



DEPARTMENT OF

THEATRE & DANCE

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE



The Department of Theatre & Dance...
where imagination **DANCES** with personal
transformation, and creative excellence
ACTS with a social conscience.



The department's **MISSION** emphasizes the value of performance as a vital means of working for social justice and personal transformation.


The Gustavus Theatre & Dance season entertains and challenges audiences with cutting-edge contemporary performances, including dance and plays, innovative approaches to the classics, musicals, and devised performances.






We invite majors and non-majors alike to explore the **POWER OF PERFORMANCE** to raise awareness, create community, foster self-expression, challenge stereotypes, evoke compassion, and represent diverse perspectives.

The department offers students unique opportunities for creative collaboration with faculty, intensive workshops with guest artists, and independent, student-created work.

A stage performance featuring five dancers in motion. The stage is lit with blue and purple light, with two large, vertical, orange-hued smoke or light columns on either side. In the background, a screen displays a person speaking at a podium. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Through our program of classes and hands-on experience,
we train and nurture **THINKING ARTISTS** who have both the
technique and the insight to create high-quality and
compelling performance.



“The thing that sets Gustavus Theatre & Dance apart is the **COMMUNITY**. There’s incredible support and kindness from all of the students, but you also feel very supported by the faculty in a way that encourages you to do your best and keep learning new things about yourself and your craft.”

— Emily Haugen, Theatre Major



EVELYN ANDERSON SCHOLARSHIPS are available for demonstrated excellence in theatre and dance. Students may apply for a scholarship in Acting, Directing, Design and Technology, and Dance. To apply, visit **apply.gustavus.edu/register/theatredancescholarship** or call the admission office at 1-800-Gustavus.

“Being a part of the Dance program at Gustavus has brought me a sense of joy. Through experiences onstage and in the studio, the department has helped me find and explore my own sense of movement. The faculty truly pushes, supports, and cares about your growth as an individual. Becoming involved in the Department of Theatre & Dance was easily the highlight of my first year.

— Gabriella Schwakopf, Dance Major

Before Gustavus I was not a curious dancer. With what I have learned in the last three years, including the promotion of internal feeling and consciousness, I am now a curious dancer. I am curious about how movement and placement feels in my body. I am curious about how these movements relate back to technique training and exercises.”

— Elisabeth Kray, Dance Minor





The Gustavus Dance program provides a welcoming environment—encouraging all students to **EXPLORE MOVEMENT**, whether as a first-time dancer or as a more experienced mover. Strongly rooted in contemporary modern technique, with classes in ballet and African diasporic forms, our curriculum includes composition, choreography, and performance projects, international techniques, dance history, and the science of movement.

Our nationally recognized Gustavus Dance Company and Apprentice Troupe have multiple opportunities for performance each year, working with faculty and guest artist choreographers. Student works are featured in the Choreographers' Gallery and in the student-led Shared Space.



The Department of Theatre & Dance provides a welcoming environment for risk-taking and experimentation—encouraging all students to explore movement, text, space, color, materials, and histories. Our approach develops a deep understanding of embodied knowledge, creative expression, and transformational awareness.

“The Gustavus Department of Theatre & Dance has given me a chance to work closely with faculty and to develop my own **UNIQUE PATH** as I’ve discovered my creative ambitions. I’ve also found that the student community is incredibly welcoming, talented, and driven to pursue their dreams—whether onstage or behind the scenes. From acting and directing to stage management and dramaturgy, I’ve had the chance to explore a wide variety of artistic roles at Gustavus.”

— Samuel Peters, Theatre Honors and English Major



WE CREATE CREATORS

Our department provides training and opportunities for students to create their own work; empowering student artists is at the core of our mission.

