

GUSTIE of the WEEK

Melissa Lynn



Gustie of the Week Professor Lynn

Submitted

Emma Kelsey
Staff Writer

Melissa Lynn is a professor in Math, Comp Sci, and Statistics here at Gustavus, and this week, she is also the Gustie of the Week! Lynn has taught for four years at Gustavus, moving back here after graduate school in Los Angeles. She held a postdoctoral position at the University of Minnesota before coming to Gustavus.

"I really enjoyed talking with the students and faculty, and I could really feel the sense of community. It felt like exactly what I had been looking for in my career. When I was driving away from campus after the interview, I didn't want to leave - that says a lot, given how stressful interviews can be!" Lynn said.

Lynn shares that there are many things she likes about teaching here on The Hill. Through her time here, she's watched students grow through their college experience and has even seen some of her students, who had her first semester here, graduate this year with Computer Science degrees.

"The students here put great effort into learning... I'm so proud of the work they've done, and I'm so excited to see what they'll do in the future! The students here also have such a wonderful variety of interests, whether it's sports, music, or other extra-curricular activities, they are very involved and excited to challenge themselves," Lynn said.

Lynn also shares that she appreciates the variety of courses that students are able to take as they earn a liberal arts degree, and she loves that the students share her enthusiasm for having a multidimensional education and learning about a variety of topics.

Lynn finds great joy in teaching here at Gustavus and has a clear commitment to finding the best mode of teaching her students.

"There's such a wonderful variety of ways to think about a problem and understand it.

It's an exciting challenge to think about what works best for each student, and students are always coming up with new and creative ideas! It's wonderful to see those 'aha!' moments where a student understands something they've been struggling with, and that makes teaching endlessly rewarding," Lynn said.

Senior Abigail Doran has been in classes with Professor Lynn since her first year and has worked with her as a tutor and grader for various courses. Lynn is also Doran's advisor for her computer science major.

"Professor Lynn has always been so supportive of me - encouraging me to live into all my different interests and abilities. As a professor, she pushes students to interact with the course material in new ways by promoting interdisciplinary discourse. She creates an environment that inspires holistic learning and growth," Doran said.

Doran states that Professor Lynn is a vital role model in the MCS department here at Gustavus. According to Doran, she brought a new perspective to computer science classes that connects their learning to larger concepts and real-world issues.

"She has helped to broaden the perspectives of students through her teaching and advising. She leads with patience and compassion and reminds her students about the importance of having grace for oneself and others," Doran said.

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Senior Santiago Zapata has also taken many computer science courses with Professor Lynn and is one of her other advisees. He shares similar sentiments regarding Lynn's effective teaching style and charismatic approach.

"Professor Lynn has been

an exceptional professor for my computer science class. Her lectures are engaging, and she presents relevant and interesting applications of computer science that make the subject matter more interesting. She takes time and is always willing to provide extra help when needed. It is clear that she cares deeply about her students' success and works hard to create a welcoming and inclusive learning environment," Zapata said.

Zapata says that Lynn's passion for computer science is contagious and has inspired several students to pursue careers in the field.

"She goes above and beyond to provide a quality learning experience and is always available to help students navigate difficult concepts or solve challenging problems. Her contributions to the Gustavus Adolphus College community have been invaluable, and she embodies the ideals of excellence and leadership that the Gustie of the Week represents," Zapata said.

Senior Josephine Bierbaum also spoke about the incredible work and dedication of Professor Lynn here at Gustavus. Lynn is Bierbaum's advisor, and she has taken a few classes with her. They also presented their work on a dataset analysis at the Mining Actionable Insights from Social Networks (MAISoN 2022) workshop, a virtual conference held last April.

Bierbaum credits Lynn with making exciting new topics like machine learning and data science accessible to Gustavus students by bringing a lot of knowledge on these topics to campus and teaching courses on these subjects.

"Professor Lynn is an incredibly hard-working person and is involved in a lot, but she is so patient... She is always kind and very generous with her time when her help is needed," Bierbaum said.

