

# THEATRE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2025



PHOTO BY LILA EPSTEIN

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# *Letter from the Chair*

## Rebecca Lingafelter

Dear Fir Acres Theatre Community,

I am thrilled to be writing to you on this last sunny day in April to share the extraordinary work of our students, faculty and staff over the past semester. Really! I feel so lucky to be learning, growing and creating amongst these amazing humans!

Our Spring Mainstage was a horror inspired adaptation of **Shakespeare's Macbeth**. We dug deep into the genre of folk-horror and generated movement, song/sound, design and event to tell the story of Shakespeare's vicious and despotic king. On a personal note, this was one of the most gratifying productions I have gotten to direct at Lewis & Clark. I really enjoyed both the process and the resulting production and revelled in Shakespeare's poetry in relation to the world we created. The production featured four senior theatre majors, performing in the



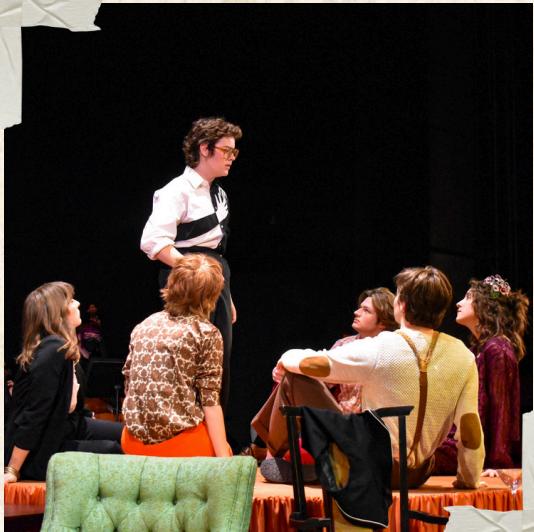
production as their Theatre Capstone; **Ruby Guzman, Anna Kulbashny, Seb Lockhart, and Percival Walter** all brought an enormous amount of talent, heart and passion to this process and created remarkable renderings of each of their characters.

Fir Acres then presented our first ever resident performance by a dance company, inviting **Tiffany Mills Dance Company** to perform the West Coast premier of their production; *The Viola Trilogy* at Lewis & Clark. The performance also included the work of 10 Lewis & Clark students under the direction of Tiffany Mills, our Director of Dance. I had the



opportunity to attend opening night, and sitting in the sold out Fir Acres Theatre, witnessing world class performance and then watching our students not only meet the professional standards, but exceed them - Ack! "Proud" doesn't even begin to capture how I felt. It was our program at it's finest; supporting students to become the best that they can be, and laying the groundwork for their life in the arts.

We closed out the season with our **Theatre Thesis Festival**, featuring the work of seven senior Theatre Majors. The Festival ranged from



re-interpretations of a Sondheim classic with a full band, to solo shows grappling with joy in the midst of tragedy and tragedy in the midst of a comedy act, our first ever dance concentration major dancing in original choreography by a group of alumni, a bitter-sweet meditation on animals and grief and a comic journey through an actor's nightmare. For the first time ever, we converted the Mainstage into a kind of black box, lowering the grand drape and bringing the audience and the performances together onto the stage. We were thrilled with the outcome and plan on staging

future festivals here! All Seniors also wrote extraordinary written thesis mentored by Professor Meera.

I also want to highlight the accomplishments of a few of the incredible staff and faculty that make Fir Acres the magical dreamland of theatre that it is! Assistant Professor Suhaila Meera taught **Playing at the Border** for the first time this semester; a class which examines how migrant and refugee stories are told in film, theatre, and visual art, providing students with opportunities to engage directly with Portland's immigrant communities. Professor Meera also recently received a prestigious **American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship** to support her research during her sabbatical next year finishing her book project "The Child at the Border". Speaking of sabbaticals, Professor Štěpán S. Šimek has been on sabbatical for the last year and produced work around Portland including **Veronica in Bed at Shaking the Tree** and a **trio of Chekhov Farces at 21Ten**, both of which enjoyed sold out houses and critical acclaim. Finally, our incredible new admin, Jessica Foote, has catapulted our little program into the spotlight through thoughtful and effective communication of our stories through social media and the press. We have had the largest audiences we have enjoyed in decades due to her expertise and hard work.

