

OUR NORTHWESTERN DIRECTION

Annual Report 2016

Northwestern | SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION





OUR NORTHWESTERN DIRECTION

Erin "Mimi" Reininga's mother acted on Broadway, so Mimi's exposure to theatre started early and intensely. Yet when she chose to study at Northwestern's School of Communication, she found a community that could both challenge her perceptions of theatre and support her unique ideas.

"I really do believe that the people you're around will lead you in the right direction," the senior says. "Everyone here is forging their own path in this universe of theatre."

Mimi's new quest is to collaborate, experiment, and subvert as an artist—as she was asked to do when she played Thyona (above) in the 2016 Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts production of Charles Mee's *Big Love*.

The School of Communication is progressing forward and upward; our innovative undergraduate curriculum, expanding graduate and professional programs, enhanced state-of-the-art facilities, and visionary faculty set the course. Our generous donors are the wind in our sails.

Each program and person featured in this calendar has found a unique path, thanks to engaged alumni who fund research, curricular development, and growth. Through all our journeys, you move us in our Northwestern Direction.

Give every year, make a difference every day.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1 New Year's Day	2	3 Winter quarter classes begin	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 <i>Agamemnon, Louis, 2 p.m.</i>				

*Agamemnon, Louis,
7:30 p.m.*

*Chinese New Year
Agamemnon, Louis,
7:30 p.m.*

JANUARY



A SINGULAR DIRECTION

Garry Marshall created his own path to leadership. A 1956 alumnus of the Medill School of Journalism, he was a great friend to the School of Communication, generously contributing significant resources, time, and talent to build our community.

Marshall is best known for his landmark TV shows *Happy Days*, *Mork & Mindy*, and *Laverne & Shirley* as well as his blockbuster movies, including *Pretty Woman* and *The Princess Diaries*. He cut a familiar figure on campus, clad in purple and eager to dispense stories and advice with great warmth. Two of his children received degrees from the School of Communication, and one graduated from Medill; one of his granddaughters now attends Northwestern. Marshall very publicly credited the University with pointing him to success.

"I tell everyone that college is important," he told a crowd gathered last May at Pick-Staiger Concert Hall to screen his last film, *Mother's Day*. "In college, you can try things and fail. In real life, if you fail, they might fire you. Here, if you fail too much, they might kick you out, but it's better to fail here and then go get a snack at Norris."

A prolific writer, director, producer, and even actor, Marshall died in July 2016. His loss prompted an outpouring of tributes from his entertainment industry friends and acolytes as well as so many at Northwestern who witnessed his magnanimity firsthand. He will be greatly missed.

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
				Agamemnon, Louis, 7:30 p.m. <i>The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane</i> , Wallis, 7 p.m. Agamemnon, Louis, 7:30 p.m.	Agamemnon, Louis, 7:30 p.m. <i>The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane</i> , Wallis, 11 a.m. & 2 p.m. Agamemnon, Louis, 7:30 p.m.	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Agamemnon, Louis, 2 p.m. <i>The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane</i> , Wallis, 2 p.m.				Agamemnon, Louis, 7:30 p.m. <i>The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane</i> , Wallis, 7 p.m. Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m. Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m.	Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m. <i>The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane</i> , Wallis, 11 a.m. & 2 p.m. Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m.	12
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Urinetown, Barber, 2 p.m. <i>The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane</i> , Wallis, 2 p.m.		Valentine's Day		Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m.	Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m.	Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m.
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Urinetown, Barber, 2 p.m.	Presidents' Day			Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m.	Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m.	Urinetown, Barber, 7:30 p.m.
26	27	28				
Urinetown, Barber, 2 p.m. Danceworks, Louis, 2 p.m.		National Theatre Live: <i>No Man's Land</i> , Louis, 7 p.m.				

FEBRUARY



A COLLABORATIVE DIRECTION

Each winter, the School of Communication's Dance Program dazzles us with its collaborative cutting-edge showcase, *Danceworks*. Faculty and visiting artists work together to choreograph the show's individual pieces, all performed by students. In 2016 *Danceworks* featured five talented creators, including Tony Award winner Garth Fagan, best known for his groundbreaking work on *The Lion King*.

"It's such a delicious feeling to be out there flying and not worrying about where you're going to land," Fagan told students during a campus event last February. "Where else can you get that feeling? Standing still? No! And that's what's good about dance." With his assistant Natalie Rogers-Cropper, Fagan gave dancers an opportunity to experience flight (above) in his inventive work "Two Pieces of One: Green."

The program also included choreography by 2015 Guggenheim fellow Rosy Simas, Hedwig Dances artistic associate Maray Gutiérrez, Northwestern dance lecturer Jeff Hancock, and program director Joel Valentín-Martínez. "I believe having students engage with such renowned choreographers in the field allows the students to learn from a different point of view," says Valentín-Martínez, "and also to get a taste of what the professional world currently expects from a dance performer."

