



UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE & DANCE
ALUMNI NEWS

1999/2000

CONSTRUCTION BEGINS!



James Spiegelberg, site contractor, Oliver Walter, A&S Dean; Rebecca Hilliker, Department Head, Philip Dubois, UW President; Charles Graves, attorney for the donor and Anne Adams, theatre major celebrate the ground-breaking ceremonies.

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A gorgeous autumn with mild temperatures and (believe it or not) no snow is speeding construction on the new acting studio/classroom/movie theatre addition to the Fine Arts. At this writing, the whole department shakes, rattles and rolls daily as jackhammers and bulldozers chisel a massive 5,000 square-foot crater into the west façade. The cavity extends right out to the end of Sorority/Fraternity Row, temporarily eliminating dozens of parking spots, but no one is complaining, for soon we'll have badly needed space for a department that has grown to nearly one hundred majors.

Next summer, when the addition is complete, the first level (which will be accessed through the old Music Department Green Room) will contain a pilates room for dancers, storage space and a 4,000 square-foot rehearsal hall with twenty-five foot ceilings, lots of light and a fully sprung floor. The smaller second floor (which will be accessed at lobby level, near the main west entrance of the building) will contain a new, fully-enclosed light booth for the old studio theatre, a stage manager's office, a projection booth and a television control room. The renovation will also give the studio theatre new, cozy seats and a badly needed re-worked electrical system. The 1.6 million dollar project is funded by an anonymous donor and supporter of UW Theatre and Dance.

But construction is only part of the story. It has been a fast-paced year. In February, our program produced the National Irene Ryan Acting Award winner at the Kennedy Center (the highest academic acting award in the country). Sophomore Rian Jairell beat out 14 finalists (mostly from graduate schools) to take home the honor for Wyoming.

The 5th Annual Snowy Range Summer Dance Festival brought dancers from the Martha Graham Dance Company, the Colorado Ballet and the Peter Pucci Plus Dancers for a week of concerts and classes. The third annual Gladys Grane Mountain Plains Film Festival was held with more than a dozen diverse, independent films (from John Waters' Pecker to Todd Solondz's Happiness) allowing audiences to see the type of movies that don't normally play in Wyoming. For the third year in a row the department staged "vertical dancing" at Vedauwoo. Hundreds were entertained as our dancers waltzed and jitterbugged on the end of rappelling ropes ten stories above the heads of the audience. The UW summer theatre staged its 45th season of plays including An Inspector Calls, The Atomic View Hotel, the musical Chaps and the children's show Many Moons. For the second year in a row the department's Summer Apprentice Program gave high school students a chance to work with professional technicians and actors.

This only scratches the surface of what was another year of teaching, growing and producing. Please visit, there's always something happening and we are always happy to see you.

UW STUDENT WINS NATIONAL IRENE RYANS



UW sophomore Rian Jairell has won the 1999 National Irene Ryan Acting Award at the Kennedy Center. Rian, whose scene partner was freshman Missy Moore, beat out a field of mostly graduate students to take home the title. Not only did a UW student win the national, but sixteen UW students made it to the regional Irene Ryans. Of those, eight made it to the regional finals.

DEPARTMENT WELCOMES NEW FACULTY MEMBER



The Department of Theatre and Dance is happy to welcome Fred Mann III to the faculty. Fred comes to us from New York City where he directed, danced and choreographed dozens of productions. He was with the Milwaukee & Eglevsky Ballet and worked with the legendary Bob Fosse. He was also in such films as TOOTSIE, Woody Allen's EVERYONE SAYS I LOVE YOU and MIGHTY APHRODITE.

ALUMNI & FRIENDS NEWS

1970s

ANGLIN, JOHN (1971) is currently the Division Chair for the Fine Arts at East Central College in Missouri. He has taught there since 1971. Recently he received the Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

BLACKSTONE, SARAH (1976) lives in Murphysboro, Illinois with her husband (Irv Engle) and two scotties (Tucker and Abby). She is currently serving as Chair of the Department of Theater at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. Last spring, she spent her sabbatical in Mexico studying street performance.

CLYMER, KATHLEEN (1975) has taught theatre, speech and art at high schools in Green River, WY, La Junta, CO and Burlington, WY.

PETTY, GUY (1976) - has designed stage shows for entertainers Michael Jackson, Engelbert Humperdinck, Loretta Lynn, John Denver, Wayne Newton, Tom Jones and The Beach Boys to name just a few. He has also designed quite a few "Stage Spectaculars", including the 20th Anniversary of the Mikado in Tokyo, the grand opening of The New Fujiya Hotel in Atami Japan, as well as numerous extravaganzas in South Africa, Korea and Europe. He now works for Walt Disney World as Senior Art Director of Entertainment.

