

MINNETONKA THEATRE CURTAIN CALL CLUB

Newsletter - Summer 2021



Greetings friends of Minnetonka Theatre!

I had the honor of serving as the president of the Curtain Call Club last season and am proud to fill the role again for the 2021-2022 season.

Our mission is to support the growth and quality of theater in Minnetonka, benefitting and enhancing Minnetonka High School Theatre and Minnetonka Community Theatre productions.

One major activity is providing grants that benefit the entire theatre family. Last season the CCC financially supported:

- Cameras that enabled streaming and recording of special events including the fall production of *Broadway, Here I Come!*, winter production of *Blithe Spirit*, and the one-act play *Subject to Change*
- Classes for crew members in sound design and scenic painting
- Sound and lighting rental, costumes, and royalties for the spring musical *Something Rotten!*

With the exciting season ahead and your support as members, we look forward to providing Minnetonka Theatre with the largest grant sum in our history!

The CCC also supports Minnetonka Theatre by building a community of members to network, provide assistance, and enjoy theatre together. While we couldn't gather in person very much last year, it was wonderful to see many of you at our virtual board meetings.

[» More CCC Info Here](#)

This year I hope you will participate in fundraisers, attend board meetings, serve on a committee, and get to know your fellow theatre boosters. Opportunities abound - please join us!

Jill Dunning-Harris, CCC President



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Upcoming Dates

August

- 2021 *Student Arts Showcase* 7 p.m. 8/27 & 8/28
- Membership Drive - Early-bird perks end 8/31

September

- *Chicago* Audition Videos due 9/1
- Minnetonka Theatre Merchandise Sale Opens 9/8
- Student Theatre Interest Meeting 3 p.m. 9/9

October

- Minnetonka Theatre Merchandise Sale Closes 10/2
- Tech Saturday - CCC Lunch 10/30
- Theatre Merchandise Delivery 10/30
- Orpheum Theatre Tickets for *Come from Away*, *Hadestown* and *The Prom* available with special pricing in October

November

- *Chicago* Opens 11/6
- Winter Play & One Act Auditions 11/14

December

- *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* Opens 12/4

LOOK BACK TO SOMETHING ROTTEN!



"It's such a delight/There's nothing quite like a musical." And there's nothing quite like putting on a musical outdoors, as Minnetonka Theatre did this May with their production of *Something Rotten*.

Jason Elyea-Wheeler '21, who played William Shakespeare, said that "Even though it's more classically accurate to the times of Shakespeare, performing outside was wildly different from our main stage shows. Top of the show was in broad daylight, and we could see the entire audience! Act 2 rolls, and it got dark! It was a whole new experience from walking out on stage an hour ago. The lights are up, it's a little colder, and bugs! Nothing prepared us for all the bugs flying around the lights. But we had a great time performing in the purple parking lot."

Photography by Amy Jore

Crew member Spencer Ammon '22 talked about the differences with stage lighting.

"Working this show was interesting. We had to consider how the lighting would change as the sun went down. At times it was difficult to see. One interesting thing to notice was how lighting the show during the day was totally different than at night. You can really see how the lights affect the tone and mood of the show at night. Battling the sun was a challenge and a huge learning experience for me."

"I definitely wasn't anticipating how much the weather and outside elements played a role in our performance," said Hailey Guptail '23, one of the five minstrels. "When you're on main stage, props don't move due to a wind gust! It was exciting not knowing what would happen, and then trying to figure out how your character would adjust to that in a split second. Rain, wind, heat and all, I still wouldn't change anything about the experience!"

Spotlight evaluators agreed that *Something Rotten!* was something special. Minnetonka Theatre's production of *Something Rotten!* received 21 Spotlight awards including Outstanding Achievement in Musical Theatre. The Spotlight Education program "honors high school musicals and students by formally recognizing the extraordinary achievements...onstage and offstage."

