria, 2024 - This workshop presented theories utilized in my advanced movement class see how a broader audience would respond to the work. The artists embraced the work and made many connections about how to utilize it in their future practice.

What price for dramatic performances: Utilizing Emotional Dramaturgy to Combat ‘Post-Dramatic Stress’, Association for Theatre in Higher Education, Austin, TX, 2021 (Virtual) - At this conference I presented what would later be fully fleshed out for my dissertation.

Teaching

Semester Outline: VCU Courses Taught

Fall 2026	THEA335-001 Advanced Movement and Voice THEA490-001 Intimacy, Consent, and Wellbeing in the Entertainment Industry
Spring 2026	THEA204-003 Movement for the Actor II THEA391-003 Topics: Advanced Stage Combat
Fall 2025	THEA335-001 Advanced Movement & Voice THEA335-002 Advanced Movement & Voice THEA492-005 Independent Study
Spring 2025	THEA210-002 Introduction to Stage Combat THEA204-004 Movement for the Actor II THEA491-011 Topics: Fringe Festivals
Fall 2024	THEA335-001 Advanced Movement & Voice THEA203-004 Movement for the Actor I
Spring 2024	THEA204-002 Movement for the Actor II THEA210-002 Introduction to Stage Combat
Fall 2023	THEA203-001 Movement for the Actor I THEA335-001 Advanced Movement & Voice
Spring 2023	THEA204-002 Movement for the Actor II THEA210-002 Introduction to Stage Combat
Fall 2022	THEA203-001 Movement for the Actor I THEA203-002 Movement for the Actor I
Spring 2022	THEA204-002 Movement for the Actor II THEA210-002 Introduction to Stage Combat
Fall 2021	SPCH321-002 Speech for business and profession THEA 335-001 Advanced Movement & Voice

Descriptions of Teaching Responsibilities and Courses

THEA203 - Movement for Actors I

Practice and study of stage movement for the purpose of creating truthful physical behavior in the theatre. Each class session will begin with a short warm-up, move into improvisational and free physicality, and eventually move into focused physical work (sometimes with text, sometimes without). Course objectives are to understand how to develop a sense of presence and physical awareness in space (*discovery*), to understand how to develop a connection between authentic physical and emotional behavior (*play*), to understand how to develop trust, respect and awareness within the group (*ensemble*), to begin to develop a personal artistic process for the creation of new work. By the end of this course you will be able to apply the process of discovery to performance, become present in performance on demand, have the skills and ability to work in an ensemble, and describe the beginnings of an individual process for the creation of new work. Theorists such as Meyerhold and Laban will be applied to the performance of a monologue.

THEA204 - Movement for Actors II

This class will continue the practice and study of stage movement for the purpose of creating truthful physical behavior in the theatre. Our ultimate goals are to understand how to develop a sense of presence and physical awareness in space (*discovery*), to understand how to develop a connection between authentic physical and emotional behavior (*play*), to understand how to develop trust, respect and awareness within the group (*ensemble* and *complicité*), to begin to develop a personal artistic process for the creation of new work. Heightened physicality will be applied to scene work.

THEA210 - Introduction to Stage Combat

An introduction to the techniques and performance of unarmed and armed stage combat sequences for the stage.

THEA335 - Advanced Movement & Voice

Integrating physicality and embodiment into theatrical storytelling, we will be exploring both the 'what' and the 'how' of physical theatre. The class is structured to challenge students with alternative ideas of expression, create new spaces to explore, and instill a practice of physicality to be incorporated into the student's work now and in the future. Entering into the world of play, this course will touch on the foundations of Clowning including exercises based on the work of Jacques LeCoq, Commedia dell'Arte, and others. We will utilize foundations of contact improvisation and explore the world of physical devising pulling from the work of such theatre companies as Frantic Assembly, Push Physical Theatre and the work of Andrei Droznin.

SPCH321 Speech for Business and the Professions

This course is an upper-level public speaking course that centers on theory and practice in oral communication. Students organize and present a range of informative and persuasive speeches related to their area of interest, and practice interviewing skills.

New Courses Developed and Taught

THEA490 – Intimacy, Consent, and Wellbeing in the Entertainment Industry

The work of performance often requires artists to engage with emotionally demanding material, physical vulnerability, and complex interpersonal relationships. As the entertainment industry continues to evolve, artists are increasingly recognizing that compelling storytelling and performer well-being are not competing priorities but interconnected aspects of ethical artistic practice. This course explores how consent, communication, emotional dramaturgy, and mental health awareness can contribute to healthier rehearsal and production cultures. Students will examine contemporary practices that support performers before, during, and after the rehearsal process, drawing from theatre, film, television, and live performance. Topics include informed consent, collaborative communication, emotional labor, rehearsal ethics, psychological safety, performer resilience, trauma-informed practice, and emerging roles such as Mental Health Coordinators. This course equips future performers, directors, stage managers, educators, and creative leaders with practical tools for fostering collaborative environments where artistic rigor and human well-being coexist.