"I think a lot of students would agree that despite how busy she is, she's one of those professors who you can always count on to make time for you with a smile when you need her help," Bierbaum said.

Do you have a suggestion for a Gustavus student, professor, or staff member who could be our next Gustie of the Week?

If so, send their name, position on campus, and a short description of why you think they should be recognized to

gkearney@gustavus.edu
for a chance to be featured!

A representative from the Gustavian Weekly will be in contact with you via email if your suggestion is chosen to be featured in an issue of the paper.

Out of Scandinavia resident artist: Jeannette Ehlers

Michaela Woodward
Staff Writer

This week, the Gustavus campus welcomed Danish-Trinidadian Visual Artist Jeannette Ehlers for a week-long residency as part of the Out of Scandinavia Artist-in-Residence program.

Every year, the Scandinavian Studies department hosts an artist on campus to talk about their work with students as a way of connecting the Scandinavian history of the college with contemporary cultural and creative movements from the region.

Professor Ursula Lindqvist is the coordinator for Out of Scandinavia Week.

"The Out of Scandinavia artist-in-residence program connects Gustavus students to the Nordic region as it is today, as opposed to how it was 150 years ago at the time of the college's founding. The professional, world-class artists we bring to campus are grappling with some of the great questions of our time through their visual art, writing, filmmaking, and music. They visit courses across campus which are engaging the same kinds of issues that the artist does," Lindqvist said.

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Connecting the artist's work with global issues promotes a strong interdisciplinary conversation across campus and deepens the academic experience for various classes and disciplines.

"I am teaching about Ehlers' work in my course on Nordic Colonialisms and Postcolonial Studies, and we're also offering a course on Scandinavian women writers that counts for the GWSS major and minor," Lindqvist said.

Additionally, the goal of the program is to highlight the diversity of Scandinavian culture and the people who live in the region.

"Our first Out of Scandinavia artist, in 1989, was the Indigenous Sámi poet, musician, and activist Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, from Arctic Finland, and he was selected to highlight aspects of global Nordic culture and society that often are unknown to people living here in the upper Midwest. Scandinavia today is not just one big white space where everyone eats lutefisk and listens to Ace of Base. The Nordic region is incredibly diverse today, and to some extent, it always has been. Ehlers, who was born and raised in Denmark with Caribbean roots, exemplifies the complexities of Nordic identity today and what that means for tackling many of the great challenges of our time," Lindqvist said.

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Events for this year's Out of Scandinavia Week were organized by the Scandinavian Studies department and co-sponsored by African and African Diaspora Studies; Latin American, Latinx, and Caribbean Studies; Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies; Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies; Comparative Literature; the Department of Art & Art History; the Department of Theatre & Dance; the Center for Inclusive Excellence; the Equity and Inclusion Division; the Center for International and Cultural Education; and the Pan-African Student Organization.

After a week full of events on campus, including a reception, class visits, and the public lecture "From Invisibility to Manifestation" on Wednesday night, Ehlers repeated that lecture at the American Swedish Institute in Minneapolis on Thursday.



Danish-Trinidadian Visual artist Jeannette Ehlers.

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Her visit will culminate with a masterclass today, Friday, titled The Art of Performance at 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Gardner Lab Theater.

As a visual artist, Ehlers works with multiple mediums, including photography, video, sculpture, installation, and performance. Her work, while varied, often focuses on decolonial messaging and bringing unsung histories to light. Her most recent solo show, "Archives in the Tongue: A Litany of Freedoms", highlights the traditions and folklore of the African diaspora in order to shine a light on Denmark's colonial history.

Her works are currently displayed in the exhibit "Fragments of Epic Memory" at the Minneapolis Institute of Art until July 9. The exhibit features art by contemporary Caribbean artists and focuses on how history can be reimaged through art.