A revival of this magical, must-see musical is planned for the summer of 2022 at Theatre L'Homme Dieu! Trent Boyum explains: "In the summer of 2019 the MHS production of *Bright Star* was invited to perform at the venue (the first and only high school group ever!) It turned out to be an unforgettable experience for cast, crew, and staff, spending a week together learning and having fun while sharing our production with the Alexandria community. TLHD loved it so much they've invited us back for 2022!" *Something Rotten!* will be performed at TLHD July 12-17, 2022.



Photography by Diana Klein

The CCC provided the customary Tech Saturday Lunch to the cast, crew and staff with a mountain of grab and go treats.



Photography by Amy Jore



Photography by Amy Jore



CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2021



Photography by Amy Jore

The Curtain Call Club hosts an annual event celebrating the high school theatrical accomplishments of the graduating seniors. This year's theme, A Night of Stars, was held on June 1 on the main stage and live-streamed for the Minnetonka Theatre community.

Upon their arrival, seniors walked the red carpet and were photographed by our very own paparazzi, Amy Jore and Laura Ammon. They enjoyed a delicious dinner from Mandarin Yang, followed by dessert graciously provided by parent volunteers. Parents joined their seniors for dessert and to watch the program.

Just like the real Tony Awards, guest hosts Noah Howe '20 and Mike Kingston '20 started off the program with a hilarious song--original lyrics set to "Sincerely, Me" from *Dear Evan Hansen*. Speakers for the evening included CCC President Jill Dunning-Harris and board member Cari Lindberg, who presented the 2021 Senior Awards.

The Minnetonka Theatre Curtain Call Club Senior Award is available to any MHS senior who has participated in at least one theatre production (cast, crew, front of house or pit orchestra) during their high school career. The award is not about how many lead roles received or how many shows they were in; it goes to students that contributed to the Minnetonka theatre program in other ways, including volunteering, working with the elementary programs, or by the example they set for other students. These applications were scored blindly by a panel of Curtain Call Club members, based solely on the quality of the answers given.

This year the Curtain Call Club Senior Award was presented to the following students as pictured above (L-R): Vera Shipley, Chloe Stromberg, Virginia Morrow, Caitlyn Carroll, Grace Brabec, Jenna DeJong, Lena Pak, Dominic Bradburn, Tessa Ramsden, Maryn Reader, Ella Van Engen, Jason Elyea-Wheeler, Nate Turcotte, Henry Olig, Truman Klein and Jason Kizilos.

A new award was also presented this year. Each applicant is required to answer the question: "If you could present this award to a senior other than yourself, who would it be and why?" This question is really about the spirit of Minnetonka Theatre. Which students which made the biggest impact with their peers? Who do the students look up to? After reviewing the applications, the panel thought it was important to recognize two individuals whose names that kept coming up over and over again: Dominic Bradburn and Vera Shipley.

The program included a video compilation of heartfelt tributes ("Tonka Tonys"), presented by past and present theatre students, to each senior. The evening concluded with a highlight video featuring the past four years of productions and a montage of each senior's favorite moments.

The Senior Celebration Co-Chairs, Rina Kizilos and Janice Elyea-Wheeler are grateful for the many volunteers who helped make the event a success. It was a wonderful night celebrating each senior, the performers as well as the technical, stage, pit orchestra, front of house, costume, make-up and hair crews that make Minnetonka Theatre so special.

See the Class of 2021 Senior Reflections on page 7 for the impact of theatre on some of our graduates.

SUMMER CAMP AT THE THEATRE

In June, Minnetonka Theatre hosted its annual summer camp. This year's theme was Broadway Rocks! and featured music from renowned rock and roll Broadway musicals. This year, 69 students participated and performances were recorded and provided to parents.

