Dear Alumni and Friends,

What a start to the school year! The new students arrived in the midst of earthquake repairs only to hunker down for Hurricane Irene their very first weekend at the University. This department has fared relatively well in midst of it all but a sunny day has taken on new import as it has become a rarity! We are now back on track for a year full of exciting shows and new opportunities for our students, faculty, and alumni.

In this issue of The Aside you will see that we have been very busy. Between Abraham Lincoln, A Life In Verse in March, the N.Y. alumni event in June, and preparation for the new season we have:

- graduated an energetic group of students
- expanded our audiences
- celebrated playwriting awards
- renovated systems in the Hartke Theatre
- planned a new reading and discussion series to take place at Theater J and the Callan Theatre
- and started a new scholarship for M.A.T.E. students

All the while we have continued to offer the best education and production opportunities we can. We have put together a variety of articles to give you a taste of life here in the drama department. By the time you receive this we will have once again hosted alumni during Homecoming weekend for a reception in the Upper Lobby. This has become a fun place for people to connect with old friends and meet new ones across the years.

To save valuable space for the articles I will keep my message short. Just know that we love hearing from you, having you visit, mentor, and support us in our full range of activities. As we gear up for our 75th anniversary, we look forward to connecting with even more of you to celebrate the legacy of theatre at Catholic University.

Sincerely,

Gail Stewart Beach
Chair, Department of Drama

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New Reading Series

This year the drama department has embarked on a dynamic new reading and discussion series to be presented at two separate venues, Theater J and Callan Theatre. The series will focus on new or rarely produced works and contemporary issues and features the combined talents of our faculty, alumni, and students.

The play readings will be presented at Theater J on Friday nights and at the Callan Theatre on the CUA campus on Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. For each of the readings, a panel of experts from fields relating to the plays’ subject matters will foster a lively discussion engendered by each play. This will create an opportunity for faculty, students, and alumni to interact with a wider D.C. community and encourage new audiences to come to campus and see our work.

The first installment of the series, Alternative Methods, written by Patricia Davis, directed by CUA Drama’s head of acting, Marietta Hedges, and acted by alums, current students, and professional D.C. actors, will take place on November 4 and 5. Alternative Methods explores the role of mental health professionals in the interrogation of detainees in the war on terror.

The second will be Chance and Necessity, written by CUA Drama’s head of playwriting, Jon Klein, and directed by CUA Drama’s head of directing, Eleanor Holdridge, and take place on March 23 and 24. The play features historical characters such as Nobel Prize-winning microbiologist, Jacques Monod, novelist Jerzy Kosinski, and philosopher and author Albert Camus. Jon Klein describes it as a “moving chronicle of three amazing men and their times, which also questions the connections between random events and moral consequences.”

Finally on April 27 and 28, The Unseen will be presented. Written by Craig Wright and directed by CUA M.F.A. candidate Sasha Brätt, the play is about two men imprisoned by a totalitarian regime and mercilessly tortured for unknown crimes, living with an enigmatic new prisoner who communicates in code, Brätt describes the work as “a darkly humorous examination of faith in an uncertain world.”

— Eleanor Holdridge
This summer the University undertook extensive renovations of the electrical and rigging systems in the Hartke Theatre. The old patch panel was removed, along with the dimmers, all of which were obsolete (We have saved examples for posterity!). We now have a 21st-century lighting system, with a dimmer per circuit, and a new ION light board with which to run them. The next step will be to update the instruments themselves. Our hope is that by replacing the incandescent instruments we currently own with new LED instruments we will not only greatly improve the quality of our lighting (less amber shift) but also reduce the energy costs incurred. It is estimated that the new instruments could pay for themselves in a matter of just a few years.

In addition, the elevator in the apron has been adjusted and serviced and a number of the electrical raceways have also been repaired. The entire rigging system was examined, ropes replaced, a new fire curtain installed (one that won’t come in every time the humidity changes!), and a fall-assist safety harness system installed. While many of these improvements may not be visible to an audience member, they greatly enhance the safety and ease of our daily operations. We continue to work with the administration to prioritize future projects, as we are all keenly aware that a building used so continually for 40 years is in need on many levels.

There were improvements to the outside of our buildings as well. The very '70's outdoor lights have been replaced with a more contemporary look. New lettering was installed on the Harewood Road side of the building and up lights placed to highlight the facades of both the Hartke and Callan theatres. Our next goal will be to install a marquee on the campus side of the complex at the top of the stairs so that those coming from across campus can find us more easily.

— Gail Beach

Cymbeline Talk-Back

On Sunday, April 10, 2011, the drama department hosted a pre-show discussion for the audience members attending the afternoon performance of Cymbeline. During the discussion, the director, Eleanor Holdridge, explained how she edited the script to highlight the relationships between parents and their children, noting how Shakespeare portrays the King of the Britons as an uncaring father and indecisive leader. Thomas Donahue and Gail Beach described what artists, images, and other sources inspired the designs for the set and costumes. Patrick Tuite, the production’s dramaturg, described how the play offers an abbreviated history of ancient Britain. He identified the sources that Shakespeare may have used to create his narrative and detailed how the play compresses time, people, and events to tell an entertaining story of Britain’s past.

The audience was full and asked insightful questions concerning the production, its edits, designs, and conceit. The faculty was particularly happy that Gary J. Williams (M.A. 1966) and Josephine Williams (M.A. 1967) participated in the pre-show discussion.

— Patrick Tuite

Abraham Lincoln: A Life in Verse

On March 25, CUA alumni gathered for a reading of Abraham Lincoln, A Life in Verse in the Hartke Theatre. The play is a compilation of poems about the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln, including original work by the subject himself. The play, originally conceived by Jack Knight and written by Deborah Dearing Khayat (B.A. 1963), was directed and sponsored by Gene Morrill (M.F.A. 1965) and included performances by Danielle Drakes (M.F.A. 2004), Bill Largess (B.A. 1976), and Alan Wade (M.A. 1972).

