



Trinity Filut

High school: Naperville Central High School

Hometown: Naperville, Ill.

Major: Theatre arts: theatre history, and design and technology

Minor: Art

Activities: Alpha Psi Omega national theatre honor society, Augustana theatre (scenic painting and props)

Internships: The Spotlight Theatre in Moline, Ill.

Post-grad plans: Work in the Quad Cities at various theaters as well as tech director at Music Guild for its 2022 summer season

“From the moment I met Trinity, I knew they had the drive, the passion and the skill to be a wonderful well-rounded theatrical artist. Whether it be in their props making, scenic painting or other artistic projects, they put their whole self into the work and it shows. They are kind and compassionate in all aspects of their work to teach their peers about their techniques, and they work as a team player taking on responsibilities outside of their comfort zone to ensure a smooth process for everyone. I can’t wait to see what the future holds for Trinity as they go off to share their art to the world.”

— Michael Turczynski, technical director/
instructor, theatre arts

Why Augustana?

I wanted small classes because I knew I would learn better in small groups and one-on-one with teachers. Originally I applied as a joke. Upon visiting and learning of the theatre department, I fell in love. I met some amazing current students at the time and couldn’t see myself going anywhere else. The campus and the student life really set the “yes” for me because I knew I would be accepted and at home here.

Are you where you thought you’d be when you first came to campus?

Honestly no. When I got to campus, I decided on communications and theatre. With the workloads, I dropped communications and put more focus on theatre.

I thought I wouldn’t really befriend any of the professors and stay kind of a loner like in high school. But, god was I wrong. I have the most support from my professors and shop co-workers. I never saw myself being given the opportunity to work in a scene shop, let alone be working for a theatre before graduation.

Who helped you get to where you are now?

My list may be small, but there are so many parts involved in this list. I have to thank my family for pushing me and believing in me during the toughest parts of college. From me bawling not thinking I’ll pass to loud happy calls about my endless opportunities and my sibling loving to hear about my shows really gave me hope on where I was going in life.

As well as many of my professors: Dr. Kiki Kosnick, who though I only had a few French classes with says hello to me to this day. The whole theatre department, including Dr. Jennifer Popple, Shelley Cooper, Mike Turczynski and many others — these professors and friends have given me endless support though every show and even my off-campus shows.

Also the people I have met in the scene shop — many of them so willing to learn, letting me teach my skills and asking questions wanting to learn, and being so enthusiastic seeing me when they enter the shop. And, my best friend Annaliesa, what would I do if we hadn’t met.

Peak experience?

Honestly, this one I never thought would happen. Being a theatre technical major, I never saw myself ever on a stage, but then senior year happened. Scene moving in “Macbeth” was needed, and my bright green hair would not fit. I was wigged. It was the weirdest thing. I created my alter ego “Stephanie.”

Well, it was loved by directors, and I was added to the musical. Me, a tech kid, as a staged character in a show. Though I can’t sing and never really acted before, I finished my senior year in a musical. Just Wow.

MORE THAN I IMAGINED 2022

SENIORS REFLECT ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND LOOK AHEAD

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What surprised you?

I was so surprised by how supportive all the professors are. I didn't think they would care about making connections with each student, but I was wrong. My professors are the ones who got me to where I am in the theatre world.

Also, how strange college can be — from outside improv to a car smash — never expected that in the middle of campus.

How did you use Augie Choice?

I was going to use my Augie Choice to go to Austria with the theatre department, but COVID dampened those plans. So instead I interned at The Spotlight Theatre, where I helped build and paint the set for "The Lightning Thief." I was able to add to my skills and make a connection to another theatre.

What will you miss the most?

Augustana's scene shop. Especially this year, the people I have worked with have so many different personalities, and it's always fun utter chaos every time you enter the shop. From the inside jokes to the daily laughs about the most stupid things, I don't know what I am going to do without seeing these people every day. They make my week and help me see that I am where I am meant to be.

Advice for the Class of 2026?

It's OK to change your mind; change it as much as you want. Don't be afraid to see your professors outside of class. They will do everything in their power to help you. I learned this a little too late. I wish I had known they are truly here for you when I started.

Always strive for something you love.