

## **Minnesota State Mankato at the Region V Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival 51**

Minnesota State University, Mankato's Department of Theatre and Dance participated along with 1,581 registrants, representing 87 colleges and universities, in the Region V Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival gathering in Sioux Falls, hosted by South Dakota State University, the University of South Dakota (and several others), during festival week, January 20-26, 2019. Region V represents Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri, and its regional festival is the largest of the eight in the country.

Seven students advanced to the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship Semifinal round from a field of over 400 nominees. These included **Cam Pederson** (senior BFA Musical Theatre from East Grand Forks) partnered by Seth Honerman (2<sup>nd</sup> year MFA Directing candidate from Aberdeen, SD); **Matthew Sather** (senior BFA Musical Theatre from Spencer, IA) partnered by Yu Miao (1<sup>st</sup> year MFA Musical Theatre candidate from China); **Delanie Wiedrich** (senior BFA Musical Theatre from Hazen, ND) partnered by Trevor Belt (2<sup>nd</sup> year MFA Directing candidate from North Kansas City, MO); and **Ty Hudson** (1<sup>st</sup> year MFA Acting candidate from South Sioux City, NE) also partnered by Trevor Belt. Three Semifinalists advanced to be Finalists (the top 16), including **Gary Du Charme II** (senior BFA Musical Theatre from Vinton, IA) partnered by Delaney Reitveld (senior BFA Musical Theatre from Bemidji); **Martha Juliana Cubillos Caceres** (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA Acting candidate from Bogota, Columbia) partnered by Ryan Christopherson (junior BFA Acting from Rochester); and **Ashley D'Lyn Gunn** (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA Musical Theatre candidate from Coeur d'Alene, ID) partnered by Sandiana Mervill (1<sup>st</sup> year MFA Acting candidate from Tampa, FL). Martha was the **Irene Ryan 3<sup>rd</sup> Runner Up** in the entire competition. In addition, two singers advanced to the Musical Theatre Intensive (MTI) Showcase and performed on the festival mainstage: **Cam Pederson** and **Lydia Prior** (sophomore BFA Musical Theatre from Sioux City, IA); and two dancers also advanced: **Mitchell Evans** (senior BFA Musical Theatre from Litchfield) and **Zoe Hartigan** (senior BFA Musical Theatre from Lakeville).

Minnesota State Mankato captured several top national "behind the scenes" awards this year. Two graduate students advanced and became SDC (Society of Directors and Choreographers) Finalists: **Seth Honerman**, for his presentation of *Vinegar Tom*; and **David Loudermilk** (1<sup>st</sup> year MFA Directing candidate from Jacksonville, FL) for his presentation of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. David tied for second with an Honorable Mention, Seth captured 1<sup>st</sup> place, and will be going to the Kennedy Center this April. **Natasha Singh** (junior BFA in Theatre Design/Technology from Mankato), was the Region V winner in Stage Management for *Ragtime*, and will also be going to Washington. And **Alex Rollins** (senior BFA in Theatre Design/Technology from River Falls, WI) captured 1<sup>st</sup> place in the National Lighting Design category for *Talley's Folly* and will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> MSU student to head to the Kennedy Center in April. **Ben Kramer** (2<sup>nd</sup> year MFA Scene Design candidate from Sioux Falls, SD), captured Honorable Mention (tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> Place), for his scene design of *1984*.

Another category of national award comes from the Stagecraft Institute. The Don Childs Award, 1<sup>st</sup> place, went to **Jameson Bernhagen** (sophomore BFA in Theatre Design/Technology from Prior Lake), for his work on *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*. Stagecraft Institute Awards were also given to: **Alex Rollins** for *Talley's Folly*; and a Special "Collaboration" Award (never given before) for *Hedwig* was awarded jointly to **Cam Pederson** (for Costume/Hair/Make Up Design), **Erin Wegleitner** (3<sup>rd</sup> year MFA Scene Designer, from Sioux Falls, SD; for Scene Design); and **Jameson Bernhagen** (for Lighting Design). All four of these students received a scholarship for a week-long intensive in Las Vegas.

Regional Awards were presented to: **Sam Buckley** (BFA Musical Theatre from Thief River Falls, WI) who captured 1<sup>st</sup> place in Dramaturgy; **Jameson Bernhagen**, 1<sup>st</sup> place for Lighting Design for *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*; **Cam Pederson** 1<sup>st</sup> place for Make Up Design for *Hedwig*; and a brand new award, The DTM (Design/Technology/Management) Legacy Award was given to **Reegan Tolk** (junior BFA in Theatre Design/Technology from Sioux Falls, SD) for his work on *1984*.

KCACTF Certificates of Merit (awarded by Region V Responders who visit and critique the productions on site) were awarded to **Ben Kramer** for his Scene Design of *1984*; to faculty member **John Paul** for his Scene Design for *Ragtime*; to **Natasha Singh** for Production Stage Management of *Ragtime*; to **Erin Wegleitner** for her Scene Design for *Bye Bye Birdie*; and to **Alyssa Thome** (senior BFA in Theatre Design/Technology from Woodbury) for Production Stage Management for *Bye Bye Birdie*.

During the past year, faculty members **John Paul**, **Heather Hamilton** and **Paul J. Hustoles** have served as Region V Respondents. Hustoles continues his service to Region V by being on the Regional Advisory Board and served as the Festival Registrar for his nineteenth time this year. Alumnus **W. James Wood** (MFA Directing), a professor at South Dakota State University, now serves as the Chair of Region V, KCACTF.

Pictured, left to right, top row: Wegleitner, Alex Rollins, Cam Pederson, Natasha Singh, Seth Honerman, Ben Kramer, Jameson Bernhagen.  
Bottom row, Sam Buckley, Martha Juliana Cubillos, Ryan Christopherson.