

# THEATRE NEWSLETTER

*Spring 2024*



Lewis & Clark College



# WHAT'S INSIDE

**A LETTER FROM  
THE CHAIR- 1**

**MAINSTAGE  
HIGHLIGHTS- 3**

**SENIOR THESIS  
FESTIVAL - 6**

**ALSO ON  
STAGE - 17**

**ALUMNI  
SPOTLIGHT - 20**

**FACULTY  
UPDATES - 22**

**DEPARTMENTAL  
HONORS - 25**

**LOOKING  
AHEAD - 26**



# A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

REBECCA LINGAFELTER

Dear Fir Acres Theatre Community,

I am in the midst of the whirlwind that is the end of the spring semester at Fir Acres! This time of year is full of joyous celebrations (Senior Dinner, Senior Lunch, Senior Brunch... Really! We have to celebrate our incredible graduating Major/Minors at every meal), end of term performances, and reflective conversations about what we learned, how we grew, where we were challenged, and what we will carry with us into the next adventure.

Needless to say, it is a full and full-hearted time. This newsletter (thoughtfully crafted by the gifted Ella Dunn) will take you through all of the incredible work our students have engaged in over the past semester, highlight our amazing alumni and give you a glimpse into our future in the fall. I will touch on a few highlights here:

Our Spring Mainstage, **Wolfplay by Hansol Jung**, directed by our new faculty member, Suhaila Meera, was an unmitigated success. Working with a small team of stellar actors, as well as student dramaturg, assistant director, designer, stage managers and crew, Professor Meera put together an incredibly funny, moving and deeply imagined piece of performance that touched on themes relevant to many people in our community. Audiences raved and the whole football team showed up to our Sunday Matinee to cheer on their teammate Rusty Nozoe in his Fir Acres debut!



## A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR (CONTINUED)

**Student driven work** was also a highlight of the Spring semester. In addition to the Theatre Thesis Festival (which I will wax poetic about below), and Once Upon a Weekend, our Student Produced Slot showcased the work of student actors taking on the work of Anton Chekhov. The evening consisted of scenes and monologues from Chekhov's four major plays and included translations by our very own Štěpán S. Šimek! Class presentations this semester included new choreography coming out of Tiffany Mills' TH308 Composition class, a full production of Twelfth Night performed by Acting III, an adaptation of Caryl Churchill's Love and Information with a phenomenal staging that included imprints of memory, time and relationship on bodies in tempura paint directed by Cristi Miles, and a puppet theatre performance of Gilgamesh by Miranda Hardy's scenography students.

I had the privilege of mentoring eleven Senior Theatre Majors through their **Capstone process** this spring resulting in **6 creative projects**, including a mainstage design and five productions as part of the 2024 Theatre Thesis Festival. The work ranged from adaptations of greek mythology to gothic horror for the 21st Century to a Broadway musical and original dance. The students all brought themselves fully into the process and tempted the boundaries of their creative stamina by producing, performing, writing, designing, directing, dancing; all with rigor, collaboration and generosity. I am very proud of this group and can't wait to see the impact they have on the world.

Join us in the fall for a full season of performances including our bi-annual Mainstage musical (Into the Woods! My favorite of all time!), Dance Extravaganza, Once Upon and student produced productions.

See you at the Theatre!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Lingafetter". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and larger than the others.

Chair, Department of Theatre



**SPRING MAIN STAGE PRODUCTION:**

# **WOLF PLAY**

**WRITTEN BY: HANSOL JUNG  
DIRECTED BY: SUHAILA MEERA**



**"NOWADAYS, THERE AREN'T ENOUGH PLAYS THAT REALLY FEEL LIKE THEY SHOULD BE PLAYS, BUT THIS IS ONE OF THEM. WHAT IS THEATRE UNIQUELY CAPABLE OF DOING? BRINGING US TOGETHER, LIVE, TO HEAR A REALLY HUMAN STORY."**

