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4-2021

**impromptu: A newsletter from the College of Arts & Humanities at  
MSU Moorhead**

Minnesota State University Moorhead

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## “THAT’S A WRAP”: A FAREWELL TO TOM BRANDAU

Professor Emeritus Tom Brandau called it a wrap on March 3, after a valiant six-plus year battle with incurable cancer. Tom started his full-time teaching career at MSUM in 2004, when he was hired to develop the newly created Film Production program. Tom nurtured the award-winning program over fifteen years, also serving as Department Chair for three years. An inspiring teacher, Tom developed many student-centered initiatives, including the Moorhead Public Access show *Underexposures* (showcasing MSUM student films), and the biennial Alumni Summit, bringing together current students and alumni. Tom always included students and alumni in the production of his award-winning films. Community-driven, Tom served as co-chair and volunteer to the Fargo Film Festival for many years, and was the recipient of the Volunteer Spirit Award (2013), as well as the Ted. M. Larson Award (2020). He is dearly missed by his colleagues, students, and alumni. Our thoughts go out to Tom’s wife, Janet Haak Brandau.



## ART PROFESSOR NAMED DISTINGUISHED LECTURER

Sherry Lee Short, professor in the School of Art, received the 2020 Dille Distinguished Lecturer Award through the Dille Fund for Excellence. Her online lecture, titled *Wounded Land*, will take place April 14 at 5 p.m. Sherry has held national and international artist residencies in remote wilderness areas, including Porcupine Wilderness and Isle Royale National Park, both in Michigan; and Theano Point in Ontario, Canada. Short received the MinnState Outstanding Educator Award in 2019. To attend the April 14 lecture, open ZOOM and enter meeting ID 925 173 8733 and passcode 004321.



April is National Poetry Month. Inspired by the success of Black History Month, held each February, and Women’s History Month, held in March, the Academy of American Poets convened a group of publishers, booksellers, librarians, literary organizations, poets, and teachers to discuss the need and usefulness of a similar month-long holiday to celebrate poetry. The first National Poetry Month was held in 1996. So in celebration of the 25th National Poetry Month, Andrew Reed, one of our current creative writing majors, has allowed us to reprint one of his original poems.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. Well, what are moving pictures worth? Beginning with this issue of *Impromptu* we are adding video and audio links that are intended to inform, engage, and inspire our readers. And for good measure, we’ll continue to include creative writing selections for your enjoyment. Let me know what you think about these additions. As always, I’m looking to share any news and activities you may have.

**Dr. Earnest Lamb**, Dean, College of Arts & Humanities

## I PROMISED AS WE PARTED THAT I WOULD RESIGN MYSELF TO ANOTHER SHIVER

By Andrew Reed

Shaking like a leaf in the breeze, jittery with coffee; this sunny afternoon is transformed into a moody city street at night as the smoky melodies of Roxy Music's *For Your Pleasure* spin out from the turntable. Empty glasses are refilled with eclipses of Bordeaux and the trills of saxophone, the roughness of your hackle as smooth as satin, the fanfare of whispers—a forgotten tongue—like Latin.

With these ingredients, step back into memory. Winter; forest. Far from how we arrived, but what remains of our footprints suggest we may find our way back yet. Under this canopy of bare trees paired with the sound of shivering knees, as the wind threatens to make us red and raw, the scent of summer still lingers on your skin. I promised as we parted that I would resign myself to another shiver;

one last parting gift like the warmth the winter sun promises but can't quite deliver. Or the snow—falling white—but like so many other pure ideas is sullied by season, visitation, acknowledgement, and other well-intentioned things.

As it stands, there may still be a new rime and grime upon us this year.

As the hoarfrost returns, capping the trees in delicate lace at dawn blazing red like fire coral,

in the blink of sunset my antipathy for *tempus fugit*, too, returns. Try as I might, I can't chase away your memory with perfumed skin

regardless of how similar or different the scent is. Come spring, myself and everything else will stand shakily on fawn legs. Each budding leaf like a sunburst to the psyche; every breeze a step too close to freezing, and each raindrop almost snow.

Finally, as coffee once again stains the rim of my mug, the stain of your kiss still remains off the eves of the final day each year as winter transitions to spring.

Andrew is an advanced creative writing student of Kevin Zepper, professor in the English Department.

