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SPRING 2021

CHAIR'S LETTER

What a year it has been!

In my previous "Letter from the Chair" at the end of the Fall semester, I wrote: "While we don't know what exactly is in store for us in the Spring Semester, the Fall has definitely taught us that creativity has no bounds, and the it can overcome even the most daunting obstacles. This is why we're looking towards the next semester with much confidence and we're convinced that the entire 20/21 academic year at the Theatre Department will continue being a success."

And now, here we are, in May, at the end of the Spring semester, and we can now safely say the despite all the obstacles, challenges, and the whole "weirdness" of the times we've been living through, the Spring at the Theatre Department has indeed been an unmitigated success.

Unlike in the Fall, this past semester we taught almost all of our classes entirely in person – safely, masked, and socially distanced, but IN PERSON. As is often the case in the Spring, most of our courses were studio classes – Acting I, II, and III, Directing, and Senior Seminar – and it was lovely to see that every available rehearsal space in the building and beyond were filled with classes, rehearsals, and other activities. This semester, we were also able to welcome – mostly virtually – a number of guest artists and theatre professionals offering a variety of workshops to our students. The workshops ranged from autobiographical writing and performance, to theatre and protest to acting in musical theatre, and others, and many students participated in one or more of them.

Most important though, we continued producing live theatre in the Spring. Jenna Tamimi's production of The Secretaries – a campy, bloody sort of a "feminist Grand Guignol" was performed for a limited live audience (sitting in swivel chairs in the middle of the action) and streamed live to hundreds of on-line viewers world-wide. The production featured a number of remarkable, bold, and brave performances, it employed puppetry, used all kinds of technological wizardry, and assaulted the audience with a cheesy selection of 80s music to effectively highlight the "camp" inherent to the script and the performances. The production featured another "first" for the Department – it was the first ever main-stage production that we staged in the Black Box theatre.

As usual, we also put on a fully produced Senior Thesis Festival at the end of April. This year's festival was performed live at the Main Stage theatre for a small audience of twenty-five and was also live-streamed for those who couldn't attend in person. It featured a fully realized original musical, and two devised one-person performances all of which reflect the work of our graduation directors, performer/creators. Sam Gensler's project, Seat at the Table was an original piece presented in the tradition of American monologists such as the late Spalding Gray and Mike Daisy: bare stage, a chair, a desk, and a solitary figure of the speaker. It was an exploration of the friction between the myths that shape American manhood and men's actual lived experiences and of the conflict arising from being brought up without any tools to decipher the feelings stemming from experiencing a world very different from what you were promised. Sofía's Marks' originally devised performance, Con serpientes vengo yo dealt with the struggle of finding balance and acceptance within oneself. It was inspired by the myth of the Aztec snake goddess Quetzalcoatl, "the one who is at one with the beasts." Sofía's piece used dance, music, ritual, spoken word, and songs to explore and to remember the parts of ourselves that we have disowned because we (or others) thought they were shameful or wrong. And finally, Robert Rodrigues and Arielle Scena-Shifrin collaborated on an original, full-fledged musical, The Murder at Thorton Terrace, a playful combination of a classical 'whodunnit' murder mystery, a game of Clue, and an "escape room" experience. The musical featured a company of eight actors, three musicians, and a large artistic and production team composed entirely of

In addition, the students in our studio classes presented final projects to a limited audience. The directing class presented a record number of fifteen directing scenes; the Acting III class presented a fully staged version of Shakespeare's Midsummer Night Dream in the College's beautiful Estate Gardens; the students in the Acting II course performed a truncated version of Mike Bartlett's play, Cock (really, that's the title) in a makeshift "boxing ring" in the theatre courtyard, and our dance students choreographed and performed in the annual "Dance Y" concert which was streamed live-streamed to the community.

student designers, choreographers, and crew.

Cleary, the Spring Semester was a success. We have once again proved to the world, that the theatre is alive and well, and that – no matter what the obstacles may be – the show must and will go on! We're looking forward to the Fall when everyone will be vaccinated and life will return to as much normal as is only possible. We have a fantastic season lined up, all of our Fall classes appear to be filled to capacity and the Department remains as strong as it ever was.