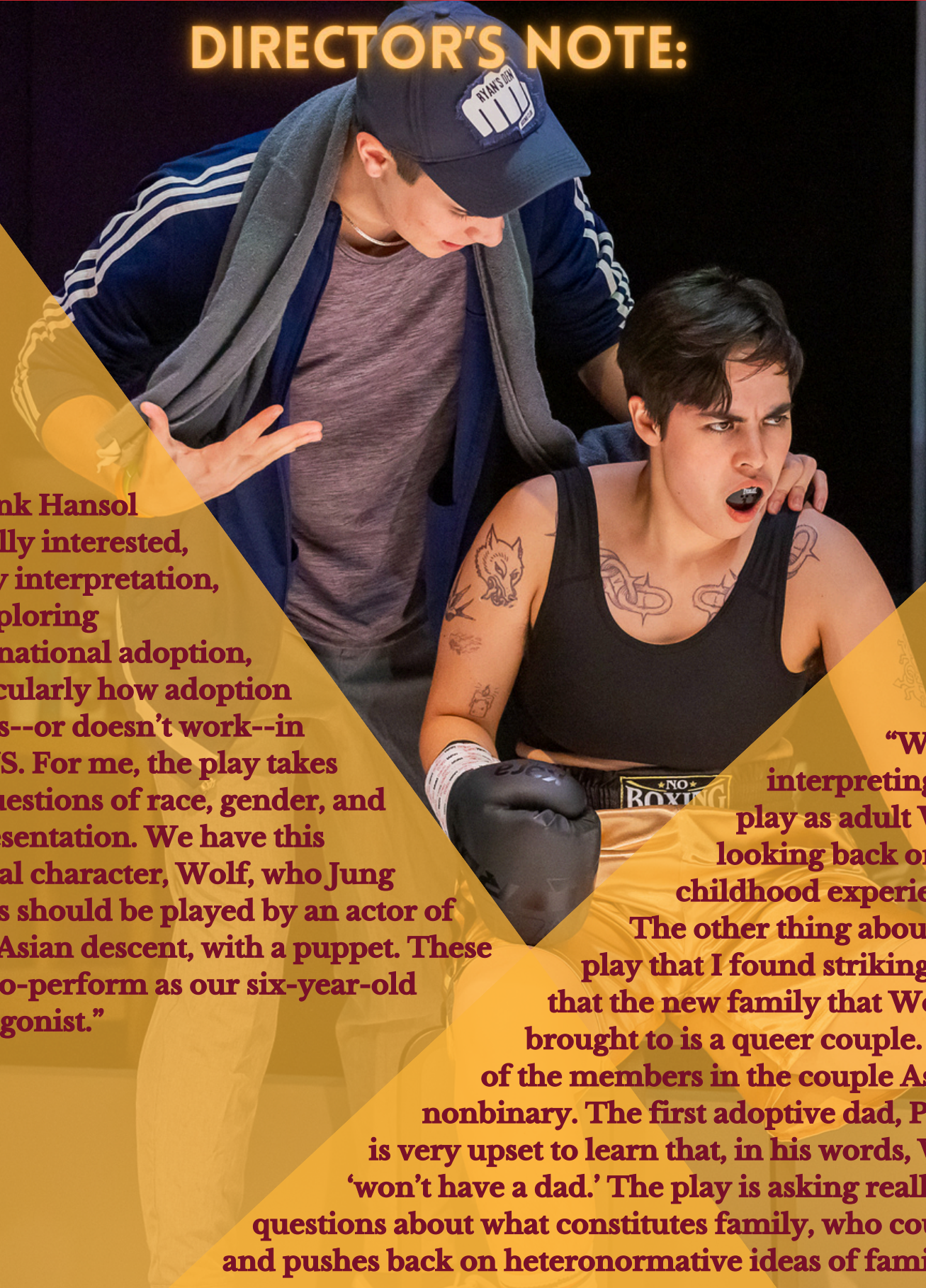
**-DIRECTOR, SUHAILA MEERA**



# WOLF PLAY

WRITTEN BY: HANSOL JUNG  
DIRECTED BY: SUHAILA MEERA

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE:



“I think Hansol is really interested, in my interpretation, in exploring transnational adoption, particularly how adoption works--or doesn't work--in the US. For me, the play takes up questions of race, gender, and representation. We have this central character, Wolf, who Jung writes should be played by an actor of East-Asian descent, with a puppet. These two co-perform as our six-year-old protagonist.”

“We are interpreting the play as adult Wolf looking back on his childhood experience. The other thing about the play that I found striking was that the new family that Wolf is brought to is a queer couple. One of the members in the couple Ash, is nonbinary. The first adoptive dad, Peter, is very upset to learn that, in his words, Wolf ‘won’t have a dad.’ The play is asking really big questions about what constitutes family, who counts, and pushes back on heteronormative ideas of families.”



