

# NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2021

## THE SAPPY EDITION

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### LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

We made it through another year - I'm so proud of you all! I'm proud of every time you just got up and got through the day, for every time you got yourself something tasty to eat or whipped something up yourself in the kitchen, for every time you were tired and took a nap instead of making yourself work more, for every assignment or project you completed (or even partially completed), for every meeting you got through, for everything you tried, even if it didn't go how you intended - because the most important thing is that you tried! I would give you all hugs if I could. Thank you for riding with us through this year - for coming to our workshops, for sharing your silly powerpoints on game nights, and for putting up with all of our silly jokes. It was so nice to meet you all, even if it was through a zoom screen. (I hope that I have given off 6 foot energy this entire time if you've never seen me in person.) I can tell already that everyone here is a fantastic and talented person, and I can't wait to see all of the exciting things everyone here is going to do.

Some of us may be graduating, but please feel free to reach out to us anytime! As long as it's not through Microsoft Teams...or Zoom...or Skype...even Facebook would be okay. Hoping that everyone stays safe and takes care ~

Xoxoxo  
Kami

### ANNOUNCING OUR NEW BOARD!

Thank you to everyone that ran! We're excited to announce the new board! \*drumroll please\*

CHAIR: *Shamus Bonner*

VICE CHAIR: *TJ Hays*

SECRETARY: *Anabel Blackford*

BUSINESS MANAGER: *Elizabeth Amstutz*

OUTREACH COORDINATOR: *Megan Franco*



## MY EXPERIENCE WORKING ON PITT MAINSTAGES THUS FAR

POV: You're a freshman, interested in working in Pitt's theater department. But alas, we are in unfortunate times for theater. Nonetheless, virtual options have presented themselves, and oh...what is that...a (kinda) in-person show as well. You don't even know what a master electrician or technical director is, but you take the popportunities as they come, and suddenly, you find yourself helping out with three mainstages this semester. So here's the breakdown of my experience thus far on Pitt's mainstages, from someone who just figured out what "mainstage" means.

### **SPARK**

I will be honest, I did not know where the Studio theatre was and planned on wandering around Cathy until I found it. But I got to see the Heymann, Randall, and Studio for the very first time. I got to hang some lights, do some patching, tie many wires to many pipes. And I learned that walking around with a wrench attached to your hip looks pretty cool. I also learned to use a drill for the first time and realized they are not as scary as they seem. A little double press on the trigger, and you'll look like a pro. I didn't know what I was doing while painting, but with a spongy dab here and there, apparently, my work looked great. I also have permanent paint stains on my shirt and sweatpants now; they have officially become my painting outfit.

### **ANON(YMOUS)**

Well, I finally learned how to use teams for this show, and I'm still not a fan. Have I read the entire script yet? I'm going to plead the fifth on that one. I never thought I could be so picky when it came to how high heels should sound. And I probably spent a good hour just listening to people walking through grass. I learned that you can know nothing about sound design and just press every button on the screen and it will look like you know what you're doing. Is that city ambiance? No that is the sound of voices with reverb layered on top of traffic noise with an ever-present loop of cricket chirps. Suffice to say, I've learned two things: sound is very complex and nuanced, and people record the weirdest sounds and put them on the internet for everyone to hear.

### **APPALACHIAN PARIS**

I don't know what a devised production is, but sign me up! I've learned more about Pittsburgh and Oakland than I ever thought I needed to. Apparently I'm not the only one who has tripped down the Pete steps and has the sound of "Walk Sign Is On Forbes" ingrained into my brain. This show had me wandering through the outer columns of the Mellon Institute and watching the fish in the pond at St. Paul's while munching on a banana. It's pretty neat to think that my work will be forever out there on a tour, and I get to shape how the world sees Oakland. The catch is we only have three more weeks to finish everything. I believe we can make it happen...hopefully!

