

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA (<https://www.ua.edu>)

Panitch Wins UA's Blackmon-Moody Award

📅 November 7th, 2016



Seth Panitch

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Seth Panitch, professor of acting in The University of Alabama's department of theatre and dance, has earned the 2016 Blackmon-Moody Outstanding Professor Award.

Panitch will receive the award Nov. 11 in a ceremony at the UA President's Mansion.

The Frederick Moody Blackmon and Sarah McCorkle Moody Outstanding Professor Award is one of the most prestigious awards given by UA. It is based on a specific accomplishment that is innovative, creative, useful or captures the imagination.

Created by Frederick Moody Blackmon, of Montgomery, to honor the memory of his grandmother, Sarah McCorkle Moody, of Tuscaloosa, the award is presented annually.

Dominic Yeager, assistant professor of theatre at UA, nominated Panitch based on his success in producing theatrical productions in Cuba.

Panitch, now in his 12th year at UA, was the first U.S. director to helm a professional theatrical production in Cuba since the Cuban Revolution with "Merchant of Venice," which played at the Adolfo Llauro Theatre. As a result, the Cuban Ministry of Culture invited him to direct four more productions in Havana.

One of those productions transferred to a historic Off-Broadway theatre in New York, becoming the first bi-national production there in 50 years and drawing coverage from some of the most notable news organizations in both Cuba and the U.S.

"His work, seen on the most significant national and international stages, as well as on film, has attracted a spotlight on the arts at UA that has not only raised the stature of his own career, it has hugely impacted the national recognition of the department, College and University, as well," said Yeager in his nomination letter.

Panitch has written, directed and performed in four Off-Broadway shows in New York City and is working on a fifth. The previous ones have all garnered rave reviews in The New York Times and among leading theatrical organizations.

Panitch has also directed and performed in the nation's most highly respected Shakespeare Festivals and produced documentary films. More recently, he directed and wrote a full-length feature film that has secured the representation of Joel Zwick, director of "My Big Fat Greek Wedding."

Panitch, a Los Angeles native, recently received the grand jury prize for best film at the 20th American Black Film Festival for his first full, feature-length film, "Service to Man" and was selected as the 2016 SEC Faculty Achievement Award winner for UA.

UA's department of theatre and dance is part of the College of Arts and Sciences, the University's largest division and the largest liberal arts college in the state. Students from the College have won numerous national awards including Rhodes and Goldwater scholarships.

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