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
			Danceworks, Louis, 7:30 p.m.	Danceworks, Louis, 7:30 p.m.	Danceworks, Louis, 7:30 p.m.	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Danceworks, Louis, 2 p.m.						Winter quarter classes end
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Daylight saving time begins					St. Patrick's Day	Spring break begins
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
		Spring quarter classes begin	National Theatre Live: <i>Saint Joan</i> , 7 p.m., Louis	National Theatre Live: <i>Hedda Gabler</i> , 7 p.m., Louis		

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MARCH



A SCIENTIFIC DIRECTION

School of Communication professors regularly achieve excellence—and garner awards—for their groundbreaking work. As of fall 2016, the Department of Communication Studies includes six professors who as junior faculty won the National Science Foundation's prestigious Faculty Early Career Development (or CAREER) Award: from left, Madhu Reddy, Michelle Shumate, Darren Gergle, Leslie DeChurch, Brent Hecht, and Anne Marie Piper.

The NSF's most prestigious early-career award supports faculty doing outstanding research and offering excellent classroom teaching. It recognizes those most likely to build a lifetime of leadership in integrating education and research. The school's winners cover a broad range of specialties, from how we use computers to communicate to how multigroup teams collaborate. Communication studies winners of the NSF CAREER Award are rare enough, but six in one department is unprecedented—and illustrative of the direction the school is taking toward incorporating data science and computation into this expanding, innovative field.

"To have this many faculty in one place all having a CAREER grant, it's like a unicorn; it never happens," says Shumate, who completed her grant-based research last year. "We are the only place in the country with this many communication CAREER winners."

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S M T W T F S

1
2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 Palm Sunday 10 Passover begins at sundown 11 12 13 14 Good Friday 15

16 Easter 17 18 Passover ends at sundown 19 20 21 22

Fuente Ovejuna, Barber, 7:30 p.m.
Fuente Ovejuna, Barber, 7:30 p.m.

23 Fuente Ovejuna, Barber, 2 p.m. 24 25 26 27 28 29

Fuente Ovejuna, Barber, 7:30 p.m.
Waa-Mu Show, Cahn, 7:30 p.m.
Waa-Mu Show, Cahn, 7:30 p.m.

30

Fuente Ovejuna, Barber, 2 p.m.
Waa-Mu Show, Cahn, 2 p.m.

APRIL



AN EXPLORATORY DIRECTION

In *Another Way West*, the 85th annual Waa-Mu Show, a graduate student retraces her ancestor's journey on the Oregon Trail amid loss, love, and unanticipated awakenings. The production interwove the past with the present, the humorous with the tragic, and the inimitable experience of creating a new theatre work with our outstanding curriculum.

David H. Bell, the Donald G. Robertson Director of Music Theatre, has transformed the beloved student-run musical revue into an incubator process for writing, orchestrating, choreographing, producing, and performing an original book musical. While the last several years' shows have reflected this change, 2016's *Another Way West* was Waa-Mu's first foray into completely uncharted waters; the story was neither an adaptation nor based on actual events. The idea, along with all the effort and ingenuity that followed, was entirely the students' own. "There was no road map," says Bell. "It was an empty page."

Yet in three short quarters, a beautifully cohesive and imaginative new musical was created. Because of it, the roughly 200 students involved became more collaborative and creative—and thus better prepared for professional success.

"Every year we set the bar a little higher," adds Bell. "You have to keep having faith that it can always be better." Thanks to his tireless direction and our community's support, every year it is.

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Mother's Day Stick Fly, Louis, 2 p.m.		National Theatre Live: Amadeus, Louis, 7 p.m.		Stick Fly, Louis, 7:30 p.m.	Stick Fly, Louis, 7:30 p.m.	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Stick Fly, Louis, 2 & 7:30 p.m.					Ramadan begins at sundown	
28	29	30	31			
	Memorial Day					

MAY



A HOMeward DIRECTION

It appears that 2016 was the year of Seth Meyers. His television show, NBC's *Late Night with Seth Meyers*, garnered rave reviews for its pointed election commentary; he welcomed a new son; and he returned to his beloved Northwestern to accept an honorary degree and deliver the Commencement address in June. To borrow a phrase from his comedic world, he killed.

A 1996 radio/television/film graduate, Meyers eschewed the trend of celebrity commencement speakers who aim to "go viral" with an all-purpose address. Meyers instead was delightfully personal, detailing Northwestern friends, campus memories, his alumni parents, and professors—notably the School of Communication's Paul Edwards—who guided his way. His address was also riotously funny and reminded the graduates, families, and faculty in the audience why his Northwestern direction has been so well documented.