# DIRECTOR: SUHAILA MEERA



This year, Suhaila Meera joined the campus community as an Assistant Professor of Theatre. Before coming to LC, she finished her PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies. She also studied Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity as secondary fields.

“In grad school, I was a dramaturg for several productions. I also would direct. In my fifth year, I got to do a really exciting project, co-writing an adaptation of a short story by Bhisham Sahni about a little boy who gets lost during the partition of British India. I and my cowriter took this story and adapted it for the stage, and then I had the opportunity to direct it, too.”

Meera directed Fir Acres’ spring main stage production of Wolf Play by Hansol Jung. The production implemented puppetry as a way of portraying a child character.

# SENIOR THESIS



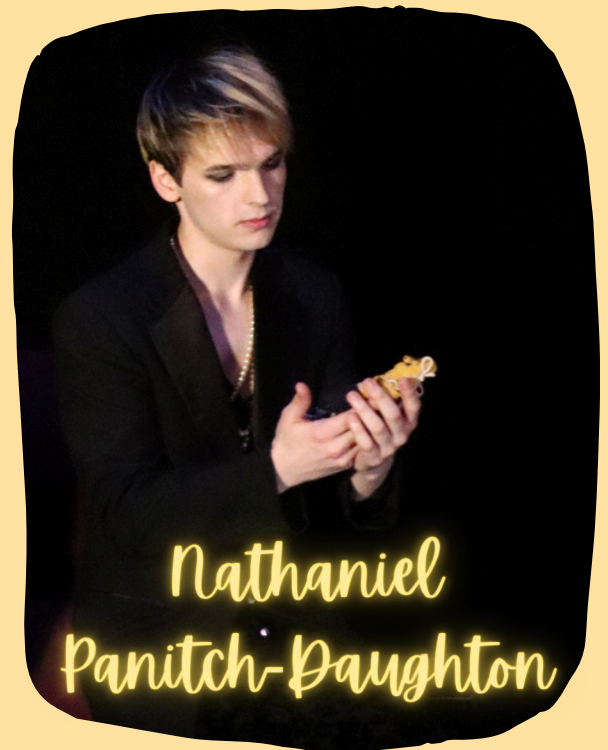


# SENIOR THESIS FESTIVAL



"My name is Dylan Blanchard. I've worked on The Monkey's Paw with Nathaniel, a muppety horror nightmare about a severed monkey's paw set in a word of fabric. The production was so fun and a great use of exploring all of the acting, directing, moving, and designing I've learned here at Fir Acres. I plan on taking this knowledge and hopefully exploring it further in the Portland theatre scene and beyond!"

"This semester, I directed an adaptation of a 1907 horror play The Monkey's Paw. I was attracted to its themes of comfort, greed, and gnawing terror. I used recycled fabric throughout the set and in the masks of the performers in order to accentuate the coziness and unnerving atmosphere. I was largely inspired by the fabric puppetry of The Muppets, which manifested in both the design and the direction. I worked with my co-producer and actor Dylan Blanchard and the mask maker Torin Maclaughlin. I plan on pursuing a career in counseling, conservation, and theater, ideally in the Great Lakes region."



# SENIOR THESIS FESTIVAL

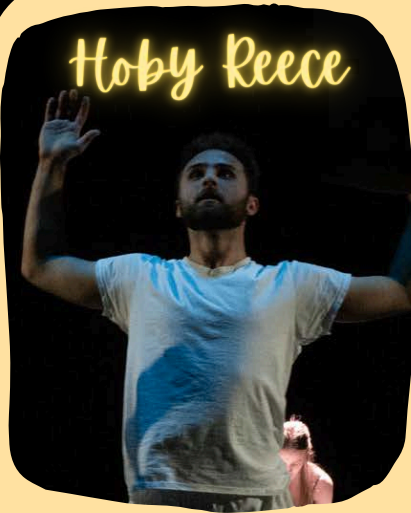
"For my thesis, I directed a cut of *Waitress*, with fellow seniors Emma Greene, who played Jenna, and Fiona Salbato, who designed the props and set. *Waitress: the Musical* follows a talented, small-town pie baker named Jenna who experiences an unwanted, unplanned pregnancy with her abusive husband Earl. She learns how to break cycles of female generational trauma and trust herself through her female co-workers, other women in her life, and an affair with her gynecologist. I really wanted to stray away from the big flashy lights of Broadway and narrow in on the intimate themes of the play and tell a story about women and mothers without a tap dance or kick line. Through this process, I learned this is the very type of work I'm interested in; finding larger-than-life characters in plays and narrowing in on the themes of their lives and seeing how they resonate with wider audiences and real-life people. I hope to do as much directing and production work as I can after my days at LC."