The event was preceded by an alumni reception hosted by the department Chair Gail Beach. The department is grateful to the many alumni who participated and attended the event. The work was well received and we are thankful for the many suggestions and ideas provided for the further development of the play.

— Thomas Donahue
NY Alumni Event

On July 13 a sizeable group of alums gathered once again at Roundabout’s American Airlines Theatre thanks in large part to the generosity of Sydney Beers (B.A. 1992). This time we included graduates of the School of Music’s Musical Theatre Program and some of their faculty, along with drama alums from across the years. This event offered everyone a chance to see old friends, meet newer alumni, and catch up on the current goings-on of the department. Also attending were faculty members Tom Donahue, Rosalind Flynn, and Eleanor Holdridge. Maureen O’Rourke (Dean’s Scholar for Drama), Rachel Burkhardt (Ed McMahon Scholarship recipient), and Frank DiSalvo (M.F.A. playwriting candidate and recipient of a teaching assistantship) were there to represent our current students and enjoy a chance to get to know those who went before them. My sincere regret was my inability to spend much time with each person; I appreciated all of your kind words and support of the work of the department. I especially appreciate the efforts of Sydney who was still going strong from Roundabout’s Tony wins the previous evening. Kudos to her and her colleagues.

Just prior to the event I received a call from Joe Sicari asking if there was a chance for Phil Bosco to read a wonderful tribute to Henry Sutton written by author Robert Ludlum. Because Henry was beloved of many a member of the CUA drama department it is printed on page 9 in the Alumni News for your enjoyment.

The Ed McMahon Scholarship

This year some changes were implemented to the Ed McMahon Scholarship. The endowment has generated sufficient funds to continue to support both a rising junior and rising senior in the drama department and to add a rising junior in media studies. In the case of the drama department we were able to select a candidate who is a double major in both drama and media Studies this year. Amy Horan has been very involved in all aspects of the department since she arrived here two years ago. She has been on stage, backstage (asst. stage managing and stage managing), and an active member of her class throughout the department. She is an energetic, enthusiastic student, and one very deserving of this award. She joins senior Rachel Burkhardt, last year’s recipient, who continues to be a welcome presence in the department. Rachel and Amy will also be collaborating as our two Box Office managers this year!

New M.A.T.E. Scholarships

This year, through the generosity of an anonymous drama alum and spouse, a new scholarship was born. With it we are currently able to offer $1,000 scholarships to three M.A.T.E. students for their final coursework towards the degree. The M.A.T.E. program is one of a select few in the country designed specifically for individuals teaching theatre in elementary through high school. With budget cuts throughout the country, support for teachers seeking educational advancement has been limited, so even a modest bit of assistance can make a measurable difference to them. We are very grateful to the individuals making this donation and their acknowledgement of those who dedicate themselves to teaching our future students! The fund has been set up so that others may donate as well in hopes that more can benefit from the opportunity. If this is something you wish to consider please let us know and we will help you through the process.

The other major change to the M.A.T.E. program is that we are now offering classes so that the degree can be completed within “three summers.” This opens it up to people from across the country and has already generated considerable interest. We will continue to offer selected classes for the M.A.T.E. throughout the academic year for those who wish to take them. The intensive summer sessions are designed for both constituencies, giving them the chance to focus in depth on various aspects of their program apart from the daily work during the school year. If you know of anyone who might benefit from the MATE program please guide them to our website where they can find detailed information and links to the application process. (http://drama.cua.edu).
M.F.A. Playwriting Article

The M.F.A. playwrights, under the expert supervision of Jon Klein, have been winning awards and receiving readings and productions in a wide range of venues. We are especially excited by the news that an unprecedented two out of five finalists who have won slots in the 2011–2012 Kendeda Graduate Playwriting Competition are Bob Bartlett and Timothy J. Guillot (M.F.A.s in playwriting 2011), with readings of their plays to be performed in November in New York City and in the Kendeda Festival at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, in February of 2012.

Below is a recent list of CUA Playwriting student and alumni accomplishments:

2011

Rachel Barclay
• Production of The Field, Complete Theatre Company, N.Y.C.
• Kennedy Center National JFK Scholarship
• Performance of Trees Are Living Legacies at JFK 50th Anniversary Celebration, Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.

Bob Bartlett
• Performance of Whales, DC Writers’ Showcase, National New Play Network, Kennedy Center
• Performance of Whales, American College Theatre Festival, Region 2
• Performance of Fallout, Baltimore Playwrights Project
• Performance of Whales, Seven Devils Playwrights Conference, Idaho
• Runner-up, KCACFT Mark Twain Award for Whales
• Runner-up, KCACFT David Mark Cohen Award for Whales
• Finalist, Kendeda Graduate Playwriting Award for Whales
• Director of Master Harold And The Boys, Quotidian Theatre Company, Bethesda, MD

Rebecca Gingrich-Jones
• Performances of Unforgivable, American College Theatre Festival, Region 2, Theatre J, Washington, D.C.
• Production of She Said/She Said, Catholic University
• Production of The Furies, Active Cultures Theatre, Washington, D.C.
• Reading of She Said/She Said at First Draft, Washington, D.C.
• Finalist for Wordbridge Playwrights Laboratory
• Honorable Mention, Jane Chambers Playwrights Laboratory

Timothy J. Guillot
• Production of Insurgent Sonata, Capitol Fringe Festival, Washington, D.C.
• Production of We Fight We Die, Mead Theatre Lab Program, D.C., funded by a Creative Communities Fund Grant
• Performance of Nowhere, American College Theatre Festival, Region 2
• Performance of We Fight We Die, American College Theatre Festival, Region 2
• Production of Requiem: For Those We Have Lost, Catholic University
• KCACFT Musical Theatre Award for Listen To Me
• Finalist, Kendeda Graduate Playwriting Award for We Fight We Die

Deborah DeGeorge Harbin
• Production of Run: Reboot, Run of the Mill Theatre, Baltimore
• Production of Chiquita, Double (XX) Fest, Stone Soup Theatre, Seattle
• Production of Hypochondria, Double (XX) Fest, Stone Soup Theatre, Seattle
• Production of Hello Kitty’s Got Claws, Milligan College Festival of One Acts, Tenn. (also directed)

• Play Commission: Fertile Ground — Stories From Messiah College’s First 100 Years, Messiah College, Pa.

