Performance Studies

Department of Communication

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PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE 2021-22

PERFORMANCE STUDIES IN THE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

The UNC Department of Communication is pleased to announce the inauguration of two new beautiful performance spaces, including the Media Arts Space @ 108 E. Franklin Street, and the newly renovated Black Box Theater in Swain Hall. These new facilities allow the department to re-engage with presenting a brand new season of performances. According to Department of Communication Interim Chair Renée Alexander Craft, “It’s exciting to see the department embark upon live public performance again. The Performance Studies season has been ‘off-line’ for the past several years owing to the ongoing realities of the global pandemic as well as the availability of feasible performance spaces. Performances like these honor and amplify the department’s commitment to engaged, critical, and creative scholarship.”

Season Overview

**OCT 13 at 5:00 p.m.** ***Footprints in the Snow*** - an in-process workshop by Kevin Pabst.

Media Arts Space @ 108 E. Franklin

**NOV 11-15 *Feminist World, 2091 or: How I Learned to Expertly Judge Inadvertent Human Intrusion at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant***by Chandler Classen

Black Box Theater @ Swain Hall

**DEC 9-12** ***Breaking Up With Jesus***by Joey Richards

Media Arts Space @ 108 E. Franklin

**MAR 4-7**  ***Beyond The Roots***by Imani Williams (honors thesis performance)

Media Arts Space @ 108 E. Franklin

**APR 7-24 at 7:30 p.m.** ***Cascade***by Jim Grimsley

Black Box Theater @ Swain Hall

The Performance Studies season is created by faculty and students within the Department of Communication, beginning with a free workshop at the new performance space in the Media Arts Space on Franklin Street, followed by works by UNC graduate students in the Fall, and an undergraduate honors thesis performance in the Spring. The final work of the year directed by Artist in Residence Joseph Megel, will continue our ongoing partnership with StreetSigns Center for Literature and Performance to feature ***Cascade***, the world premier play by playwright, novelist and UNC alum Jim Grimsley.

According to Joseph Megel,, “We are so looking forward to the new energy created by these exciting new spaces, bringing the potential of technology to the work of live performance and we are thrilled to see students creating new and inventive work once again, as we look forward to more work like this in years to come.” Megel is directing both “*A Feminist World, 2091 or: How I Learned to Expertly Judge Inadvertent Human Intrusion at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant” and “Cascade.”*

Renee Alexander Craft notes, “It’s especially rewarding to see works created by our undergraduate and graduate students who are exploring critical issues that define our current moment.”

Performance Studies Season Detail

**Oct 13, 5:30.** – ***Footprints in the Snow***

Media Arts Space @ 108 E. Franklin

by Kevin Pabst, UNC Graduate

Kevin Pabst’s grandfather died when he was four, leaving Pabst’s no memories of him. This performance attempts to stage a kinship across barriers of time and space by engaging poetry, music, and monologues.

**Nov. 11-15**. – ***Feminist World, 2091 or: How I Learned to Expertly Judge Inadvertent Human Intrusion at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant***Black Box in Swain Hall

Black Box Theatre in Swain Hall

By Chandler Classen, Ph. D. Candidate

Thursday - Saturday @ 7:30, Sunday at 3, Monday at 5.

In satirizing an *actual* Department of Energy report from the 1980’s that describes future threats to nuclear waste storage (and inevitably predicts the end of humankind as we know it), this absurdist play serves as a fun, political romp into the future. While at first glance this may seem like a generous understanding of a “based-on,” scenario, this play creates the scenarios as they are written, engaging the spirit of the scenarios and imagining how a group could conclude that these scenarios were worthy of the paper they were printed upon and the ink that produced these truly absurd scenarios.

***Dec. 8 - 12.*** *–* ***Breaking up with Jesus***

Media Arts Space @ 108 E. Franklin

By Joey Richards, Ph. D. Candidate

Thursday - Saturday @ 7:30, Sunday at 3.

Returning to the South after eight years away, Joey Richards is forced to confront and come to terms with a turbulent ex. In this autobiographical one-person show, Joey reveals the sometimes funny, sometimes heartbreaking journey of getting out of a toxic relationship with Jesus Christ. Grounded in small-town Georgia and blending comedy and tragedy, this is the story of how religion affects family, struggles with gender and sexuality, and issues of depression and anxiety. The performance is an attempt to address the question, "What happens when you realize that the Jesus-shaped hole in your life is really a scar?"

**March 3-7. -** ***Beyond the Roots***

Media Arts Space @ 108 E. Franklin

By Imani Willliams

Thursday - Saturday @ 7:30, Sunday at 3, Monday at 5.

Imani Williams boldly explores the reality of growing up while black in America through the eyes of a young girl living in the suburbs of Atlanta. An autoethnographic exploration of the impact of different events and how it shapes one’s future is both touching and captivating. Key moments are threaded together to show how pain, love, education, and personal reflection, encouraging one to use their voice and stand up for something bigger than themselves.

**April 7 – 24** *–* ***CASCADE***

Black Box Theatre in Swain Hall

By Jim Grimsley, UNC Alum

Directed by Joseph Megel

Co Production with StreetSigns Center for Literature and Performance & Process Series

Thursday - Saturday’s @ 7:30, Sunday @ 3:00.

Acclaimed NC playwright and UNC alumni, Jim Grimsley, takes us to the not-so-distant future where the climate crisis has reached its ultimate conclusion. Society is breaking down, resources are scarce, and people are on the move. Last season, we presented *Cascade* as a reading in-process. This season, we continue our partnership with StreetSigns to bring you the full production in two venues throughout the month of April.

**More Information**

Performance Studies in the Department of Communication at UNC is committed to offering students and faculty the opportunity to participate in a series of interrelated courses in textual study; oral history and ethnography; the theory of and practice in writing, designing, and directing performative events. Classroom experiences extend into a wide variety of performative opportunities at the co-curricular level, including seminars with visiting scholars; participation in regional and national conferences and festivals, campus performance/production work, joint ventures with local, regional, and nationally prominent authors, and social activism through performance work in the community.

For more information, you may contact Joseph Megel [megel@email.unc.edu](mailto:megel@email.unc.edu)

Please also visit the following links:

Website: <https://comm.unc.edu/undergraduate-studies/performance-studies/>