

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021

TIME IS A CONSTRUCTED EDITION

IN THIS ISSUE!

- Meet Elizabeth!..... 1
- Stream Spark..... 1
- Stage Managing in a Pandemic..... 2
- What Gel Color are You?..... 2
- Kami’s Spicy Design Corner..... 3
- Sophia’s Tech Tips..... 3
- Guess Who Sticker Edition!..... 4
- Minari and Nomadland Review..... 4
- Crossword Corner..... 5
- Conference Corner..... 5

MEET ELIZABETH!

WELCOME OUR NEW JUNIOR BOARD MEMBER!

Howdy and Salutations, everyone! I’m Elizabeth and extremely thrilled to join the board. I’m a freshman this year and brand new to Pitt’s theater department, and from what I’ve experienced thus far, it’s been quite a hoot and a holler. I’ve had a wonderful time learning more about different theatrical areas and meeting people in the department. If you want to discuss cat videos, Pixar films, or why winter is the best season, I’m the gal for you, and I look forward to doing more with USITT! (Which I always pronounce as “you-sit” whether that’s correct or not)

STREAM SPARK

SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS THIS FRIDAY!



Spark Production Positions!

Directed by KJ Gilmer

Scenic Designer - Alex Dolinger
 Technical Director - Sophia Kosowsky
 Scenic Charge Artist - Jess Fitzpatrick

Lighting Designer - TJ Hays
 Asst. Lighting Designer - Emily-Ann Stephens
 Master Electrician - Rissa Towsley

Sound / Projection Designer - Gianni Downs
 Asst. Sound Designer - Natalie Osbourne

Costume Designer - Karen Gilmer
 Asst. Costume Designer - Rebecca Hobart

Stage Manager - Shamus Bonner
 Asst. Stage Manager - Emily Niedbala
 Asst. Stage Manager - Abby Dean

STAY UPDATED!



@PITT.USITT



@PittUSITT

PITTUSITT.WEEBLY.COM

STAGE MANAGING IN A PANDEMIC

There's no way to get around it – stage managing in a pandemic is no easy task. Between room occupancy limits, distancing requirements, prop handling protocols, and so much more, it takes the busy job of the stage management team to a whole new level. Working on Spark with a cast of 10 in-person actors, an assistant director, a SM team of 3, and the numerous coaches, designers, and department staff it takes to bring the show to life, the Studio Theatre began to feel quite cramped fast.

More than anything, working at a time like this really emphasizes the need for flexibility of the stage management team. As the stage manager, not only did I do the usual - organize rehearsals, make schedules, and call cues, but also had to learn the intricacies of making a film. That meant creating filming schedules to maximize our time to record, as well as working with on-the-fly changes to ensure that we actually captured the action on the camera – something you don't usually think about when you're used to creating for an in-person audience. As for the ASMs – they had to take on an almost new job altogether. Without a backstage to manage, or even props to organize, their job became about making sure the cast was prepared as we jumped between scenes and organizing who could be in what rooms. I'm sure it was no easy feat, I honestly could not have done it without them.

One of the biggest changes we needed to make as stage managers was just taking a step back. Your first instinct when stage managing is to jump into the middle of every problem in the interest of solving it as fast as possible. Actor missing a prop? "I'll go grab it!" Something broke on stage? "I can handle it!" But that way of working in a pandemic simply isn't feasible – and that's ok! It's important to take the health of the stage managers just as seriously as everyone else, even if that means slowing down. As we've all learned throughout the pandemic, health is communal, so anyone not being careful has the potential to affect the entire production.

I count myself infinitely lucky to have had this opportunity. March 1st was our first day of "rehearsal filming," exactly a year since I closed with *Appropriate*, the last in-person theater I had done before we started Spark. It was an amazing experience, both in terms of what I learned about stage management, as well as getting the opportunity to work with so many amazing designers, technicians, and performers (many of whom I had only ever met over a screen). I'll still miss the thrill of people filing into the house for opening night, but I still can't wait for everyone to see what we created!

by Shamus Bonner

WHAT GEL COLOR ARE YOU?

BASED ON YOUR ZODIAC SIGN



Aries: R89 Moss Green -
Fierce and Courageous



Taurus: R63 Pale Blue -
Peaceful and Sensuous



Gemini: R42 Deep Salmon -
Communicative and Perceptive



Cancer: R16 Light Amber -
Nurturing and Emotional



Leo: R312 Canary -
Expressive and Confident



Virgo: R74 Light Blue -
Hard Working and Practical



Libra: R60 No Color Blue -
Indecisive and Balanced



Scorpio: R27 Medium Red -
Intense and Passionate



Sagittarius: R08 Pale Gold -
Friendly and Philosophical



Capricorn: R69 Brilliant Blue -
Practical and Masterful



Aquarius: R58 Indigo -
Abstract and Unpredictable



Pisces: R95 Medium Blue
Green -
Mystical and Imaginative

by TJ Hays

CONGRATS TO THE

CAST AND CREW OF

COLLECTIVE RAGE

This month, let's talk about DESIGNING some rest into our hectic schedules.