Other notable works from Ehlers include "Whip it Good", a performance piece where she paints a white canvas with char-

coal dust, using a whip instead of a paintbrush to represent the brutality of slavery and colonialism. During the performance, she invited audience members to "paint" the canvas, creating an interactive piece and inviting the audience to join her in reshaping the historical narrative channeled through the piece.

Additionally, Ehlers and fellow artist La Vaughn Belle created the first statue of a Black woman in Denmark. The statue, titled "I Am Queen Mary" commemorates one of the rebel queens who led a labor revolt on the then-Danish, now U.S. Virgin Islands in 1878. This part of Danish colonial history is rarely recognized, and the statue is a means to decolonize the historical narrative in Denmark.

Senior Scandinavian Studies major Mad Chase has helped organize Ehlers' visit to campus.

"Ehlers has had many meetings with students across campus in a variety of different ways. One thing that is so won-

derful about the OOS program is the ability to talk to a living artist in informal meetings, course visits, and lunches. This has been really nice in order to ask about Ehlers' understanding of her own artist process and her work beyond that," Chase said.

Lindqvist hopes that Ehlers' visit will inspire some time for reflection and relaxation as the end of the semester comes rushing forward.

"Ehlers' visual art is incredibly compelling and speaks to so many core questions about what makes us human, what connects us, and what divides us. I hope everyone is able to look up from their flood of deadlines and obligations and engage with her art as a way to remember why we're all here getting an education or working in education. It's so easy to lose sight of that when everyone is so busy. I hope Jeannette's presence here will inspire many and help us recharge," Lindqvist said.



May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

by Aiya Jorde, Features Writer



Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Today

According to a 2021 report from the Pew Research Center, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are the fastest-growing racial group in the United States. Now more than ever, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are making a mark on United States Culture. In 2021, Kamala Harris became the first Asian American Vice President of the United States. In terms of pop culture and film, South Korean director Bong Joon Ho's *Parasite* won the 2019 Academy Award for Best Picture and Marvel debuted its first Asian superhero in Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings in 2021. With a different theme every year, the Federal Asian Pacific American Council (FAPAC) has pronounced this year's theme: Advancing Leaders Through Collaboration. Continuing with the "Advancing Leaders" theme series which began in 2021, this year's theme "further highlights FAPAC's efforts in advancing leaders in the Federal and DC governments." Below I've listed some books to read and movies to watch this month!

April showers bring May flowers...

...and Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month!

That's right. The month of May celebrates and honors the generations of Asian and Pacific Islanders who have both contributed to and enriched America's history and culture. This month recognizes cultures from the entire continent of Asia— including East, Southeast and South Asia— as well as the Pacific Islands of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia. As of 2019, the United States Census Bureau reports that there are around 22.9 million people of Asian or Pacific Islander descent in the United States. Let's take some time to explore the history of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and why you should celebrate!

Brief History of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Back in 1977, New York representative Frank Horton introduced a resolution that proposed declaring the first ten days of May as Asian American and Pacific American Heritage Week. Hawaii Senator Daniel Inouye also introduced a similar resolution that year but unfortunately, neither resolution passed. The following year, Representative Horton introduced another resolution that "authorized and requested" the president to declare the seven-day period starting May 4, 1979, as Asian Pacific American Heritage Week. The resolution was passed and in October of 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed it. In 1990, legislation was passed to extend the observance to a month, and two years later, Congress passed a public law that officially designated May as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. The month of May was chosen by legislation due to two key dates: May 7 and May 10. May 7, 1843, was when the first Japanese immigrants arrived in the United States and May 10, 1869, was when the first transcontinental railroad was completed in the United States, which had major contributions from Chinese workers and shaped the success of the American West.

Movies:

- ANY GIBBLI FILM (
- *Minari*
- *Parasite*
- *The Joy Luck Club*
- *Crazy Rich Asians*
- *Flower Drum Song*
- *The Farewell*
- *Sunset at Chaophraya*
- *Tigertail*
- *The Lunchbox*
- *Books*
- *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan
- *If They Come for Us* by Fatimah Asgfar
- *Crazy Rich Asians* by Kevin Kwan
- *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng
- *If I Had Your Face* by Frances Cha
- *Eat a Peach: A Memoir* by David Chang
- *Minor Feelings* by Cathy Park Hong

Wowza! Well, what are you waiting for? Go out and celebrate! Enjoy your May and have a great week! (Also, can you believe there's only a couple weeks of school left! Insane.)



