

MESSIAH UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF
THEATRE AND DANCE
PRESENTS



THE SPRING SENIOR SERIES

AN EVENING OF PERFORMANCE
CREATED AND PRESENTED BY DEPARTMENT SENIORS

**“THE STORIES
WE TELL”**

CREATED BY
ADAHLEE SCHROEDER

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27
SUNDAY, MARCH 1

**“DRAMA
AND DRAGONS”**

CREATED BY
JULIA ITSON

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY, 27
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28

**“MORAL OF
THE STORY”**

CREATED BY
CLARA BELLOT
& ELEANOR MUND

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28
SUNDAY, MARCH 1

POORMAN BLACK BOX THEATER • CLIMENHAGA BUILDING

2025-2026 SEASON

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DEPARTMENT OF
THEATRE AND DANCE

Mission Statement: As a community of Theatre and Dance artists, we cultivate the stewardship of intellect and imagination in a forum for civic dialogue as we seek to understand our calling in Christ.

messiah.edu/departments/theatre

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“THE STORIES WE TELL”

Created by Adahlee Schroeder

Performances: Friday, February 27 & Sunday, March 1



CAST

Cecil Adahlee Schroeder
Hadrian Nathan Perlis

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director Ashley Sheffe
Stage Manager Kim Keiffer
Assistant Stage Manager Gloria Rosato
Scenic Designer Adahlee Schroeder
Costume Designers Adahlee Schroeder, Clara Bellot, Ashley Sheffe
Lighting Designer Adahlee Schroeder
Sound Designer Ben Vanderlin
Properties Masters Kim Keiffer, Adahlee Schroeder
Hair and Makeup Designer Ashley Sheffe
Fight Choreographer Adahlee Schroeder
Show Image Illustration Ashley Sheffe
Advisor Daniel Inouye
Chair of the Theatre and Dance Department Daniel Inouye
Technical Director Benjamin Roberts
Production Manager Patricia DuBois
Publicity Coordinator Abby Crispin
House Manager Sarah Dunn
Light Board Operator Raven Anderson
Sound Board Operator Sidney Handshue
Run Crew Austin Galbreath

A NOTE FROM THE CREATOR:

The Stories We Tell is an introspective play about how reading fiction can both support and hinder a person's growth. Imaginary friends and childhood memories go hand-in-hand as a young woman explores the connection between a cherished novel and her own past.

This play is based on a short story I wrote during my freshman year of college. It explores the links between trauma and escapism.

It has been a wonderful experience to work with Nathan Perlis (Hadrian) to create the script through seemingly endless rehearsal hours. Thank you for your patience and willingness to go along with my crazy ideas.

Thank you to Ashley for sticking with me through it all as a director and friend. I am grateful to all the people who have been a part of this process from the project advisor, Daniel Inouye, to my amazing stage manager Kim Keiffer.

And last but not least, thank you dear audience for listening to the story we will tell.

Adahlee Schroeder, Creator

BIOS

Adahlee Schroeder (Cecil) is a senior theatre and English double major. Some other shows she was in were *By the Bog of Cats* (Catwoman), *Foreign Gifts* (Raya), and *Who Will Carry the Word?* (Hélène). She is grateful for the support of friends and family. A special thanks to God, the director, designers, and crew, without whom her senior show would most certainly not be the same.

Nathan Perlis (Hadrian) is a junior film and media arts major, with a theatre minor. He has performed in multiple Messiah theatre productions, including the student directed one-act *Trifles* (Sheriff Henry Peters), followed by the season shows *By the Bog of Cats* (Joseph Swane) and *Anything Goes* (Spit). As he moves toward his senior year and beyond, he hopes to better fuse his knowledge of film and theatre to tell more impactful and God-honoring stories.

“DRAMA AND DRAGONS”

Created by Julia Itson

Performances: Friday, February 27 & Saturday, February 28



CAST

Dungeon Master	Julia Itson
Barbarian	Anika Peterson
Bard.....	Nick Papa

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director.....	Julia Itson
Stage Manager.....	Kim Keiffer
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Gloria Rosato
Costume Designers.....	Julia Itson, Anika Peterson
Lighting Designer	Julia Itson
Sound Designer	Julia Itson
Properties Master	Julia Itson
Show Image Illustration.....	Arianna Lucatino
Advisor.....	Daniel Inouye
Chair of the Theatre and Dance Department.....	Daniel Inouye
Technical Director	Benjamin Roberts
Production Manager	Patricia DuBois
Publicity Coordinator	Abby Crispin
House Manager	Sarah Dunn
Light Board Operator	Raven Anderson
Sound Board Operator	Sidney Handshue
Run Crew	Austin Galbreath

A NOTE FROM THE CREATOR:

DRAMA AND DRAGONS was created as a love letter for those who sometimes lack the confidence to be their authentic selves. Growing up, I always felt a disconnect from society as someone who progressively found themselves drifting further away from the “norm.” Theatre, dungeons and dragons, and my friends have always served as part of my “escape” from society’s ideations of who I should become, creating a boundary between myself and the confidence I lacked to be authentic. But this mindset is restrictive, for not only myself but the people around me. So, no matter how scary the journey is, I believe it is important to be your full, authentic person. I hope this show brings you joy and encouragement to always be yourself. Let your freak flag fly!

