Creating the Musical Capstone Festival

ABOUT THE CAPSTONE PROJECTS
These are new musical developmental processes. The goal for each graduating writer is to create a one-hour showcase of their work, specifically around a musical they have written. The format of rehearsals and final performances will vary depending on the project, though all artistic and producing processes will be mentored by AMTP. Each project will rehearse for a total of 40 hours spread over the course of winter quarter (January 10 – March 9). Rehearsals may take place over Zoom or in-person, though any in-person activity will adhere to the strictest national, state, and university COVID guidelines established at the time. While memorization won’t be required for all projects, actors will be asked to learn music quickly and retain information in a short time.

CASTING INFO
All projects will cast from the winter general auditions. Callbacks will take place between November 3rd – 10th and likely either be on Zoom or through submitted videos. In-person appointments are possible, but not required. Specific instructions and materials will be sent with the callback lists. Students may be cast in more than one project and it is possible to be cast in the Capstone Festival and a Wirtz production or StuCo show. However, students may only be cast in two projects total in Winter Quarter 2022.

All current students are eligible to audition. We celebrate and encourage people of all ages, ethnicities, colors, cultures, national origins, genders, gender identities, sexual orientations, religious affiliations, and physical abilities to audition for the festival.

PERFORMANCES
All projects will perform twice between March 10 – 13, both in-person. One performance will be in the Wirtz Center in Evanston and the second in the new Wirtz theater on the Chicago campus. Performances will run like a festival, with a short turn around between each show. Please see the attached performance schedule for reference. Final performances may be video recorded and made available for a general audience to access and view.

THE PROJECTS:
- Illest Dance by Alex Manaa & Ruchir Khazanchi
- The Doors We Close by Trevor K. Band
- Abandon All Hope by Libby Hatton, Mitchell Huntley, & Samuel Perlman
- Home for the Summer by Brandon Acosta & Bennett Petersen
- Faith Lost / Faith Found by Sarah Geltz
### Creating the Musical Capstone Festival
**AMTP Dress Rehearsal & Performance Schedule**

**SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

All times are in Central Standard Time (CST)

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10/18/21 brb
Illest Dance

Lyrics and Book by Alex Manaa; Music by Ruchir Khazanchi and Alex Manaa
Directed by Samara Malik

SYNOPSIS:

"Illest Dance" follows the story of a young aspiring dancer, Bill Foster. Bill tries to find a balance between working to support himself, and committing to dancing. Unfortunately, one day Bill is involved in a tragic accident which leaves him unable to dance. Devastated but determined, he takes the first job he can get as a wine salesman. Bill excels and gets promoted, and out of elation he begins to miraculously dance -- however, he is unable and unwilling to stop. When a doctor tells him he must forcefully stop or dance to death, Bill is forced to choose: trade the life he thought he’d have for stability, or risk everything for one last chance to do what he loves.

"Illest Dance” explores the struggles of being working class and overcoming barriers to achieve one’s dreams, and what happens when forced to choose between our livelihood and our passion.

CHARACTERS

BILL FOSTER (Baritenor): An African-American man in his early-to-mid 20s. Bill is an aspiring dancer, but seems to be chained to his menial jobs as he is living paycheck to paycheck. Bill’s life turns upside down when he suffers a life-changing injury that leaves him unable to dance.

JENNY GOMEZ (Mezzo): A Latinx woman in her early-to-mid 20s. Jenny is a college student who aspires to become an educator. As Bill’s partner, she tries to strike a balance between supporting Bill’s ambitions, and being realistic. Jenny struggles with guilt when Bill’s life takes a turn for the unexpected.

RAFI CASTILLO (Tenor): A Latinx man in his early-to-mid 20s. Rafi is Bill’s lifelong childhood friend. Rafi struggles with feeling indebted to Bill and others in his life who have shaped him into the person he is, and is constantly trying to repay others for what they have done for him.

DR. POMFREY (Alto): A physician of Middle Eastern descent in their late 30s to mid 40s. Dr. Pomfrey is jaded with pessimism over others’ pursuits of what can be perceived as unrealistic goals, and is content with choosing stability, as they know all too well what an unstable life is like.

JUSTINE A. WAGNOR (Alto): A French business woman and a perfectionist; Bill’s eventual no-nonsense boss.

CLARENCE (Baritone): A dancer who comes from wealth; used to getting his way. He does not like Bill.

ENSEMBLE: Will play various roles: community members; dancers; coworkers. Will have a strong presence throughout the show. NOTE: Some characters may double as minor characters.

