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

Minnesota State University Moorhead

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impromptu



MAY 2021



STRAW HAT IS BACK

MSUM's beloved summer theatre series, canceled last year due to COVID-19 restrictions, returns next month with three shows planned for an open-air stage on the MSUM campus mall. Each performance is limited to 200 seats to allow for safe in-person attendance. The season opens on June 1 with *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* and repeats June 2 and 3. The second musical opens June 8 with *8-Track: The Sounds of the 70s In Concert*. The musical repeats June 9 and 10. The season closes with *Godspell*, which runs June 15, 16 and 17. See the list of events on page 4 for ticket information.



HARMONY SCHOOL HIRES MUSIC ED MAJOR

Ryan Bredeson, senior music education student, begins a temporary position this summer at the Harmony School, an El Sistema-inspired organization in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The school's mission is to provide free, intensive, culturally-responsive performance classes and ensembles to students who have little access to music instruction. Ryan spent spring break at the school for the program's launch, which included training and teaching for two days. "I was impressed with their profile, as well as their mission to transform lives through inclusive music education," said Ryan. "As a student of MSUM's music education program, this is a good opportunity to apply skills I've learned here while still studying for student teaching." Ryan will teach bucket drumming, a form of street music in which drummers use plastic buckets as instruments, to an economically disadvantaged group of students.



Dear Class of 2021,

The month of May has arrived and it's time to celebrate you -- our graduates. This has been a challenging year in so many ways, yet here you are, graduating from MSUM. That is absolutely amazing.

I would like to thank every professor, instructor and staff member at MSUM who has contributed to your success. I would also like to offer my sincerest gratitude to every family member and every friend who encouraged and supported you along the way. We are all so very proud of you.

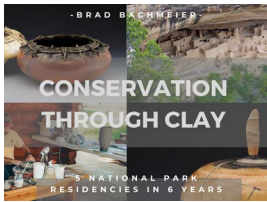
As graduates with degrees from the College of Arts and Humanities, you have a special mission: to ensure the continuing life of the arts and humanities in a world so in need of your creative gifts, critical thinking, and dedication to the study of ideas. While much has changed, I take great comfort knowing that you -- our next generation of problem solvers and innovators -- are well prepared to help us overcome the challenges of both today and tomorrow, and to find solutions that will transform our world for the better.

When you graduate in May, you'll be joining thousands of MSUM alumni who are transforming the world. I can't wait to see what you do next.

Congratulations.

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

Please join us for the College of Arts and Humanities virtual graduation ceremony on Thursday, May 13 at 10 a.m.: Graduation at Minnesota State University Moorhead (mnstate.edu)



PROFESSOR'S WORK LINKS ART AND CONSERVATION

Ceramic artist and MSUM Art Professor Brad Bachmeier set out to honor and capture the characteristics of some of our nation's most notable historic and geographic areas when he was named the recipient of five juried artist-in-residence awards. The residencies led Bachmeier to Mesa Verde National Park, a UNESCO National Heritage Site; The National Petrified Forest in Arizona; The Grand Canyon/Parashant National Monument; Theodore Roosevelt National Park; and Red Rock National Conservation Area. At each of these residencies, conservation issues regarding these iconic spaces profoundly impacted Bachmeier. Now, six years and two-hundred pots later, Bachmeier's project is on display at the North Dakota Museum of Art in an exhibition titled "Conservation Through Clay." Bachmeier described the residencies as "rare, intense and life-changing experiences." The exhibit, which features 50 of the pots Bachmeier created during the residencies, opened March 21 and continues through the first week of June. Bachmeier shares his residency experiences in a video on the museum's webpage. Go to <https://www.ndmoa.com/exhibitions-current>. The project is also featured in the April 2021 issue of Ceramics Monthly. To access the article, go to https://www.ndmoa.com/images/user/698/docs/BBachmeier_Apr21_CM%5B45%5D.pdf.



THEATRE ARTS HONORED BY NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) honored the work of MSUM theatre students

and faculty for a live-streamed production last November of *Black Flag*. The production advanced to the regional festival in January. Additional accolades were awarded to the following MSUM theatre students for outstanding performances: Lexi Francis, Emily Kautz, and Michael Pfautz in *Black Flag*; and Samuel Vallego and Bryan J.

Meyer in *The Water Gun Song*. In total, MSUM Theatre Arts produced eight events during an academic year challenged by COVID-19, including four pre-recorded events for thousands of school-age children. MSUM's Theatre program has successfully competed for awards and recognition at the festival every year for decades, including advancement to national competitions in Washington D.C.



ROLE-PLAYING INSPIRES HISTORY STUDENTS

When MSUM history professor Sean Taylor discovered the benefits of a role-playing approach to teaching history, he applied for and won a 2011

Fulbright scholar award to further develop the concept and teach it in another country. The Fulbright award provided funding for Taylor to spend 10 months in Norway teaching American history to Norwegian college students. "Reacting to the Past" is a game-based method originally developed at Barnard College a decade earlier. Since, then, the concept "has exploded," Taylor said, with more than 3,000 college history teachers using it all over the United States and abroad. The approach asks students to simulate the roles of historical figures and views of the day. A student studying the Puritans in Massachusetts, for example, might have to argue as Puritan lawyer John Winthrop, who believed that women shouldn't have the right to vote. "In essence, this approach teaches students everything we want them to learn at college -- to argue, to listen to other arguments, and to think about things differently," Taylor said. The competitive aspect of the games provides students with extra incentive to dig deeper into their research and create compelling arguments, whether they agree with the views they're representing or not. Taylor's colleagues, MSUM history professors Annette Morrow and Nathan Clarke, also use the method every year in their history classes. Taylor also co-teaches a class on environmental ethics with School of Science Professor Alison Wallace.

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 sundet@mnstate.edu.

SPRING 2021 EVENTS

MAY

- 01 Senior Recital, Bradee Isbel, percussion**
In person and streamed, Gaede Stage, 1 p.m.
- 01 Junior Recital, Nora Christensen, flute**
In person and streamed, Gaede Stage, 4 p.m.
- 01 Senior Recital with Kara Brusven, guitar**
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.

JUNE

- 01 Straw Hat Summer Theatre presents: I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change**
*(through June 3)
7:30 p.m. (PG-13; rain date June 4)*
- 08 Straw Hat Summer Theatre presents: 8-Track: The Sounds of the 70s In Concert**
*(through June 10)
7:30 p.m. (PG-13; rain date June 11)*
- 15 Straw Hat Summer Theatre presents: Godspell**
*(through June 17)
7:30 p.m. (PG-13; rain date June 18)*

All Straw Hat performances will take place on an open-air stage on the MSUM campus mall. Purchase tickets at mnstate.edu/tickets. Each performance is limited to 200 seats to allow for safe in-person attendance.

Because of the uncertainty regarding COVID-19, please look for possible changes to in-person, on-campus events when you visit 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 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



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