ŠTĚPÁN S. ŠIMEK-CHAIR OF DEPARTMENT

THE FIR ACRES SPRING 2021 MAIN STAGE PRODUCTION OF

THE SECRETARIES

WELCOME TO THE COONEY LUMBER MILL IN BIG BONE, OREGON, WHERE EVERYTHING IS BIGGER (AND BLOODIER). A NEW GIRL JOINS THE STENO POOL. SHE'S PRETTY AND GOOD AT EVERYTHING SHE PUTS HER MIND TO, BUT HOW FAR WILL SHE GO? FITTING INTO THIS CLIQUE (CULT?) TAKES CHARM AND THE ABILITY TO WIELD A CHAINSAW. ONCE A MONTH A LUMBERJACK MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARS, AND A SECRETARY ENDS UP IN HIS JACKET. COONEY LUMBER MILL'S SECRETARIES MAY TAKE THEIR MURDEROUS RAGE OUT ON LUMBERJACKS BUT THE REAL HORROR THE PLAY REVEALS IS THE EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE BETWEEN WOMEN.

THIS CAMPY HORROR-COMEDY IS A FEMINIST CONTEMPLATION ON INTERNALIZED HOMOPHOBIA AND SEXISM.

WIGS, FLANNEL, CHAINSAWS, AND A CRITIQUE OF THE PATRIARCHY!

PICTURES BY OWEN CARREY

"do I want to be her or be with her?"



The Secretaries by the Five Lesbian Brothers (Maureen Angelos, Babs Davy, Dominique Dibbell, Peg Healey, and Lisa Kron) was first produced at the feminist theatre collective Wow Café in New York City in 1993. Written and performed in a camp style, the play tells the story of a cult of murderous secretaries who you just can't help but love to hate! I was first introduced to The Secretaries as a sophomore in college, and it had me at the first click and giggle! I am thrilled to be offering this play as a part of other college students' feminist theatre awakening!

The juxtaposition between manly Lumberjacks and pretty secretaries, sawdust and cashmere, crimson painted nails and blood point to the performativity of gender and indulge in a captivating campy style. Thus, claiming camp, an aesthetic typically associated with queer men, as also belonging to and being within the artistic purview of queer women. The homosocial space of the steno pool becomes homoerotic as the five secretaries engage in a keyboard clicking rhythmic dance between hate and love, perpetrator and victim, and identification and desire. The play rejects the Freudian view of identification and desire as mutually exclusive, acknowledging more complex configurations of female desire and bringing to light that familiar lesbian conundrum, "do I want to be her or be with her?"

Though as the secretaries will warn you this story "gets a little gory", the Lesbian Brothers are adamant that this is not merely a revenge play or a simple inverse of the violence against women that the horror genre (and media generally) normalizes. No, the real violence the play exposes is not so much the hacked-up lumberjacks as it is the emotional and psychological violence the women inflict on one another in the policing of each other's bodies through food and sex. The actual horror has less to do with bloody chainsaws and more to do with internalized misogyny and homophobia. We see what happens when the patriarchy is in such tip-top shape that men don't even need to physically destroy women because women will do that job (like everything else) for them. Though written and set in the 90s world of obsessive SlimFast dieting and the "bitchification" of women in the public eye, these themes are in no way unique to that decade. From Phyllis Schlafly to Women for Trump, we see these are problems we've had and unfortunately still have today. Take caution, "remember sitting next to you might be a secretary!"





JINJU HURLEY

In my piece, I invite the viewer to journey through a long fever dream -- the type of dream that leaves you bleary-eyed and somewhat confused, with questions but no answers. The viewer will take the role of the dreamer and walk through a wonderland where the dancers tell a story about absurdity, chaos, fear, and the world of mysticism that lies beyond what we see in the physical realm. I was inspired to bring this concept to fruition during a time in my life where I was waking up every morning remembering fragments of the strange dream I had the night before, and wanting to go back to bed so I could keep experiencing the magical story my brain told for me in the night rather than getting up to live another boring day. I'm so proud of the work that the dancers, the cinematographers, the Dance Y organizers, and myself put into this project, and though it was a somewhat hectic process, it was such a fun learning experience and a wonderful opportunity for creativity and passion to thrive.