Efforts will be made to ensure casting is as true to the character’s ethnicities/cultural identities as possible, but everyone is welcome to audition!
At the center of a labyrinthine enchanted forest sits the Juncture: an ancient tree that – once every thousand years – grants the ability to change a past decision. When repairwoman Flora finds the only map to the Juncture, she teams up with the magical Aldus to ward off the forest’s magic and make it to the tree unscathed. But the Juncture can only grant its magic to one person – and Flora and Aldus aren’t the only ones after it. As opposing forces race through the forest, they must all wrestle with the questions: how do our biggest regrets influence the people we become? And what does it truly mean to change the past? Should we?

First rehearsal: February 6 (Week 6)
Tech & Performances: March 6–12 (Week 10)

A draft calendar is available here. We have attempted to avoid conflicting with major processes as much as was possible.

Logistics

We are shooting for an off-book, lightly staged reading. Actors will be seated on-stage with scripts when not in a scene, but will be expected to be comfortable performing scenes and/or songs without their scripts in hand.

Actors may each be called for no more than 40 hours of rehearsal. Dress rehearsals and performances do not contribute to these per-actor maximums.
The Doors We Close

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

*Pronouns refer to those of each character. Actors of all gender identities are encouraged to audition, and in some circumstances, the writer may be open to revisions to reflect actors’ identities.*

FLORA (she/her) 20s, not magical. Quick-thinking. A repairwoman. Seeks to find a connection to magic, and through it, her deceased, magical twin sister. Good with a sword.

ALDUS (he/him) 40s, magical. Grumpy, but also a softie. AWOL from the King’s army. Seeks to rekindle the love he lost due to his conscription as a young man.

TEMIER (any*) Ageless, magical. A chaotic fae inhabitant of the enchanted forest. Thrives on mischief, but ultimately listens to their conscience. Eventually. Knows more than they let on.

tuh-MEER

WITCH (he/him) Ageless, powerfully magical. Stoic and grounded. Protector of the enchanted forest and the Juncture. Seeks to create a better world.

LOT HAR (she/her) 40s, magical. General of the King’s Army. Will stop at nothing to carry out her goals. Seeks greatness and victory.

JEANETTA (she/her) Purveyor of magical relics. A friend and mentor of Flora’s. How she procures her goods is a trade secret.

YOUNG FLORA (she/her) 7, not magical. Ada’s twin sister. Energetic. Wants nothing more than to be magical, but learns she’s not able to use magic and likely never will be able to.

ADA (she/her) 7, magical. Flora’s twin sister. People-pleaser. Eager and born connected to magic; unaware how difficult it can be to control.

MARKET-GOERS / ARMY OFFICERS / INHABITANTS OF THE FOREST

Vocal parts are not listed because keys and ranges may be adjusted based on actors. *We are shooting for a cast of 6-8 actors, making use of doubling.* This number may vary, but that is our target so all cast members are featured.

*Temier’s casting is open to all genders. The script refers to Temier with gender neutral (they/them) pronouns; adjust pronouns based on casting.*
Abandon All Hope

A Musical Comedy
(AMTP Senior Capstone; Winter Week 10)

Music/Lyrics/Book by
Libby Hatton, Samuel Perlman, Mitchell Huntley

Directed by
Madeline Oberle

SYNOPSIS
Satan dips and Dante finds himself in charge of Hell. And it only gets weirder from there. With Satan's old stage manager Lucy showing him the ropes, the Betrayal Trio seeking to overthrow him, and every dead person Dante touches “reawakening,” all hell breaks loose in this adaptation of Dante’s Inferno.

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

The Poets
DANTE (he/him; Tenor) — Stubborn poet from the 14th century. Main character syndrome.
POET DANTE (he/him*; Tenor or Sop w/ Mix) — Narrator of Inferno, keeps it moving.
VIRGIL (he/him*; Bari/Mezzo) — DANTE’s guide through Hell and **bestie**.

On Hell’s Payroll
SATAN † (he/him; Baritenor) — Director of Hell. Recently unfrozen. Wants a vacation.
LUCY (she/her; Alto) — SATAN’s SM.

Public Domain Villains of the Theatre (PDVT)
JAVERT (he/him*; Bari/Mezzo) — Hell’s Child Wrangler. [Speaks French]
MRS. LOVETT (she/her; Alto) — Hell’s Caterer.
CLAUDIUS (he/him*; Bari/Mezzo) — Leader of the group. Hell’s Fight Choreographer.