P.S. - The end of the semester can be a stressful time, so please take a deep breath and treat yourself to a movie night. Here are some fantastic suggestions: *The Edge of Seventeen* (2016), *Once* (2007), *Easy A* (2010), *Short Term 12* (2013), *The Farewell* (2019)

by Elizabeth Amstutz

## STICKERS!!!

The stickers sold so well - we even ordered some more! Make sure to get yours today - perfect for laptops, water bottles, spiking your snacks on the tech table - for anything! We can do local pickup or drop it in the mail for no extra cost!  
**\$2 per sticker - or get a grab bag with all of them for \$10!**



## KAMI'S SPICY DESIGN CORNER

For the last spicy design corner, I have a big piece of overarching advice about design - Everyone is a designer! I know that may sound silly, especially writing to a bunch of theatre designers and technicians who either already know that they're designers or wouldn't consider themselves designers. But I seriously mean it when I say that everyone is a designer. Even if you don't think so. Think about it - designing is largely problem solving. When problems come up, you all design solutions. Maybe you design schedules. Maybe you design fun ways of teaching other people how to learn new things.

I say this all to say that no one should ever doubt themselves - you're all designers in whatever capacities you decide. You're capable of everything you want to do and more, and never let anyone else tell you otherwise!

## PLANT OF THE MONTH!

Introducing: Elizabeth's succulent trio!  
Pictured left to right are Snap, Crackle, and Pop! What a snazzy group of plantas!



## \$5 TAROT READINGS!



We are all afraid of the future! Let Jess pull some cards for you to help give you some guidance (and either reassurance or more stress, no results guaranteed).

After filling out the google form, Jess will email you a three-card reading. You can pay with cash, or email USITT if you need to set up an alternative payment. (All proceeds will go to USITT)

## DESIGN TECH- SENIOR SUPERLATIVES

CONGRATS TO ALL THE SENIORS!!!

MOST LIKELY TO DESIGN SHE KILLS MONSTERS

NICK DEPINTO

MOST LIKELY TO ACTUALLY MAKE MONEY IN THEATRE

SOPHIA KOSOWSKY

MOST LIKELY TO MOVE TO EUROPE AND START A THEATRE

ALEX DOLINGER

MOST LIKELY TO EMPLOY ANNMARIE IN THEIR BAKERY/CAFE

KAMI BECKFORD

MOST LIKELY TO USE ALL THE GEL COLORS

MICHAEL RUSSO

MOST LIKELY TO PUT EVERYTHING + THE KITCHEN SINK ONSTAGE

JESS FITZPATRICK

MOST LIKELY TO BE SECRETLY AMAZING AT PAINTING

XIAO HAN

MOST LIKELY TO DESIGN EVERYONE'S TATTOOS

NATASHA LOWY

MOST LIKELY TO YEE-HAW

THOMAS BEDNARZ

MOST LIKELY TO BE A JACK OF ALL TRADES

JENNA TEPLITZKY

MOST LIKELY TO LOW-KEY WORK ON EVERY LAB

MELINA YELOVICH

MOST LIKELY TO BE A LIZARD PERSON DISGUISED AS THE CHANCELLOR

DEREK LAMB

## SPRING BAKING!

As we get into the warmer months, soon there will be tons of fresh fruits around perfect for baking! Here's just a short collection of some of my favorite baked goods if you're ever looking for something a little sweet.

**Peach cobbler** - Something about peaches just scream summer to me. Cobbler's my favorite use for them, because then you get the perfect combo of fresh peaches, brown sugar, and spices. Add some vanilla ice cream and it's absolutely perfect enjoyed while the breeze blows.

**Strawberry shortcake** - A warm weather classic, nothing beats strawberry shortcake when the berries are at their best. Going the extra mile to make your own shortcake and whipped cream will only make it even more amazing.

**Lemon...anything** - I'm a total sucker for lemon. Lemon tart, lemon cake, lemon water ice. You really can't go wrong putting lemon in your baked goods. Lemon curd pairs beautifully with raspberry jam, or you can put some lemon zest in your blueberry pancakes, they'll all come out great.

by Shamus Bonner

## WHAT YOUR COSTUME PRODUCTION BAG SAYS ABOUT YOU

### HOT TAKES BY JESS



#### THE TECHNICIAN

- Definitely a technician or sound/lighting designer
- The blacks never match
  - Always prepared
- Probably carry a wrench



#### THE STATEMENT PATTERN

- Costume and scenic designer energy
- Listened to Gianni about graphics
  - Fun control freak
- Has some self-control



#### THE NEUTRAL-TONES

- Cool
- Genuinely just a cool chill vibe
- Earth sign energy
- Probably crafts a lot



