

Lewis & Clark College

FALL 2024 THEATRE NEWSLETTER



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A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

REBECCA LINGAFELTER

Dear Fir Acres Theatre and Dance Community,

“Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.” - Goethe

I have always loved this invitation to be bold - to begin before you are ready - that in committing to something, we open up the possibility that something transformative will happen. This has been my experience of our department this semester; boldness, commitment, generosity and the power of dreaming things into being.

The semester began with a phenomenal series of student-written, student-directed One Act plays that were also, for the very first time, student-produced! Pushing back against our department policy to cancel *Student One Acts* when we produce the mainstage, a group of students approached me and asked if they could self-produce the slot. This meant that in addition to rehearsing, marketing and performing the *One Acts* themselves, they were also coordinating all the logistics of design, planning and coordination.

And it was brilliant! Three plays, all written in Štěpán S. Šimek’s Playwriting class and addressing themes that focused on the variability, complexity and heartbreak of relationships. I am so proud of the students’ initiative and the incredible work that they brought into being. I was also thrilled to be able to help bring one of the productions to the Willamette View Senior Living facility across the river from us in Milwaukee.



In collaboration with alumni Dylan Blanchard (CAS '24), we brought Jaime Kushnick’s *Nine Years Again* to perform for a group of over 100 seniors in our first ever community partnership of this kind. We are looking forward to organizing another event for the spring!

This student produced work was followed by an extraordinary faculty directed production of Stephen Sondheim’s *Into the Woods*. In collaboration with the Music Department and directed by our very own Cristi Miles, the production reimaged Sondheim’s world of fairy tales for the 21st Century. The design by resident designers Miranda Hardy and Jenny Ampersand was surprising and visually stunning and reclaimed the musical from its dusty chest of fairy tale tropes and made it relevant and meaningful to our college community. Miranda’s concept of a forest of 1,500 wishes contributed by the campus community was a design choice that perfectly exemplified our commitment to creating performance that enriches our connection and understanding of each other.



The music was incredible, and Sondheim is no joke (IYKYK), but under John Cox's brilliant musical direction, the orchestra and singers rose to the challenge and created an incredible evening of performance. Over 70 students participated in the production from actors to design assistants to production to front of house to marketing! The production performed to sold out audiences and raucous standing ovations.



The semester finished up with a fantastic *Dance Extravaganza* showcasing the work of six incredible choreographers under the mentorship of our new Director of Dance, Tiffany Mills. Tiffany has been a transformative addition to our department, and in addition to bringing her years of professional experience into her work as a teacher and mentor, she has helped to craft a NEW Dance Concentration for the Theatre Major! Students can now Major in Theatre and Concentrate in Dance, allowing students the freedom to pursue their disciplinary interests within the program. This spring will see our first graduating senior with this major!

In addition, we are hard at work designing a new concentration in Applied Arts for Social Justice to connect students to curriculum that looks at the way the arts can be used to make impactful change in the world. Look out for an announcement about this new concentration in the spring.



And these are just the highlights of our production season and doesn't even touch on all the extraordinary work happening in classes; Contact Improv demonstrations in the library, 14 directing scenes in collaboration with our first ever costume class, dynamic and moving renditions of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* in Voice + Movement, creating board games in Fundamentals of Design, a *Once Upon* to remember and on and on! There is so much more to tell, but I am going to stop here and just say how grateful I am to be a part of this learning community; a community that engages with such commitment to the rendering of new things.

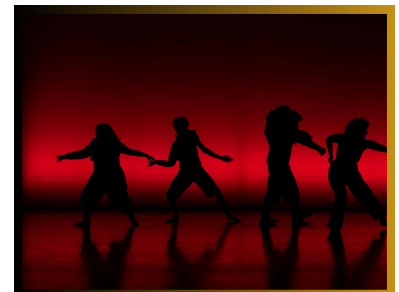


It is magic indeed!

See you at the Theatre!