Julia Itson, Creator

BIOS

Julia Itson (Dungeon Master) is a Messiah University senior studying a BFA in musical theatre. Julia’s most recent credits include *Nunsense* (Sister Mary Regina), *Anything Goes* (Erma Latour), *Tartuffe* (Cleante). Julia’s time at Messiah has been spent learning not only performance techniques but also gaining a love for the scene shop, leading to Julia’s interest in scenic carpentry and technical development. Blessing and thanks to Christ for this educational experience the past four years.

Nick Papa (Bard) is positively ecstatic to be performing in Julia Itson’s own production, *Drama and Dragons*. Before coming to Messiah University, he’d been doing theatre for 8 years. Nick performed in and around his hometown in Connecticut with his school and the YMCA. His favorites include *Clue* (Wadsworth), *Mary Poppins* (Bert) and *SpongeBob* (Patchy the Pirate). He is currently a junior computer science major which he hopes to pursue as a career while keeping theatre in his life.

Anika Peterson (Barbarian) is PUMPED to be a part of this whimsical and dork-tastic adventure! She is working towards a musical theatre BFA here at Messiah. You may recognize her from productions of *Nunsense* (Robert Anne), *Anything Goes* (FBI Agent/Featured Tapper), or *By the Bog of Cats* (Waiter). She would like to thank her friends, family, castmates, directors, and crew for their endless support. Let the dice roll!

SPECIAL THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thanks to...

- Michael Itson
- Daniel Inouye
- Ed Cohn
- Ben Roberts
- Tara Savarino
- Alan Howley
- Family and friends

This production features the following musical selections:

“The Adventure Song” from *Stranger Sings: The Musical*
Music & Lyrics by Jonathan Hogue

“Stick It to the Man” from *School of Rock*
Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, Lyrics by Glenn Slater

“Upgrade” from *Be More Chill*
Music & Lyrics by Joe Iconis

“Cool as I Think I Am” from *Nerdy Prudes Must Die*
Music & Lyrics by Jeff Blim

“Lost!” from *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*
Music & Lyrics by Rob Rokicki

“Hard to Be the Bard” from *Something Rotten*
Music & Lyrics by Wayne Kirkpatrick and Karey Kirkpatrick

“Gotta Get Out” from *Ordinary Days*
Music & Lyrics by Adam Gwon

“The Minstrel, the Jester, and I” from *Once Upon a Mattress*
Music by Mary Rodgers, Lyrics by Marshall Barer

“Two-Player Game” from *Be More Chill*
Music & Lyrics by Joe Iconis

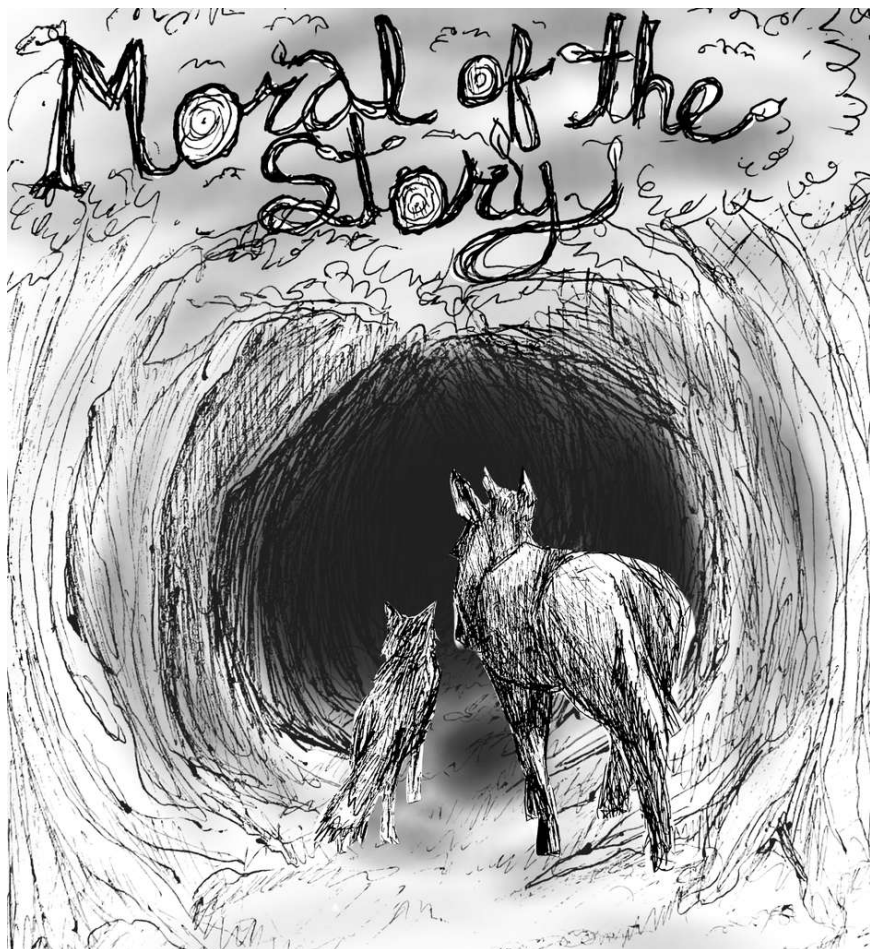
“Corner of the Sky” from *Pippin*
Music & Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz

“Freak Flag” from *Shrek: The Musical*
Music by Jeanine Tesori & Lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire

“MORAL OF THE STORY”

Created by Clara Bellot & Eleanor Mund

Performances: Saturday, February 28 & Sunday, March 1



CAST

Ass	Clara Bellot
Fox	Eleanor Mund
Aesop	Tyler Lynch

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Megan Eich
Stage Manager	Gloria Rosato
Assistant Stage Manager	Kim Keiffer
Costume Designers	Clara Bellot, Eleanor Mund, Ashley Sheffe
Lighting Designers	Ella Shane, Clara Bellot
Sound Designers	Eleanor Mund, Clara Bellot
Properties Masters	Clara Bellot, Eleanor Mund
Guitarist	Alden Walker
Show Image Illustration	Ashley Sheffe
Advisor	Daniel Inouye
Chair of the Theatre and Dance Department	Daniel Inouye
Technical Director	Benjamin Roberts
Production Manager	Patricia DuBois
Publicity Coordinator	Abby Crispin
House Manager	Sarah Dunn
Light Board Operator	Raven Anderson
Sound Board Operator	Sidney Handshue
Run Crew	Austin Galbreath

A NOTE FROM THE CREATORS:

Morality has been a confounding topic in humanity for all its existence. What is it? How do we decide? How do we put it into action? Eleanor and Clara invite you to join them on this journey, examining these questions through the lens of *Aesop's Fables*. What happens when the characters from these short stories, meant to wrap morals up in a neat bow, begin to ask these questions of themselves?

A passion project born out of a desire to dig deeper into the foundations of morality, Eleanor and Clara challenge the audience to use this opportunity to reflect on their own perceptions of morality and place in the world. But they leave it up to you to decide the moral of the story.

Clara Bellot & Eleanor Mund, Creators

BIOS

Clara Bellot (Ass) is a senior musical theatre major with a minor in education and is honored to be able to bring this labor of love to the Messiah stage! You may recognize her from past Messiah productions, such as *Clue* (Miss Scarlet), *Anything Goes* (Erma), and *Tartuffe* (Dorine). She extends love and thanks to Marmee, her sister, Nana, friends, and the wonderful people that made this show possible, most of all her co-creator, Eleanor. Enjoy!

Eleanor Mund (Fox) is so excited to finally put this story in front of an audience! They are a senior musical theatre major, having appeared in Messiah shows such as *Nunsense* (Sister Mary Hubert), *By the Bog of Cats* (Hester), and *Crimes of the Heart* (Meg), among others. They extend a huge thank you to their ever-supportive family, friends, and loved ones, their dedicated cast and crew, and most of all, their co-creator Clara.

Tyler Lynch (Aesop) is a sophomore musical theatre major. He's done five shows here at Messiah: *Shoeless Joe* (2024): *Lost In The O.Z.* (Tin-Man), *Blue Christmas* (Soldier), *Shoeless Joe* (2025): *This Joint' Is Jumpin'* (Jazz Bar Member), *Anything Goes* (Captain Reginald Strong) and *Clue* (Mr. Green). He has liked the process of getting to know Aesop's fables. Tyler is happy to be a part of his third senior show.

SPECIAL THANKS & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Clara and Eleanor would like to thank, first and foremost, the team that made this show possible, including but not limited to Gloria, Tyler, Ella, Dan, their professor and Senior Show advisor, and Ashley, the talented artist who designed their poster. They extend love and thanks to their family and friends for their endless support. Eleanor would also like to thank their partner, RJ. And finally last but not least, Aesop, for his fables that have so inspired them.