THEA391 - Stage Combat

This course is an introduction and exploration of technical and aesthetic aspects of stage combat. Our main goals are to develop the ability to safely portray the illusion of violence onstage within the context of a play with specificity and dramatic power, as well as to understand how stage combat fits into the practice of theater as a whole. All of your current and previous training in acting, voice, and movement will be integrated in this course. Other aspects include the development of strength and flexibility, eye/hand coordination, understanding and applications of principles of safety in working with a partner, and learning how to advance your character journey and develop ensemble work through each individual move in a fight sequence. You will also learn how to accurately notate fight choreography.

THEA491 - Fringe Festivals

This course is a practical introduction to the history and production of Local, National, and International Fringe Festivals. The class will be a combination of lecture and practical work.

Teaching - Outside VCU Curricula

2026 - Guest Lecturer at the University of Idaho for Intimacy Direction course

2024 - Governor's School: Taught stage combat at the Virginia Governor's School held at Radford University in Radford, VA

2023 - Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp - Taught two sessions of two weeks each. In the first session, I taught movement for actors and directed one of four final performances. The second session, I taught dance and choreographed three of the final performances.

THEATRE

2026 - *The Bacchae of Euripides*

Movement Direction

2025 - *A Distinct Society*

Intimacy Direction

2025 - *The Rocky Horror Show*

Intimacy Direction

2025 - *Smoke*

Intimacy Direction

2025 - *The Wild Party*

Intimacy/Fight/Dance Choreography

2025 - *Rhinoceros*

Movement Direction

2024 – *Anon(ymous)*

Movement Direction

2024 - *Roman a Clef*

Intimacy/Fight Direction

2024 - *Twelfth Night*

Fight Direction

2024 - *The Descendants*

Fight Direction

2023 - *The Light*

Intimacy Direction

2023 - *Log Cabin*

Intimacy Direction

2023 - *Berta, Berta*

Intimacy Direction

2023 - *A Soldier's Play*

Fight Direction

2023 - *POTUS*

Fight Direction

2023 - *Measure for Measure*

Intimacy/Fight Direction

2023 - *Let the Right One In*

Intimacy/Fight Direction

2023 - *Gross Indecency*

Intimacy Direction

2023 - *Rent*

Intimacy Direction

2023 - *The Imaginary Invalid*

Movement Direction

2022 - *Sugar in Our Wounds*

Fight Direction

2022 - *The Rocky Horror Show*

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: David Emerson Toney

The Firehouse Theatre, Richmond, VA

Director: Kareem Fahmy

Richmond Triangle Players

Directors: Lucien Restivo and Kendall Walker

Cadence Theatre, Richmond, VA

Director: Anna Senchal Johnson

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Wes Seals

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Jesse Njus

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Chelsea Burke

The Firehouse Theatre, Richmond, VA

Director: Sharon Ott

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Rick St. Peter

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Desiree Dabney

Yes, and Theatre, Richmond, VA

Director: Lucretia Marie

Richmond Triangle Players, Richmond, VA

Director: Julie Fulcher-Davis

The Firehouse Theatre, Richmond, VA

Director: Tawnya Pettiford-Wates

Swift Creek Mill Theatre, South Chesterfield, VA

Director Shanea Taylor

Virginia Repertory Theatre, Richmond, VA

Director: Dorothy Holland

Randolph-Macon College, Ashland, VA

Director: Jan Powell

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Wes Seals

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Freddie Ashley

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Desiree Dabney

Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

Director: Jeff Darland

Richmond Triangle Players, Richmond, VA

Director: Lucretia Marie

Richmond Triangle Players, Richmond, VA

Intimacy Direction
2022 - *How I Learned to Drive*
Intimacy Direction
2022 - *Collective Rage: A Play in Five Bettys*
Intimacy Direction
2022 - *Legacy of Light*
Intimacy Direction
2022 - *MacBeth*
Fight Direction

Director: Chelsea Burke
The Conciliation Lab, Richmond, VA
Director: Chelsea Burke
Richmond Triangle Players, Richmond, VA
Director: Chelsea Burke
Brightpoint Community College, Midlothian, VA
Director: Zack Owen
Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
Director: Mary E. Hodges

Acting Work

2024 - *Roman a Clef*
Queenie
2023 - *The Disappearance of Ezra Clybourne*
Logan/Chris
2022 - *Steel Magnolias*
M'Lynn

The Firehouse Theatre, Richmond, VA
Director: Sharon Ott
*Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, Twin Lakes, MI
Director: David Little
Virginia Repertory Theatre, Richmond, VA
Director: Julie Fulcher-Davis

FILM AND TELEVISION

Intimacy Coordination

2026 – *The Dark Path*

2026 – *The Pig Path*

2025 - *To Be Vaguely Asian in the American South*

2024 - *Sport Star*

2022 - *Swagger*

Short Film, Richmond, VA
Director: Sarbajeet Das
Feature Film, Richmond, VA
Director/Writer: Brian Landis
Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY
Creator: Kansas Ballesteros
Tisch School of the Arts, New York, NY
Creator: Ellis Finney
Apple TV, Richmond, VA
Creator: Reggie Rock Bythewood