Steve Lewis
• Production of Youthtopia, Imagination Stage, Bethesda, Md.
• Production of Trust Fall, Boston Theatre Marathon, Boston Playwrights Theatre
• Teaching Writing for Young Playwrights’ Festival, for Which Way Is Not Death

Glenn Mas
• Theater Arts Program Coordinator of the Ateneo de Manila University, The Philippines

Matthew Smith
• Production of Pastoral Smut in the play anthology Variations on Chaos, Run of the Mill Theatre, Baltimore
• Performance of Happy the Man, Run of the Mill Theatre, Baltimore

Emily Bentley Solomon
• Finalist, 2010 Fresh Voices Screenplay Competition, for Which Way Is Not Death
• Quarter Finalist, Nicholls Screenplay Fellowship, for Which Way Is Not Death

Stephen Spotswood
• Production of The Apocalypse Project, Mead Theatre Lab Program, funded by a Creative Communities Fund Grant
• Production of A Cre@tion Story for Naomi, DC Arts Center
• Production of The Resurrectionist King, Active Cultures Theatre, Washington, D.C.
• Performance of Fistful of Sand, American College Theatre Festival, Region 2
• Performance of The Aaronsville Woman, Abingdon Theatre, N.Y.C.
• Winner of the Christopher Brian Wolk Award, for The Aaronsville Woman — Jon Klein

Congratulations Graduates!

M.F.A. Jan 2011
Robert E Bartlett Jr.

M.F.A. May 2011
Rebecca Hanna Gingrich-Jones

M.A.T.E. Jan 2011
Damion Perkins.

M.A. May 2011
Emily G. Blackstone
Alan Katz

B.A. May 2011
Kimberly Clark
Lindsay Gentry
Erica McLaughlin
Maureen O’Rourke
Joanna Pinto
Jessica Skelton
Alison Talvacchio

Timothy J Guillot
Lee Mikeska

— Jon Klein
Faculty News

Susan Cohen, lecturer, is excited to return after taking the spring semester off. During that time she gave and took several master classes, did some volunteer work, and traveled. She very much enjoyed working on Cymbeline. “It was gratifying to see the actors integrate my ‘Alexander notes’ into their characters.” It is also Susan’s 3rd year as a Helen Hayes judge.

Tom Donahue, faculty, designed the set for How I Became A Pirate for Imagination Stage and Cat’s Cradle for Longacre Lea.

Eleanor Holdridge, head of M.F.A. Directing Program, will direct The Gaming Table as part of the Folger Theatre’s new season. The play, by early 18th-century British dramatist Susanna Centlivre, will run from January 24 to March 4, 2012. The play will coincide with the Folger Shakespeare Library’s “Celebration of 1000 Years of Women Writers” Festival. Also in the past year, Holdridge directed Something You Did for Theater J, Pygmalion at Everyman Theatre, and a Riot Grrrl production of Much Ado About Nothing with Taffety Punk Theatre Company.

Jon Klein, head of the M.F.A. Playwriting Program, represented CUA Drama at two national theatre conferences this June. The first was the inaugural Dramatists Guild Conference at George Mason University, where he served on a panel called “Teachers Who Write, Writers Who Teach.” He also attended the 50th anniversary Theatre Communications Group Conference in Los Angeles. Jon proudly highlights the accomplishments of his playwriting students on his website, http://www.jon-klein.com/catholic-university-mfa.html.

Megan Reichelt, staff, B.A. 2006, In the past year, Megan performed as Feste in Twelfth Night with Wandering Souls, an evil cyberg-duck in Inkwell’s reading of Clementine and the Cyberducks, as Naomi in Bright Alchemy’s A Cre@tion Story for Naomi, as Emily Winter in Active Culture’s The Resurrectionist King, and reprise her role of Naomi in the new Bright Alchemy play, When the Stars Go Out.

Guillaume Tourniaire, lecturer, M.A. 2009, gave master classes in audition techniques for voice students at American University and Peabody Conservatory. He directed a remount of Carrie Klewin’s (M.F.A. 2007) production of The Pirates of Penzance for the Washington Savoyards. He has also gotten engaged and returned to CUA to teach a class on French Neoclassical Theatre and the Theatre of Molière. He is currently directing a production of The Last Days of Judas Iscariot for Silver Spring Stage and will be directing two one-act operas (Offenbach’s Monsieur Conflteur Restera Chez Lui and Mozart’s The Impresario) for Bel Cantanti Opera after the holidays.

Patrick Tuite, head of M.A. Dramaturgy Program, traveled to Los Angeles last August to present a paper at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education’s (ATHE) annual conference and enjoyed a mini-reunion with Martine Green (M.A. 2004), Danny Junod (B.A. 2005), and Megan Smith (B.A. 2006). In October, he presented a paper concerning representations of Irish and African figures in early-modern plays at the Sixteenth-Century Conference in Montreal. In December, he saw Al Pacino and CUA Alumni Brian McDonald in the Broadway production of the Merchant of Venice. He became a Helen Hayes judge in January and has seen over 20 different productions since. Patrick returned to New York in March to see the Broadway revival of Jason Miller’s That Championship Season and presented Jason Patric with a copy of his father’s play. He served as the dramaturg for the department’s production of Shakespeare’s Cymbeline. He recently completed an essay titled “From Antimasque to Execution: Revising History through Performance.” The essay identifies the execution of Charles I as a social drama that was staged outside the same hall in which the king had produced his masques. Ashgate will publish the article in a collection of essays next year. Finally, Patrick traveled to Chicago in August and presented a paper at the Association for Theater in Higher Education conference.

Paata Tsikurishvili, lecturer, directed Synetic Theater’s Don Quixote. He also acted in the reimagining of The Master and Margarita.