Jane Williams '22 and camp leader provided a description of Minnetonka Theatre Summer Camp, "Minnetonka theatre summer camp is a great opportunity for kids to connect and interact with each other while experiencing what it is like to be on stage as a performer. It has many of the perks of theatre such as learning songs and dances as well as playing games and performing for friends and family. Camp takes place towards the end of June and is available to anyone entering fourth to ninth grade. Apart from being a fun summer activity for campers, it is also a wonderful opportunity for high school students who are involved with the theatre department to volunteer and experience leadership while staying connected to their community during the summer season."



ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

Q&A WITH EMMY NOMINEE JOE HOLDMAN!

MHS grad Joe Holdman '09 has been nominated for an Emmy for Outstanding Lighting Design/Lighting Direction For A Variety Series - 2021 for his work on *Dancing with the Stars*. The Creative Arts Emmys will take place over four ceremonies in September. The Curtain Call Club caught up with him to find out more about this talented alum.

Were you on crew in high school? What was your favorite Minnetonka show that you worked on?

I was! I actually started doing crew in middle school (at MME). I was onstage in a couple of shows, I think...playing Bundles McCloskey in our 8th grade production of *Annie Jr.* was the highlight of my acting career. I tried crew as well and liked that much better. Believe it or not, I was on the sound crew for every show – I didn't touch lighting until college. I was behind the sound console for most of them. I think my favorite show might be *Jekyll & Hyde*. It was my first show behind the sound console, and one of the bigger ones I remember doing. The music was great too!

Did you continue your theatre education after high school?

I did – I studied theatre design at Viterbo University in La Crosse, WI. It was a small theatre program, so the tech students had to do a bit of everything to keep the productions afloat. I got thrown into some lighting projects while at school, and combined with a side job lighting terrible 80s cover bands, I really got hooked on lighting.

Where did you start out and how did you get your foot in the door in Hollywood?

After college, I spent a couple of years bouncing around the Midwest working on whatever I could find – theatre, corporate shows, pushing road cases at festivals, whatever. I really wanted to get into lighting music, though, so I moved to Los Angeles to give that a try. Thankfully, I found a full-time job with a lighting production company out here, and while working there I made some connections that allowed me to jump into a freelance career. Since then, I've been able to find enough work to keep busy, which I'm very thankful for!

Where do you get your inspiration from?

I'm actually not sure how to answer that, ha! My specific job is as a lighting programmer, so I sit at a console and combine the desires of the lighting designer / creative team / artist / production with what my own impulses might be for whatever we're lighting. I have to sit equally in two different worlds... the Creative: thinking about what we want things to look like; and the Technical: figuring out how to implement the creative and ensure that it plays back accurately during the show. I don't think of myself as seeking inspiration, as I'm not actually innately creating anything...instead, I'm responding to whatever content I'm lighting – music, dance, someone speaking on a stage, etc. – and deciding how I can help them tell their story or convey their message. I suppose, in short, I could say that I'm inspired by the music or artist that I'm working with.

What has been your favorite show to work on so far and why?

I really enjoy working on *Dancing with the Stars*. It's a great production team and crew, and the atmosphere on set is always really positive and fun. There's a good variety of music to play around with, and you can't beat the energy of a live show!



What's the hardest part of your job? What's the most fun?

I think the most difficult part of my work is keeping myself engaged and feeling creative for the entirety of a show. Not only can the days get very long (caffeine is a must), but the productions themselves can stretch on for weeks and months on occasion. On these longer shows, you might do 10-15 musical performances per episode across 10-15 episodes in a season. It can get challenging trying to come up with new combinations of looks, keep things interesting and fresh and different while still using the same lighting rig. The best part of the gig is when I get to program to music I really like or can have fun with. I have a musical background, so I approach programming as another sort of musical instrument. If the song is good, and I can bop along to it, I'll have a great time.

Joe Holdman, Continued on page 5.



Photo courtesy of Wendy Holdman

Joe Holdman, Continued from page 4.

Any advice for our students looking into this career field?