"This semester at Lewis & Clark, I have been working on my thesis of *Waitress: the Musical* as a lead artist and the lead role of Jenna. Alongside Paige Cabral, we cut the show to focus on Jenna's storyline of perseverance and of deep love for herself, her friends, and her daughter. I love this beautiful show, and the amazing people who worked on it, so incredibly much and I am so grateful for the opportunity to bring this story alive with this amazing community. After graduation, I will continue to create art in Portland, and use my training in theatre to create opportunities for people to come together and make pieces that matter to us, that blend together music and theatre and so much more."



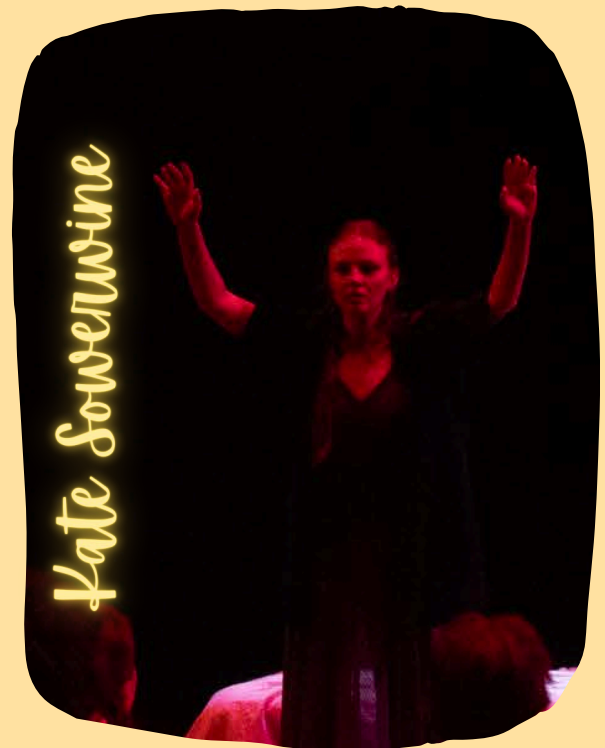
# SENIOR THESIS FESTIVAL



"I worked as co-lead artist, dancer, and choreographer for Requiem, Lewis and Clark's first concert dance style thesis. It has been incredibly rewarding to create this piece of work alongside all of my collaborators, I was especially happy with the music that was composed for the piece. Having an original score allowed the piece to stand as its own original piece of work, and it lended authenticity to what we were doing. Setting and performing a dance piece of nearly 30 minutes of length

was a test of mental and physical endurance as well all of my skills as an artist, I am very proud of what we as a cast were able to accomplish. After Lewis and Clark I plan to do everything I can to involve myself in local dance and theatre in Portland, and I would eventually like to obtain my master of fine arts in dance."

"Working on my piece Requiem for the past year has provided many opportunities for both creative growth and creative freedom. I am so grateful to have had the chance to devise my own dance piece for the festival and to have had so many wonderful people involved in the process. Requiem gave me a space to explore and process a deeply personal and profound story, and to share it with others. I hope to continue telling stories, and pursuing any and all kinds of art-making in the future."



# SENIOR THESIS FESTIVAL



"My creative thesis was performing as Annie Wilkes in *Misery* by William Goldman (adapted from Stephen King's novel). I specifically wanted to focus on horror and realism and *Misery* was the most interesting play to me because of its focus on character and character relationships. I loved that we were able to successfully reframe the story through Annie's perspective and also focus on the development and deterioration of the relationship between Annie and Paul. I'm very proud of this production and it has given me a lot of motivation to continue working on horror theatre in the future!"

"*Misery* is about a woman named Annie Wilkes, who rescues Paul Sheldon, the writer of her favorite romance novels, the *Misery* Series, from his wrecked car in a winter storm and then decides to keep him. The story of our production of *Misery* is deeply centered around love, if not between Annie and Paul, then between Annie and herself. The secret cause within production has been to give Annie back her sense of self, her right to exist as she is in the world, and her authority as a reader to take ownership over the story and character that she loves, in spite of the derision by its author.

My written thesis is also deeply connected to questions around authorship and collaboration, as I explored the work of proletarian theatre director, Joan Littlewood."