Mark Wujcik, technical director, was the set designer and technical director for Longacre Lea production of Something Past in Front of the Light.
Alumni News

Kathleen Akerley, M.F.A. 1998, was seen as Maise in Shakespeare Company’s *Junio and the Paycock*. She is also the artistic director of Longacre Lea where she adapted Kurt Vonnegut’s novel *Cat’s Cradle* for the company. The play ran Aug. 11–Sept. 5 in the Callan Theatre. She directed *Something Past in Front of the Light*, a piece she wrote, for Longacre Lea as well. Along with that, she directed *Beyond The Horizon* for The American Century Theatre. Kathleen will be directing Sam Shepard’s play *The Tooth of Crime* for Washington Shakespeare Company Avant Bard (formerly Washington Shakespeare Company).

Catherine Asfend, B.F.A. 1984, was seen in *Wife Swappers* at Cherry Red Productions.

Bob Bartlett, M.F.A. 2010, saw his play *Whales* accepted into the nationally prominent Seven Devils Playwrights Conference held in Idaho. *Whales* was also chosen as a finalist for the 2012 Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting competition and for the DC Area Writers’ Showcase. In addition to being the runner-up for the Mark Twain Award, he was the runner-up for the KCAC TDF David Mark Cohen Award. Bob’s play *Fallout* was produced by the Baltimore Playwrights Project. He also served as the director for *Master Harold and the Boys* with the Quotidian Theatre Company in Bethesda, Md., and Landless Theatre Company’s *The B Team* at the D.C. Arts Center.

Robin Baxter, B.A. 1983, is currently doing wigs for *Addams Family* and is working on her own show, *Robin Baxter’s Bipolar Beautytips and Chainsaw Repair*. She is hoping to get going in January with a BCEFA benefit.

Karen Berman, M.F.A. 1993, inducted into the prestigious College of Fellows of the American Theatre in 2008 (notable members have included CUA’s Father Hartke, Tony Award winners Ming Cho Lee, Jack O’Brien, and William Ivey Long; and Pulitzer Prize winners Edward Albee and Paula Vogel), has been elected to its Board of Directors for a two-year term.

Nick Bowling, B.M. 1990, was nominated for a Jeff Equity Award for his direction of the play *The Farnsworth Invention* with TimeLine Theatre Company.

Jay D. Brock, M.F.A. 2009, directed *The Magic Flute* for Catholic University’s Opera Theatre and *F*cking Up Everything for Woolly Mammoth Theatre. Jay was also hired on a one-year visiting faculty contract with CUA’s Benjamin T. Rome School of Music.

Frank Canino, M.A. 1962, had a production of his short play *Sara Plays Her Game* put up by Love Creek Productions’ Brief Acts Company in New York, a reading of his play *A Fine Week in Goa* with The Drawing Board, and a reading of his play *16671* staged by Theatre of the Elephant. His play *Passing Through Forbidden Places* was a semi-finalist for the Eugene O’Neill Playwrights Conference this past summer as well as a semi-finalist in the Phoenix Theatre New Works Festival and a finalist in the Pandora Productions of Louisville, Ky., New Play Series. He has also rejoined RLTP’s Playwrights Workshop. His play *The Angelina Project* appeared on the high school stage in Texas three times this spring in a state-wide competition. *Looking for Angelina* has aired on PBS several times and is now available through Platinum Image Film.

Jack Carr, M.F.A. 1975, has been on the Wesleyan University Theater Faculty since 1984 where he was the chair for 10 years before stepping down last year. He has designed for theatre and dance productions in New York and Europe, most recently at the Bulandra Theatre in Bucharest.

Michael John Casey, M.F.A. 1998, appeared in *George and Martha: Tons of Fun and How I Became A Pirate* at Imagination Stage. He was also seen in *Solas Nua’s Swampoodle* and Longacre Lea’s *Cat’s Cradle*.

Brigid Cleary, B.A. 1979, appeared in *The Savannah Disputation* at Olney Theatre and continues her role as Mrs. Shubert in *Shear Madness*.

Kristin DeTos, B.A. 2009, won a Jeff Equity Award for costume design in a mid-sized production for her work on *Tobacco Road* at the American Blues Theater.

Suzanne Delle, M.F.A. 2006, opened the newly renovated Casino Theatre in Newport, R.I. in October 2010 as part of her duties as an associate professor of theatre at Salve Regina University.

Ashley DeMain, B.A. 2007, appeared in *Beyond the Horizon* at American Century Theatre and Longacre Lea’s *Something Past in Front of the Light*.


Chris Dinolfo, B.A. 2006, was seen in *Johnny Meister and the Stitch* and *Swampoodle* at Solas Nua.

Danielle Drakes, M.F.A. 2004, played Hester in the Hegira’s production of *In The Blood* by Suzan-Lori Parks. She is the founder and artistic director of the company.

Jenny Donovan, B.A. 2010, was seen as Helena in Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* as a part of the 21st annual free outdoor Shakespeare production with Olney Theatre Center’s troupe The National Players.

Jessica Frances Dukes, M.F.A. 2005, was seen as Thelma in *The Trip to Bountiful* at Round House Theatre and in Woolly Mammoth’s *Booty Candy*.

Julie-Ann Elliot, M.F.A. 1992, has been busy on and off stage in the past year. She was seen as Karen in Olney Theatre’s *Dinner with Friends* directed by fellow alum Jim Petosa, featuring fellow alumni Paul Morella, and Peggy Yates, and assistant directed by M.F.A. Directing Candidate Sasha Brätt. She was also seen as Officer Randy Osteen in *Superior Donuts* at Studio Theatre, Meave in *Charming Billy* at Round House Theatre, and doing readings at Imagination Stage, Theatre J, Studio Theatre, The Phillips Collections, and Arena Stage. She has also been involved in a variety of industrial videos, voice-over work, including podcasts for projecthope.org, audio book narrations for Potomac Talking Books, Inc. (a contractor for the Library of Congress’ recorded books program for the Blind and Physically Handicapped), a slew of characters voiced for Graphic Audio, and a radio commercial.