SEAY, DONALD (former faculty) is currently the Chair/Artistic Director of the Department of Theatre at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. Dr. Seay has been actively associated with over 220 productions. He was awarded McMillen and Tozer Grants for study and research in England, France, East and West Germany, Finland, Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.

1980s

ABRAMS, DAVID (1983) spent his first summer after leaving UW doing western melodrama musicals at the now-defunct Dirty Jack's Theater in Jackson, WY. He then married the "woman of his dreams" had a son and moved to Eugene, OR, where he majored in English at the University of Oregon. After working as an editor for a couple of small-town newspapers in Montana, he joined the Army as a journalist. He is now in his 12th year in the Army and has been stationed in Georgia and Texas and is now doing his second duty in Alaska.

BLACK, MONTE (1986) received his MFA in modern dance from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1991. He has performed with many outstanding regional theatre companies, including Theatre Under the Stars (Houston, TX), Fifth Avenue (Seattle, WA), Playhouse in the Park (Cincinnati, OH), and The Rep (St. Louis, MO). He also performed in the 15th Anniversary National Tour of The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas. Monte is currently

Assistant Professor of Dance at the University of Northern Colorado.

BOND, BRAD (1988) After six years of living in New York, Brad's original musical, *Celestina: A Tragic Musical Comedy* received a full production as an Off-Off-Broadway show. The piece originated as part of Brad's Spanish Masters Thesis, which involved adapting a 500-year-old Spanish novel-in-dialogue into a modern, English play.

PENTON, BILL (1984) - After getting an MFA from Western Illinois University in 87, he became the Co-Managing/Technical Director of the Gascon Center Theatre in Culver City, California. His most recent show has been extended and possibly optioned by HBO. It's next going to Chicago and then on to the east coast next year. This summer he's heading to Alabama to shoot his own independent film.

ROBISON, DAVE (1985) has wandered the land in search of the "sweet spot of his existence." After being a bookstore owner, digital artist and an actor, Dave has finally discovered teaching. For the past six years he's been teaching computer software to "those in need of his unique blend of technical prowess and theatrical enthusiasm." He is currently living in Ft. Collins, CO, and will be marrying his true love in June of 2000.

SLATER, MARTHA (Waskowitz) and her husband Bill live in Philadelphia. She has had many good auditions and has worked on various projects, the most recent of which was a series of poetry readings with opera singers. Their big news, however, is that she is expecting TWINS in April!

SOLLARS, RENE and STORM just purchased a home in Laramie and are "restoring it to some version of its original greatness." Rene is in the process of starting a full service portrait studio. She photographs weddings and portraits for seniors and families. Storm is on the road with various concert tours (currently N Sync) which keeps him away from home for much of the year.

VERNON, KEVIN YALE (1986) was a fundraiser for Wyoming Public Radio before moving on to WCBU at Bradley University in Peoria where she stayed for six years doing fundraising, public relations and event planning. She is currently a full-time student at Illinois State University in Theatre/English Education. She says, "I just didn't want to spend the rest of my life behind a desk and as a teacher there's a real opportunity to make some small differences."

1990s

BAKKAR, JENNIFER (1999) is in Washington State working as a customer service rep and receptionist for a computer internet company that specializes in connectivity (dsl) and co-location. Though she works in Seattle, she and Asem just bought their first house in Everett. On the weekends she is busy volunteering for such organizations as Make a Wish Foundation, American Cancer Society and Seattle Works. She invites everyone to come visit.

GALAITES, JIMMIE (1998) is working on his MFA in acting at Florida State University's Asolo Conservatory. He says that he, "never knew Meisner exercises could be so hard!" Lisa Howe is moving down to Sarasota in January and they plan to marry the summer of 2001.

GONZALEZ, MICHAEL (1999) is getting his MFA in playwriting at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. He is getting ready to direct his own play *Foul Territory* and writing a new one-act and full length (both are based on monologues inspired by classmates at UW).

GRAY, DAVID & CHONTELLE (1993) are teaching at Central Wyoming College. Chontelle is Technical Theatre Director and Dave is currently teaching English.

MAHONEY, SHANNON (1996) just finished her MFA in acting at California State University at Fullerton. She also belonged to the Synthesis Dance Company and recently performed at the Ford Amphitheatre in Hollywood. She has acted in several plays in L.A.

MILLHONE, AMALIE (1997) is currently getting her MFA in acting at LSU. This year, she played Miss Tesman in *Hedda Gabler* and Mina in *Dracula*. She is also teaching beginning acting and says she is thrilled with her students

even though it's a 9:30 am class. This winter she is traveling to Chicago to audition for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. "I would love to come back to the west and do theatre this summer. If not for the Shakespeare experience, for the cooler summer. I am dying down here in the deep south but having a great time."