Finally, finally... (whew! There is so much to tell you about!), the Lewis & Clark faculty approved a NEW concentration for the **Theatre Major: Art for Community**. This new concentration assembles courses in our program that live at the intersection of applied theatre, performance studies and theatre for social change including Professor Meera's new class and our Inside/Out Autobiographical Performance course. We are excited to start to be able to offer this curriculum



to students this fall. AND we are offering our first ever Immersive High School Theatre Intensive (ISTI!) for two weeks in June. The program director is local Theatre star, Isaac Lamb, and will feature faculty from some of the regions top theatres including Meredith Kay Clark and Julana Torres.

I didn't even mention our trip to bring performance to Willamette View Senior Living or our partnership with Bag and Baggage Productions on a new play residency hiring six of our students to work on a professional workshop production or our exciting 2025-26 season including guest director Tracy Francis and a collaboration on a devised dance theatre piece between myself and Tiffany Mills! So I'll just leave all that here as a tease to check in with next year's letter.

If you read all the way to here - thank you! And you must be a real fan... SO consider spreading the word about our little (mighty) department. If you have young people in your life interested in Theatre connect them with us through our High School summer program or get in touch with admissions for a tour and a meeting with the chair.

Have a great summer and see you next year!

Love,  
Rebecca Lingafelter  
Associate Professor and Chair  
Department of Theatre  
Lewis & Clark College



PS: I'll be away in the fall with the New York Fine Arts Trip, where I will get to spend a semester with 15 students learning about and exploring the culture, history and artists of New York City. But don't worry, I'll take lots of pictures and we'll post updates to our "abroad" blog on the website and Štěpán S. Šimek will be holding down the fort as Chair!!

# SPRING MAIN STAGE PRODUCTION:

# macbeth

This spring, the Theatre department at Lewis & Clark presented Shakespeare's infamous *Macbeth* on the Fir Acres Main Stage, directed by Department Chair Rebecca Lingafelter.

Quoth Lingafelter: "In this contemporary examination of Shakespeare's seminal play, we explore the relationship between human beings and the natural world through the lens of folk horror. Drawing on rich inspiration from artists such as Ari Aster, Robert Eggers and Robin Hardy as well as pagan traditions embedded in Shakespeare's text, we will create a world of the uncanny, where our perception and our reality become blurred. Created in partnership with the ensemble, the production explodes notions of gender, power, ambition and human significance in the face of a larger mystery."

The so-called "Scottish play" was brought to life with the help of costume designer Jenny Ampersand and scenic and lighting designer Miranda Hardy, who helped to create a liminal, unsettling setting for the performance.



# SPRING MAIN STAGE PRODUCTION:

# macbeth

“

I love to do Shakespeare plays when they are purposeful. There is a real moral and ethical choice to choose to do a Shakespeare show, and they can be most useful for reflecting back to a society what's going on now.

- PERCIVAL WALTER '25

”



“

I had worked on so many student projects and a lot of different thesis festivals since freshman year, and thought this would be an incredible challenge. [...] This kind of show is just a beast, and it's so long, so dense, and so well-known and respected. After talking with Rebecca about her early concepts, it just felt so right.

- ANNA KULBASHNY '25

”

The rehearsal process is really a blast [...] It's super collaborative, and I feel like I'm a real contributor, that I'm active in the process of making this thing, and everybody is! And I'm seeing it become real, which is insane!

- TANNER HANSEN '26

”



# TIFFANY MILLS DANCE COMPANY

This semester, the NYC-based Tiffany Mills Dance Company performed with ten Lewis & Clark students through a residency that also brought together dance communities from three Oregon universities, including Reed and University of Oregon. This residency gave students the opportunity to learn from the professional NYC-based dance company through the course of the semester, a process which culminated in a performance of the West Coast premiere of the Viola Trilogy, a show which originally premiered in New York City at National Sawdust. The company also conducted a series of free workshops at Lewis & Clark and Reed College which were open to the public.