Lee Eskey, B.A. 1993, is now an instructor at Holy Wood Acting Studio in Hollywood. A first of its kind, it is an acting studio based on Pope John Paul II’s “Theology of the Body.” The studio provides professional actor training, with a focus on discerning which stories actors choose to tell, and how to maintain one’s own integrity within Hollywood.

Michael Gabel, B.A. 1970 and M.F.A. 1973, currently teaches Acting for the Camera classes at The Theatre Lab in Washington, D.C. He was honored to be one of the four presenters at the 2010 Peer Awards. He was awarded the 2010 Silver Peer Award for *Soul Searching* and the 2010 Gold Peer Award for *Last Call*. He also won the Best Acting Award at the 2011 Baltimore 48 Hour Film Project. He just completed the first season of the Web series *Wall Geek*.


Rebecca Gingrich-Jones, M.F.A. 2011, was a finalist for the Wordbridge Playwrights...
Alumni News, cont.

Laboratory and had a performance of her play Unforgivable at the ACTFestival at Theater J. Active Cultures Theatre produced her play The Furies in Washington, D.C., this past season. His next project will be directing Witness for the Prosecution at the Olney Theatre in Maryland.

Deb Gottesman, M.F.A. 1992, was seen in A Man of No Importance at the Keegan Theatre.


Martine Green, M.A. 2004, completed her Ph.D. in the Department of Theatre and Drama at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. In addition to writing her dissertation, Martine has been very active as a professional dramaturg and teacher. While working on her research, she became the first FAIR Fellow in Dramaturgy at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. She will return to Ashland for her third stint as a dramaturg in January. This past fall, Martine was also hired as a dramaturg for a fall production at the Court Theatre in Chicago. In addition to her dramaturgical work, Martine recently completed a two-year term as a visiting assistant professor at Kenyon College, where she taught courses in theatre history and dramatic literature in the drama department. At Kenyon, Martine was also the American and African Diaspora Studies’ Dissertation Fellow. Finally, she has been an active member of the Dramaturgy Focus Group at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education.


Timothy J. Guillot, M.F.A. 2011, saw his play We Fight We Die chosen as a finalist for the 2012 Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting competition and receive 3rd place in the Larry Neal Writer’s Competition. The Mead Theatre Lab Program produced the play through the Creative Communities Fund Grant. He also won the KCAC/TF Musical Theatre Award for the score of his show Listen To Me; his play Nowhere was also performed at the Festival. In the Capitol Fringe Festival, Insurgent Sonata, another of his plays, was produced. He is currently the audience services manager at Studio Theatre and a company member at Forum Theatre.

Deborah DeGeorge Harbin, M.F.A. 2007, had productions of her plays Rur: Reboot at Run of the Mill Theatre in Baltimore, Chiquita and Hypochondria by Double (XX) Fest at the Stone Soup Theatre in Seattle, and Hello Kitty’s Got Claws at the Milligan College Festival of One Acts in Tennessee (which she also directed). She is the Playwriting Instructor at Milligan College Summer Arts Academy in Tennessee. She was commissioned to write Fertile Ground for Stories From Messiah College’s First 100 Years, at Messiah College in Pennsylvania.

Will Haza, B.A. 2006, has recently appeared as a lead in a Four Fingered Films feature film Roulette. He has also been seen in ID Discovery’s The Nightmare Nextdoor.

Helen Hedman, B.A. 1973, appeared as Mrs. Higgins in Pygmalion with Everyman Theatre.

Mari Lyn Henry-Varney, M.A. 1968, was recently elected to be vice president of programs for the League of Professional Theatre Women, which will be celebrating its 30th anniversary during the next year. It included a kickoff in Duffy Square in September 2011 and in March, 2012, an event honoring notable women in the theatre at the Lincoln Center Library for the Performing Arts which runs until May. She is currently teaching audition skills for the camera at the Michael Howard Conservatory and has honored her late husband’s (David K. Varnay) memory with contributions to the Actors Fund in his name.

Slice Hicks, M.F.A. 2009, was seen in the production of Mary Stuart at Artisphere and in to Shakespeare Company’s Juno and the Paycock.


Rachel Holt, M.F.A. 2009, was seen as Elise in Sisters of Ellery Hollow.


C. Robert Jones, M.F.A. 1961, had productions of two of his plays run this summer. Nocture was produced by the Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre (SART) from July 7 to 17, 2011. There was also a reading of Facades at Barter Theatre’s Appalachian Plays and Playwrights Festival on July 29, 2011. His website is www.crobertjones.com

Elizabeth (Susie) Kentsis, M.F.A. 1983, has not only traveled to Australia, but had a daughter there. She returned to the United States and went on to earn an M.A. from the College of Education at the University of Nebraska, followed by graduate studies in drama therapy at Kansas State University. In Omaha, she played Edith in Jake’s Women, Betty in Foreigner, and Demetria Riffle in On Borrowed Time, along with several radio spots, TV commercials, and industrial films. After returning to the D.C. area, she played Beverly in The Shadow Box at Reston’s Lighthouse Theatre. Susie has also participated in four feature films and two HBO specials. Her most recent work was as Nurse Jackson in Still Beating Hearts in a staged reading at the Kennedy Center with Theatre of the First Amendment. She is a member of AEA, SAG, and AFTRA.


Vincent Lancisi, M.F.A. 1988, founder and artistic director of Everyman Theatre in Baltimore, is responsible for making the smooth move of the theatre into the newly renovated old Town Theatre for its 20th anniversary season.

Bill Largess, B.A. 1976, was seen in the revival of Travels with My Aunt at Rep Stage. In his role of artistic director for the Washington Stage Guild, he and WSG have received the Department of the Army’s Award for Patriotic Civilian Service and the Presidential Bronze Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service.