KATRINA KUZMINA

Personally, I have been going through very turbulent times this semester which resulted in an extremely chaotic process of creation for Dance Y - music, idea, vision, choreography were changing every day. And while as a perfectionist, I wish it was more polished, as an artist, I am glad my piece captured a raw emotion of the moment. Having a medium between the performance and the audience (camera) was initially very intimidating to me since it felt disturbing to the natural flow of energy exchange between the audience and the dancers. Eventually, I have learned to appreciate the additional meaning a mediated performance can have.

CANALTUNKAYNAK

I enjoy the artistic process the most when I have clear boundaries, but a loose structure so that I know what I am doing and I can explore. It was absolutely amazing to get the chance to create a piece where I had to listen to my heart and see where it takes me.

LAUREN SATTERWHITE

The first time I stepped foot on the Lewis & Clark campus, I knew I wanted to go here. In a way, it felt like home. That's exactly what my Dance Y piece is about. After spending the first semester of my sophomore year in Massachusetts, I missed LC everyday. My freshman year was incredible and I couldn't wait to come back and make new memories. Even though this semester hasn't been the easiest to be as social as I would have liked, Lewis & Clark still felt like coming home. In this piece I have tried to capture a warm, welcoming feeling and with the help of Makana Laboy, I have achieved that goal.

My favorite part about being a choreographer for Dance Y is watching my choreography truly come to life. I have choreographed for many musicals before but being able to choreograph for dancers has been my dream for a very long time. I had full creative freedom to express my own story in the way that I wanted. The dancers in my piece are incredibly talented and without them, this dance would not have been the same. They have made my piece exactly what I wanted it to be and I can't thank them enough for their hard work and dedication.

My process for this particular dance came from a song. I originally had a different idea for my piece which was going to be about Covid and how gloomy and depressing everything has been. But once I heard this particular song, my whole idea changed. Everything about this dance reminds me of how good times are just around the corner. The movements in the dance are freeing. Not only is my piece fun to perform but it's also relaxing to watch. I feel a sense of warmth and joy everytime my dancers are performing and I can't help but smile. I hope viewers are able to feel just as uplifted as I usually am when they watch this piece. I could not have asked for a better partner. Thank you Makana!

SUNNY BROADHEAD & ARIELLE SCENA-SHIFRIN

We wanted to choreograph this piece because there didn't seem to be many jazz pieces featured in dance Y or X. We wanted to explore a genre that felt a little different for the dance community at Lewis and Clark. We pulled a lot of inspiration from Fosse movements and foundational characteristics. It was a great experience working with all the dancers despite the craziness that COVID brought to the table.

EMMA BRYAN & VENUS EDLIN

It's been so fun working with everyone on this dance and I feel like we've both learned a lot about collaboration and natural rhythms with and without music to choreograph to! We especially want to thank Isha Elboctorcy and Sam Flores for their incredible work on our song as our piece wouldn't be the same without it. We want audience members to be ready for a dance party on film they won't want to miss.

WATCH SPRING 2021 DANCE Y TODAY!

ON YOUTUBE VIA: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7b9HXpTJI4



SPRING 2021

ACTING IN MUSICAL THEATRE WITH ISAAC LAMB MARCH 13 & 14, 2021 MAIN STAGE 2-5PM

Introducing students to the fundamentals of acting in a musical including applying text analysis, given circumstances and character work to songs and scene work.

ON CAMERA AUDITIONS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL ACTOR WITH LANA VEENKER MARCH 26, 31 AND APRIL 7 ZOOM

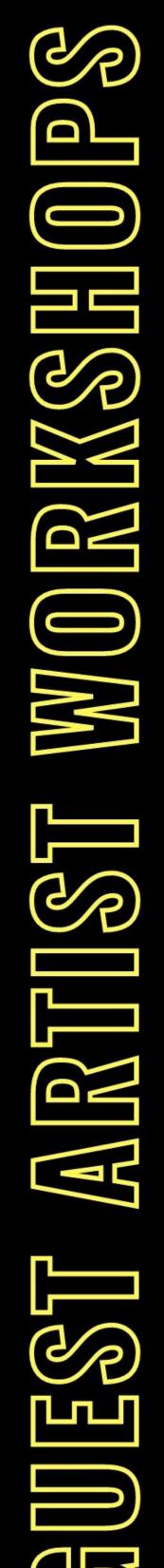
3:30-5:30PM

Focus on preparing professional taped auditions for the camera, as well as the ins and outs of film and television casting.