## STUDENTS INTERPRET SOCIAL DISTANCING THROUGH COLLABORATIVE PROJECT



MSUM students will present “Distance,” a premiere YouTube event April 29 at 7:30 p.m. The event features students’ interpretations of the challenges they’ve faced during the COVID-19 crisis. “We know that

performance and the arts brought people together during quarantine and thought this would be a unique opportunity for students to express their own experiences through this collaborative project,” said Craig Ellingson, director of Theatre Arts in the School of Performing Arts. The project is the result of collaboration between Theatre Arts and MSUM’s School of Media Arts and Design. It includes student work in performance, animation, film, graphic design, audio design, and technical production. Students involved in the event worked closely with MSUM faculty and staff, and with guest artist Lacey Erb, a professional projection designer based in Brooklyn, N.Y. To attend the online event, go to [mnstate.edu/tickets](https://mnstate.edu/tickets). A YouTube link to join will be emailed to all ticket holders approximately one hour before curtain from MSUM’s Director of Ticketing Amanda Citrowske.

## MUSIC PROFESSOR REFLECTS ON “WHY” OF TEACHING

Dr. Erynn Millard, a music professor in the School of Performing Arts, was recently a featured guest on an episode of *Music (ed) Matters*, an Apple podcast led by host and music educator Dr. Emily Williams Burch. Millard, Burch and Dr. Amy Kotsonis (University of Northern Iowa) provide insights into the musical and non-musical challenges and joys of leading a choir and managing a choir room. The podcast can be accessed by visiting <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/music-ed-matters/id1507217262> and scrolling to Episode 46, which originally aired on Feb. 23.



We are always looking for news about our alumni, students and faculty members, and for feedback on Impromptu. Send news and comments to Rebecca Sundet-Schoenwald at [sundetre@mnstate.edu](mailto:sundetre@mnstate.edu).

## SPRING 2021 EVENTS

### APRIL

- 08 Tri-College History Lecture featuring Dr. Elijah Bender, Concordia College: "Calamity: Problems of Evaluating Change, Continuity, and Causation in Natural Disaster Histories."**  
To attend this live Zoom lecture, please contact Dr. Sean Taylor at [sean.taylor@mnstate.edu](mailto:sean.taylor@mnstate.edu).
- 10 Senior Recital, Peter Nelson**  
In person and streamed, Gaede Stage, 2 p.m.
- 12 Panoply: Faculty Exhibition**  
(through May 14)  
Online reception April 29 from 5 to 7 p.m.
- 26 Jazz Ensemble Concert**  
In person and streamed, Hansen Theatre, 7:30 p.m.
- 29 String Ensemble Concert**  
In person and streamed, Hansen Theatre, 7:30 p.m.
- 29 DISTANCE (Theatre, SoMAD and EIT)**  
Streamed YouTube online premiere, 7:30 p.m.  
Get access to the event at [mnstate.edu/tickets](https://mnstate.edu/tickets).
- 30 Film Capstone Project Screening**  
YouTube Premiere – Like [SoMAD's Facebook page](#) for more information closer to the event, 7 p.m.
- 30 Wind Ensemble Concert**  
In person and streamed, Hansen Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

### MAY

- 01 Senior Recital, Bradee Isbell**  
In person and streamed, Gaede Stage, 1 p.m.
- 01 Junior Recital, Nora Christianson**  
In person and streamed, Gaede Stage, 4 p.m.
- 01 Senior Recital with Kara Brusven**  
In person and streamed, Gaede Stage, 7:30 p.m.
- 04 Virtual Choir Concert**  
Live on Facebook, 7:30 p.m.
- 07 School of Media Arts and Design Film and Animation Celebration Screening**  
YouTube Premiere – Like [SoMAD's Facebook page](#) for more information closer to the event, 7 p.m.

Because of the uncertainty regarding COVID-19, please look for possible changes to in-person, on-campus events when you visit [mnstate.edu/tickets](https://mnstate.edu/tickets).

**i** Please Note: MSUM's Roland Dille Center for the Arts Gallery is currently open to a limited number of mask-wearing individuals: Monday-Thursday 4-8 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.-8 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Opening receptions will take place on Zoom and Facebook Live. Visit [mnstate.edu/academics/colleges-schools/art/gallery](https://mnstate.edu/academics/colleges-schools/art/gallery) to view exhibitions online, attend online receptions, and find updates on hours.

**▶** MSUM students in the School of Performing Arts are undeterred by the challenges of this year! Follow this link for videos of students in a variety of performances: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_GZ69TRIZTE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GZ69TRIZTE)