# SENIOR THESIS FESTIVAL

"My creative thesis was an adaptation of Madeline Miller's *The Song of Achilles* that included dance-like movement where I almost singlehandedly adapted the script and also played Patroclus. I loved getting to work with both my director and my actor as we built the world of the show together, and also how the piece felt like an extension of all three of our individual labour and dedication. After LC, I would like to pay my bills by doing theatre and create a life I am content with before eventually meandering my way to graduate school for a MFA in acting (ideally, Classical theatre or Shakespeare!). You will also be able to see me perform in various performances with Original Practice Shakespeare in the parks of Portland this summer!"



Congratulations

SENIORS!





# MISERY



Ruby Keyes & Skylar Vayda







# The Monkey's Paw



Dylan  
Blanchard  
&  
Nathaniel  
Panitch-  
Daughton







# ACHILLES & PATROCLUS

PHOENIX COX







# Requiem

Kate Sowerwine & Hoby Dece





# WAITRESS



EMMA GREENE

PAIGE CABRAL



FIONA SALBATO





# ALSO ON STAGE... ONCE UPON A WEEKEND

## "HOLD MY BEER!"

Every semester, (Pause.) produces Once Upon a Weekend, our biannual 24 hour play festival. This Spring, we produced six student written plays under the theme HOLD MY BEER. Featuring evil witches, morose kings, supervillains, and One Direction, this semester's Once Upon hosted one of the largest audiences we've ever seen.





# ALSO ON STAGE... AN EVENING WITH CHEKHOV

“In *An Evening with Chekhov*, audiences were transported to an underground bar in Moscow in the early 1900s, where Anton Chekhov gathered with contemporaries, including Tolstoy and Stanislavski, to argue passionately, share their work, recite poetry, and play music.

The seven actors explored themes of inertia, grief, isolation, love, and the human condition through scenes from *Three Sisters*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *The Seagull*, featuring translations by Paul Schmidt and LC Theatre professor Stepan Simek. The struggles and desires of Chekhov’s characters speak to the political issues, social change, and restlessness in Russia at the turn of the 20th century – and feel very much akin to the struggles in our lives today.”

*Continued on next page...*



# ALSO ON STAGE... AN EVENING WITH CHEKHOV

"This student-produced performance was directed by Anna Kulbashny '25 and stage managed by Corey Near-Ansari '26, and took place in the Black Box on April 4th.

Rehearsals began in early March as a series of short scene readings, and over the course of four weeks quickly grew into something more. LC Theatre Department chair Rebecca Lingafelter provided invaluable guidance. Additionally, theater majors Jasper Prodromou '25, Ruby Guzman '25, and Lev Starr '25 helped build the evening and the world of the scenes, attending various rehearsals as outside eyes."

- Anna Kulbashny  
*Director*





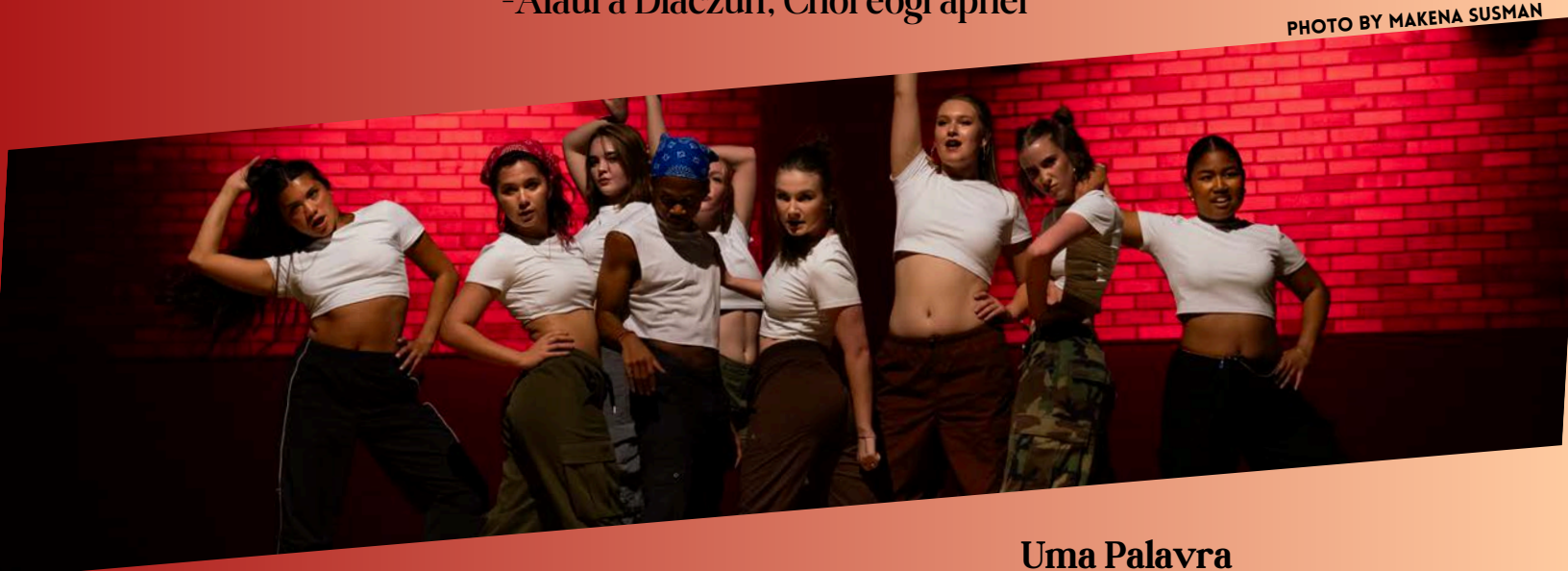
## ALSO ON STAGE...

