Kamilla Kurmanbekova

Los Angeles, CA, USA
kamilla@kkamilla.com • kkamilla.com, LinkedIn

Scenic and costume designer, scenic artist and theatre educator based in Los Angeles, with 15+ years of international experience in theatre, film and arts education. MFA in Theatre (Major: Design) from Boston University and recipient of the Douglas W. Schmidt Award for Outstanding Scenic Design (2012). Designer of sets, costumes, scenic painting and props for 40+ theatre, opera, dance and music productions in the USA, Europe and Central Asia, from the stage design for *Qyrq Qyz (Forty Girls)* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music to costume design for the feature film *The Wounded Angel* (Berlinale Panorama, 2016). A hands-on maker across design, scenic painting, sculpture and construction, and a teacher of stage and costume design at university and community-college level. Portfolio: kkamilla.com.

Theatre Design

2026	*Clue* — scenic design and build, Harvard-Westlake School, Los Angeles
2026	*Mean Girls* — scenic design (guest designer), California State University Channel Islands, Camarillo
2026	*Animal Farm* — scenic and costume design, Arcadia Stage Theatre Company, Arcadia High School Performing Arts Center
2026–27	*Hadestown* and the 2026–27 season — costume design, Arcadia Stage Theatre Company
2026	*Our Town* (Wilder) — production lab faculty (stagecraft and scenery build with students), Moorpark College Theatre Arts, dir. John Loprieno
2018	*Qyrq Qyz (Forty Girls)* — stage design; dir. Saodat Ismailova; Aga Khan Music Initiative. World premiere at the Hopkins Center for the Arts, Dartmouth College; Brooklyn Academy of Music (Harvey Theater); Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac, Paris
2012	*Assassins* (Sondheim / Weidman) — stage design, New Repertory Theatre and Boston University, Boston
2011	*Woyzeck* (Büchner) — stage design, Boston University College of Fine Arts
2011	*Aura* (after Carlos Fuentes) — stage design
2011	*Our Lady* — stage design
2010	*The Hairy Ape* (O'Neill) — scenic design, Boston University Theatre Lab
2010	*GOOD* (C. P. Taylor) — scenic design
2009	*Demon* (opera, A. Rubinstein) — stage design, BFA thesis, Kazakh National Academy of Arts
2008	*ALZHIR* — stage design, National Opera and Ballet Theater, Astana
	The Threepenny Opera (Brecht / Weill) — stage design, dir. E. Nursultan, Auezov Theatre, Almaty
	Akiko in Aktas — stage design, dir. A. Mayamirov, Auezov Theatre, Almaty
	Funny Money (Ray Cooney) — stage design, Auezov Theatre, Almaty
	Base Jumping (Alexander Didenko) — stage design, Artishock Theatre, Almaty
	The Ugly One (Marius von Mayenburg) — stage design
	Alice in Wonderland — stage design, TheaterLab, Spain
	Medea — stage design, KazNAA Stage, Almaty

Film and Screen

2023	*Nothing Touching*, music video for Calvin Adams — art director & production designer
2023	*Janym*, music video for Shyryn Bazarkulova — art director & production designer
2021	*MY BLUE*, short film — director & art director
2017	*Crash Test Aglaé*, dir. Éric Gravel — costume designer
2016	*The Wounded Angel*, dir. Emir Baigazin — costume designer (Berlinale Panorama, 2016)
2014	*Boy Duck* and *Maxabatym Zhuregimde*, dir. A. Uzabaev — art director
2013	*Trace on the Water*, dir. T. Temenov — art director
2009	*Mai*, dir. S. Abishev — art director

2008 Kodak Project — photographer
2007 "Cesna" commercial and "No Smoking" campaign, Almaty — art director
2006 *Man Stick*, dir. A. Gancev — art director