You don't have to watch that movie



Jonas Doerr
Opinion Columnist

An innocent sophomore is sitting at a table in the Caf, sipping from a big red cup of water. All is peaceful. But then his friend walks up to him pointing to something on his phone.

"Have you seen this?" the friend pulls up the Wikipedia plot summary from an obscure movie from the '80s. "It's sooo good. You have to see it."

The sophomore's eyes widen. He starts to tense up and quiver. Some voice inside his head starts screaming, "NOOOOOO!"

But it's too late. The fatal words have been said. His quivering hand reaches for his backpack. He pulls out his laptop. He tries to break away, but it's too late. The movie is already on his screen.

Two hours later, the spell finally breaks. He slams his laptop shut, exhales loudly, and leans back in his flimsy, wooden chair. He realizes some new friends are sitting at the table with him now. "Guys, you wouldn't believe what I just watched. You absolutely have to see this movie."

They turn towards him with looks of pure horror. But it's too late. Their hands are already reaching for their laptops, and the cycle begins again.

For many amateur movie critics, a simple good or bad is not enough. In fact, analyzing the various parts of a movie or show and saying what made it superior or awful is often too much as well. Instead, they have to give the most manipulative of all reviews: "You have to watch it."

At that point, what is there to do? If one does not watch the



TV.

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movie, they are insulting their friend's glowing review, implying that the friend has bad taste in movies. Plenty of people think their friends have bad taste in movies, but letting them know is a bad strategy for keeping friends around.

"In fact, analyzing the various parts of a movie or show and saying what made it superior or awful is often too much as well."

Plus, the movie or show might be an important cultural knowledge base. Who knows how many references one will miss if they don't watch all 400 episodes of *Grey's Anatomy* or if they haven't watched *Harry Potter* front to back 13 times? That's 272 and 255 hours, for the record, that definitely could not be used in a more effective way.

It might seem like there is no other option. One simply must watch the movie.

But wait. I have a secret to tell

you: you don't have to watch it.

"That's 272 and 255 hours, for the record, that definitely could not be used in a more effective way."

Believe it or not, it is possible to survive after not watching a movie that you "have" to watch. In fact, by not watching that movie, one can not only survive, they can thrive, they can jive, and they can Live Laugh Love!

If you're worried about missing cultural references, don't worry. It's impossible to stay on top of every reference. It's estimated that there's about half a million movies out there. Considering that humans live on average just under 700,000 hours, if you never slept and only watched movies you could get through about half of them. But that doesn't account for shows as well.

There will always be some references people get and some they don't. It's much faster and, may I say, vibey-er to learn how to laugh off a reference one

doesn't get than to try to catch up on every single piece of media, which means that really there is no movie you have to watch.

Perhaps the argument could be made that a movie or show is simply too good to miss. However, someone who argues that sitting in place for two hours staring at flashing LCD pixels is the peak of human experience might be missing something. Some movies are better at creating emotional peaks and valleys, but watching someone else feel something is nothing compared to feeling it oneself.

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This doesn't mean that it's wrong to watch movies. It's not, if it's for the right reason. Watching a movie because of peer pressure won't be fulfilling,

but watching one out of genuine interest can be. Choose a movie that has themes and ideas that seem appealing, and perhaps it will reveal some important truths about life while being fun.

Even better, choose a movie that's not at all your usual type. Expand your horizons and do something new. If you like dramas, watch a comedy. If you like action, try romance. If you like horror, try a historical show. It may be less comfortable, since it's unfamiliar, but it is likely to give you new perspectives, help you understand people, and learn something new.