# DANCE Y

“Dance Y is usually a little lower-stakes (than Dance X), and more casual. There’s more room to wiggle around with ideas that you have.”

-Alaura Diaczun, Choreographer

PHOTO BY MAKENA SUSMAN



### Modern Animalia

Choreography: Lila Ward

Cast: Danielle Lieberman, Eva Silberstein, Gabi Kuglen-Alvarez, Liv Ladaire, and Lyric Martin  
Music: “Courant d’air” by Lous and The Yakuza

### Emotive

Choreography: Sophia Kingsbury

Cast: Mattie Harrop, Lola Arthur, Izzy Goodwin, Annie Paulsen, Kate Macaulay

Music: “Falaise” by Floating Points

### bodies bodies bodies

Choreography: Teresa Serra

Cast: Grace Harrington, Kanani Seward, Lili Blum, Stella Kinney, Teresa Serra

Music: “Pjluk” by Cecile Believe, “Gimme More” by Britney Spears, “Jumpin’ Jumpin’” by Destiny’s Child, “Money” by Cardi B, “That Girl” by Bree Runway

### ¡Ay, Qué Bueno!

Choreography: Alaura Diaczun

Cast: Isabella Derr, Alaura Diaczun, Cassidy Floyd-Driscoll, Jayden Haight, Izz Lamola, Danielle Lieberman, Kanani Seward, Josie Stenzel

Music: “Oh That’s Nice” by Pete Rodriguez (1967)

### Asambe

Choreography: Alvin Kilenga

Cast: Alvin Kilenga, Kate Franzen, Ellie Parsons, Cassandra Whitmore, Grace Harrington, Annie Paulsen, Isabella Derr, Mattie Harrop, and Valiha Rajaobelina

Music: “Le Coup de Soleil” by Bon Entendeur, “Gimme That” by Chris Brown, “Tchougal” by DJ Merco, “Supa Strut” by Tre Oh Fie, “Program” by Chase and Status, “Shu” by Diamond Platinumz

### possède-moi

Choreography: Alex Stukert

Cast: Alex Stukert, Abby Fisher, Camille Yarmo, Izzy Goodwin, Kayla Beard, Rebeka Kerék, and Sophie Blauvelt

Music: “Possédée” by Potochkiné

### Uma Palavra

Choreography: Marzieh Ghaderi

Cast: Daniela Bernal, Marzieh Ghaderi, Stella Kinney, Katrina Kuzmina, Liv Ladaire, José M Maidana, Adela Masic, Eva Silberstein

Music: “Redrum” by 21 Savage

### milkweed

Choreography: Norah Levinson

Cast: Alandra Crowley, Izz Lamola, Iman Agic, Gianvito Cassanelli, Audrey Perry

Music: “Cybele’s Reverie” by Stereolab

### Back to the Streets

Choreography: The collaboration of Cheer and Step

Cast: Liana Vargas, Sinai Jones, Blessing Maduagwu, Valiha Rajaobelina, Josie Ward-Lombardo, Debbie Mukuka, Keira Rodriguez Mendez, Ashvini Chari-Large, and Miranda Caba Solano

