

Performer Residency Guidelines 2025

The Steep and Thorny Way to Heaven performance residency is designed for early to mid-career performing artists looking to develop their short-form performance skills. Our performance residency is discipline agnostic and encourages artistic bravery and risk-taking with a focus on leveling up your technical skills and storytelling through comprehensive act creation support. Performers from all disciplines are encouraged to apply. Given the historic exclusion of BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, neurodivergent and disabled artists, and older emerging artists from programs such as this: priority will be given to members of these marginalized groups, but all are welcome to apply!

This residency is designed to fully support the creation of three new short-form (4-11 minute) acts from the ground up.

What's Included:

- Rehearsal and act creation support through rehearsal notes and workshops with Creative Co-Directors Megan Skye Hale and Myrrh Larsen. Possibilities include but are not limited to:
 - Character creation and exploration
 - Storytelling and arc
 - Movement and precision
 - Incorporating props or set elements
 - Moving beyond improvisation
- One-on one workshops and consultations on:
 - Music selection and editing
 - Costuming for any budget
- Practical resources and best practices for booking including:
 - Corresponding with producers
 - How to speak lighting and technical needs
 - Live performance or polished rehearsal recordings of all 3 acts

About The Steep and Thorny Way to Heaven:

The Steep and Thorny Way to Heaven began as an underground venue and multidisciplinary performance company focusing on thematically rich and immersive worlds. For the past 13 years Steep and Thorny has produced the Night Carnival: a themed variety show and costume party featuring some of Portland's best performing artists. This year, The Steep and Thorny Way to Heaven moves out of our former permanent venue and into various performance spaces around Portland to produce a 3 Night Carnival season.

About our Creative Directors:

Myrrh Larsen (they/them) is a rock musician, theatrical director, and technical director for *The Steep and Thorny Way to Heaven* and our umbrella non-profit *Misfit Academy*. Myrrh's creative work focuses on the *Song Saga* - narrative rock performances incorporating a variety of dancers, circus performers, and other movement artists. Bringing their skills as a theatrical and

technical director to cabaret and variety performance consulting, they focus on story arc, narrative shaping, and the ways technical elements shape story.

Megan Skye Hale (she/her) is a classically trained actor, character clown, movement director, and Creative Co-Director of *The Steep and Thorny Way to Heaven* and *Misfit Academy*. As the founding artistic director of immersive theatre company *Speculative Drama*, Megan's work explores non-traditional staging, deep character analysis, and movement precision. Her consulting work focuses on technique as character expression, and clown and movement principles for all performance styles - combining a sense of play with technical rigor to enhance story and performance.

How To Apply:

Our application process is very informal and designed to remove barriers to applying. Selections are not based on current performance quality, and performance samples are welcome but not required.

If interested please email misfitacademy@gmail.com with the subject line "YOUR NAME, Performer Residency" and the following information:

1. Your name and pronouns
2. Your performance discipline(s)
3. A short paragraph or a few sentences describing why you are interested in this residency program and what your goals are. Don't worry, your goals can shift throughout the residency process, this is just a starting point!
4. Anything else you would like us to know, or examples of your work you would like to send (reminder - this is **NOT** required!)

Past resident artists include Betsie Heart, Kate Makkai, Bentley Fox, Kelsey Aicher, and Jay Eddin.