Elizabeth Lee, B.A. 2009, has been accepted at NYU-Tisch School of the Arts, Asia, for an M.F.A. degree in dramatic writing. She will be starting this fall and graduating in May 2013.


Steve Lewis, M.F.A. 2009, is now teaching Writing for Young Playwrights’ Theatre in coalition with Arena Stage, Imagination Stage, Writoap Lab, and UMUC. His play Youthopia was produced at Imageaion Stage in Bethesda, and Trust Fall was produced with Boston Theatre Marathon at the Boston Playwrights’ Theatre.

Cam Magee, B.A. 1978, was the dramaturg for Richard III with Washington Shakespeare Company and portrayed Juno in Juno and the Paycock with Shakespeare Company as well.
Alumni News, cont.

Glenn Mas, M.F.A. 2006, was appointed the theatre arts program coordinator at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Buzz Mauro, M.F.A. 1992, was seen in A Man of No Importance at the Keegan Theatre.

Brendan McCoy, M.F.A. 2005, appeared in Touch with No Rules Theatre and New Jerusalem at Theater J.

Annie McEntee, M.F.A. 1979, has spent almost 30 years working in communications where she became an instructor and then a training manager. She earned a second master’s degree from Loyola University in pastoral studies, which she put to use leading the RCIA at St. Michael Catholic Church in Glen Allen, Va., for the last 12 years. She is currently directing shows at Saint Gertrude High School, leading the St. Michael’s RCIA, and creating online courseware for Verizon.

BT McNicholl, B.A. 1988, recently served as an acting coach on the upcoming Tom Hanks/ Sandra Bullock film Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close produced by Scott Rudin and directed by Stephen Daldry.

Daya Mendez, M.F.A. 2004, appeared in Divorcias, Evangelicas y Vegetarianas at GALA Hispanic Theatre as a part of their 35th season.

Kate Molinaro, B.A. 2009, appeared in Julius Caesar with Taffety Punk Theatre Company. She also appeared in the Riot Grrrl production of Much Ado About Nothing also with Taffety Punk.

Paul Morella, M.F.A. 1980, was seen in The Odd Couple at Theater J and Dinner with Friends at Olney Theatre.


Carol Pearson, M.A. 1977, has been working as a reporter, anchor, and program host for various radio and television operations. She is currently at the Voice of America, where she has been for nearly 30 years, and works as a health reporter for the Voice’s central TV news operation. In 1998 she and her husband adopted the first of three children. All were older orphans from Russia. They have since learned a lot about Russian culture, cuisine, language, mental health, learning disabilities, and special education services. She now lives in Reston, Va.


Joanna Pinto, B.A. 2011, was accepted into a summer Shakespeare program at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England. She was excited to share some of her adventures, including trips to the Globe to see All’s Well That Ends Well as a groundling — it was wonderful (despite the rain) — Pinter’s Betrayal on the West End with Kristin Scott Thomas, and The Cherry Orchard at the National. At RADA, she performed in Love’s Labor’s Lost, Sonnet 40, scenes with Emilia from Othello, and speeches as Rosalind from As You Like It.

Bruce Phillips, B.A. 2005, won a Jeff Award for his role designing the robots in Heddartron, Sideshow’s show with the Steppenwolf Garage Rep. He will be returning for a second contract on board the Oasis of the Seas, the biggest cruise ship in the world, in the Broadway musical Hairspray.

Barbara Pinolfini, M.F.A. 1985, was in Everyman Theatre’s Pygmalion.

Kyle Prue, B.A. 1986, stars as Mr. Higgins in Pygmalion for Everyman Theatre’s final production in their 20th anniversary season.

Roland Reed, retired faculty, assisted in adapting Don Quixote for Synetic Theatre.

Jamie Roberts, M.F.A. 2003, is back in DC, living in Woodley Park. By day, she is an instructor at the SimCenter at the Uniformed Services University (the military medical school), and by night she has been serving as a Helen Hayes judge and dancing/organizing in the regional Argentine tango scene.

Eli Sibley, M.F.A. 2009, was seen in Beyond The Horizon at American Century Theatre.

Molly Smith, B.A. 1974, continues her success as artistic director at Arena Stage which will be putting up a revival of A Raisin in the Sun this season.

Emily Bentley Solomon, M.F.A. 2010, was a finalist for the 2010 Fresh Voices Screenplay Competition for Which Way is Not Death.

Andrew Sonntag, B.A. 2007, was seen in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and Annie at Olney Theatre Center.

Jessica (Emanuel) Spotwood, M.A. 2006, was awarded a publishing deal for her trilogy of novels called The Cahill Witch Chronicles. The first book in the series is titled Born Wicked and is set to be released in February 2012.

Stephen Spotwood, M.F.A. 2009, reports his play, The Aaronsville Woman, was awarded the Christopher Brian Wolk Award by the Abingdon Theatre in NYC. The award recognizes excellence in playwriting and is bestowed on an American playwright of a full-length play every year. As part of the award, a staged reading of the play was given in January. His play The Resurrectionist King was commissioned by Active Cultures under a new initiative called ‘The 19th Century Local Project.’ His play A Cre@tion Story for Naomi was produced by the DC Arts Center, Fistful of Sand at the ACTFestival, and The Apocalypse Project at the Mead Theatre Lab Program, funded by a Creative Communities Fund Grant. He also saw a production of his play Sisters of Ellery Hollow fully actualized.

Lynn Steinmetz, B.A. 1976, was seen as Mrs. Pearce in Pygmalion with Everyman Theatre.

Bob Taeschner, Ph.D., M.F.A. 1959, spent 35 years teaching high school drama in Seattle after obtaining his secondary teaching certificate from Seattle University where he taught while studying. He also earned a doctorate in drama from the University of Washington. After retiring from teaching, he substitute taught until he began teaching at the International Academy of Design and Technology, where he still teaches today. In his teaching career, he has directed more than 125 shows, mostly full round productions, some of which he wrote. He has also been in several movies, commercials, and industrials. He acted in three seasons of shows at ACT Seattle, in one show with Seattle Repertory Theatre, Second Stage, and at Seattle Civic Light Opera.