Be nice! Be the person who volunteers to help, the one who shows up, has a positive attitude, and gets the work done. Never be afraid to admit when you don't know something. You never know who you're working with... the gal you're running cable with today could be your boss tomorrow. Try to learn about other folks' jobs. At the end of the day, remember that you're all on the same team, trying to successfully execute a production.

Are you going to the Emmys and do you have your acceptance speech ready?!

Oh man – I'm actually pretty sure I have a show the night of the Creative Emmys ceremony (the non-televised night that they do all the lesser-known Emmy categories). But even if I was there, and won, and had to go up on a stage...I think I'd be too petrified to speak, being on the wrong side of the lights!



Joe working in Los Angeles

Photo courtesy of Wendy Holdman

STAFF HIGHLIGHT NANCY FARGO, RESIDENT MAKEUP DESIGNER

Photos courtesy of Nancy Fargo



If you ever wondered how that beast or elderly person could actually be a high school actor, you have witnessed the backstage magic of the Minnetonka Theatre resident make-up designer, Nancy Fargo.

Nancy is retiring from Minnetonka Theatre this year and she leaves a wonderful legacy of theatrical artistic excellence as well as many inspired students. Trent Boyum, Artistic Director comments, "I've personally seen students sit in her make up chair and have an 'ah-ha moment' once they see themselves made up as their character. They see themselves in the mirror before she begins and the character they are playing when she is through."

Mama Fargo, as she is known to students, has been a positive presence for years. "She really helped to increase my confidence in my makeup skills," says Ella Stefan '19. "She also was one of the main people who supported me in my dream of being a makeup artist after high school and gave me the encouragement I needed to chase after that dream."

Nancy started her Minnetonka Theatre career in 2008 when her son Ryan was a freshman. Her first project was a tattoo on a sailor's belly in *South Pacific*, and she has worked almost every Minnetonka Theatre show since then. One of her proudest and most fulfilling moments was for *Phantom of the Opera*. "I had to design the Phantom's scar and it was quite a process, but it turned out great. The first full dress rehearsal that we saw him remove his mask and his tortured face looked so horrid under the lights (which is what we were going for) was very fulfilling and worth all the hours that went in to that creation," remembers Nancy.

The entire theatre family will miss seeing Nancy regularly backstage, but she plans to stay connected to our community by volunteering to help wherever she can. Says Nancy, "I'm not ready to say a hard goodbye yet, just so long for now!"



Nancy and Ryan McCartan
Phantom of the Opera 2011

THE
MYSTERY CAFÉ

themysterycafe.com

WHO DUNNIT?

Join us on October 17 to discover who the culprit is, at what is sure to be a hilarious night of interactive dinner theatre. The evening is currently being planned by the CCC in partnership with The Mystery Cafe. Location to be announced.

Stay tuned for more details!



2021 STUDENT ARTS SHOWCASE

Joe Harris and Hannah Seeman,
Student Directors

In the summer of 2019, incoming seniors Emma Tripp and Gabby Jore created a student-led cabaret with the intention of featuring every actor who auditioned as a means of showcasing their talent.



Photo courtesy of Janice Elyea-Wheeler

Pictured above are just some of the 22 talented actors that will be performing in the Student Arts Showcase.

This year we have the honor of directing the Student Arts Showcase with the same intention in mind. Every actor has the opportunity to take the spotlight and perform songs of their choice from musicals like *Hairspray*, *Rent*, *The Prom* and more. Working alongside the actors, we've seen the powerful community that's been built from everyone's shared love for theatre. It's been incredibly empowering to see this passion from each student from a director's point of view. It's also been fun collaborating with everyone as it has brought a new perspective not only to us as directors but also to the actors who get their opportunity to shine.

Admission is free, but free will donations will be accepted at each performance so we can continue to do what we enjoy, performing! The Student Arts Showcase will be held on Friday, August 27 and Saturday, August 28 at 7 p.m. at the Minnetonka Theatre Arts Center. We hope to see you all there!