We're always constantly growing and learning, and over the past year, I really took some time to learn about the value of rest and slowing down. I very much was a person that tried to pack as many things into their day as possible - I gave myself long to-do lists and I wouldn't let myself go to sleep until I finished specific tasks which meant I saw the sunrise a lot (which was pretty, but not worth it). And sometimes I do find myself falling back into that habit because I do like to keep myself busy to prevent me from sitting with my thoughts - which is also why I have cafe vlogs or French R&B (I recommend!) playing in my house 24/7. But I've realized a couple of things:

1. I'm not meant to be a machine. None of us are. I'm meant to water my plants, picnic with friends, design things, and eat fresh bread. So don't expect yourself to do an un-human amount of work!
2. If I burn myself out now, I'll never get to do all the wonderful things I want to do. And we have time - there's no need to pack everything into one day!
3. I'm not a fan of capitalism. Rests and capitalism don't mix well since capitalism thrives off of people being treated as machines. So be resting, I'm actively protesting. Naps as a form of protest? I love to see it. (check out @thenapministry on instagram to learn more about rest as a form of protest!)

Now, I stop calling days "unproductive" just because I took the day to rest - rest is one of the most productive things you can do! When I'm tired, instead of forcing myself to stay awake, I go to bed - no questions asked. I make myself go to bed before midnight - I went to bed at 8:30 the other night - I can't tell you the last time I did that (on purpose - I've fallen asleep eating dinner though). I don't meditate as in listening to guided instructions (I'm stubborn and don't like being told what to do), but I don't rush on walks (or try not to, I walk at 473843 miles an hour). I hope that if you also struggle with prioritizing rest in your day to day, you know that the feeling of having to constantly work is a hard one to knock down - especially when everything around you is telling you that you have to work as hard you possibly can at all times. We'll be even better at the things we want to do when we approach them well-rested. We can't do anything really without taking care of ourselves first. So in whatever way works for you, I hope you start resting more - you deserve it!

SOPHIA'S TECH TIPS!

It's really important to have sharp blades! This is true for saw blades, knife blades, drill bits, the sharp parts of scissors, and anything else you are using to cut something. If your blades are dull it will be a lot harder to cut through material and it's more likely your blade could slip, jam, or overheat. A dull blade increases the risk of injury to yourself and those around you, and also has the potential to damage your project. If you are cutting a material and have to put more effort into it than usual, or it's taking longer than normal, those are two good indicators your blade may be dull. Another good sign your blade is dull is if you have to make several extra cuts to cut all the way through something. Always swap a dull blade out for a sharp one as soon as possible, and either set the dull blade aside for sharpening or dispose of it in a designated sharps container.

PLANT OF THE MONTH!

Introducing: Jess' Yucca Plant!



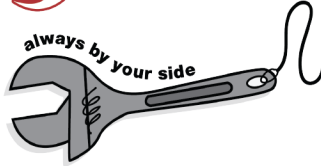
GUESS WHO - STICKER EDITION

GUESS WHICH BOARD MEMBER DESIGNED EACH STICKER!

1.



2.



3.

STRUGGLING-
please hold

4.



5.



AND DON'T FORGET TO SUPPORT PITT USITT BY BUYING THEM SOON!

(Answers on page 5)

PLEASE WATCH NOMADLAND AND MINARI

AN ENTREATY AND LAUDATORY REVIEW

If you're looking for a wonderful flick to watch this weekend, well look no further, because I have two powerhouse of a movie for you:

Nomadland

A film so patient, highlighting the beauty of the banal, as it weaves its way through the life of wanderer Fern, portrayed by the wonderful Frances McDormand (who oddly reminds me of my aunt??). This film is reminiscent of a documentary feature, sharing brief glimpses of Fern's travels as she moves onto new places and people. Every character she meets is absolute gold (their character names are the same as their real names, how cool is that!) and grounds the film in a strong sense of humanity. Fern herself represents a powerful journey across grief, loss, and memory. I suddenly have a strong urge to travel the country in a van and run through the desert. This film is magic, and it was written, directed, and edited by the magnificent Chloé Zhao (seriously, this woman does like everything). Truly, this movie leaves you with a cathartic feeling of growth and wonder and beauty in the ordinary.