**“** It feels like we are building a narrative together, piece by piece, and when it all comes together, it's so gratifying. It feels like everyone's voice is showcased in what we've worked on. I'm so glad I can be a part of this incredible team my last semester at LC! - Rosalie Zuckermann '25 **”**





# ONCE

# UPON

# A

# WEEKEND

Once Upon a Weekend is an opportunity sponsored by the (Pause.) board 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 semester's theme?

# I KNOW A GUY.

# THESIS FESTIVAL 2025

This festival showcased the work of seniors who put their own performances on the stage for the creative component of their senior thesis.



## COMPANY

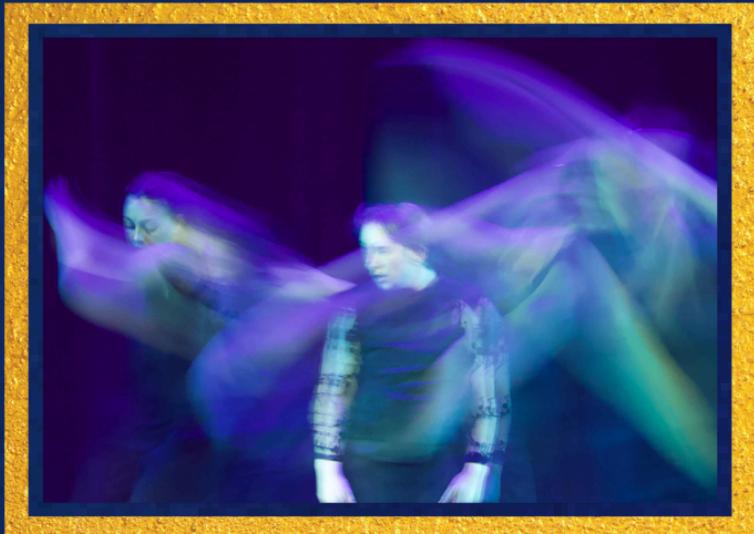
Lead Artist: Mack Mae

Why do we love? And why is it worth it? *Company* is a story of cycles of love, identity, growth, and letting go—and how our relationships impact all of those things.

## ON FATE

Lead Artist: Lev Starr

We get to decide how our life path will look, but sometimes our lives themselves can make decisions for us. This dance piece is about looking to the future and seeing what the possibilities of life can be. In three sections, this performance explores love and romance, diving deeply into a career, and simply letting life take you where it wants you to go.



## EVERY BRILLIANT THING

Lead Artist: Piper Clark-White

*Every Brilliant Thing* is about connecting with the people around you and finding joy in the little things.



# TRESIS FESTIVAL 2025

## **THOM PAIN (BASED ON NOTHING)**

Lead Artist: Charlie Chalmers

Thom Pain (Based on Nothing) is a testament to and reminder of the beauty of life, despite the pain that comes with it.