RULE, CAROLINE (1997) will graduate with an MFA in screenwriting from USC film school in May. She also works for HBO Pictures as the Assistant to the Story Editor. She plans to work there at least until she sells her, "multi-million dollar screenplay to Dreamworks and become a famous writer/director/actress."

SABELLA, SAL (1998) just finished Kiss of the Spiderwoman at the Northshore Music Theatre in Beverley, MA. Currently, he is in a national tour of The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber and working "with some pretty amazing people."

SANTANGELO, JOHN (1996) is in the midst of his second year of an MFA in Set Design at UNLV. Last summer was a busy one - he returned to UW to design three shows for Summer Theatre and married UW alumna Angela Stoddard.

STODDARD, ANGELA (SANTANGELO) (1996) works as a loan officer at a mortgage company by day and by night she works at the Stardust Casino's Enter The Night as a Las Vegas Showgirl. She continues to take ballet classes during the week and was even offered a role in Nevada Ballet's Nutcracker. Last summer she married UW alumnus John Santangelo.

STONER, CHARITY (1998) moved to Boston and is now working at an internet start-up company called Interactive Strategies as a Web Prominence Specialist. She says that she really loves her job and is keeping busy, but Boston was a "Culture Shock!"

TABOR, CHRISTOPHER (1996) is in Ithaca, New York while his girlfriend Melissa attends graduate school at Cornell University. He is currently the Production Manager/Production Stage Manager for the Kitchen Theatre Company. He has stage managed their last five mainstage productions as well as acted in a production for their children's theatre series, Saturday Morning Live! (Check out their season at www.kitchentheatre.com.) This autumn he also joined the Ithaca College faculty to teach their stage management course.

THOMPSON, TEROLYN LEISA (1998) went to Los Angeles for an internship at the Mark Taper Forum. She worked with PLAY (Performing for LA Youth) and the YAP (Young Audiences Program) programs. In June, she was hired by the Long Lake Camp for the Performing Arts in New York to direct and to teach for the summer. She directed 6 plays in 9 weeks! She is planning to attend Graduate school in the Fall of 2000!

WARD, MICHELLE (1997) is currently in her 3rd year of medical school at the University of Colorado in Denver. The first 2 years of the program are spent in the classroom and laboratory but now she is working in more clinical settings. She says, "I miss dancing every day, but my time is very limited right now. I am really enjoying where I am at and the incredible experience this has been. "

WEBER, JIM (1993) wrote and filmed a short DVD project entitled Morning Observer (which stars UW grad Pete Simpson). Since then he has co-written two full length screenplays and seven short films. In November he'll be co-producing, acting in, and co-directing one of his own short films called Groupie which will be shot in NY. Last summer he acted in two short films and, in one, had to ride a horse; he says it pays to go to school in Wyoming.

FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

WILLIAM MISSOURI DOWNS - had his second book published by Harcourt Brace. Screenplay: Writing the Picture is now required reading at many film schools including UCLA. Ed Solomon, author of the movie Men In Black calls it the best book on screenwriting currently on the market. He also won the top ten teacher award from the College of Arts and Sciences for the second year in a row and a Merit Award for research.

BILLIE K. GROSS spent last summer working in Skagway, AK. She is now working on the Wyoming Territorial Park upcoming Christmas show .

LARRY HAZLETT - is in the process of assimilating and compiling hundreds of photos that he took while researching provincial theatre in Saratov, Russia during the winter of 1999. He is also heavily involved in the design specifics and construction for the new acting studio and Studio Theatre remodel as well as the proposed remodel of the Education Auditorium.

REBECCA HILLIKER - spent four days at the Sundance Theatre Institute with Moises Kaufman (The Three Trials Of Oscar Wilde) during the work shopping of Kaufman's new play The Laramie Project. She is planning on spending a week in New York City with his company (the Tectonic Theatre) as they continue their work on the production which will open at the Denver Center in February. She is going to spend the spring of 2000 at the University of Alabama at Birmingham helping the department develop a new performance and design curriculum. In May she has been asked to direct a production of Trifles for an interdisciplinary symposium "Common Threads: Susan Glaspell's Trifles and the Interactions of the Arts, Law and Society." The conference will be held in Tel Aviv and will be centered around the production.

LEE HODGSON was accepted into the prestigious United Scenic Arts Union and won the Merit Award for Teaching.

MARSHA KNIGHT - recently spent a week in New York City at the Performing Arts Library, researching the lives of two early 18th century dancers: Hester Santlow and Marie Salle. She is presenting a piece at the American College Dance Festival in March based on innovations these women made as dancers/choreographers and on the common points they shared in their artistic and personal lives.

MARGARET STALDER - choreographed For Vedauwoo Lichen - Veertical Variations in Sound and Space - a vertical dance performance held at Vedauwoo. She also worked with Annie Sailer and Tom Cilek on Time Went Away, a collaborative dance and mixed media performance and is currently working with Fred C.L.Mann III preparing for the Y2K dance production in May. In November she performed a vertical dance duet with Sam Wisely, a doctoral student in Zoology at Casper College for an opening reception for Narrative Strands an art installation by Wendy Bredehoft.