Dominic Traino, M.A.T.E. 2008, designed the set for The Magic Flute for Catholic University’s Opera Theatre.


George Wilson, B.A. 1966, M.F.A. 1974, teaches regularly with his wife at Indiana University Northwest in the medical department, working with first- and second-year medical students in their physical examination and communications skills. Rosalind Franklin University has invited him back for the third year for a lecture series on medical history taking and dealing with difficult patient situations. He has also been picked as an instructor in male health screening at Marquette University’s physician assistant program and Carroll
Alumni News, cont.

College (PA). As of June 2011, he and his wife, June, have conducted two specialized communications seminars for the PA department at Northwestern University and they have been able to employ and train three other NPTAs for the program there. They are hopeful that this will become a regular addendum to the physician assistant program at NU.

Abby Wood, B.A. 2004, was seen as Miss Casewell in 1st Stage’s production of Agatha Christie’s The Mousetrap this past January. She also appeared in Julius Caesar with Taffety Punk Theatre Company, Night and Day at Artisphere, and Cat’s Cradle with Longacre Lea.

Peggy Yates, M.F.A. 1980, is a founding member of the Playhouse in Millburn, N.J. She is best known for a new program—Audio Description—the undersigned would like to relate an event he personally witnessed.

As the aforementioned non-too-bright producer, I asked him why he did it. “The mood takes over!” was the emphatic reply.

Thereupon, Henry walked out from the wings with a crowbar in his hands. Smiling and speaking softly, he addressed the miscreant and said: “Please don’t do that to the flowers in our ground row. They have to be replaced and that’s not very nice.”

The Actors’ Studio’s Flavor-of-the-week replaced and that’s not very nice.

The above all accepted as the fruits of a wonderful talent, there is one glaring contradiction in Henry’s theatrical life: He’s entirely too generous to have survived so well in a not entirely so gentle profession. Where is a list of venal enemies? Where a trail of drunken brawls and wounded former friends and egotistical outbursts? Why can’t there be unearthed any history of malicious gossip and denigrating insults directed at his fellow professionals—all time-honored traditions of Thespis?

Several decades ago—30, 40, 50, whatever your infallible disinformation may be—Henry Sutton was born in a thatched hut in Burma, or a Hindu temple in Kuala Lumpur or a mud tree nest in Afghanistan—ibid, accurate disinformation.

Although his first utterings were not completely understandable, his missionary parents and older brother, Walter, swear he was howling, “There’s No Business Like Show Business!”

This credo served the lad well for years to come, for if there was ever the living definition of a working actor, the multifaceted journeyman professional, it’s Henry. Except for a period when he joined forces with a fledgling non-too-bright producer in New Jersey he was rarely at liberty. When asked why he left the Jersey experiment, his answer was succinct: “I read the Emancipation Proclamation!”

For decades he played every conceivable type of role, an extraordinary range, from Shakespeare to Tennessee Williams, from Inge to Aristophanes, all over the country, as well as one of the longest individual runs on Broadway. His friends called this period Hank’s David Merrick annuity.

The above all accepted as the fruits of a wonderful talent, there is one glaring contradiction in Henry’s theatrical life: He’s entirely too generous to have survived so well in a not entirely so gentle profession. Where is a list of venal enemies? Where a trail of drunken brawls and wounded former friends and egotistical outbursts? Why can’t there be unearthed any history of malicious gossip and denigrating insults directed at his fellow professionals—all time-honored traditions of Thespis?

Nowhere, I tell you! It’s simply not fair! It’s patently unsportsmanlike for Henry to behave with such tolerance and gentility. However, lest the above leads one to think Henry is submissive in his search for tranquility, the undersigned would like to relate an event he personally witnessed.

It was in a production of Picnic, in the cast a super-ultra Method actor, since methodically and deservedly having faded into oblivion, who kept ripping up the flowers of the stage’s ground row garden. I mean he literally yanked the plastic daisies and roses from the fabric stage grass. As the aforementioned non-too-bright producer, I asked him why he did it. “The mood takes over!” was the emphatic reply.

Whereupon, Henry walked out from the wings with a crowbar in his hands. Smiling and speaking softly, he addressed the miscreant and said: “Please don’t do that to the flowers in our ground row. They have to be replaced and that’s not very nice.”

The Actors’ Studio’s Flavor-of-the-week turned to me and hoarsely asked. “Who is he?” “You’d better know,” I replied. “He was raised in Asia and trained by a Tong in the Jungles. We’re told he likes to tear chests open and snap heads off for fun. We call him Burmese Charley. ...Don’t rip up the flowers anymore.”

Sorry, Henry, I had to tell the truth.

Happy Birthday. Your everlasting friendship with us and our children is more than heartwarming—it’s overwhelming. And our daughter, your goddaughter, Glynis, sends many kisses.

We love you.

—Robert Ludlum
CUAdrama Abroad

Many of our undergrads choose to study abroad during their junior year. The offerings through CUA’s Center for Global Education have diversified and the experiences are life-changing. Here is a sample from our most recent group:

My time in Buenos Aires was incredible—I picked up the language faster than I imagined, met new friends from all around the world, and watched many plays in the biggest theatre city in the Southern Hemisphere. I loved Buenos Aires so much I can’t imagine never going back to Argentina. There is no better way to learn a language that surrounding yourself in it; studying abroad changed my life.

— Chris Daileader

Studying abroad was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had. As an individual, it made me stronger in many ways because I was out of my comfort zone. I had to become very independent as I made my way around Rome on my own, traveled to other countries, all while interacting with people in a different language. In Rome I learned a great deal about their culture and style of living. At first it was hard to get used to their customs but as a whole, it was a fun experience and I am glad I went.

