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PULP THEATRE: THE FAIRYTALE LIVES OF RUSSIAN GIRLS

By Robert W. Dalton

When the set designer, lighting director and the villain in Pulp Theatre’s production of “The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls” have a meeting, Joanna Burgess ’22 does all the talking.

That’s because Burgess, a physics and theatre double major from Clinton, South Carolina, has all three jobs.

“These are all things I have a passion for, and it’s been really fun,” Burgess says. “It’s been a lot of work, but we have a great crew that has helped make the vision a reality.”

Pulp Theatre is an Interim project that allows students to take the lead in all aspects of a production. The four-week term concludes with performances scheduled for 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday (Jan. 27-29) in the Sallenger Sisters Black Box Theatre inside the Rosalind Sallenger Richardson Center for the Arts. Performances are free and open to the public.

“The Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls” tells the story of Annie, a 20-year-old who returns to Russia to lose her American accent. She finds that her home country is filled with wicked witches and ravenous bears.

Burgess plays Baba Yaga, a witch. It’s her first time playing a “bad guy.”

“It presented a lot of challenges,” Burgess says. “It was a good lesson in acting.”

Annie Puckett ’24 and Nadia Drahun ’25 won’t be on stage during the production, but they did have a key role in getting the play there.

Puckett, a psychology major from Greenville, South Carolina, and Drahun, an undeclared major from Greenville, created a pronunciation guide for the Russian words in the play. Puckett, the dramaturg for the production, read through the script and picked out the Russian terms. She then enlisted Drahun, whose family moved to the United States from Belarus when she was 4, to translate.

Hailie Gold ’23, an English and theatre double major from Simpsonville, South Carolina, is directing the play. She says there have been some challenges, including having a lead actor test positive for COVID right out of the gate.

“We’re very fortunate to have people who are so dedicated to their craft,” Gold says. “I knew I wanted a play that would highlight our young women. Being able to present a vision that I believe in, a story that is colorful and fun that I can relate to and other young women can relate to, has been beautiful and sometimes unbelievable.”

PHOTO CREDIT: Ben Jordan/Pixelman Media.

SPRING PRODUCTION

“Pride and Prejudice”
A play by Kate Hamill, based on the novel by Jane Austen. Directed by Matt Giles ’07.
Jerome Johnson Richardson Theatre, April 21-23 and 27-30, 8 p.m.
Ticket information coming soon to:
“BEING MOVED: AN EXPLORATION OF ORGANIC MOVEMENT AND EXPRESSION,”
LED BY ROBIN LEVINE.

Feb. 25, 6 p.m.
Artist Talk
McMillan Theater

Levine will lead a conversation about her work, the importance of expressive movement and how it can be relevant to everyone. There will be a debut screening of INTERCONNECTED, an original dance theatre piece centered around mental health.

Feb. 25, 7 p.m.
Movement Workshop
Tony White Theater

Students will actively engage with movement as a language regardless of formal dance training or physical abilities. Levine will teach movement qualities and demonstrate how to apply them to thought patterns to effectively communicate a story, feeling or idea.*

Feb. 26, Noon
Organic Choreography
Tony White Theater

Levine will guide students through the movement creation process. She will help students with exercises and feedback to take their ideas and devise a short movement piece with a message. By the end of the workshop, students will have created something uniquely connected to themselves.*

*Students will be socially-distanced and movement will be self-contained.
“I WORK WITH CLAY.”
AMERICAN CERAMICS FROM THE HACKNEY-HAIGHT COLLECTION

Richardson Family Art Museum,
Feb. 8–May 22, 2022

“I Work with Clay” showcases utilitarian ceramic traditions and innovations over the past 60 years. Many potters, such as the Owens family of North Carolina’s Jugtown, and their cousin, Ben Owen III, have continued family traditions for generations. Cynthia Bringle has centered her working and teaching around the Penland School of Craft for over 50 years. Contemporary potters like Mark Hewitt and Matt Jones use an apprentice system, so new makers can learn their proven methods. Alex Matisse, who started using clay instead of the traditional painting materials of his great-grandfather, Henri Matisse, along with John Vigeland and Connie Matisse, have evolved East Fork Pottery from the studio to factory dinnerware production techniques. Taken together, this serves as significant source material for endless creativity and aesthetic achievement.