THRESHOLD PRACTICE - ACCESS AS ART MAKING WITH GRANT MILLER AND JONATHAN LEE MARCH 28, 2021 BLACK BOX 12-3PM

Introducing students to the phases of Threshold Practice; an access focused approach to art making.





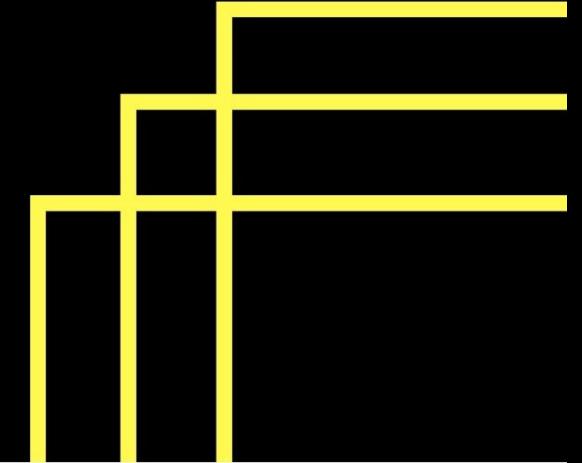
PROTEST AND PERFORMANCE WORKSHOP WITH NATE COHEN APRIL 10 & 11, 2021 ZOOM 12-3PM

Introducing students to the history of performance as a form of protest, unpacking the definitions of these terms as well as some of the crossover between the forms.

BIOGRAPHICAL WRITING AND PERFORMANCE WITH ELAINE BROMKA MARCH 20 & APRIL 3, 2021 ZOOM 1-3PM

Tapping Into the hidden impulses in your writing and using your writing and research in Biographical Performance.

Sponsored by LC Theatre Department and Center for Entrepreneurship and Leadership Center



THEATRE THESIS FESTIVAL

THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL FEATURED A FULLY REALIZED ORIGINAL MUSICAL AND TWO DEVISED ONE-PERSON PERFORMANCES, ALL OF WHICH REFLECT THE WORK OF OUR GRADUATION DIRECTORS, PERFORMER/CREATORS.

SAM GENSLER

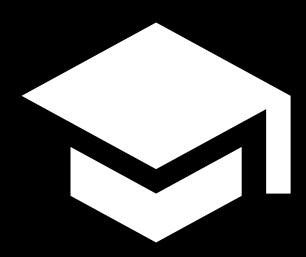
SEAT AT THE TABLE - SAM'S PROJECT IS AN ORIGINAL PIECE THAT WILL BE PRESENTED IN THE TRADITION OF AMERICAN MONOLOGISTS SUCH AS THE LATE SPALDING GRAY AND MIKE DAISY: BARE STAGE, A CHAIR, A DESK, AND A SOLITARY FIGURE OF THE SPEAKER. IT IS AN EXPLORATION OF THE FRICTION BETWEEN THE MYTHS THAT SHAPE AMERICAN MANHOOD AND MEN'S ACTUAL LIVED EXPERIENCES AND OF THE CONFLICT ARISING FROM BEING BROUGHT UP WITHOUT ANY TOOLS TO DECIPHER THE FEELINGS STEMMING FROM EXPERIENCING A WORLD VERY DIFFERENT FROM WHAT YOU WERE PROMISED.