Minari

This movie is not only about the struggles of immigration and cultural divides, but so much about the resilience of family and the sacrifices dreams take. With the "American Dream" at its core, the film pushes through a Korean family trekking uncharted territory, both in work and family relationships. This film truly feels like a proper A24 movie (I swear this company never makes a bad film) as its poignant moments reflect not just the specificities of a particular group, but also address the larger complexities that are relevant to all. With a style that I can only describe as "enduring" (persistent??, or patiently tenacious, maybe?), I could feel the film steadily pushing me across the journey right alongside the Yi family. Based in the simplicities of life, this film opened a lens for me into the realities of what it takes to make a family.

So grab yourself some popcorn (or ice cream, a personal movie-time favorite), support some really cool Asian-American artists, and have a beautiful, tear-moving two hours with each of these perfectly composed films.

Side Note:

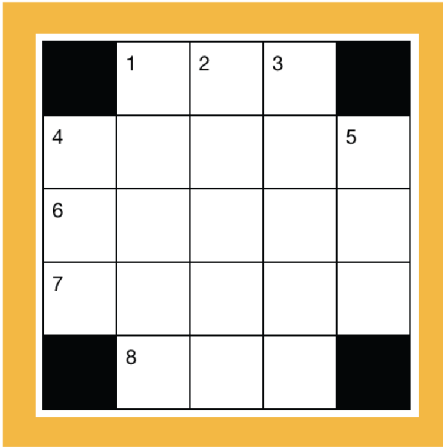
Enormous congrats to Nomadland and Minari for winning "Best Motion Picture – Drama" and "Best Foreign Language Film" at the Golden Globes, respectively; well-deserved wins (I seriously cried when this happened).

Side Side Note:

Speaking of the Globes, a quick Google search will let you check out some of my favorite looks that were served by these stars (Leslie Odom Jr. | Jackson Lee | Laverne Cox | Andra Day | Josh O'Connor | Anya Taylor-Joy | Cynthia Erivo | Elle Fanning | Riz Ahmed | Dan Levy | Lana Condor | Sarah Paulson | ... and of course Jason Sudeikis)

By Elizabeth Amstutz

CROSSWORD CORNER!



Across

- 1 Dandy
- 4 What actors or D&D players may have
- 6 Best of the best
- 7 Symptom of COVID-19 :(
- 8 Phonetic "your"

Down

- 1 Banging on metal to make a thunder sound, e.g.
- 2 Martini garnish
- 3 Actor Dinklage
- 4 Game official abr.
- 5 Spanish to be

FEBRUARY

ANSWERS

D	A	W	N	
O	C	E	A	N
G	U	A	V	A
S	T	R	A	T
	E	E	L	S

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

CONFERENCE CORNER

NETWORKING TIPS FROM AN INTROVERT

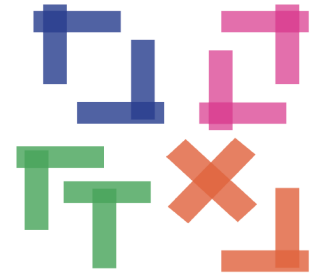
Whether you're going to USITT conference this week or not, a crucial part of working in theatre is networking. Depending on your personality this might be your favorite or least favorite part of the job. For me, it's somewhere on the lower end, not because I don't like meeting people, but because I am always afraid that I am bugging people or just not doing it 'right.' In that vein, I've compiled some tips about networking for everyone that I've found helpful!

1. If you are at an event like conference, where there are tons of theatre professionals and students all together. Guess what! You already have something in common. Use it!
2. This one comes from Annmarie, try to say yes when someone asks you to get a drink or lunch or whatever. A lot of jobs can come your way just by socializing and getting your name out there.
3. Go to Summerstock! There will be theatre makers from around the country and what bonds you more than the shared of experience of being both physically and mentally exhausted.
4. Make goals for yourself. While networking can be fun it's also work. Challenge yourself to send cold emails to companies or post x amount on your professional social media.
5. Sometimes you network without realizing it. I got a job this past summer just because I still talk with one of my good friends from high school. Networking can be as simple as keeping in touch.

These are just a few tips that stood out to me, but find what works for you and how you communicate!

by Jess Fitzpatrick

STICKER ANSWERS



Sticker 1: Kami Beckford

Sticker 2: TJ Hays

Sticker 3: Shamus Bonner

Sticker 4: Sophia Kosowsky

Sticker 5: Jess Fitzpatrick

If you guessed we all sent design ideas to Kami (mostly) and Jess to make you would also be right!

SENDING MORE STUDENT

SELF-CARE DAYS!

STAY SAFE FRIENDS.