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## The Flynn Names Jennifer Skinder as Director of Education and Announces the Return of Student Matinee Shows

BURLINGTON, VT — **The Flynn is excited to announce the hiring of Jennifer Skinder as the theater's new director of education.** Jennifer comes to the Flynn from Vermont College of Fine Arts, where she is currently the director of the college's Center for Arts + Social Justice. As the Flynn's director of education, Jennifer will manage the Flynn's in-person classes, summer camps, in-school programs, online workshops, and more, and lead a multi-function team of staff, teaching artists, and interns.

One of the primary programs that Jennifer will oversee is the Flynn's **Student Matinee Series**, which welcomes students from schools all across Vermont to come to the Flynn to experience world-class performances from a wide variety of artists. The first Student Matinee Series show of the season is on November 5 on the Main Stage. **The Flynn welcomes the entire student body from Burlington High School to a special presentation of *Cartography***, a show about displacement that tells the stories of four young immigrants from El Salvador, Syria, Lebanon, and Rwanda.

"Arts education is at the heart of the Flynn's mission," said **the Flynn's Executive Director Jay Wahl**. "I'm so excited to welcome about 1,000 students from our neighbors at Burlington High School for our first Student Matinee Series show since the pandemic closed our theater. *Cartography* is an extraordinary theatrical piece brimming with empathy and emotion. This interactive show also lets the audience participate using their cell phones, mapping out where everyone came from in real time. This will provide all BHS students the opportunity to visualize the journeys of their friends and classmates, and to marvel at how they all came together in Downtown Burlington."

"We at BHS are incredibly excited to be able to come together to share in an experience at the Flynn this Friday as a community," said **Lauren McBride, principal of Burlington High School**. "This will be the first time that our entire student body is able to be in one space at the same time since our last pep rally (February 2020!). We could not be more excited to have the production *Cartography* as the focal point for our first time coming back together as a community. BHS has experienced a lot over the course of the past year and half. *Cartography* is a story of leaving pasts and lives behind and starting anew. Not only does this show reflect stories that members of our community can connect to, it also can be translated to the larger experience of our school over the past year and a half. Advisories and classes have been preparing for this production by engaging in conversations and watching the 15-minute intro on the website. Students have communicated their excitement and relief to have an experience where they 'can come together like a real school community,' being in one space, sharing an experience together at

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the same time. We are incredibly grateful to the Flynn and our community partners for offering us this opportunity.”

“We’re in a moment when sharing stories and making connections is more important than ever,” said Jennifer Skinder. “The arts urge us to listen, to think about ourselves in historical contexts, to reflect and ask questions, and to imagine new futures. I’m honored to join the amazing team at the Flynn as they reopen, and to collaborate with them to expand access to the arts, and to arts education, in Vermont.”

Jennifer Skinder has a Masters of Education from Johnson State College. She comes to the Flynn with over 12 years of experience in arts education in Vermont, as both an educator and administrator. She has worked at Vermont College of Fine Arts since 2015. As Director of the Center for Arts + Social Justice at VCFA, Jennifer cultivated programming and educational opportunities for artists and students working at the intersection of arts and social change. At Vermont College of Fine Arts, Jennifer has also served as director of the Graduate Studies in Art & Design Education program, and as Assistant Director of the Graphic Design Master's program. Before that, she worked as an art educator at Barre Town Middle and Elementary School for six years.

Over the last 10 years, 82% of Vermont schools have attended a show at the Flynn and 340,707 students have attended a matinee performance. The Flynn is excited to announce the return of this series on **Friday, November 5** with a showing of the stunning, interactive theater presentation **Cartography** on the Main Stage. Created by Brooklyn-based theater artist Kaneza Schaal and author Christopher Myers, *Cartography* is a timely and captivating show that tells emotional stories of young immigrants leaving their worlds behind to start anew. This Student Matinee Series performance of *Cartography* is sponsored by the University of Vermont Division of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Rock Point Advisors, LLC, and Lake Champlain Chocolates.

Find out more about the Flynn's education programs at [flynnvt.org](http://flynnvt.org).

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