CCC FALL MEMBER DRIVE IS HERE

There are many ways to support Minnetonka Theatre, and membership is one of the best ways nurture the place where our students have the opportunity to grow creatively, learn new skills and experience the joys found within a theatre family.

- Become an active part of the theatre community, learn about volunteer opportunities and receive invitations to CCC member-only events.
- Access to CCC board meetings, and opportunities to participate and help guide CCC initiatives.
- Each member receives recognition in show programs.

[Click for CCC Website](#)

If you join or renew your membership by **August 31st**, you will have access to advance season ticket sales!!

JUST ANNOUNCED!

Become a CCC Member by August 27th and receive priority seating at the 2021 Student Arts Showcase on Saturday August 28th!

Membership Levels

PRODUCER	\$1,000+
DIRECTOR	\$500 - \$999
DESIGNER	\$300 - \$499
CHOREOGRAPHER	\$200 - \$299
HEADLINER	\$50 - \$199
PATRON	\$25 - \$49

Producer benefits include two free tickets in Directors Row to opening night of *four* main stage and studio theatre productions!

NEW THIS YEAR

Director benefits include four concessions gift bags!

See Broadway Shows!

Orpheum Theatre in Minneapolis
Friends of the CCC Pricing
Save the Dates!

Tickets for all three shows
available in October

<p>Wednesday January 19</p> <p>\$58 & \$38</p>	<p>Sunday March 20</p> <p>\$38</p>	<p>Sunday April 17</p> <p>\$38</p>
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REFLECTIONS FROM THE CLASS OF 2021



The past four years in theatre have been the reason I've made some of my closest friends and I cannot thank Minnetonka Theatre enough for that. The memories I was able to make in my time here have made me feel so much joy and I will definitely hold them close to my heart as I go off to college.

Ella Van Engen

Theatre has provided me a community that is united not only under common interests, but common goals. I will always remember how theatre fosters interpersonal relationships in a way that nothing else can; a group of individuals with multifaceted interests and talents that harmonize to create art makes for an empowering environment that offers the opportunity to truly feel connected.

Caitlyn Carroll



I feel so incredibly privileged and grateful to have been a part of such an outstanding community. If it were possible, I would want to go back and do one performance from every single show that I've been a part of, starting all the way back with *Evita* to present day *Something Rotten*. Of course I have favorite shows, but it's too hard to pick just one! Every show had its own charms and quirks that made it so much fun.

Jason Elyea-Wheeler



The thing I will remember most about Minnetonka Theatre is the professionalism it instills in its students. Each day we are encouraged to go out of our comfort zones. As a result of that bravery we are able to grow as a community and put on productions that never fail to amaze audiences. Because of this, we are better prepared for our future and more eager to put in the work because we all know how well it pays off. I will never forget the thrill of opening night when we all get to come together and celebrate all our hard work.

Maryn Reader

One aspect of Minnetonka Theater that I will always cherish is the incredible community of people that make our shows shine. I have met some truly amazing people through the theater program, many of whom will be lifelong friends of mine. The talent present in the cast, crews, and leadership of each show create a truly magical experience each time, and I couldn't be more grateful to have been a part of it!

Truman Klein



Theatre has been the place in high school where I have made some great friends and felt comfortable to truly express myself. I always looked forward to going to the Arts Center after school and having fun while working on an amazing show! The experiences I will remember the most were almost always in the dressing rooms during tech week and performances, chatting and spending time with my friends.

Tessa Ramsden

Minnetonka Theatre to me is not about the audience or even the performance itself; it is about the people. Theatre has introduced me to a completely different group of people than those I encounter in the academic setting of the rest of the school. They are loud, eccentric, and overflowing with personality, and greet friends and strangers alike with huge hugs (I still haven't caught on to that part). I am proud and honored to have been part of this community, and I will carry my experiences in Minnetonka Theatre with me for the rest of my life.