Professional Experience

- **Harvard-Westlake School** — **Los Angeles, CA**
  Guest Artist: Scenic Designer and Builder (part-time) — *Aug 2026–May 2027*
  - Designs and builds scenery for the school's productions, currently *Clue*
  - Explains each design concept and guides students through stagecraft, scenery construction and scenic painting as they help realize it
- **California State University Channel Islands** — **Camarillo, CA**
  Guest Scenic Designer, Mean Girls — *Fall 2026*
  Production-specific scenic design engagement.
- **Arcadia High School, Arcadia Stage Theatre Company** — **Arcadia, CA**
  Costume Designer — *2026–27 season*
  - Costume design for the season, including *Animal Farm* (also scenic design) and *Hadestown*
  - Costume renderings, fabric selection, costume budget and costume plot
  - Mentors students in sewing, costume construction, fittings and character research
- **University of Southern California, School of Dramatic Arts** — **Los Angeles, CA**
  Scenic Painter — *Jan–May 2026*
  - Scenic painting for School of Dramatic Arts productions, including *Legally Blonde*
  - Mentored students through the scenic painting process
- **ArtFest LA** — **Los Angeles, CA**
  Lead Creative Director / Organizer — *2025*
  Creative direction and organization of a large-scale immersive public art festival: artists, fabrication teams, logistics and installation.
- **MJ Atelier** — **Los Angeles, CA**
  Lead Sculptor / Scenic Painter / Instructor (full-time) — *Dec 2019–Dec 2023*
  - Led large-scale sculpture and scenic painting for high-end interiors and installations
  - Trained and mentored studio artists in sculpting techniques, materials and production standards
  - Delivered custom scenic and sculptural work to specification and deadline
- **Theatre, opera, dance, music and film** — **USA, Europe, Central Asia**
  Scenic, Costume & Props Designer; Scenic Painter (freelance) — *2005–2018*
  Designed and built sets, painted scenery, and designed costumes and props for 40+ productions, delivered to fixed opening dates.

Teaching Experience

- **Moorpark College** — **Moorpark, CA**
  Part-Time Faculty, Theatre Production: Technical — *Aug 2026–Present*
  - Teaches Stagecraft/Scenic Lab and set-building classes
  - Leads the production lab classes in which students apply technical-theatre training to the semester's productions, including *Our Town* (Fall 2026)
- **LifePlus LA** — **Los Angeles, CA**
  Art & Academic Director; Art Instructor — *Dec 2023–Present*
  Directs the art program's curriculum, instruction and academic direction, and teaches.
- **Kazakh National Academy of Arts (T. K. Zhurgenov)** — **Almaty, Kazakhstan**
  Lecturer — *2012–2015*
  - Taught stage design and costume design, including costume history, to undergraduate scenography students over six full-time semesters (approx. 90 semester units)
  - Supervised student design and construction work through departmental productions
- **Almaty Design School** — **Almaty, Kazakhstan**
  Art Instructor — *2015–2016*

- **Boston University, College of Fine Arts** — **Boston, MA**
  Teaching Assistant — *2010–2012*

Education

- **Boston University, College of Fine Arts** — **Boston, MA**
  Master of Fine Arts, Theatre (Major: Design) — *2012*
  Coursework: Scene Design Studio, Scene Painting I–II, Costume Design (two terms), Lighting Design, History of Decor, Figure Drawing, Sculpture. Douglas W. Schmidt Award for Outstanding Scenic Design.
- **Kazakh National Academy of Arts** — **Almaty, Kazakhstan**
  Bachelor of Fine Arts in Scenography — *2009*
  Bolashak International Scholarship recipient.
- **Los Angeles City College** — **Los Angeles, CA**
  Associate of Arts in Film Directing — *2022*
- **Accademia del Giglio** — **Florence, Italy**
  Painting studies (summer term) — *2010*
- **Shota Rustaveli Theatre and Film University** — **Tbilisi, Georgia**
  Immersive theatre studies — *2007*
- **with Gralf Habben** — **Kazakhstan**
  Scenography workshop — *2006*

Exhibitions

2013	Venice Biennale, Central Asian Pavilion — Venice, Italy
2011	Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space — Prague, Czech Republic
2010–12	Incite Festival — New York, USA

Awards and Scholarships

2012	Douglas W. Schmidt Award for Outstanding Scenic Design — Boston University
2012	Esther B. & Albert S. Kahn Career Entry Award — nominee
2010	Grant of the Fund of the First President of Kazakhstan
2009	Bolashak International Scholarship
2001–02	National Art Competition, Kazakhstan — 1st and 3rd place

Skills

- **Scenic design**: concept and research through build for proscenium, studio, opera-house and immersive spaces; drafting packets in AutoCAD and Vectorworks; 3D models in SketchUp; scale and white models; painter's elevations and shop drawings.
- **Scenic painting**: large-scale scenery; trompe-l'oeil architectural painting; faux marble; wood and stone graining; aging and distressing; colour theory.
- **Fabrication**: scenery construction in wood, metal (including welding), plastics, foam, resin and textiles; counterweight fly systems in production; large-scale sculpture.
- **Costume design**: renderings, fabric selection, costume budgets and plots; hand and machine sewing, measurements, fittings, alterations and construction.
- **Software**: Adobe Creative Cloud (including video editing); AutoCAD; Vectorworks; SketchUp.

Certifications and Languages

- **OSHA 10-Hour Outreach Training, Construction** — 360training (2026)
- **Adult & Pediatric First Aid / CPR / AED** — American Red Cross (valid through 2028)
- **Languages**: English (fluent); Kazakh and Russian (native)
- **References**: available on request