They would also like to credit in thanks the wonderful musicians and songs that are included in this show:

“Elsie” by Nickel Creek

“Rule #22 - If Trees Could Talk” by Fish in a Birdcage, Kristina Helene

“Disembodied Mind” by Sparkbird, Stephan Nance

“The Moon Will Sing” by The Crane Wives

“Rule #21 - Momento Mori” by Fish in a Birdcage

“Allies or Enemies” by The Crane Wives

“Liar” by The Arcadian Wild

“Mountain Banjo” by Rhiannon Giddens

NUNSENSE Book, Music and Lyrics by Dan Goggin, Directed by Ed Cohn

The Little Sisters of Hoboken, residents of Mt. St. Helens Convent and teachers at the school, have a problem. It seems Sister Julia (Child of God) has accidentally killed off 52 sisters with a botulism-laced soup. But even worse, the remaining nuns only had enough cash to bury 48 of the dearly departed; the other four are in the freezer. The Little Sisters must raise money for a proper burial before the health inspector comes!

Poorman Black Box Theater Oct. 2-4, 9-11 at 8pm.; Oct 5, 12 at 3pm; Oct. 9 at 10 am special school performance

CLUE Based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn, Written by Sandy Rustin, Additional Material by Hunter Foster and Eric Price, Based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture, Based on the Hasbro board game CLUE, Original Music by Michael Holland, Directed by Daniel Inouye

Based on the iconic 1985 Paramount movie which was inspired by the classic Hasbro board game, *Clue* is a hilarious farce-meets-murder mystery. The tale begins at a remote mansion, where six mysterious guests assemble for an unusual dinner party where murder and blackmail are on the menu. When their host turns up dead, they all become suspects. Led by Wadsworth – the butler, Miss Scarlet, Professor Plum, Mrs. White, Mr. Green, Mrs. Peacock and Colonel Mustard race to find the killer as the body count stacks up. *Clue* is the comedy whodunit that will leave both cult-fans and newcomers in stitches as they try to figure out...WHO did it, WHERE, and with WHAT!

Miller Theater Nov. 13-15, 21-22 at 8pm; Nov. 16, 23 at 3pm; Nov. 20 at 10 am special school performance

BLUE CHRISTMAS DANCE CONCERT Directed by Gregg Hurley

Messiah University dance students acknowledge the struggles and challenges of this broken and fallen world with a lament-driven dance experience. Reflect with us through the medium of dance in an intimate evening of words, music, and dance that will tenderly prepare us all for the joyous season of Advent.

Poorman Black Box Theater Nov. 20 at 7 pm

FALL SENIOR SERIES

An evening of performance created and presented by department seniors.

Boyer 131 Dec. 5 at 8 pm and Dec. 7 at 3 pm; Poorman Black Box Theater Dec. 12-13 at 8 pm

HUMANITIES SYMPOSIUM DANCE CONCERT Directed by Gregg Hurley

Dancing is a scholarly pursuit. Watch and consider how the dance program tackles the annual Humanities symposium topic in its own unique way.

Poorman Black Box Theater Feb. 20 at 4 pm; Feb. 21 at 8 pm

SPRING SENIOR SERIES

An evening of performance created and presented by department seniors.

Poorman Black Box Theater Feb. 27- 28 at 8 pm; March 1 at 3 pm

HANSEL & GRETEL By Engelbert Humperdinck, Directed by Damian Savarino

This magical opera, based on the Brothers Grimm story, boasts one of the most beautiful scores in the repertory and begins with two hungry siblings venturing into the forest looking for food. Their adventures include finding a house made of candy and outwitting a witch who wants to turn them into yummy desserts. Eventually Mother and Father find them safe and sound and the whole family rejoices in gratitude for being reunited. Come and witness one of the most enchanting operas ever written!

Miller Theater March 26 – 28 at 8 pm; March 29 at 3 pm

CULMINATION '26: SPRING DANCE CONCERT Directed by Gregg Hurley

Dancing is an artistic endeavor. Celebrate spring and the dance accomplishments of Messiah University's theatre and dance department in an offering of favorite dance pieces from the year, new faculty work, student adjudicated creations, and senior capstone projects all in one fun and glorious dance concert!

Miller Theater April 17 at 8 pm; April 18 at 2 pm

ONE-ACT PLAY FESTIVAL & SHOELESS JOE: A MUSICAL CABARET Directed by Daniel Inouye & Susan Hurley

A festival of student-directed and fully produced one act plays and the musical theatre cabaret, *Shoeless Joe!* Join us for several evenings of fresh, inventive, and innovative story telling.

Poorman Black Box Theater April 23-25 at 8 pm; April 26 at 3 pm