

# Carleton

Department of Theater and Dance

507-222-4345

Dear Future Carl,

Congratulations on being accepted to Carleton! As chair of the Department of [Theater and Dance](#), I'm pleased to know that you're interested in joining our community, and want to extend a personal welcome. I use the word "community" very deliberately, for the [faculty](#), staff, and students of theater and dance are a warm and welcoming group that will make you feel at home immediately. We're also a very busy community with lots of ways to get involved right away.

Every term the department mounts a major [theater production](#) directed by a faculty member or guest director. Likewise, in the fall and spring, [dance faculty create a fully produced concert](#) with Semaphore, a company of student dancers. Interspersed with these productions and concerts are the student "comps" performances, which are staged by our senior majors. Lately the [theater students](#) have tackled such various projects as cutting-edge British drama, writing and directing an original play, and devising performances based on personal experience or thematic interests. [Dance majors](#) are similarly creative, choreographing and performing work that pushes both themselves and the limits of the art form. So, all told, the department is almost always in production for not just one event, but several.

I would also urge you to take a look at the [student-run organizations](#) that produce theater and dance. There is the Experimental Theater Board, which produces anywhere from three to five productions each term. The variety of what they produce is exciting and impressive – groups of students have rehearsed and produced shows such as Stephen Sondheim's musical *Assassins*, the French comedy *Art*, and the American political thriller *Men of Tortuga*. The Experimental Dance Board produces a large-scale concert of new works twice yearly. Dancers can also participate in numerous student-led dance groups including Synchrony, a group that performs to popular music, WHOA! the hip hop group performing on the main stage in the spring, Krush the K-Pop group, and JCO the Jazz and Contemporary group.

As you can see, if you're a performer, there are abundant opportunities to get on stage. If you're interested in getting involved behind the scenes, there are ample opportunities there as well. Every term the department hires over thirty students to work in the scene, lighting, and costume shops. Students are paid for this work, but they uniformly report that what they learn about design and technical theater in the process is just as important.

Whatever your specific interest, our classes as well as our production program will give you a way to explore it. The department offers traditional courses in acting, directing, design, and playwriting on the [theater](#) side, and Krump, Contemporary, Modern, Ballet, West African, choreography and Dance History on the [dance](#) side. The department brings in several professional guest choreographers every year and guest directors for mainstage productions. We're also keen, however, to keep our curriculum current with the cutting edge of professional performance practice and to respond to the challenges of the times. We promote ethical, anti-racist practices and the belief that diversity and inclusion are critical for the advancement of the art form. Courses that accomplish the above are Theater for Social Change, Devised Theater and Collective Creation, Live Performance + Digital Media, Reading the Dancing Body, and Dance Lab. If your interest tends toward research and analysis, we have active scholars on the faculty who teach a variety of courses in dramatic literature, theater and dance history, and performance theory.

So, again, welcome! If you'd like to talk to me before you arrive, don't hesitate to get in touch. My email is [jhoward@carleton.edu](mailto:jhoward@carleton.edu) and my office phone is 507-222-5481. I look forward to meeting you, and especially to working with you.



Best,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Judith Howard". The signature is written in a dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Judith Howard  
Chair, Department of Theater + Dance