The Betrayal Trio
JUDAS (he/him; Tenor) — Betrayed Jesus.
BRUTUS (he/him; Bass) — Betrayed Caesar.
CASSIUS ‡ (he/him; Baritone) — Betrayed Caesar. How original of him.

The Damned
DAMNED 1, DAMNED 2, DAMNED 3, DAMNED 4 (potentially SSAA) — Hell’s Ensemble.

† These roles may track as a doubling.
* Can be played by actors not of the pronouns listed (secondary vocal types listed).

DUE TO TWO OF OUR WRITERS’ POSITIONS AS MDs, AAH REHEARSALS WILL NOT CONFLICT WITH SOMETHING ROTTEN! OR BIG FISH.
HOME FOR THE SUMMER
A New Musical
Music by Brandon Acosta  Lyrics by Bennett Petersen  Book by Juliet Huneke
Directed by Lucy Harrington

SYNOPSIS
After their first year at college, a group of high school friends return to their small, traditional town of Cedar Lake, Iowa. They thought they had left behind their mistakes, but when they find themselves back where they started, they are forced to revisit their old friendships, relationships, and identities. HOME FOR THE SUMMER follows Noah, a young gay man running from a life of repression without knowing what he’s running towards, and Alex, Noah’s cousin and best friend who fights to maintain her relationships with the people she loves the most. As they navigate the summer, this group of friends are confronted with the question - When fundamentally changed people return to a place that is always the same, is it worth it to adapt? Or easier to just run?

NOTES
Performances will be taking place either March 10th and 12th or March 11th and 13th with a dress rehearsal taking place earlier that week. HOME FOR THE SUMMER is a secondary process and will be rehearsing the second half of Winter Quarter, though a rehearsal schedule has not been set in stone. Actors can be cast in both HOME FOR THE SUMMER and one (1) other process, unless performances directly conflict.

CHARACTERS
Noah (he/him)
18, gay. Hyperactive, overthinking, a bit of a class clown. Not comfortable anywhere.

Alex (she/her)

Michael (he/him)
19, gay, deeply closeted. Charming, hometown hero. Attached to his hometown, and his masculinity.

Cameron (she/her)
19, straight. Michael’s twin sister. Farm chic sorority girl, very ingrained homophobia.

Ava (she/her)
18, queer/questioning. Cameron’s best friend. Life of the party. Quick talking and very understanding. In the process of discovering herself.

Ensemble
Various citizens of Cedar Lake, Iowa.

CONTENT WARNINGS: Homophobia
FAITH LOST / FAITH FOUND
Music, Lyrics, and Book by Sarah Geltz
Directed by Mantra Radhakrishnan

The Story
Ella is just finishing up her first year teaching fourth grade at St. Anthony, a Catholic School in Southern California. She is unexpectedly fired on the last day of school and quickly pinpoints her queerness as the real reason she was let go. Around the same time, she meets an individual named Sawyer, and the two begin dating. Ella's path forward in her career as well as her religious identity is largely influenced by this new relationship, and over the course of the summer, she learns how to grapple with her past and present as a means of shaping her future.

Character Breakdown

ELLA BENSON (she/her, 24)

SAWYER (they/them, 24)
Moved to LA to become a director, works at a coffee shop for now. Non-binary lesbian. Grew up in the Evangelical church, now identifies as atheist. Extremely sarcastic. Tells it like it is; a realist. Outgoing and confident. Big fire sign energy, probably a Sagittarius.

LEVI (he/him, 24)
Ella's best friend from college and current roommate. Bisexual. Non-practicing Jew. Teaches first grade at the local public school. The embodiment of joy. Always finds the positive side, even when there really isn't one. Loves making people laugh. Definitely a Leo.

JAMIE BENSON (she/her, 52)
Ella's mom who passed away two years prior and appears in flashbacks. The kindest woman you'll ever meet. Taught sixth grade at St. Anthony for 30 years. Had the relationship with her daughter most mothers can only dream about.

MR. MORRIS (he/him, 44)
The principal of St. Anthony. Believes he is the definition of “woke Catholic.” Energy is always at 110%. Hard to tell how genuine he really is. A people-pleaser to a fault.

ENSEMBLE (2-3 actors)
These actors will fill the roles of baristas in the coffee shop, performers at an open mic night, other teachers, and a general ensemble voice that is present throughout the show.

Rehearsal Schedule
The dates of this rehearsal process are very flexible, and we will work with actors to create a schedule that works around their other commitments, most likely spread out over the second half of winter quarter. Tech will be the week of March 7th with performances on Friday March 11 and Sunday March 13.