Nate Turcotte



Minnetonka Theatre has been such a substantial part of my life since elementary school, and I am so thankful. It has been such a safe space for me to grow as a person because of my kind and supportive peers. I think I will remember little moments with older peers the most because they taught me to push myself, while still being kind to myself in the process. If I could do a show over again, I would choose *Beauty and the Beast* because that was the first show I did with both of my little brothers.

Greta Lindberg

Minnetonka Theatre has changed my life. Meeting all of the wonderful people here has given me the courage to explore singing which is one of my now favorite things to do, and it's where I've met most of my best friends. Theatre has given me a lot more confidence in talking to people and socializing. I'll always remember playing guitar hero with crew before all of our *Mary Poppins* shows... there were so many bonds built there.

Henry Olig



Minnetonka Theatre really sparked my love of stage management and technical theater. Since first working backstage as the student director of *On The Town* I have tried to take any tech theater opportunity I could. I have loved being able to work backstage on the many different shows over my four years. If I had to do any show over again I would do *Bright Star* as I think it is the most beautiful show we have done and the fun I had working backstage. Because of Minnetonka Theatre I am so excited to be going to college to major in stage management and hopefully build a career as a professional stage manager.

Dominic Bradburn



In my four years in Minnetonka Theatre I have felt so loved and looked after. The Minnetonka Theatre community is the most accepting group in the high school. As a multicultural student I have never felt more loved and accepted anywhere else. In the past four years, I have seen this community include everyone no matter their differences.

Jason Kizilos

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

OUR 2021-2022 SEASON IS HERE!

Although we've had plenty of ups and downs these past many months, we are thrilled to get back to a full year of amazing shows at Minnetonka Theatre. As we return indoors to the Arts Center, we are excited to present some of the most popular Broadway shows of all time...

Chicago has everything that makes Broadway musicals great: a universal tale of fame and fortune, one showstopping song after another, and the most astonishing dancing you've ever seen. The show will open November 6, 2021.

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat is the world's most beloved family musical. This timeless story of jealousy, forgiveness and hope will come to life again this December on the Arts Center Main Stage.

Circle Mirror Transformation will be our 2022 One Act production; it follows the lives of a handful of small-town Vermont residents who gather each week for an acting class where hearts are quietly torn apart, and tiny wars of epic proportions are waged and won.

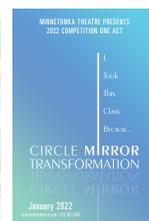
Clue will be live on stage! Murder and blackmail are on the menu when six mysterious guests assemble for a night they'll never forget! Inspired by the classic board game, Clue is the ultimate whodunit that will leave you dying of laughter and keep you guessing until the final twist.

Mamma Mia! is the mega-hit Broadway musical about a daughter's dream, a mother's secret, and a trip down the aisle you'll never forget! Mamma Mia is our number one most requested show by students and their families - and we will finally bring this blockbuster show to the Arts Center Stage in spring 2022!

Minnetonka Theatre's 2021-22 season will feature the best of Broadway, and we can't wait to welcome our students and audiences back for an unforgettable year of theater.

See you in the lobby,
-Trent

Minnetonka
Theatre
2021-2022
Season



WAYS TO SUPPORT MINNETONKA THEATRE

Theatre Merch Coming Soon!

Fall Ordering Window starts September 8;
Goods available for pick-up, October 30.

New styles will be available!



Last year's styles shown

FOLLOW US

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Click for CCC Website

mtkatheatreccc.org

WATCH FOR OUR FUNDRAISERS

Theatre Merchandise Sale Opens Sept 9

Mystery Cafe Oct 17

Broadway Shows at the Orpheum, Tickets available in October

BECOME A MEMBER

Join the CCC by August 31st and get access to season tickets before they go on sale to the public

BUY A SEAT IN THE THEATRE

Dedicate a personalized seat plaque to a loved one!

AMAZON SMILE

Name Minnetonka Theatre CCC as your Amazon Smile beneficiary and a percentage of your purchases will benefit the CCC