#### THE PRINT MIXER

- I admire your... courage
- You like a lot of things a lot
- Questionable taste but a good heart
- When it works it WORKS tho



#### THE MONOCHROME

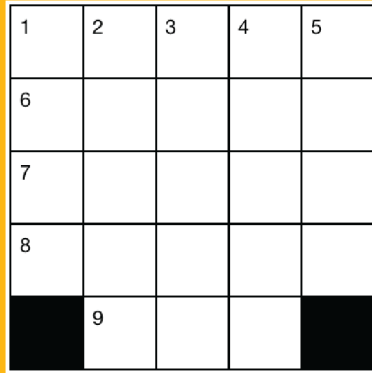
- Decisively indecisive
- Possibly a current or ex-purple person
  - Cutesy energy
- A little afraid to branch out



#### THE MINIMALIST

- Could never be me lol
- Either very sure of yourself or going thru your quarter life crisis
- Probably goes hiking and only shops at Trader Joe's

## CROSSWORD CORNER!



### Across

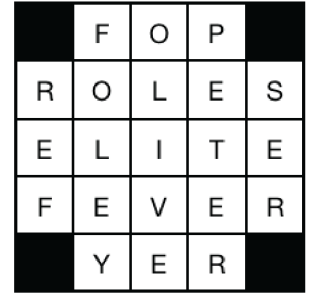
- Peruvian pack animal
- A type of column or chemical bond
- Make someone afraid
- Stories
- \_\_\_ Misérables

### Down

- Something to take to the store
- Not national
- Viking order at a bar? (2 wds.)
- Where wetland animals live
- Does well on an exam

## MARCH

### ANSWERS



Check your answers from last month! And tune in next month for more crossword fun!

## REFLECTION

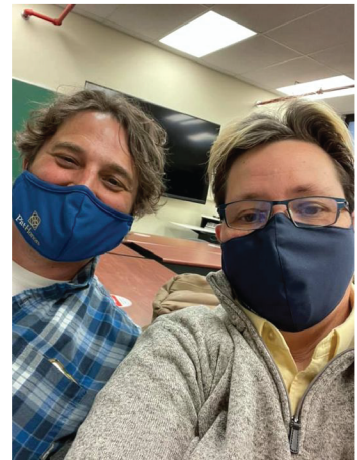
As we near the end of this crazy semester, I think it's important to look back at everything we accomplished this year, even with the setbacks of covid. As a theatre department, we adapted to pull off some very interesting shows in modes we have never toyed with before. We dipped our toes into the world of virtual performances early on all the way back in the summer with ***She Kills Monster: Virtual Realms***. This production pushed our department to explore with streaming and digital content creation. When the school year began, we started on the first of two hybrid shows. ***Miss You Like Hell*** mixed the worlds of streaming and in person performance in a fun and unique way, allowing everyone involved to push their skills in different ways. Inside the Zoom presented two productions created to fully reflect the times we are living in, building our virtual tech skills from what we learned in the summer. When we hit spring semester, we embarked on our first and only show that traded in zoom boxes for a full stage. This show allowed everyone to sort of get back to the roots of theatrical production, while also throwing in the curveball of filming. The camera challenged us and pushed us outside of spaces that we could usually go in a normal show. The semester will end with ***Anon(ymous)*** and ***Appalachian Paris***, which have surely pushed our virtual production experiences even further, so be sure to tune in and see what was created. I am so grateful to be a part of a department scrappy enough to keep pushing and adapting so that we can create performances. The biggest issue I have is not being able to truly say goodbye to all the wonderful people graduating this year, but I guarantee we will be seeing them in the biggest venues soon enough! I am beyond proud of the work we have done and continue to do, and I am eager to see what we get to pull off next year!

by TJ Hays

## SOPHIA'S TECH TIPS

Make sure to bring your snacks! When you are working as a technician it's important to stay hydrated and well fed. If you are hungry or thirsty you won't be able to do your job as well. Additionally, you might create an unsafe situation if you are preoccupied thinking about food, or are not at your full strength. Some of my favorite snacks are granola bars, cheese crackers, and peanut M&M's.

## SPOTTED: AN A+G REUNION



SENDING LOTS OF TISSUES

FOR GRADUATION!

STAY SAFE FRIENDS.