

# FACULTY & STAFF

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***Ed Simpson - Chair & Professor, Playwriting & Performance***

Ed received his MFA in acting and directing from the University of North Carolina - Greensboro and a BA in speech and drama from Guilford College. His full-length plays have been widely produced and published throughout the US and Canada and include *Additional Particulars* (2000 "Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award," "Backstage-West Garland Award for Playwriting"), *Elephant Sighs*, *The Battle of Shallowford*, *The Comet of St. Loomis*, *A Point of Order*, *Electric City Suite*, *The Amazing Goldin*, and, most recently, the docudrama *Periphery*. For television Ed wrote for the acclaimed ABC Family Channel television series, *State of Grace*. Most recently, he adapted and directed the film version of *Elephant Sighs* which starred Ed Asner. Since 1980, he has directed over 40 productions for both educational and professional theaters throughout the country including the HPU productions of *The Glasses*, *Our Town*, *The Learned Ladies*, *All My Sons*, *Early One Evening at the Rainbow Bar and Grille*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*. He is a member of the Writers Guild of America, Dramatists Guild, Actors' Equity, and, in 2009, was elected to the National Theatre Conference.

**HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Theatre**

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## ***Doug Brown - Assistant Professor, Performance & Directing***

Doug received his BFA from Rockford College, his MFA from the Florida State University/Asolo Conservatory, and his MDIV from Concordia Seminary. A professor of performance at High Point University since 2004, Doug's directing credits include *Medea*, *Peter Pan*, *The Diviners*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Steel Magnolias*, *The Dining Room*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, and *Crimes of the Heart*. A member of Actors' Equity Association, Doug has toured with the famed Asolo State Theatre and has created leading roles in the musical *The Amazing Goldin* and *Periphery*. As a guest artist, Doug has appeared in the High Point University productions *Fool for Love*, *The Crucible*, *All My Sons*, and *The Seagull*. His recent film performances include featured roles in *Lake of Fire* and *Elephant Sighs*, starring Ed Asner. Doug recently attended Larry Silverberg's True Acting Institute and received certification in teaching the Meisner approach to actor training.

## ***Matthew Emerson - Assistant Professor, Design***

Matthew earned an MFA from the University of North Carolina - Greensboro in Scenography and a BA in Theater from Averett University. His most recent designs include *Kimberly Akimbo* for the Paper Lantern Theatre; *Elephant Sighs*, the feature film produced by New Garden Media; *Beehive* and *Peter Pan* for TheatreWorks; *The Revenger's Tragedy*, *Big River*, and *Sweeney Todd* for the UNCG Theatre. Among his numerous design awards is the "Award for Distinguished Scenic Design" presented to Matthew by the Kennedy Center/American College Theater Festival for his design of *The Revenger's Tragedy*. Since joining the HPU faculty in 2009, Matthew has designed scenery and lights for *Twelfth Night*, *The Glasses*, *Urinetown*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Our Town*, *Love/Sick*, *The Seagull*, *The Dining Room*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Fuddy Meers*. Matthew is currently conducting research for a book investigating the various digital rendering, drafting, and modeling techniques for theatre artists.

## ***Cara Hagan - Instructor, Dance***

Cara Hagan is a graduate of the UNC School of the Arts and Goddard College. She is an award-winning artist of many genres including dance, film, storytelling, music and socially engaged arts. She has had the pleasure of sharing her work on stage, on screen and in educational settings across the United States and abroad. Cara is the 2009 recipient of the NC Dance Alliance Fellowship Award. She was awarded Best Short Film and Best Dance For Camera at the Indie Grits Film Festival and the Foursite Film Festival respectively in 2010 for her film, *Two Downtown*. In 2011, she received a Graduate Scholar Award at the 6th annual Arts in Society Conference in Berlin, Germany, where she presented her workshop entitled, How Did I Get Here: an Exploration of the Web of Memory, Journey and Arrival. She is currently on faculty at high Point University, where she has created and implemented the curriculum for a new dance minor program. At High Point University, she is the recipient of a 2012 Cultural Enrichment Grant and a 2012 Silvershein/Gutenstein Family Faculty Development Grant. She is founder and

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facilitator for The Wedding Dress Project, an organization whose mission is to raise awareness and inspire dialogue around issues of domestic violence, gender relations and gender stereotypes. She is also founder and curator for Movies By Movers, an annual festival now in its third year, dedicated to the art of movement on film and digital media. [www.moviesbymovers.weebly.com](http://www.moviesbymovers.weebly.com) [www.theweddingdressproject.org](http://www.theweddingdressproject.org)

## ***Ryan Hemsoth - Assistant Professor & Technical Director***

Ryan received his BA in theatre, with minors in English and History, from The Ohio State University and his MFA from Purdue University. Professionally, he served as Technical Director for several seasons at Actors' Theatre of Columbus, Ohio and at Festival 56 in Princeton, Illinois. He has had the pleasure to serve as Technical Director on productions of *Hamlet*, *Almost, Maine*, *Marat/Sade*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *The Sound of Music*. Since joining the faculty of High Point University in 2010, Ryan has been Technical Director for all of the productions, including, *Our Town*, *Urinetown*, *Twelfth Night*, and the world premieres of both *Love/Sick*, by John Cariani, and the New Play Contest Winner, *The Glasses*, by Ron Burch. He currently resides in High Point with his wife and daughter.

## ***Jay Putnam - Assistant Professor, Performance & Directing***

Jay holds a BA from William & Mary and an MFA in Directing from University of North Carolina - Greensboro. Jay's many professional directing credits include productions at NC Stage in Asheville and at Triad Stage, where he was Artistic Associate for five years and directed memorable productions of *Proof*, *Syncopation*, *The Santaland Diaries*, *Dracula*, and *Sleuth*. Since coming to HPU in 2008, Jay's work has been highlighted by productions of *Urinetown*, *Almost, Maine* and intensive work on Chekhov's *The Seagull*, a unique year-long project that encouraged student immersion with a blend of academic and production work. Jay collaborated with playwright John Cariani on the World Premiere production of *Love/Sick*, which debuted at HPU in September 2010. Jay is an active contributor to the American College Theatre Festival and a board member of the North Carolina Theatre Conference.

## ***Ami Shupe - Associate Professor, Design***

Ami holds a BA in theater from Berea College and an MFA from the University of North Carolina - Greensboro. As Resident Costume Designer at HPU, Ami has designed over 20 productions including *The Learned Ladies*, *The Diviners*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *All My Sons*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Steel Magnolias*, and *The Water Engine*. Additionally, she designed scenery for *Almost, Maine*, *The Diviners* and *How to Succeed in Business...* and directed *The Crucible* and *The Complete History of America: Abridged*. Ami's recent professional costume design credits include *The Santaland Diaries*, *Dracula*, and *An Infinite Ache* for Triad Stage; *High School Musical* and *The Music Man* for the Merry-Go-Round Playhouse; and *Beehive*, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and *Little Shop of Horrors* for TheatreWorks in Martinsville, VA. Her feature film costume design credits include New Garden Media's *Elephant Sighs*.

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