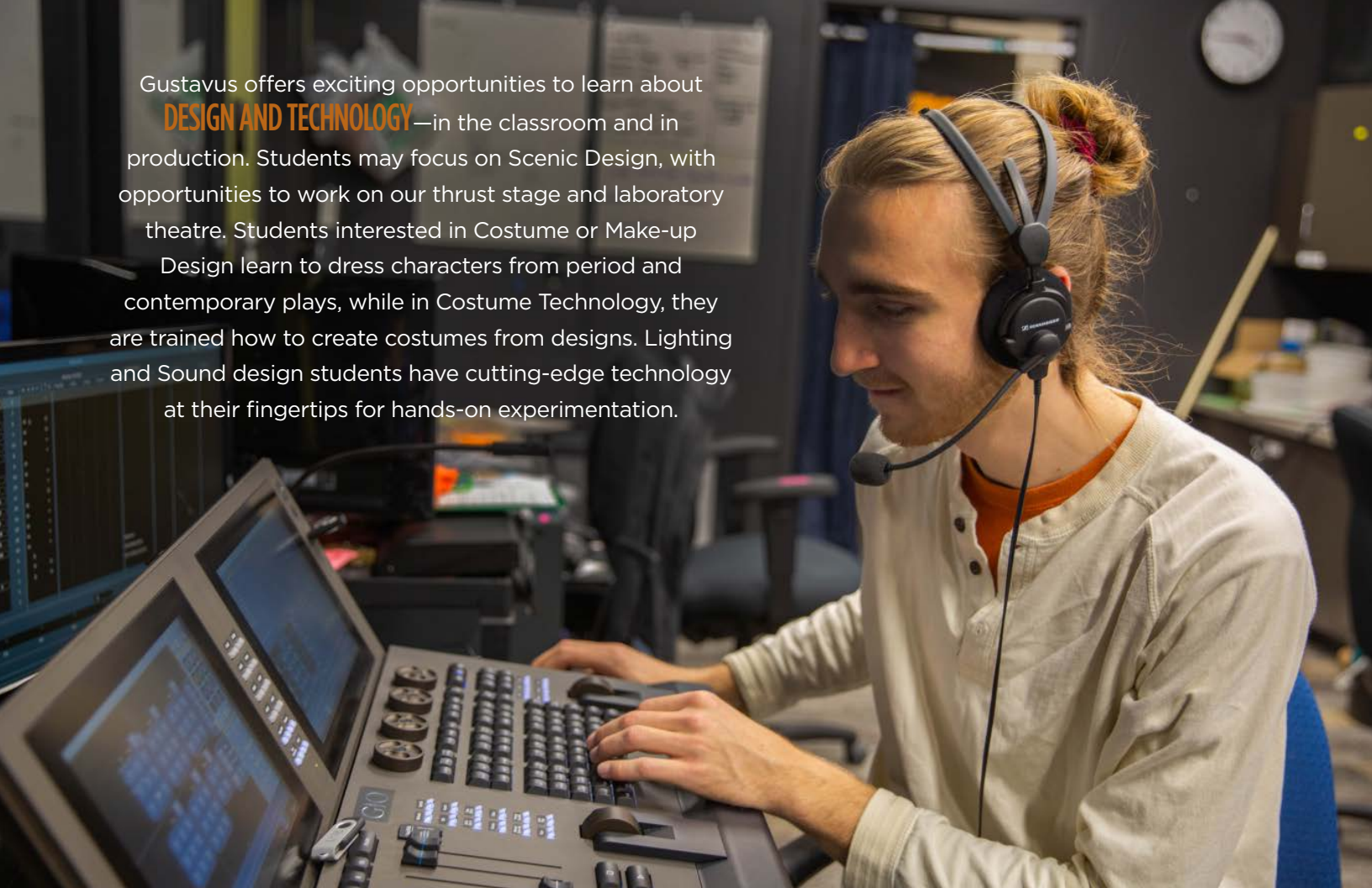



“Designing the costumes for a mainstage production allowed me to learn many things, such as the general production process and whether I can handle doing this for a career. It allowed me to learn from mistakes in an environment that gave me freedom and real experience while still having a safety net. This enabled me to get into a top graduate school in the country, and gave me the confidence to chase after what I want.”

— Kjerstin Anderson, Theatre Major



Gustavus offers exciting opportunities to learn about **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**—in the classroom and in production. Students may focus on Scenic Design, with opportunities to work on our thrust stage and laboratory theatre. Students interested in Costume or Make-up Design learn to dress characters from period and contemporary plays, while in Costume Technology, they are trained how to create costumes from designs. Lighting and Sound design students have cutting-edge technology at their fingertips for hands-on experimentation.



A theatrical scene set on a stage. On the left, a large, vibrant red curtain hangs vertically. The background is a dark, textured wall, possibly wood paneling, adorned with several empty, ornate picture frames of various shapes (oval, rectangular) and a small, glowing, candle-style lamp. Two performers are visible. A man, wearing a white sailor's cap with a dark band and a dark, open jacket, is leaning against a dark wooden door frame. He has his eyes closed and a joyful expression. A woman, wearing a white headscarf with a yellow flower and a long, flowing, light-colored dress with a ruffled hem, is standing in front of him, looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The lighting is warm and focused on the performers, creating a dramatic atmosphere.