Rebecca Lingafelter

Chair, Department of Theatre



FALL MAIN STAGE PRODUCTION: INTO THE WOODS

This fall, the Music and Theatre departments at Lewis & Clark presented Stephen Sondheim's iconic musical *Into the Woods* on the Fir Acres Main Stage. Directed by Cristi Miles, Adjunct Instructor at Lewis & Clark, story centers on a Baker and his wife, who long to have a child; Cinderella, who dreams of attending the King's Festival; and Jack, who hopes his cow will start producing milk. When the Baker and his wife discover they are unable to have a child due to a curse from a Witch, they embark on a quest to lift the curse.

Although everyone's wishes are eventually fulfilled, the consequences of their choices come back to haunt them, leading to catastrophic outcomes and offering reflections on the dynamics of community.

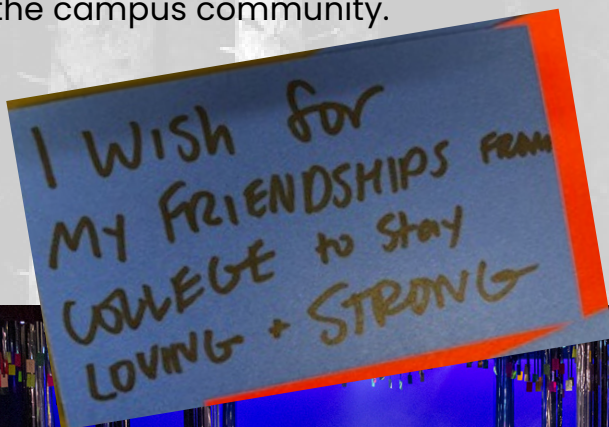
The set design by resident designers Miranda Hardy and Jenny Ampersand featured a mirrored forest under a canopy of 1500 paper leaves, each inscribed with wishes contributed by the campus community.



Why this play now?

"An answer lies in the song "Your Fault", in which the characters avoid responsibility for all that has seemingly gone awry in the telling of their stories. It is hard not to be reminded of rhetoric from our political landscape, wherein problems are loud and solutions are not."

-Cristi Miles, Director



FALL MAIN STAGE PRODUCTION: INTO THE WOODS



"Getting to play Cinderella has been such an honor. When I first listened to this show, I remember being struck by how heavily I related to a lot of Cinderella's identity crisis, and I genuinely can't put into words how special it feels to get to portray this character as a trans woman, and how lovely it is to bring this little version of the character that's existed in my head to life alongside such incredible people."

-Bryn Bollimpalli, '25

"My personal journey with this musical began as a college freshman, having just moved from my hometown. Living with my older brother, who had a blu-ray copy of the recording, he encouraged me to watch it. I vividly recall that transformative moment, seated on the carpet of my new home, captivated by the original Broadway cast. The experience was both nostalgic and novel, a blend of humor and poignancy that provided solace during my first significant life transition."

-Cristi Miles, Director



FALL 2024 STUDENT ONE ACT FESTIVAL

ATROPHY

Lewis & Clark's *Student One Act Festival* is a chance for students to write, direct and perform short one-act plays in the Black Box at Fir Acres Theatre. This year for the very first time, the entire production was student-produced! Pushing back against our department policy to cancel Student One Acts when we produce the mainstage, a group of students asked if they could self-produce the show. This meant that in addition to rehearsing, marketing and performing the *One Acts* themselves, they were also coordinating all the logistics of design, planning and coordination. The three plays under the theme of "Atrophy" were a brilliant success!

NINE YEARS AGAIN

WRITTEN BY: CLEO LOCKHART
DIRECTED BY: ANDREW VAN VOORHEES
& QUINN NEWBERRY

Two friends grapple with their relationship as the years push them apart. As seen in the many vignettes of their lives, *Nine Years Again* investigates the importance of identity, relation, connection, and history.

THE HOUSE ON ASH TREE LANE

WRITTEN BY: JAMIE KUSHNICK
DIRECTED BY: AVA LOCKWOOD

A married couple's insecurities are laid bare in their move to an unfamiliar and potentially predatory home.



THE WELL

WRITTEN BY: QUINN NEWBERRY
DIRECTED BY: QUINN NEWBERRY

A roughish trio of dishonest cow folk find themselves at a job that could change their lives together. Their time together on the trails has brought them closer and could also tear them apart in this rootin' tootin' infernal magicin' filled story of betrayal.