A quiet but observant student, Meyers found his home in Northwestern's sketch-improv Mee-Ow Show. Then it was on to professional improv, acting and directing for film and TV, and his eventual position as head writer for *Saturday Night Live*. In 2014 he nabbed the *Late Night* slot, where his intelligent, silly, sarcastic style shines.

"I learned to love to write here," said Meyers in his address. "Not a day goes by when I don't think about my time at Northwestern."

Give every year, make a difference every day.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
						Spring quarter classes end
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
			Flag Day			
					Commencement, Ryan Field, 9:30 a.m.	School of Communication convocations, Pick-Staiger, 1:30 & 5 p.m.
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Father's Day	Summer Session begins					
25	26	27	28	29	30	
Ramadan ends at sundown						

JUNE



AN ALTRUISTIC DIRECTION

For the last several years, doctor of audiology students in the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders have traveled to Peru as part of an expanded mission to include service and global engagement in their studies. Greg Horton and Shannon Switzer (above at Machu Picchu) were among the 2016 group that provided assistance to more than 300 Peruvian elementary and middle school students.

"Any chance you get to work internationally and with unfamiliar cultures can only make you a better clinician," says Horton. "I like to challenge myself as often as I can, sometimes by volunteering to take a difficult patient or to work with populations or languages with which I'm not familiar. I also relish the opportunity to learn as much as I can from other people, regardless of their background."

While in Peru, Horton and others taught children in two schools about the anatomy of the ear, how hearing works, positive communication strategies, hearing loss, and how to protect our hearing from dangerous sound levels. They also performed screenings on over 100 students and senior citizens.

"Heading to Peru and working with the local populations," Horton adds, "was just as much an educational experience for me as it was for the students I was teaching down there."

Give every year, make a difference every day.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1						
2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Six-week Summer Session ends

JULY



AN UNEXPECTED DIRECTION

The eight-foot pterodactyl puppets made of papier-mâché and fabric cast vibrant silhouettes on a gray, unseasonably warm March day. With the leafless, craggy branches along the lake suggesting a prehistoric tableau, students in the Puppetry History and Performance class laughed with delight as they raced their handmade creatures across the grass.

By running with the puppets, the students brought them to life, says Dassia Posner (fourth from left), an assistant professor of theatre and of Slavic languages and literatures and the director of the Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Theatre and Drama. "The design can be so very simple, but it can do magical things," she says. "It's an unexpected encounter of a fantasy of everyday life."

These unexpected encounters are crucial to what, and how, Posner and her colleagues teach. "From a pedagogical point of view, think about other ways you can make theatre," she adds, "and other places you can make theatre."

Backed by this ethos, the directions taken by our artistic community are limitless. A well-supported, robust student-run theatre collective innovates continually; faculty who have researched worldwide provide inspired guidance; and dynamic spaces built for emerging performance styles facilitate new skill development. It's the unexpected that sets our programs apart—and makes our students runaway trailblazers.

Give every year, make a difference every day.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Eight-week Summer Session ends

Ten-week Summer Session ends

AUGUST



AN ACADEMIC DIRECTION

Brian d'Arcy James (C93) has played a lead role in an Academy Award-winning film, won repeated accolades on Broadway, and starred in several television series. But as he engaged a crowd of enthusiastic theatre students in spring 2016, he was a humble, generous Wildcat-for-life, reminiscing about a career journey that began at Northwestern.

James (left) joined Broadway producer Barbara Whitman for a friendly Q&A moderated by David H. Bell, the Donald G. Robertson Director of Music Theatre. They discussed books every actor should read, what to do between jobs (take classes, always), and why James chose Northwestern over a conservatory.

"It's good to look away for a second," said James. "As my grandmother said, 'A watched pot never boils.'" Northwestern students don't spend much time watching pots, choosing instead to dive into challenging performances, to innovate and create new work, and to pursue and excel in career-minded internships. But it's the academic freedom Northwestern champions that prompts all students to "look away" from their majors toward other interests and courses, which makes them better practitioners and people. Theatre students, for example, return to their craft energized and inspired, using what they learned far from the stage to get a better sense of what to do on it. It worked for James, and his response elicited snaps of approval from a crowd living life inside—and very much outside—the theatre.

Give every year, make a difference every day.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
3	4 Labor Day	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 Wildcat Welcome begins	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 Fall quarter classes begin	19	20 Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown	21	22 Rosh Hashanah ends at sundown	23
24	25	26	27	28	29 Yom Kippur begins at sundown	30 Yom Kippur ends at sundown

SEPTEMBER



A DRAMATIC DIRECTION

MFA directing candidate Michael Cotey had a big problem on a tiny stage. As a student in the Toy Theatre class taught by program director Jessica Thebus (GC91, GC97), he was tasked with creating and performing a theatre work in miniature—starting at matchbox size and then progressing to a slightly larger tabletop scale. But smaller hardly means easier.