Music: “Princess going Digital” by amarae, “DE CAROLINA” by DJ Playero and Rauw Alejandro, “La Romana” by Bad Bunny and El Alfa, “Dance (ASS)” by Big Sean, “Pinco” by LMK, Notoxie and X-Man, “Shirt” by SZA, “Sensational” by Chris Brown, “Soundgasm” by Rema, “Swag” by YG



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## Liam Beveridge

### What did you do at LC, and what have you been doing since then?

I graduated in 2020 with a double major in theatre and computer science. I have lived in Portland since then, doing IT for a school as my day job, while acting whenever I have the opportunity.

### What did you do at LC, and what have you been doing since then?

Honestly, nothing at the moment! I was recently accepted into the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale's acting MFA program, and I start in August. Until then, I am just enjoying my last few months in Portland, preparing for the program, and getting ready to move across the country.

### Favorite LC production?

My favorite production while in school was Sweeney Todd during my junior year. The role was a big undertaking for me because I had never sung before. I was recently deleting old files off my phone and came across a practice recording from an early vocal lesson I had and I was shocked by how bad I sounded when I was starting out. It was gratifying to learn so much over the course of the production, and I'm grateful that I was given the opportunity to stretch myself in that way. I also loved the concept and direction for the show that Rebecca created.







# Liam Beveridge

## ANY ADVICE FOR CURRENT STUDENTS?

**"Make the most of your time and take advantage of all the opportunities you have! I don't think I ever regretted auditioning or signing up for something while I was in school."**

## ADVICE THAT STUCK WITH YOU?

**"Last summer I went to the acting workshop Usman Ally taught on campus, and Usman urged me to "abandon all artifice" in my work. I held onto this as a guiding principle while working on my grad school auditions this year."**



# Faculty Updates



Suhaila Meera

"This summer I'll be working on revising my dissertation into a book manuscript, which I'm currently calling *The Child at the Border: How Children Play Tropes of Displacement*. I'll also be traveling to India and Taiwan to spend time with family in both countries (and maybe do a little research), attending the International Federation for Theatre Research's annual conference in Manila, and finishing up some writing I started while working on *Wolf Play*."

"I am looking forward to making *A SEAGULL* with PETE, and training in Suzuki and Viewpoints. My Kiddo will be reprising their role in *MATILDA THE MUSICAL* at Portland Playhouse, and I am looking forward to seeing them strut their stuff on stage again. And of course I will be looking forward to camping as much as I can and getting on the water with my SUP."



Cristi Miles



# Faculty Updates

"In summer 2024, Tiffany Mills will be collaborating as a choreographer on a site-specific performance titled "Murmuration", commissioned by Artpark (Lewiston, NY). Through contemporary dance, sculpture, and poetry, "Murmuration" invites the public into a collaborative exploration of building a world we want to live in, informed by bird behavior, with multi-sensory approaches to strategizing and emulating change. The core of this project is a collaborative investigation of the concept of murmuration. Admired by humans for its mesmerizing movement, murmuration provides an important survival strategy for birds. Birds gather in tight, rapidly moving groups to protect themselves from predators. Murmuration is spontaneous, leaderless, and improvisational. What can we learn from this natural behavior? And how can we use what we learn to collaborate in creating and sustaining a more just and equitable world?"



Tiffany Mills



Eric Nordstrom

"Currently, I'm organizing a dance festival, taking place in Portland from June 10th to the 14th. The festival brings together the talents of 18 teachers from Oregon, California, and British Columbia." More info can be found here: <https://www.eric-nordstrom.com/pdx-ci-fest-2024>



# Faculty Updates

"Thrilled to be working with my favorite crew of misfits- designing costumes for PETE's A Seagull. Hoping to string together as many paddle board outings, conversations with soil, and chill hammock moments as possible with the rest of the summer."



Jenny Ampersand



Miranda Hardy

"Lighting Alicia Jo Rabins in NYC, Designing lights for A Seagull with PETE, making raspberry jam and whatever Adventure awaits our family!"