SOFTA MARKS

CON SERPIENTES VENGO YO - SOFÍA'S ORIGINALLY DEVISED PERFORMANCE
DEALS WITH THE STRUGGLE OF FINDING BALANCE AND ACCEPTANCE WITHIN
ONESELF. IT IS INSPIRED BY THE MYTH OF THE AZTEC SNAKE GODDESS
QUETZALCOATL, "THE ONE WHO IS AT ONE WITH THE BEASTS".
QUETZALCOATL IS BOTH LIGHT AND DARKNESS, CREATOR AND DESTROYER,
EQUILIBRIUM AND CHAOS, AND SOFÍA'S PIECE USES DANCE, MUSIC,
RITUAL, SPOKEN WORD, AND SONGS TO EXPLORE AND TO REMEMBER THE
PARTS OF OURSELVES THAT WE HAVE DISOWNED BECAUSE WE (OR OTHERS)
THOUGHT THEY WERE SHAMEFUL OR WRONG.

ROBERT RODRIGUEZ AND ARIELLE SCENA-SHIFRIN

THE MURDER AT THORTON TERRACE - ROBERT'S ORIGINAL MUSICAL IS A PLAYFUL COMBINATION OF A CLASSICAL 'WHODUNNIT' MURDER MYSTERY, A GAME OF CLUE, AND AN "ESCAPE ROOM" EXPERIENCE. AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE, A YOUNG WOMAN EMMA, PLAYED HERE BY THE MUSICAL PERFORMANCE SENIOR ARIELLE SCENA-SHIFFRIN, RETURNS TO HER HOMETOWN ONLY TO FIND OUT THAT HER BEST FRIEND HAD BEEN MURDERED. THINGS QUICKLY MOVE FROM BAD TO WORSE WHEN SHE AND HER FORMER SCHOOL FRIENDS FIND THEMSELVES LOCKED IN A HOUSE BY THE VICTIM'S DERANGED SISTER AND TASKED WITH IDENTIFYING THE PERPETRATOR. MUCH CONFUSION ENSUES, BUT THE UNEXPECTED EVILDOER IS ULTIMATELY REVEALED.



THEATRE CLASS OF 2021 :

MO FRIES, SAM GENSLER, SOFIE MARKS, ROBERT RODRIGUEZ, ARIELLE
SCENA-SHIFRIN



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES. HERE'S TO THE THEATRE CLASS OF 2021.







ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

WHAT ARE THEY UP TONOW? WITH:

NIKIMA JAGUDAJEV





LOUISE TRUEHEART

NIKIMA JAGUDAJEV, 2012

SoAn BA & Dance Honors

What was the first thing you did after graduation?

I went on an 11 day road trip across the country with Louise Trueheart (12) and Madi Manson (13). We attended the American Dance Festival In Durham, North Carolina and then Trueheart and I continued to New York where we found a shared apartment and I got a job as a server at the Cupping Room Cafe and an internship with Movement Research.

What are you up to now?

I work as a choreographer and a writer, devoted to dance and activism. I recently had my first solo exhibition at the Bergen Kunsthall in Norway titled Basically and I am currently writing a story called The Backstreet Boys, named after my group of ten friends from college that I continue to move through life with, mostly virtually, sometimes irl. Trueheart is one of these 'forever soul friends'. The story focuses on kinship and mothering; kinship as an antithesis to the institutionalization of family, pedagogy and identity, and mothering as an un-gendered political practice; a social responsibility towards the future of this planet.

Any piece of advice that stuck with you?

One very cynical professor told me to never write 'ASAP' in an email to a professor, and my badass advisor Deborah Heath told me not to take so many classes taught by men:) I'm paraphrasing.

Favourite Theatre/Dance Project?

During the senior thesis fine art exhibition Trueheart and I performed a slow meditative piece that moved in a half moon shape across the grounds in front of the LC gallery for hours. It was a repetitive movement of lifting one another. The one lifting would move the other across their body in a choreographed manner and place them down on the other side after which the person who had just been lifted would do the same to the lifter. It was done seamlessly but also laboriously. I think it was part of our independent study, a class that we proposed to the head of the theater department so that we could get credit for all the extra dancing we were doing.

LOUISE TRUEHEART, 2012

SoAn BA & Dance Honors

What was the first thing you did after graduation?