— Olivia Pavlick

I spent three months studying at the Moscow Art Theatre School in Russia, through a program with the National Theatre Institute. I thrived on the artistic atmosphere and the life of a city never at rest. I was able to learn so much about my craft as an actor in the school and theatre that were Stanislavsky’s and Chekhov’s brainchildren. Almost every other day, we saw shows after classes in some of Russia’s oldest theatres, and every night, every theatre we visited was packed with people excited to see what the performers had to offer. This provided an interesting contrast to many of America’s strictly business-minded theaters. Even though I was unable to master the Russian language, the physicality of the productions often went well beyond the language anyway. In addition to taking in the country’s rich theatrical history, I visited tons of museums, learning about Russia’s other historical ventures. Believe it or not, I did not freeze to death, and I am impatiently awaiting the chance to travel again. I am also excited to share my experiences with others as they return from their trips.

— Rachel Burkhardt

I sat there in the audience thinking to myself “well this is just crazy. I’m in Paris—it’s a once in a lifetime experience!” So, I raised my hand and volunteered. It was a one-man comedy show in the middle of Paris and he was asking for a volunteer. After my few surreal moments up on stage I came out of the theatre beaming. I was just on stage in a foreign country! It was during moments like this that I had to keep reminding myself that this was real life. Yes, I studied and learned from a great group of professors in a classroom full of bright and fun students, but I also lived with an incredible family who taught me French slang, family recipes, and true French humor. I traveled and visited friends in places I may never have had a chance to see, and I really feel that I gained an independence that can never be taken away from me. I would not change my decision in a lifetime, but it is good to be back.

— Helen Davis

My study abroad experience in Paris was an invaluable experience. I got to experience a whole new theatre with a whole new history and tradition behind it. I would encourage anyone to go, not even to study, but just to go abroad because the new perspective I gained continues to challenge and inform me.

— Anna Lathrop
Celebrating the Drama Department’s 75th anniversary!

In the fall of 2012 we celebrate 75 years of drama education at Catholic University. We plan to throw a party to let everyone know how proud we are of this, celebrating our past and anticipating our future. Initial plans are for an event here on campus while using technology to permit those who cannot come to D.C. to still connect with old friends and to celebrate our accomplishments. We are looking for alumni from each decade to work as an overall committee and to draw on the diverse talents they have. Some of you have already expressed an interest in being involved, and I ask that you contact me so I can follow up as we develop our team. Our tentative plans include an opportunity for selected alumni to meet with current students to talk about their journey in the profession, an afternoon casual meet and greet in the Upper Lobby, and an evening of sharing experiences among the generations, including the most recent members of our Hartke family. This will take some careful coordination and planning, so assistance from our alumni in pulling it together will enhance the experience for everyone.

— Gail Beach

We ask that you consider a gift to support the on-going work of the department in honor of our 75 years of educating artists, teachers, and theorists. It is a costly enterprise and we know how much someone has to give up to pursue such a passion. Please consider a donation of whatever amount you can give. The generous support of our alumni is important to our ability to continue as a competitive program.

Useful Information! Our Mailing Address:
Department of Drama, The Catholic University of America, 620 Michigan Ave NE, Washington, D.C. 20064

Please make checks out to:
The Catholic University of America.

Spring 2012 Season

Alien Invader
By Frank DiSalvo Jr
Directed by Tom Prewitt
February 16, 24, 25 at 7:30 p.m.
February 18 and 19 at 2 p.m.

Meet the White children. Grant is in a rut. Sophia lost all in a fire. Elliot failed out of college eight times. Danielle is still recovering from a stroke she suffered at 19. When the adopted siblings are unexpectedly thrown together again after their parents’ passing, their relationships are brought to the breaking point in a hilarious dark comedy about the meaning of family, the conflict over selling the family home, and a no-holds-barred quest to find The Worst Video Game Ever Made.

Mystery Plays
By Roberto Aquirre-Sacasa
Directed by Sasha Brätt
February 17, 18, and 23 at 7:30 p.m.
February 25 and 26 at 2 p.m.

These two interrelated one-acts are based on the medieval mystery plays but infused with the eerie sensibilities and off-beat characters of the modern American horror genre. The combination makes for an edge-of-your-seat experience. The Mystery Plays explore the unknown, unseen, and unexplainable, which exist within all life, death, faith, and forgiveness.

The Crucible
By Arthur Miller
Directed by Bill Largess
April 19, 20, and 21 at 7:30 p.m.
April 21 and 22 at 2 p.m.

When a group of teenage girls accuse others of witchcraft to cover up their own forbidden activities, the 17th-century town of Salem, Mass., erupts in allegations of satanic activity, hysteria, and blame. The arrests and legal trials that follow expose a community paralyzed by fear, religious extremism, and greed.

Reading Series

Chance and Necessity
By Jon Klein, CUA Drama’s Head of Playwriting
Directed by Eleanor Holdridge, CUA Drama’s Head of Directing
March 23 and 24

The play features historical characters such as Nobel Prize-winning microbiologist Jacques Monod, novelist Jerzy Kozinski, and philosopher and author Albert Camus. Jon Klein describes it as a “a moving chronicle of three amazing men and their times, which also questions the connections between random events and moral consequences.”

The Unseen
By Craig Wright
Directed by Sasha Brätt, CUA M.F.A. candidate
April 27 and 28

A play about two men imprisoned by a totalitarian regime and mercilessly tortured for unknown crimes, living with an enigmatic new prisoner who communicates in code. Brätt describes the work as “a darkly humorous examination of faith in an uncertain world.”
We Want To Hear From You!

Please fill in the information below, or email cua-drama@cua.edu so we can update our alumni database/mailing list and also include your news in the next Aside!

Name: ___________________________________________________________________

Graduation Year: ___________ Degree: ______________________________________

Name at CUA (if different from above): ___________________________________________________________________

Street Address: _____________________________________________________________

City: ______________________________________________________________________

State: .................................. Zip: ................................

Phone (h): _____________________ Phone (w): ______________________

Email: _____________________________________________________________________

Professional News: (Feel free to attach and send reviews/articles/interesting info)

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Mail to:
The Catholic University of America
Department of Drama
Attn: ASIDE
Washington, DC 20064