# SCHOLARSHIPS



Leon Pike/Edgar Reynolds  
Scholarship:  
Piper Clark-White  
Silken Polestra

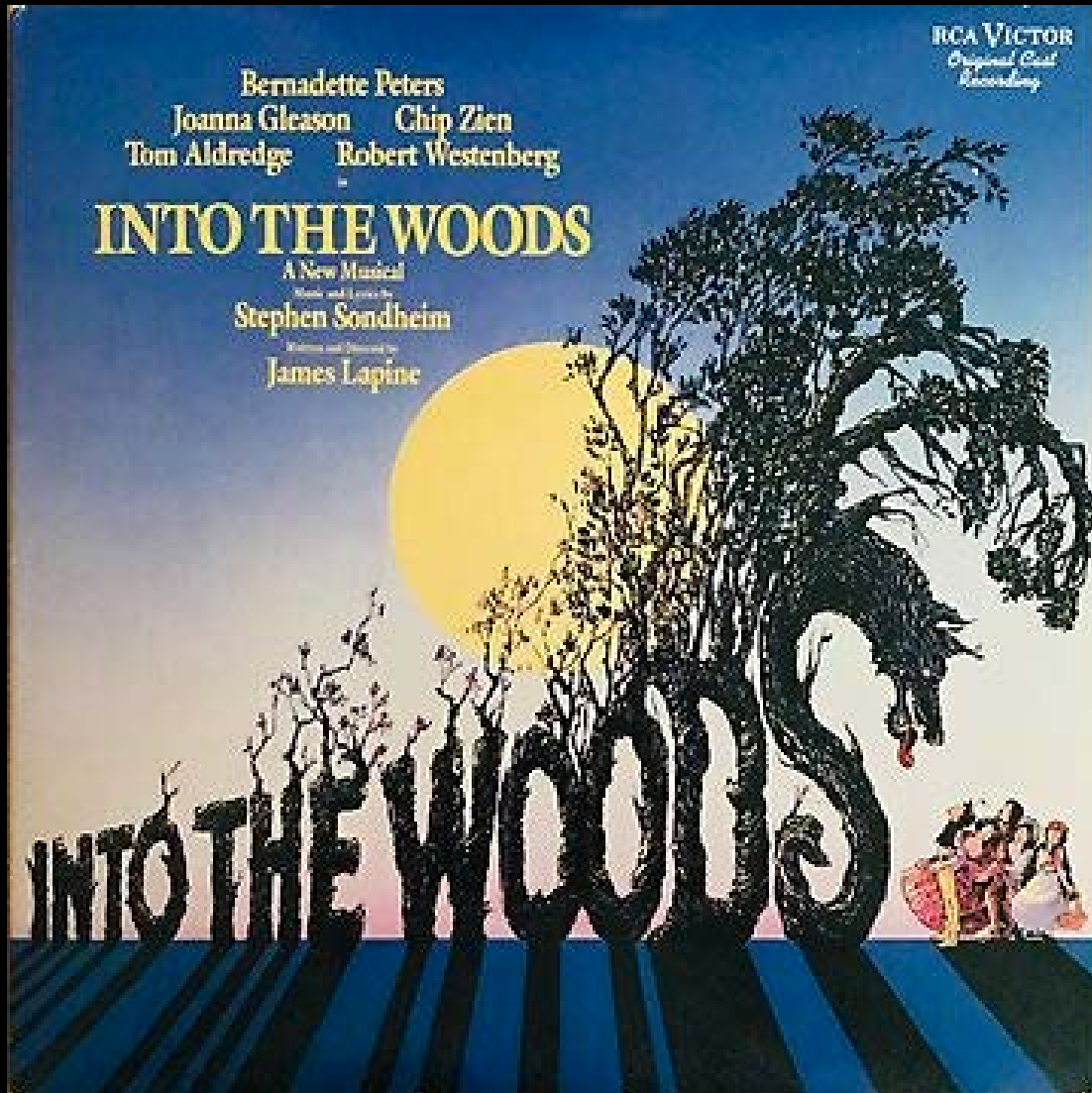
Howard R. Warren Scholarship:  
Percival Walter  
Evelyn Gore  
Gianvito Cassanelli



CONGRATULATIONS, SCHOLARS!



# LOOKING AHEAD...



TO FALL 2024!



AUDITION  
DATES TBD!



# LOOKING AHEAD TO FALL 2024



## DANCE EXTRAVAGANZA

Dance Extravaganza, commonly referred to as Dance X, offers five to seven students the opportunity to have their choreography performed for large audiences.

Dance X happens every Fall on the mainstage!

More audition information to come soon!



## STAY IN TOUCH!



[@firacrestheatre](#)



[@LCFirAcresTheatre](#)