

Mythfest

2021

NEW WORKS FESTIVAL

SONGS & STORIES OF
TROUBADOURS,
HOMESTEADERS &
MYSTICS

2021
4/14 wed
-4/28
wed

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ASUMW

THE UNIVERSITY
of
MONTANA WESTERN

Mythfest 2021

***Billy's Death:* Tatum Higginbotham**

written by Oscar Giner, video editing by Tatum Higginbotham

***Family Heirloom-My Great-Grandmother's Story:* Judy Ulrich**

written by Judy Ulrich

***The Great Blizzard of 1856:* Miranda Zent**

written by JNO M. Brainard, from the *Annals of Iowa* (1894)

***Marie, by the Fire:* Samantha Gregg**

written by Miranda Zent, videography by Cynthia Gregg

***The Medium:* Annmarie Downey**

written by Miranda Zent

***The Troubadour:* Jeshua Stradley**

written by Miranda Zent, music composed/performed by
Jeshua Stradley

***Macbeth:* Jeshua Stradley**

lyrics by William Shakespeare, music composed/performed by
Jeshua Stradley

***Blooming Lilies on My Tombstone:* Tatum Higginbotham**

written by Tatum Higginbotham, video editing by Tatum
Higginbotham, assistant videography/photography by Courtney
Anderson and Taylor Lindeman

DIRECTOR/VIDEO EDITOR/MUSIC.....MIRANDA ZENT

FACULTY PRODUCTION ASSISTANT.....JUDY ULRICH

All performers filmed themselves

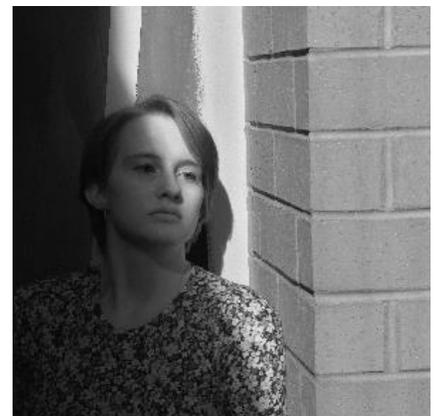
ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

ANNMARIE DOWNEY Annmarie is an Elementary Education major from Butte, Montana. Her favorite past performances are *Cinderella*, Jo March in *Little Women*, The Governess in *The Turn of the Screw*, Hunyak the Hungarian in *Chicago*, and Leisel in *The Sound of Music*. She also loves to read and write, and spend time with her family and her two cats, Loki and Pepper.



SAMANTHA GREGG is an English major from Athol, Idaho. Though she's only taken one high school drama class, Samantha is all for the dramatics. She has been a haunted house performer for over six years at Silverwood theme park, where she has enjoyed the opportunity to play many characters in settings designed to scare. Every role she plays is a potential source of fun.

CYNTHIA GREGG (videographer, *Marie, By the Fire*) is an English major from Athol, Idaho. She has performed with Missoula Children's theater and Silverwood theme park. She also plays the saxophone. She loves to be behind the camera and bring to life what she captures in film.



TATUM HIGGINBOTHAM is a Natural Horsemanship major and Biology minor from Nevada. Tatum's love for acting began as a child, and she continues acting today as well as freelance modeling. She is also a fitness instructor, equestrian, violinist and photographer. After college, Tatum plans to pursue veterinary science with an emphasis in research and equine nutrition.



JESHUA STRADLEY is a Business Major from Idaho Falls. His love for music naturally gave rise to a love of performing. Jeshua has performed in several productions, including title roles in UMW productions of *Bad Auditions*, and *The Giver*. After graduation, Jeshua will launch a custom guitar business in Idaho Falls.

JUDY ULRICH has taught Theater and Education at Montana Western for more than 30 years. Originally from the mid-west, Ulrich began *Family Heirloom: My Great-Grandmother's Story* many years ago when she happened upon her great-grandmother's name in an old Great Falls phone book. This has led to years of research and storytelling about homesteading and her Montana homesteading relatives.



DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Our word for theater comes from the Greek *theatron*, or the “place where the gods are seen.” People have always turned to theater as a means of studying human relationships and envisioning a shared and indefinite future. It’s a communal ritual to construct understanding and meaning, an art form that can’t exist in isolation. It flourishes through human connection, and by doing so, celebrates it.



Although theaters closed this year, our collective need for human connection became more urgent. UMW Theater staged its series of virtual performances throughout the year acknowledging that creating is a subtle act of defiance that brings us together in powerful ways.

These performers had the heroic spirit and energy to create in spite of the challenges of the past year. Working with tools on hand, they filmed themselves with computers and phones, lit scenes with ring lights and desk lamps, found their own costumes and converted their living spaces into virtual stages for weeks of rehearsals and filming for this event. Their performances celebrate the creative and innovative spirit of UMW students.

I thank these exceptional artists for joining me this semester. Thanks for your stories, your voices, and your wiliness to rip up your living spaces to film these performances.

I hope to meet you all in person very soon.

- Miranda

MIRANDA ZENT *has worked in theater and education for over 15 years. She has performed at New Dramatists in New York City, regional theater, and national and international venues. Her work focuses on the integration of myth, arts, and technology. She taught at Columbia College Chicago for several years before happily seizing an opportunity to move home to Montana. She is glad to be back.*

THANK YOU

Dillon's Bank of Commerce; ASUMW Student Senate;
Klaire Kramer, UMW Graphic Designer; Matt Raffety and UMW Communications;
Deborah Richardson and UMW Business Services;
Fine Arts faculty members Nathaniel Freeman, Larry Brazil and Bethany Mason;
Karl Ulrich; Cole Irwin; and Roxanne Engellant and the UMW Foundation.

Special thanks to Oscar Giner for his generous permission to use one of my favorite scripts, to Max and Thomas, and to my dad, Rod Zent, for advising-as usual.

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