Whatever you choose to watch, be careful. Recommend movies, but do it carefully. Never, never, never say the forbidden words: "You have to watch this movie."

Theater and culture, it's important



David Eide
Opinion Columnist

The past couple of weeks have reinvigorated a long dormant love of theater in me and I've decided to devote this week's column to an exploration of this medium and what it means to me. My renewed fascination began on April 13th when I was able to attend one of my favorite plays, *Hamilton*, at the Orpheum due to the school offering a selection of tickets that were much cheaper than you could get otherwise. Over the last weekend, my enthusiasm for the stage was cemented when I saw the Guthrie's staging of *Hamlet* and found it to be absolutely wonderful and a reminder for just how magical a well-done play can be. To me, theatre is one of the most misunderstood cultural products and I hope to explore why I and so many others find it to be absolutely entrancing while also coming to terms with how it has shaped the rest of our culture.

"To me, theatre is one of the most misunderstood cultural products and I hope to explore why I and so many others find it to be absolutely entrancing."

Theatre is one of the most ancient forms of cultural expression, with some historians speculating that it originally evolved from elaborate religious rituals wherein practitioners took on the roles of vari-

ous gods. The first tradition of theatre of which we have significant evidence is that of the Greeks, who originated many of the tropes found in Western theatre as well as being the literal source of the word theatre. Tragically, a vast majority of Greek plays are lost to history but the small fraction that we still possess are still powerful enough to regularly receive productions to this day. Theatre has continued to evolve throughout the years, from the morality plays of medieval Europe to the masterpieces of Shakespeare in Elizabethan England to the operas of the 18th and 19th centuries up to the present with its wide variety of plays. In effect, you can chart the various social and cultural trends throughout Western history just by taking a quick look at what kinds of plays are most popular which I think is incredibly interesting to consider.

I've seen a lot of people express a lack of interest in theatre or at the very least in theatre that isn't just the most popular Broadway shows. Now, I have nothing against Broadway, in fact, some of my favorite plays of all time are Broadway-style musicals, rather I just feel that theatre as a medium has so much more to offer than just big-budget musicals. Some of my favorite plays adopt rather minimalistic sets and have very down-to-earth plots but I nevertheless find them enrapturing. I think there is something fundamentally immersive about plays that other mediums like film or video games must go to great lengths to emulate. In large part, this is due to the physicality of theatre. Even if the sets don't actually provide a great deal of detail or if the characters suddenly drop what they're doing to break out in song, the events of the play just somehow feel more real, which stems from the actual presence of the actors on the stage. Unlike essentially every other form of media, theatre does not have a gap between the production of the work and the audience's consumption of it because the actors aren't on a screen or on a

page, they're right there.

"Unlike essentially every other form of media, theatre does not have a gap between the production of the work and the audience's consumption of it because the performance is both."

The versatility of theater is another aspect of it that I find fascinating. Theatre can be performed well in essentially any setting, from a fancy state-of-the-art stage to a simple stage outside, as demonstrated by the enduring popularity of Shakespeare in the Park festi-

vals across the world. While fancy visuals and parts of the stage moving are very fun, it is ultimately the words of the script and how the actors interpret them that make a play worth seeing, and words can be performed well in any situation. Indeed, Shakespeare's plays were originally performed with very limited props and stage dressing and that didn't stop them from becoming some of the most popular plays ever, which have been constantly reinterpreted and analyzed for centuries. Even when it comes to types of performances that are often joked about, such as high school plays, I have still often found myself engrossed in the drama, just because of the elements that I have discussed so far.

In some respects, theatre is the most "real" kind of fiction

one can consume. In part, this is because theatre doesn't really seek to simulate reality as many other kinds of visual media do, instead relying on the skill of the writers and actors in conveying emotion which in many ways is more real than the most pristine CGI. With this and the rest of the column in mind, I hope you've developed a new appreciation for the art of theatre and that you will perhaps go out of your way now to support local performing arts groups and the like.



Display outside the Gustavus theatre

Hailey Brune