

## ON THE PAGE, ON STAGE, IN CLASS, ENGLISH PROFESSOR ACHIEVES SUCCESS

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by Kalie Johnson '19

Les Hunter, playwright and BW assistant professor of English, not only teaches innovative courses on noteworthy playwrights and contemporary ideals in 20th century American theatre, but also practices his craft in academia and the theatre community as a dramatist, critic and analyst.

### EXAMINING BEST PRACTICES

Recently, Hunter published an analysis of playwriting syllabi for HowlRound using data collected from 30 syllabi of college playwriting courses to develop a comprehensive basis of understanding the applications of playwriting pedagogy, finding the best practices within the field and ultimately challenging the status quo.

Hunter said, "...mine is the first study of what exactly is being taught in playwriting pedagogy. I then compare contemporary practices to the existing literature on what should be taught. I ask the question: as educators, how are we doing? And it appears that we're actually, not really living up to what the pedagogy literature recommends."

### CONSTRUCTION BY CRITICISM

Before that publication, Hunter presented his findings at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education in Las Vegas.

After using his presentation experience and HowlRound publication to garner feedback and useful criticisms, Hunter, a theatre critic himself, prepares to present his continually evolving analysis in March at the Mid-American Theatre Conference in Milwaukee for additional feedback.

### MORE PLAYS AND PUBLICATIONS

In addition to his recent research, Hunter has been incredibly active writing, producing and developing a myriad of his plays at Playwrights Local Theater 167, Cleveland Public Theater, Dobama Theatre and more.

Among his upcoming projects, ranging from plays to publications, Hunter has authored "'Art in Democracy' in the Early Houses of the Cleveland Play House," which will be published in the essay collection "Performing the Progressive Era: Immigration, Urbanism, and Nationalism on Stage."

He also has two of his plays going into production.

### IN THE LIMELIGHT

Hunter's play "Weimar" will be staged at BW, after an initial presentation with Playwrights' GYM last May. The heightened-language story of a women's collective struggling among the Weimar Republic and Nazism will be fully produced at BW on April 4-7.

Another of Hunter's many projects on the horizon is his play "Down by Contact," which will be in co-production by Playwrights Local and Dobama Theatre in August of 2018. The play will star Anjanette Hall, BW assistant professor of theatre, and tells the story of a struggling retired pro quarterback battling the difficulties of chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).



These diverse experiences, paired with attendance at the distinguished Mellon School of Theater and Performance Research at Harvard University, have added depth to Hunter's expertise as a professor.