## **WE SHOULD BURY IT**

Lead Artist: Silken Poelstra

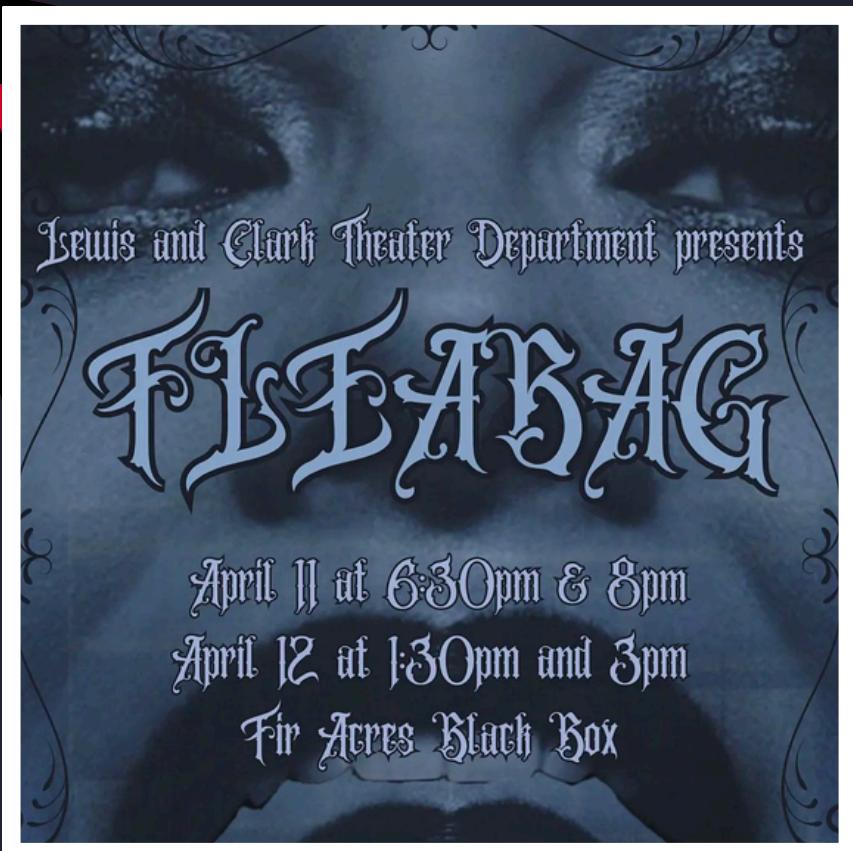
We Should Bury It [bird, 20 Magical Minutes of Darkness & Silence & Peace, 500/501] is a theatrical anthology of animal-based plays about community and grief. A group of friends hold a funeral for a bird they found. A pair of city raccoons navigate loss and existential dread. Two pigs in a factory farm bond in captivity. These stories follow mourners and their friends as they live and create meaning in their worlds.

## **THE ACTOR'S NIGHTMARE**

Lead Artists: Alexandra Gische and Ambrose Holland

The Actor's Nightmare is about how we can use comedy as a coping mechanism for the embarrassment of being perceived, until comedy can no longer shield us from our fears.





# INSIDE

Phoebe Waller-Bridge's hilarious, award-winning play that inspired the BBC's hit TV series is a darkly comedic look into the mind of a woman on the edge of financial and emotional ruin who is, more often than not, her own worst enemy.

Senior Jasper Prodromou '25 brought *Fleabag* to the stage as a student-produced, one-act performance.

The National Theater writes: "Fleabag may seem oversexed, emotionally unfiltered and self-obsessed, but that's just the tip of the iceberg. With family and friendships under strain and a guinea pig café struggling to keep afloat, Fleabag suddenly finds herself with nothing to lose."



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: EZRI GALBAN REYES '22

## Q: What are opportunities you've engaged with since graduating?

For months post-graduation, I felt like a first-year of Life, scouring for auditions and cutting hair to make money. The adjustment period was grueling, and I had to focus on my mental health. I am *still* looking for theatre gigs with queer BIPOC centered stories and working as a hairdresser to pay rent, but with a much more stable sense of being. Through collective care of my loving housemates, neighbors, and family in San Jose, I was able to take off in these amazing projects: Performing in Portland Experimental Theatre Ensemble's *The Americans* (2023) and *Cardiac Organ* (2023) and Third Rail's *Sanctuary City* (2024). Completing PATHWAYS, a two-year mentorship program at Artist Repertory Theatre, with a staged reading of our original play *WILD/CAUGHT* (2024). Collaborating with the Liminal Bodies Collective in *Edge Effect* (2025) at Sou'wester Arts Week.



