



Job Description

TEACHING ARTIST (ACTING FOCUS)

Level: Conservatory I

Organization Summary

The Unusual Suspects Theatre Company's (USTC) mission is to mentor, educate, and enrich youth in under-resourced communities through the creation of collaborative, original theatre. Our mission powers our vision of a world where all youth are given the opportunities and support they need to succeed.

Founded in the wake of the 1992 LA Uprising, USTC has grown from a small, volunteer-led youth intervention program into an award-winning leader in the fields of arts education, youth development, mentorship, and community building. After nearly three decades of service within disinvested and underrepresented communities, the focus of our work remains to ensure the equitable enrichment and development of Los Angeles County under-resourced youth. Our free, theatre-arts programs go beyond the reach of typical arts education workshops to offer personalized mentorship and a safe space for self-expression, empowering those we work with to identify and leverage their innate talents and overcome inequitable circumstances.

USTC is pursuing transformative action steps to center our communities in all aspects of our work and bring Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA) to the forefront of our operations and programs. For more information visit: theunusalsuspects.org.

Position Overview

We seek a skilled and collaborative Acting Focus Teaching Artist (TA) to co-lead Conservatory I, a year-long, ensemble-devised theatre program for youth. This TA will focus on acting, staging, voice, movement, and cultivating live performance skills. They will co-teach alongside a Playwriting TA who leads the writing and dramaturgy aspects of the program.

Key Responsibilities

- Co-lead a youth ensemble through the Conservatory I process, including:
 - Ensemble-building and presence exercises
 - Voice, movement, and character development workshops
 - Application of Stanislavski, Uta Hagen, and Meisner techniques
 - Rehearsing and blocking original student plays
 - Guiding students through performance fundamentals for final performances
- Lead sessions on projection, staging, and character embodiment
- Participate in casting, rehearsals, and performances
- Cultivate a brave and creative classroom culture
- Administrative duties such as recording and submitting detailed deliverables and attendance
- Collaborate with Co-TA and Design Team to create a finale performance

About the Program

Conservatory I is the foundation of USTC's youth theatre track. Students create, write, and perform original 10–12 minute plays based on lived experiences. Teaching Artists guide an inquiry-driven process rooted in ensemble trust, vulnerability, and personal storytelling.

Ideal Candidate Profile

Educational Background

- MFA in Acting, Directing, Performance Studies, or a related field from a regionally accredited institution (or experiential equivalent)

Teaching Experience

- Minimum 2 years teaching acting/directing at the high school/college level or conservatory equivalent
- Comfortable teaching a range of acting techniques, such as:
 - Stanislavski-based character development and objectives
 - Uta Hagen's Given Circumstances and Magic If
 - Meisner, Method, or Viewpoints-based approaches
- Proficient in:
 - Script and scene analysis
 - Voice and speech training (Linklater, breath, projection, resonance)
 - Movement and physical storytelling

Professional Artistic Experience

- 3–5 years as a professional actor in local, regional, or national theater or film and television
- Experience performing and/or directing contemporary and devised theatre
- Background in voice or movement coaching is a plus
- Experience directing or coaching youth

Skills + Qualifications

- Skilled in leading physical warmups, ensemble-building, and performance exercises
- Passion for collaboration and building artistic trust within an ensemble
- Able to co-lead casting, blocking, and rehearsals of original student-devised plays
- Capable of modeling vulnerability and stage presence in creative spaces
- Experience with directing or choreographing student work
- Background in devised theatre and experience with short + long-form improvisation
- Reliable means of transportation and a valid CA driver's license or ID are required
- Cultural competency to work effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds, as well as with a variety of institutional and governmental organizations

Work Environment + Physical Requirements

- Must be flexible working in a fast-paced, non-profit environment.
- This position works primarily at program sites.
- Must be willing to use personal equipment such as cell phone and laptop/tablet when working remotely.
- Must be willing to undergo clearances/ background checks for school and probation camp sites.

The information presented above indicates the general nature and level of work expected of employees in this position. It is not designed to contain, or to be interpreted as, a comprehensive inventory of all duties, responsibilities, qualifications and objectives required of employees assigned to this job.

Applicants for Employment

- All applicants offered employment with The Unusual Suspects will be subject to a Live Scan background check.

Commitment + Pay

- Non-exempt, part-time, temporary position
- Teaching pay rate is \$55/hr, with an additional planning rate of \$20/hr
- Position is expected to work 10-20 hours weekly, based on schedule and availability.
- All sessions are on-site at partner organizations throughout Los Angeles and/or the San Gabriel Valley
- Mandatory paid training: August 25 + 26, 2025

How to Apply

Interested candidates should prepare a resume/CV, performance portfolio (or demo reel if applicable), and a brief statement on their teaching philosophy and commitment to youth-led arts education to jobs@theunusualsuspects.org with the subject line, including the position title and your name. E.g., "Teaching Artist (Acting) - John Smith."