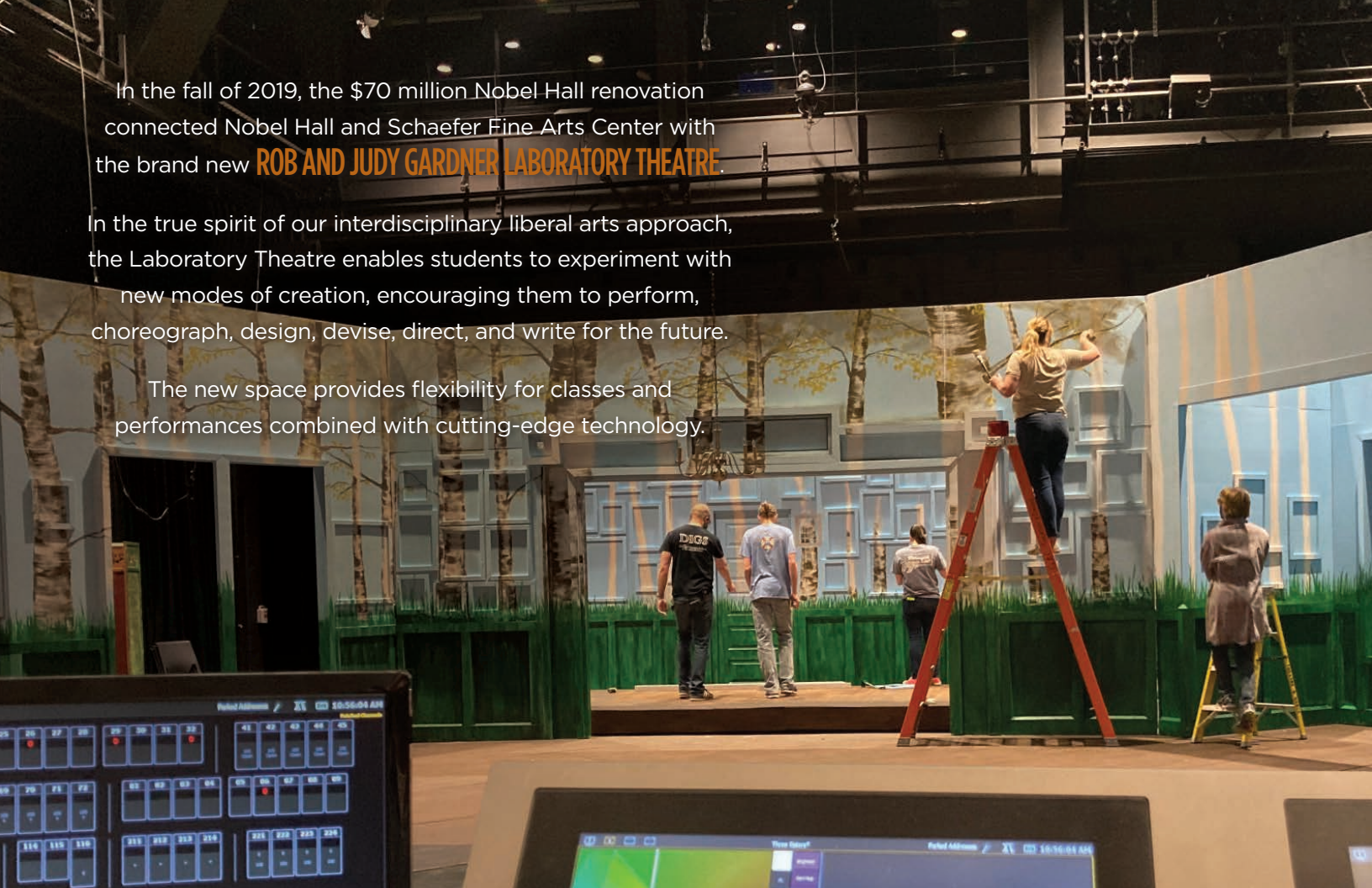
THEATRE classes emphasize contemporary performance techniques, including physical theatre, devised theatre, and improvisation. Students learn to analyze not only the “what” and “how” but also the “why” of performance through illuminating courses in history, theory, directing, and devising contemporary performance practice.

Minors and non-majors are welcome to audition for the season of faculty-directed shows each year. Additional performance opportunities are available through the Theatre Gallery and other student showcases.

In the fall of 2019, the \$70 million Nobel Hall renovation connected Nobel Hall and Schaefer Fine Arts Center with the brand new **ROB AND JUDY GARDNER LABORATORY THEATRE**.

In the true spirit of our interdisciplinary liberal arts approach, the Laboratory Theatre enables students to experiment with new modes of creation, encouraging them to perform, choreograph, design, devise, direct, and write for the future.

The new space provides flexibility for classes and performances combined with cutting-edge technology.





Designed by the renowned architectural firm of Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, the 270-seat **ANDERSON THEATRE** has been called “striking and comfortable” and “one of the best college playhouses in the state.”

Boasting state-of-the-art light and sound equipment, the Anderson Theatre is used for both theatre and dance performances.

KRESGE DANCE STUDIO

Featuring a beautiful, sprung dance floor, the Kresge Studio is used for classes, rehearsals, and performances of student choreography.

MICHELE RUSINKO STUDIO

A studio featuring a sprung floor that is used as a warm-up and small group rehearsal space.





THE BLACK BOX

An intimate studio that hosts acting and directing courses. Equipped with its own sound and lighting system, The Black Box serves as a performance venue for small-scale productions. In addition, departmental facilities include well-equipped scenery and costume shops, and specialized classrooms.





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performances and department news!



Department of Theatre & Dance

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Photography credits: Kathy Burnham, Aleutian Calabay, Nate Long, Micah J Maatman,
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