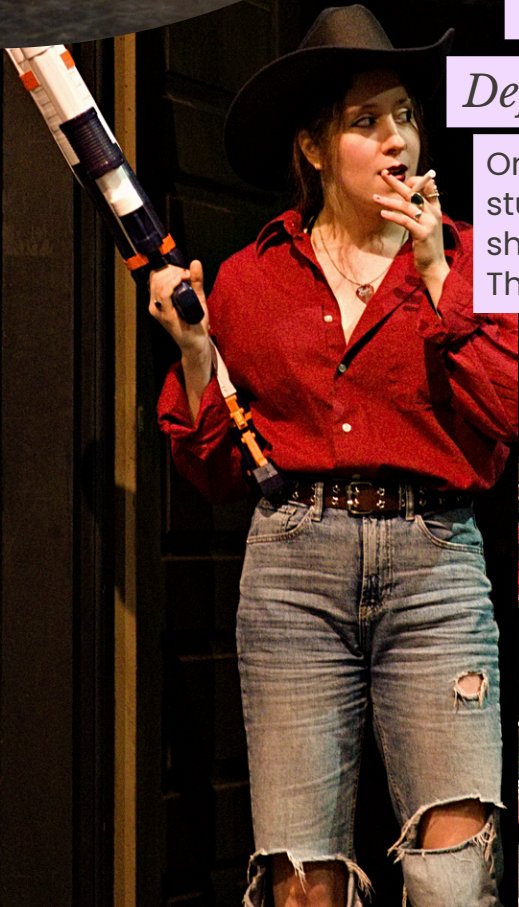


ONCE UPON A WEEKEND

Sponsored by L&C Journal of Dramatic and the Theatre Department, also known as (Pause).

Once Upon a Weekend is an opportunity for students to write, develop, and produce a short play/sketch/scene based on a theme. The catch is that they do this all within

ONE WEEK!



This year's Once Upon a Weekend embraced the theme **"It's a Sign!"** From brainstorming to final performance, the event was a whirlwind of collaboration and inspiration.



ALSO ON STAGE... DANCE EXTRAVAGANZA

Almost 30 years ago, Theater Major Emily Stone ('97) conceived of the first Dance X as an experimental dance performance. Since then, this beloved annual performance has offered students the opportunity to have their choreography fully produced, empowering LC dance artists to create dance at the highest possible level. This year's performance showcases the work of seven choreographers and more than 30 dancers.



"The creativity of everyone's choreography and witnessing it come to life has been truly inspiring. While this was described to us during the auditions, experiencing it firsthand is an entirely different and enriching experience."

-Gabriella D. Russo '28



DANCE EXTRAVAGANZA 2024:

Stir- Choreographed by Cassidy Floyd-Driscoll

Dancers: Zoe Chinn, Echo Smith, Moxie Dully, Gabriella Russo, Vinca Rose Schaefer, Danielle Lieberman, Bryn Romig

Stroll and Ramble- Choreographed by Hoby Reece and Ally Rose

Dancers: Paige Anderson, Kate Franzen, Zory Smith-Miodownik, Joy Rothi, Ellie Parsons

Intrinsic Turmoil- Choreographed by Lila Ward

Dancers: Cassandra Whitmore, Audrey Perry, Izzy Goodwin

Overblue- Choreographed by Madison Thrash

Dancers: Alandra Crowley, Andie Urbinato, Sydney Brock, Delaney McAdams, Georgie Merback, Grace Johnson, Gabriella Russo, Calliope Ruskin

Umoja- Choreographed by Alvin Kilenga

Dancers: Jatniel Sánchez, Sarah Jabbarnia, Edgar Pereira Vazquez, Colin Blume, Izz Lamola

the work we do within- Choreographed by Bryn Romig

Dancers: Zoe Chinn, Cassandra Whitmore, Lev Starr, Kanani Seward, Delilah Baldwin



"Having the opportunity to work with talented dancers and alongside other visioned choreographers within the concert has been incredibly rewarding."

- Hoby Reece, Dance X Choreographer



LONDON

STUDY ABROAD

Lewis & Clark offers more than 30 study abroad programs across 6 continents, including many with arts focused opportunities. This semester, approximately 20 students from the Theatre department are studying in London. Cleo Lockhart '25 took a moment to share some notes and photos with Theatre department.