RON STEGER - designed Nutcracker for the Charleston Ballet Theatre in South Carolina and the Springfield Ballet in Missouri. He also designed Always Patsy Cline for the Wyoming Territorial Park, The Heiress for Colorado State University as well as Angles In American And Mere Mortals for UW.

LEIGH SELTING - was promoted to full professor last spring and awarded a Meritorious Achievement Award from KC/ACTF for his direction of Sylvia. He was also appointed Regional Representative for the Society of American Fight Directors for the states of Montana and Idaho, as well as Wyoming. Last summer he performed the one-man show ME & JFK in upstate NY, and directed and acted with the Old Lyric Rep. Theatre in Utah. Next summer he is scheduled to direct for Grand Street Theatre in Montana.

HARRY WOODS - directed the well-received main stage production of Angels in America which opened the 1999/2000 UW Theatre and Dance Season.

LOU ANNE WRIGHT - served as an editor for Bill Downs' book Screenplay: Writing the Picture for Harcourt. Last summer she performed the role of Beatrice in the critically well-received production of The Effect Of Gamma Rays on Man-In The-Moon Marigolds at the Bas Bleu Theatre in Fort Collins. Lou Anne has signed with Harcourt Brace to write a new Introduction To Theatre book and is slated to vocal coach a production of Three Sisters next year at the Actor's Alley Theatre in Los Angeles.

Greetings ASOPA alumnus and present members!

The journey into the next millennium has been a busy time for ASOPA so far this year. Focus has been shifted to fundraising projects. Anticipating the cost of next year's trip to Alaska for ACTF, ASOPA has become a fund raising machine. Recently Kevin Sweeney, current President, put together a show for the Wyoming Hospital Association. This endeavor alone brought in \$2000. Our hats off to Kevin and his gang. December 13th is the date planned for our annual Cabaret night. In addition to supporting ASOPA, this is guaranteed to be a night of spontaneity and merriment.

In past years ASOPA has also helped out with some important departmental events. This year is no exception. The annual film festival was a great success. ASOPA provided everything from ushers to limo services for visiting directors. The Wyoming State High School Drama Festival is providing another service opportunity for ASOPA in December. Members will be assisting with all aspects of the contest. Thank you for your support.

80's UW THEATRE REUNION HELD IN LARAMIE

September 17-19, 1999 Laramie, WY- was the site of a reunion of 80's graduates of the University's Theatre and Dance Department. 30 of us gathered for the weekend to renew old friendships and acquaintances and visit with faculty. The reunion was held in conjunction with the Gladys Crane Mountain Plains Film Festival and special thanks goes to Harry Woods, Marsha Knight, Leigh Selting, and Bob Hooker for their logistic help in Laramie.

Out-of-towners included: Bill Penton, Los Angeles, CA - Christi Loutas-Segal, Greeley, CO - Dave Robison, Ft. Collins, CO - Jeff Baumgartner, Aurora, IL - Joe Campbell, Miles City, MT - Mark and Janelle Schultz, Scottsbluff, NE - Monte Black, Greeley, CO - Paulann and Rob Doane, Greeley, CO - Ramsey Avery, Los Angeles, CA - Rich and Jenny Martin, Lewisville, TX - Rita Amstutz-Sommers, Denver, CO - Tony Bonsignore, New York, NY

We put together an updated database of names and addresses which will be mailed out to all those who attended and those who could not. It was a wonderful time to be back on campus, the first time in 15 years for many of us. We shared many fun stories of hot-tub cast parties, production successes and nightmares, favorite classes and our beloved faculty! We even bid the theatre ghost hello as we gathered on the mainstage for a picture.

We sang a few verses of the theatre blues, thanks to Mark Schultz and his guitar- with Rob Doane on harmonica, and we tried to figure out how we all made it through those years with a degree in hand - and it was determined that we did it with the help and support of each other.

We all have great respect and fond memories of our days at UW and we all feel a special bond with the theatre department and with each other that will last a lifetime. We were a unique group and it was loads of fun seeing each other again and visiting some of our old hangouts, which surprisingly, a few are still there. We are very excited about the growth of the theatre program, the professional faculty and the improvements being made to the Theatre and Dance program. Most of us remember a small program of approx. 30 Theatre and Dance majors and now it is near 100. We are all very proud of our school and our department and have taken much of what we learned in Laramie into our present careers.

We read greetings from Amy Tigner, Kevin Yale-Vernon, and Dr. Bahs, and watched a video that Robert Ham sent to us. For all of you who couldn't be with us, we toasted you and remember you all! Maybe we should try this again sometime in the new millennium.