“I was terribly blocked in the class for a long time,” says Cotey. “Jessica Thebus said something that basically reset my brain: ‘I bet you have a story you want to tell, and I bet you could tell it with just your hands.’”

Cotey’s piece, *God Woke*, was based on a poem by Stan Lee, who created many of Marvel’s best-known comic book characters. With Thebus’s guidance, Cotey put together the first draft of his eventual final project using objects he had on hand, including the apple packed in his lunch. Innovation and improvisation are cornerstones of both this required course and directing in general. Cotey learned this valuable lesson with stunning results.

“His piece was about the relationship of God to the world and the human drive to both destruction and creation,” says Thebus. “He made great use of simplicity. The world is simply an apple—the sight of God is a desk lamp. And the effects were epic, dramatic, and endless.”

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Reunion Weekend ends	Columbus Day			Reunion Weekend begins		Homecoming
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	Halloween			

Give every year, make a difference every day.

OCTOBER



A CHALLENGING DIRECTION

Norman Lear woke up a nation. The television writer and producer behind such shows as *All in the Family*, *Good Times*, and *The Jeffersons* wrapped comedy around conversations about race, class, and religion. Taboo topics were broadcast into American living rooms of the 1970s and '80s, and the country began talking.

Lear (right) became a target of criticism and even made President Richard Nixon's infamous enemies list in 1972. He founded People for the American Way and supported First Amendment rights. One of the first inductees into the Television Academy Hall of Fame, he's won four Emmy Awards and a Peabody Award as well as the National Medal of Arts.

In a 2016 campus talk moderated by radio/television/film associate professor Thomas Bradshaw (left), Lear regaled a packed house with tales of having nine situation comedies running simultaneously on network television, his tumultuous childhood, and his recently published memoir. At events such as this one, visiting speakers awaken our community to what can happen when risks are taken, tacks are changed, and minds are expanded.

Asked how he accounts for his youthfulness, Lear replied, "It has to do with maintaining and sustaining a sense of wonder about the world." He then put his thumb into the air. "If I can believe in this thumb for 93 years—it was always there for me—then there's the possibility of anything."

Give every year, make a difference every day.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Daylight saving time ends						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Thanksgiving						
26	27	28	29	30		

NOVEMBER



A MAGICAL DIRECTION

Mary Zimmerman's greatest gift is her imagination. Her stages have evoked 1950s New York City, the creation myths of ancient Rome, the jungles of India, and so much more. She packs worlds into sets, and her stories traverse styles and defy expectations.

Zimmerman (C82, GC85, GC94), the School of Communication's Jaharis Family Foundation Chair in Performance Studies, again brought her magic to Chicago in fall 2015. The Tony winner staged her adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* at Lookingglass Theatre Company, a bastion of innovative, cutting-edge work founded by theatre lecturer David Catlin (C88), David Schwimmer (C88), Thom Cox (C88), and other Northwestern alumni. This entrepreneurial crew repurposed their esteemed theatrical education into a professional mission. Now Lookingglass amasses awards and accolades—and audiences eager to experience the sort of magic Zimmerman can spin.

Treasure Island told the classic tale of swashbucklers, buried gold, and roiling seas through Zimmerman's famously imaginative lens. She shared insights with friends of the school at a postshow Q&A (above), joined by Lookingglass producing director Philip R. Smith (C88, left) and cofounder Andrew White (C87).

Like a ship's, Zimmerman's Northwestern direction changes with the wind. And we are happy to sail alongside her on the journey.

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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
		Hanukkah begins at sundown				
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
			Hanukkah ends at sundown			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Christmas Eve	Christmas Day	Kwanzaa begins				
31						

DECEMBER

Fall quarter
classes end

Winter break begins

ANNIE MAY SWIFT SOCIETY • *The following individuals and organizations made donations of \$1,000 or more between September 1, 2015, and August 31, 2016. We apologize for any errors or omissions.*

Founder's Circle (\$50,000 or more) • Joan and Phillip Berger Charitable Fund • Stephen T. (C87, H11) and Evelyn McGee Colbert • Owen L. Coon Foundation • Estate of Jimmy Heimann • Michael B. (WCAS72, G73) and Jane Steiner (C86) Hoffman • David S. Lefkowitz (C82)* • Andrew W. Mellon Foundation • Johnny Mercer Foundation • Barbara D. Molotsky (WCAS65) • Richard Radutzky (C85) and Leslye Sussman-Radutzky (WCAS85) • C. Daniel Roth (C60) • Ronald J. and Melissa Pate (C86) Sanders • Thomas and Cynthia Cohen Secunda • Bruce (KSM86) and Melissa Spohler • Estate of Ralph Sundin (Bus36) • Barbara Whitman

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