"Since arriving in London, we've been taking classes at Queen Mary University of London, located in Mile End. The campus is nice for its easy Tube access to the rest of the city, but it's definitely not nearly as beautiful as L&C; some other students and I have been lamenting the lack of greenery and fall color on campus knowing how beautiful it is back in Portland. Personally, my favorite class right now is British Horror, a film class where each week we watch a horror movie originating in the UK in an on-campus cinema!"



"I've been making it my goal to see as much theatre as possible while I'm here, and so far this has been a success — some of the productions I've seen so far include *Cabaret*, *Waiting for Godot*, and *A Comedy of Errors* at the Globe. My favorite, though, was *Macbeth* at the Harold Pinter starring David Tennant! It was an astonishing production (plus I was able to snag a £20 ticket, which made it even better) and it got me super stoked about things to come in terms of the Spring Mainstage show."

Sending all my love to L&C,
Cleo

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Rocco Wyer '22, shares how his experience as a theatre major at Lewis & Clark prepared him for his professional acting career.



Thanks to the Theatre Department's fantastic training, I've been able to act professionally in several projects since graduating. I've been in commercials, films, and of course plays in town, my favorite of which was *Spear* at Corrib Theatre back in the spring. Not only was it a treat being on stage from beginning to end in a dialogue-heavy piece, but doing it all in a specific Irish dialect in a small venue that necessitated truthful performance.



"THIS PLAY (SPEAR) WAS A DEMANDING TEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE, AND THE HARD WORK AND SATISFACTION WERE POSSIBLE THANKS TO THE TOOLS REBECCA LINGAFELTER AND ŠTĚPÁN S. ŠIMEK HAVE EQUIPPED ME WITH."



I try to act as frequently as I can. This fall, I performed in the *Ubu America* festival, I was in three films; my most recent being an indie slasher flick shooting in Oregon; and I've collaborated on smaller projects as well including workshops and readings.

Beyond acting, I'm a headshot and production photographer, I'm a Standardized Patient (actor for medical students), and I work for PHAME, an arts academy for folks with IDD's (intellectual and developmental disabilities).

This February, I will perform in *Faena*, a PETE residency at CoHo (spearheaded by fellow alum Dylan Hankins), and shortly wafter, I'll be in Annie Baker's *The Antipodes* at Shaking the Tree.

LOOKING AHEAD TO SPRING 2025



MACBETH

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Lewis & Clark College's department of theatre will bring William Shakespeare's *Macbeth* to life on the Fir Acres stage in March 2025!

PERFORMANCES

March 7, 8, 13, 14, 15
7:30pm
March 9th, 2:00pm



PERFORMANCES

April 5th & 6th at 7:30pm

TIFFANY MILLS DANCE RESIDENCY

NYC-based *Tiffany Mills Dance Company* comes to Fir Acres Main Stage, performing with Lewis & Clark Students to explore themes of vulnerability, communication and transformation, while encouraging the audience to engage actively with the performers and embrace the differences that each brings to the stage.

AUDITION DATES

MACBETH

January 22nd &
January 23rd 7-10pm
Callbacks: January 24th
6-10pm

TIFFANY MILLS DANCE RESIDENCY

January 22nd 6:30-8:30

THEATER THESIS AUDITIONS

January 26th 12-4 & 6-8

All are welcome
to audition!
Join us for the Theatre
Department Spring
Mixer at Fir Acres
Theatre on
January 21st at 5pm
to learn more!

SENIOR THESIS FESTIVAL

April 5-6th 7:30pm

As a graduation requirement, the graduating students of Lewis & Clark's Theatre Department work all semester on projects which they will present as full productions at the end of the year. Stay tuned for more information!

FOSA 2025

April 11, 2025

The Festival of Scholars and Artists (FOSA) is a beloved annual Lewis & Clark tradition where our community dedicates a full day to celebrate our students and their exceptional work: their research, their creative accomplishments, and their achievements both on and off campus. The Theatre department will be nominating students to perform by February 16th.

STAY IN TOUCH!



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