I've joined Fil-Am youth and student organization Anakbayan East Portland. We wage the Care for Caregivers campaign and help build the Tanggol Migrante Network, defending migrant workers in their struggle for fair wages and right to livelihood. In April, I gave my first speech at an Earth Day rally to highlight the conditions of the Filipino people in the countryside who suffer from U.S. led war. I highlight how the New People's Army creates climate resilient food systems, evicts foreign corporations who plunder their natural resources, and redistributes land so peasants can feed their communities and genuinely meet their needs. I encourage you readers to find local campaigns to join or start your own and fight for what you believe is right too. Build up your revolutionary spirit and stamina for a summer of block parties and protesting!

## Q: How did your experience as a Theatre major at Lewis & Clark prepare you for your postgrad experiences thus far?

In political organizing spaces, I carry Anne Bogart's *The Viewpoints Book* and Adrienne Maree Brown's *Emergent Strategy* taught to me by Rebecca Lingafelter most comprehensively in the Devised Performance class. When thinking about programming for events like rallies or marches, my framework guides me to question, "How can this political education be accessible and immersive to broader audiences?"

In everyday life, I continue to admire the respect for every sector of the Fir Acres theatre department, from designers, to tech crew, to stage management, to performers and more. My fellows and teachers instilled in me that you really need to value people and shared experience first. With rigorous training, deep listening, and trusting in your community, even our wildest dreams can be actualized. I am most proud of the grassroots community produced shows I've had my hand in: *what has mother done.* (2023) a backyard theatre play & art market, *The Roaring 20's* (2024) a new play comprising a mostly LC alumni team, and my household's monthly dinner party X open mics that I will cherish forever.

# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT CNTD.

## Q: What's up next for you?



The Hatchery's new works development festival centering music and movement in August, workshopping *Everybody's Eyes are on the First!*, many more mobilizations on the streets with Bayan USA Alliance, and LC's first Once Upon A Weekend Alumni show this summer! But I'm most looking forward to visiting my family soon with my partner to catch up on what my grandparents and cousins have been up to.

## FAULTY SPOTLIGHT

### SUHAILA MEERA AWARDED 2025 ACLS FELLOWSHIP

Suhaila Meera, Assistant Professor of Theatre, has been awarded a 2025 ACLS Fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS). The longest running program at the organization, ACLS Fellowships support outstanding scholarship in the humanities and social sciences.

Suhaila was selected as one of 62 outstanding scholars from a pool of over 2,300 applicants through a multi-stage peer review process. Meera's research explores how mainstream media's spotlight on children has ignited debates around notions of innocence, deservingness, and citizenship against the backdrop of an ever-escalating global refugee situation. "The Child at the Border" examines cultural works from South Asia and the Middle East, analyzing how they both reflect and challenge the violent logic through which nation-states render some children displaced, or "out of place"- while these children play their assigned roles strategically.

Suhaila will be on sabbatical next year while she works on her research and writing. Congratulations, Suhaila!



Suhaila Meera, Assistant Professor of Theatre at Lewis & Clark College.

# LOOKING AHEAD....

## FALL 2025

### ***Student One Act Festival***

October 2-6, 2025 | Fir Acres Theatre Black Box  
Three One Act plays directed by students.

### ***Rain & Zoe Save the World***

October 31, November 1, 2, 6, 7 &8, 2025 | Fir Acres Theatre MainStage  
Two teenage climate activists embark on an impulsive motorcycle journey to join a group of oil protesters on the East Coast. As they follow a major pipeline across the country, what began as two young environmentalists' longing to belong to something greater than themselves gives way to Rain and Zoe discovering that the true danger in this world might just be growing up.

### ***Dance Extravaganza***

December 4-6, 2025 | Fir Acres Theatre MainStage  
Dance Extravaganza, commonly referred to as Dance X, offers students the opportunity to have their choreography fully staged for large audiences. Student choreographers are encouraged to combine skills they develop in class and experiment with new ideas and authentic movement vocabulary, empowering students to create and produce dance at the highest possible level.

## SPRING 2026

Theatre Dance Production coming to the MainStage! Stay tuned for dates and details!

# Keep in Touch!

