

CMU University Theatre Report

2016-2017

From Summer 2016 through May 2017, **University Theatre provided 141 individual students with 496 specific co-curricular opportunities** in the areas of theatre and dance performance, directing, playwriting, design, technical theatre, choreography, make-up and related theatre production areas.

Combined attendance for all University Theatre produced/sponsored productions was over 10,600.

University Theatre produced/sponsored 27 different productions (88 total performances) in this time period. To effectively serve our students, the university community and the general community, the season included a wide variety of genres and styles.

- Contemporary comedy (*Shady Business*)
- Romantic Comedy (*Shooting Star*)
- Major Broadway Musical (*A Chorus Line*)
- Shakespeare (*Pericles*)
- Award-winning Drama (*Doubt: A Parable*)
- A Theatre-for-Young-Audience production (*Pericles*)
- The University Theatre Dance Company concert featuring faculty and student choreography
- Two student-directed, student-designed Studio productions (*Closer* and *Bash*)
- The Alpha Psi Omega honorary theatre fraternity student-written, student-directed, student-designed one-acts (*Dinner Party* and *Braided*)
- An original, student-choreographed dance Studio production (*Bloom*)
- A student compiled/directed musical (*When You Wish*)
- A faculty written/performed one-man production (*MAN*)
- Two faculty-directed Studio productions (*Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* and *The Crackwalker*)
- Eight productions/22 performances of student-written, student-directed and student-performed Trap Door Improv company
- The Alpha Psi Omega Play Blitz which presented student-written, student-directed, student-designed and student-acted one-act plays
- University Theatre Dance Company Studio concert featuring student choreography and performance

University Theatre presented a **special school-group matinee performance of *Pericles* in Bush Theatre** for **nearly 500 high school students.**

Summer Theatre 2016 was presented for audiences in Bush Theatre, Howmet Playhouse in Whitehall, Michigan and the Beaver Island Community Center Theatre on Beaver Island. **Three plays were performed in repertory in all three locations.** These outreach productions were faculty directed and designed, with all other work (performing, props, costumes, set construction, lighting, sound, promotions, advertising, front of house, etc.) done by students under faculty/staff supervision.

University Theatre brought in **professional guest artists and theatre professionals** to work with students during the 2016-2017 season.

- Renee Suprenant was brought in as the **Guest Scenic Designer** for the University Theatre production of *A Chorus Line*. Ms. Suprenant has designed for La Musica Lirica in Novafeltria, Italy; Michigan State University Opera Theatre; Summer Circle Theatre; and University of Rhode Island.
- Matt Saltzburg served as the **Guest Director** for the University Theatre production of *Doubt: A Parable*. Mr. Saltzburg's professional directing credits include work at Missouri Summer Repertory Theatre; Bluff City Theatre; Next Generation Theatre Company; and Greenhouse Theatre Project.
- University Theatre brought in **professional sound technician, Heath Hetherington**, to mix and program the sound, and teach students to operate a digital sound board for the musical, *A Chorus Line*. Mr. Hetherington serves as the Director of Technical Services at the Midland Center for the Performing Arts

In January 2017, University Theatre arranged to **send 17 students and 3 faculty mentor/chaperones to the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Region III annual festival in Indianapolis, Indiana.**

Six CMU theatre students and their partners were selected to compete in the **Irene Ryan (Acting) Scholarship Auditions** with approximately 250 graduate and undergraduate nominees from other universities and colleges in the five-state region (Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Indiana).

CMU Theatre student, Jordan Lester and his partner, Danielle Montpetit, were selected to compete in the Semi-Final round of the Irene Ryan (Acting) Scholarship Auditions. Jordan was one of 44 semi-finalists selected from the 252 participating nominees.

Two CMU Theatre students competed in **design/technical related fields** with graduate and undergraduate students from universities and colleges in the five-state region (Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana).

Three CMU Theatre students were selected to compete in the **KCACTF Stage Management Fellowship** competition.

Two students auditioned, were accepted, rehearsed and performed in the festival's **Music Theatre Intensive Cabaret Performance.**

The CMU University Theatre production, *A Chorus Line*, was selected to present scenes at the festival's **Evening of Scenes.**

CMU Theatre students and faculty were also honored with Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival **Certificates of Merit** for their work in CMU University Theatre productions over the past year:

CMU Theatre student, Melanie Eickhoff, was awarded a Certificate of Merit for Stage Management of the CMU University Theatre production of *A Chorus Line*.

CMU student, Jason Aylward, was awarded a Certificate of Merit for Conducting for the CMU University Theatre production of *A Chorus Line*.

CMU Theatre faculty member, Ann Dasen, was selected to present her Costume Designs/Costumes from *A Chorus Line* at the ACTF Costume Parade.

With funding from the Communication and Dramatic Arts department, University Theatre took 24 students to see professional theatre. Through the **Student Michigan Theatre Tour Project**, students were provided free tickets and transportation to see productions at the Purple Rose Theatre and Tipping Point Theatre.

Participants in the co-curricular 2016-2017 University Theatre productions will be taking their skills from Central into the professional and academic world. The following is a partial list of what University Theatre students will be doing this summer and what some graduates will be doing in the fall.

Performing in *Pippin* at Bay View Association in Bay View, MI.

Playwriting apprentice and member of the PowerHouse Theater Training Company in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Year-long apprentice at Tipping Point Theatre in Northville, MI.

Two students will be performing at Thunder Bay Theatre in Alpena, MI.

Two graduating students will be working in the Disney Alumni Program in Orlando, Florida.

Respectfully submitted June, 2017.

Steve Berglund
Director of University Theatre