Collector’s statement
For more than two decades, we have treasured relationships with makers and the objects they make. We use all of our objects and feel a closeness to artists and the earth that comes with that (Jim Hackney ’77, Scott Haight).

Upcoming Talk:
Alex Matisse
6 p.m. on April 25 in the Sallenger Sisters Black Box Theatre of RSRCA.
“DR. FRANCIS ROBICSEK (1925-2020): THE ART OF COLLECTING”

Richardson Family Art Museum  
Feb. 8-April 30, 2022

“Dr. Francis Robicsek (1925-2020): The Art of Collecting” celebrates the life and legacy of Robicsek, whose generosity helped grow and develop the college’s fine arts collection over several decades. Best-known for being a world-renowned heart surgeon, Robicsek was an avid art collector and a true Renaissance man. Featured works from the collection, from pre-Columbian pottery to Chinese funerary urns, and from 17th-century Dutch painting to 18th-century English portrait painting, exhibit his flawless taste in collecting. Dutch paintings had had a special place in Robicsek’s heart, and it was his first emphasis in collecting after he came to the United States in 1956. He became interested in archaeology from the 1960s, when he worked to expand healthcare facilities and operations in Central American countries, including Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Belize and El Salvador. Robicsek authored five books on Mayan culture and art. Even so, Hungarian painting was a channel creating a tie between the college and the Robicseks.

Thanks to their generosity, Wofford had many opportunities to exhibit the family’s collections, including Dutch paintings, Spanish Colonial art, Russian icons and others for over two decades. The legacy of the Robicseks will continue to be evident in teaching and learning on campus and beyond.
Richardson Family Art Gallery
Feb. 1-March 4, 2022

This exhibition focuses on the deconstruction of gender, sexuality and relationships. Queer is an umbrella for anything that is not heteronormative, homonormative or cisgendered. The show is an insight to the different intricacies of being queer and the intersectionality of all the other identities that a person holds.
Interim at the Rosalind Sallenger Richardson Center for the Arts is an exciting time for students to explore beyond the traditional classroom. Dr. Gillian Young’s “Slow Fashion” course came together to host a clothing swap. Students were encouraged to bring a donation in exchange for a new “old” article of clothing.

This course was an immersion into the philosophy and practice of slow fashion. Slow fashion emerged as a reaction against fast fashion - the excessive production of inexpensive clothes fueled by rapid trend cycles that makes the fashion industry one of the leading threats to the environment (with 75% of its supply chain material ending up in landfills, for instance). In contrast, slow fashion advocates for sustainable practices like minimal production cycles and textile recycling, transparent manufacturing, the use of natural dyes and fabrics, and, in general, a more deliberate and intentional relationship to clothes.

In this course, students thought deeply about the act of getting dressed. In addition to studying and critically assessing models of sustainable fashion, students learned hands-on skills related to slow fashion, such as natural dyeing, fabric identification, basic mending, vintage sourcing and creating a capsule wardrobe, with opportunities for creative work influenced by exposure to textile artists. This course also engaged in slow fashion through the “slow” practice of research, with each iteration of the class anchored by a different research focus. During the Interim, the class focusing on indigo, an ancient dye with a powerful global impact and a particularly complex history in South Carolina.

Other interim courses at the Rosalind Sallenger Richardson Center for the Arts included “(Big) Book Club,” with Dr. Karen Goodchild, Chapman Family Professor of Humanities; “Roots of Meditation, Mindfulness and Self-Discipline,” with Dr. David Efurd, associate professor and chair of art and art history; “Argentine Tango and Culture,” with Maya Fein, assistant professor of theatre; and “Pulp Theatre,” with Colleen Ballance, professor and chair of theatre, and Daniel Day, associate professor of theatre.
CELEBRATION IN HONOR OF DR. PETER SCHMUNK

Reunion Dinner
May 6, 6 p.m.

Symposium
May 7, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Cocktail Reception
May 7, 5 p.m.