I drove across the country with Nikima Jagudajev ('12) and Madeline mason ('13) to attend American Dance Festival. After that, Nikima and I moved in together in an apartment in Brooklyn, NY and became interns with Movement Research. We showed a piece called "Playing With Genitals" within the first few months of being there. We put on two pieces we had started enveloping in college that year. One was called Extensors and took place at a gallery in Williamsburg and the other was our graduation piece "Who Knows Where the Time Goes?" which we showed at the infamous downtown venue Judson Church. I also worked as a babysitter for a French family on the upper east side and worked myself to the bone.

What are you up to now?

I've lived in Berlin since 2013 and work as a freelance dancer, writer, and curator. I am also part of a queer feminist collective called COVEN BERLIN, and I edit and run our online magazine. At the moment I am working on a text through which I am trying to explore how belief operates in the body and in the world. What kind of an inner movement is a leap of faith? How is belief coopted by market forces? It's been an introspective year, and I haven't performed on stage since being in Nikima's work in Mexico City in January of 2020. Luckily, the German cultural funding system has turned on the proverbial tap, so I am looking forward to presenting more work as a result of this quiet time. COVEN has a new theme, the YEAR OF THE BOG, and we will be doing some events and hosting videos in our online gallery, the CYBERBOG, throughout 2021.

Any piece of advice that stuck with you?

The summer after graduating, I called my mother, in tears about what to do with my life. Like a true Pisces she told me to "let go of the reins."

Favourite Theatre / Dance Project?

I loved the dance improvisation class that culminated into this wandering site specific medley. We saw so many friends, danced in trees, in the bon, got into the fountains, rolled down the staircase at the library. It's a little embarrassing now, but at the time I was just so inspired and probably very stoned. An amazing day.



Štěpán S. Šimek

This semester, Stepan taught a wonderful Acting II course with a group of talented and dedicated students, as well as the Senior Seminar, where he worked with the five graduating seniors, who created a wonderful array of creative projects, wrote extensive research theses, and worked very hard throughout the semester. In addition, Stepan continued chairing the department and writing many emails to many people in the department and the College administration, filled many forms, attended many Zoom meetings, and so on. He has also served as the Chair of the College's Budget Advisory Committee and learned how the College's financial "sausage" is made. (and it is "complicated," to say the least) He is in process of reviving his previously cancelled production of Danse Macabre, an original piece with music based on the life and writing of the 15th century French poet and rabble rouser, Francois Villon.

Michael Olich

Besides the fun challenges of teaching two courses and advising amazing students, Michael enjoyed the semester as scene designer, collaborating with guest artists Miranda Hardy (Lighting Designer) and Trevor Sargent (Video Designer) as well as our own Jenny Ampersand (Costume Designer) and Matthew Robins (TD) all in support of Jenna Tamimi's mainstage production of The Secretaries. Extra creative support came from Junior advisees Karen Wingard (Ass't Scene Designer - and Puppet Designer), Amber Adamski (Ass't Costume Designer), and Ryann St. Julien (Prop Coordinator). What an amazing adventure we all had mounting the first (final?) mainstage in the Black Box Theatre!

Jenna Tamimi

Jenna taught American Drama and directed The Secretaries, which was also featured in the Gender Studies Symposium. She was thrilled to work with such talented artists and students!

Rebecca Lingafelter

Rebecca taught Acting I, Acting III and the largest group of directing students EVER in the Directing class this semester. While masks and social distancing changed a lot about the practice of performance, the ability to be together in a room felt like a gift. She is looking forward to Acting III's final performance of A Midsummer Night's Dream throughout the campus gardens, and will be working with her theatre company, PETE, on culmination of Fronteriza, a three-year long process excavating company member Cristi Miles' experience growing up Mexican-American in El Paso through the lens of the current global migration crisis. She's also looking forward to watching her 3 year old play in the wading pool this summer!





to all theatre faculty and staff. together we have pulled through this very challenging year.

COMING UP NEXT SEMESTER

main stage.

"passion play" by sarah ruhl. directed by rebecca lingafelter. auditions september 1st and 2nd. performances november 5th to 13th.

dance extravaganza 2021. auditions september 4th. performances december 3rd and 4th.

black box.

one act festival 2021. auditions september 1st and 2nd. performances september 30th, october 1st and 2nd.

once upon a weekend. submissions TBA. performance october 16th.





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