

Love of theater drives 'Almost Maine' actor Ryan Moore

Amanda Sieradzki
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"Theater moves a culture," says actor Ryan Moore. A second-year student in Tallahassee Community College's theater program, Moore is a staunch believer in the art form's ability to engage and mobilize communities. "It can capture history in just a few hours and reflects what a culture is and what's going on."

Moore is starring in "Almost, Maine" at Theatre TCC! this fall. The romantic comedy follows the stories of several small-town residents on a cold, winter night. The town "Almost" is so far north that a running joke throughout the show is that it is "almost" not in the US.

For Moore, each moment onstage has been an opportunity to explore the complexity of relationships in both characters that he plays with his respective scene partners. The show is layered with metaphors that highlight unique situations and interpretations of love.

"In one scene they're waiting for a shoe to drop," describes Moore. "In another scene my partner is bringing back all the love that she gave me because she wants to leave town. The push and pull of that scene demonstrates how love is a two-way street."

Hooked in middle school

Many of Moore's favorite shows share similar meaningful messages. He enjoys "Hairspray" and "Godspell" for their themes of unity and togetherness in the face of hardships. As much as he enjoys them, musicals were not where Moore started his theater career.

Moore moved to Florida from Michigan in elementary school. He began taking theater classes in seventh grade and

was encouraged by his teacher to develop his skills. After his first full theatrical production, he was hooked.

"I knew it was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life," says Moore. "Being on the stage and seeing smiling faces really warmed my heart. That was the moment I knew I wanted people to enjoy themselves and be happy whenever I was onstage."

Moore attended Lincoln High School and participated in plays, chorus and the international thespian festival before venturing into musicals. He says participating in "Disaster, the Musical" enhanced his passion for theater given the challenge of balancing acting, music and movement.

Mentors amid challenges

His mentor in high school, Naomi Rose Mock, was his primary voice and acting teacher. Moore says Mock helped him to understand pitch and melody, and remains his go-to for his music-related questions. At TCC, he is appreciative for professor Eva Nielsen's continued support and mentorship, especially while navigating the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We were very lucky to be able to perform in the theater while adhering to the restrictions," says Moore, who says not many classes met on campus last semester. "The relationships we had in those small classes made us our own little cast. I'm lucky to be a part of Theatre TCC! and I know the relationships I have now will be kept as I move forward."

Moore plans to finish his Associate in Arts degree this spring, and will apply to Florida State University's theater programs. In the meantime, his goal is to take in every opportunity possible, both

If you go

What: "Almost, Maine" at Theatre TCC!

When: 8 p.m. Oct. 7-9 and 15-16, 2 p.m. Oct. 17

Where: Turner Auditorium, 444 Appleyard Drive

Cost: \$15 Adults, \$10 Seniors, \$7 Students and Children, Free for TCC students/faculty/staff with TCC ID

Contact: For more information, visit <https://tcc.fl.edu/theatretcc>.

on and offstage.

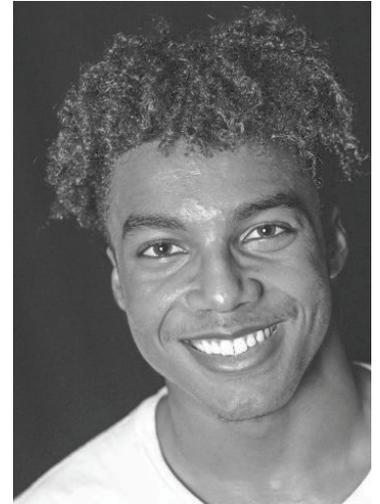
Network of relationships

He's worked closely with Ken Frederickson, the theater's technical director, in learning the ropes of the backstage crew that makes magic happen onstage. At its core, Moore sees theater as a network of relationships, whether it's engaging in banter with a scene partner or communicating with the stage manager about a show's nuances.

"Having a great relationship with the people of the theater is vital in being a successful actor because you have to be able to communicate your ideas and thoughts," says Moore.

"In theater you'll always be working with somebody. Even if it was a one man show, you're working with tech, or when you're doing musicals, you're working with ensembles and all of you will work together onstage. Working with directors and lighting directors, all sides of theater you'll always talk and exchange ideas with everyone around you."

During the rehearsal process for "Almost, Maine," Moore has pored over the



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script searching for context clues that will heighten how his character relates to the cast. He'll study the script and consider what might have been happening to any given character before or after a scene occurs in order to give a full, accurate picture of their mannerisms and portrayals.

Moore is always seeking out a natural chemistry with scene partners. He says it's often his peers that push him to grow and be a better actor. In addition to exploring these stories of love and loss, he's excited to share the thrill of his first love — theater itself — with audiences this October.

"I'm in love with the theater, so I don't see myself just stopping at Broadway," reflects Moore. "I would love to see where this road takes me."

Amanda Sieradzki is the feature writer for the Council on Culture & Arts. COCA is the capital area's umbrella agency for arts and culture (www.tallahasseearts.org).

BIRTHDAYS

Singer **Chubby Checker** is 80. Actor **Alan Rachins** ("Dharma and Greg") is 79. Singer-guitarist **Lindsey Buckingham** of Fleetwood Mac is 72. Jazz saxophonist **Ronnie Laws** is 71. Blues singer **Keb' Mo'** is 70. Actor **Janel Moloney**

("The West Wing") is 52. Singer **Gwen Stefani** of No Doubt is 52. Actor **Neve Campbell** is 48. Actor **Lena Headey** ("Game of Thrones") is 48. Singer **India.Arie** is 46. Actor **Shannyn Sossamon** (TV's "Moonlight") is 43.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Sunday, Oct. 3, the 276th day of 2021. There are 89 days left in the year. On this date:

1863: President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday in November Thanksgiving Day.

1941: Adolf Hitler declared in a speech in Berlin that Russia had been "broken" and would "never rise again."

2001: The Senate approved an agreement normalizing trade between the United States and Vietnam.