



# Center Stage

Newsletter of the UW Department of Theatre & Dance

Summer 2008

## Putting It "On The Line"

Summer is in full swing in Laramie and for the first time in years we've had April, May, June, and July showers (and one tornado to boot), so the flowers are gorgeous this year! All of us at the University of Wyoming Department of Theatre and Dance hope this issue of Center Stage finds you happy and healthy and enjoying these beautiful summer days.

The spring semester opened with *ALMOST, MAINE*, John Cariani's quirky comedy about the love-starved inhabitants of a northern Maine town falling in and out of love on a magical winter's night. Directed by **Leigh Selting**, the play sold out early and was a hit with audiences.

Long before *ALMOST MAINE* got off the ground, the department was gearing up to host the 2008 Region VII Kennedy

Center American College Theatre Festival at the new UW conference center. As the center opened in mid-February, right as the festival was scheduled to begin, we all waited with bated breath to see if all the walls would be painted and carpet laid in time, but the conference went off without a hitch thanks to the combined efforts of our students, faculty and staff and conference personnel. At the festival, **William Missouri Downs'** provocative play *THE M WORD* was one of the invited productions, and our acting, directing, design, and playwriting students took top honors, with several going on to national competition (see UW Theatre Students Claim Top Honors, p. 4).

Region VII KCACTF was such an all-consuming piece of work that we did not mount a spring dance concert and instead merged our

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performers' needs into one show, *A CHORUS LINE*, which went up in late April. Directed by special guest **James B. Nicola**, with musical direction by **Dr. Patrick Newell** and choreography by **Jennifer Deckert**, this dazzling musical-verite about Broadway gypsies trying to land a part in the chorus of a new show allowed our actors to work on their dance moves and our dancers to gain some acting chops, and everyone to learn how to belt out a tune.

Effective the end of the summer theatre season, long-time design faculty member **Larry Hazlett** retired from the department (see *Hazlett Retires*, p. 3). UW Theatre & Dance thanks Larry for

Actors Mark Mieden and Callan Riedel cuddle under the Northern Lights in *ALMOST, MAINE*.



his conscientious and careful work over his 21-year career with the department.

Three new faculty members will come on board with us this fall, including **Lawrence Jackson** in dance, **John O'Hagan** in acting, and **Adam Mendelsohn** in lighting and sound design (see Welcome New Faculty, p. 5).

The summer season is just drawing to a close (see Summer Festival

Has Broad Appeal, p 3) and a new season of challenging work is already upon us.

We look forward to keeping you up-to-date on activities as we continue to make UW one of the best undergraduate theatre and dance programs in the country!

Headshots of hopefuls from  
A CHORUS LINE.



## UW Students Win Fellowship To William Inge Theatre Festival

For the second straight year in a row, Theatre and Dance students from the University of Wyoming were awarded scholarships and the opportunity to perform at the annual William Inge Theatre Festival, one of the nation's foremost theatrical events.

Student director Amy Hollon was awarded the prestigious Inge Festival Scholarship Scene Audition fellowship, which recognizes the most outstanding student-directed and student-acted scenes written by Pulitzer Prize and Oscar-winning writer William Inge, or by one of the past winners of the William Inge Festival Award, including American greats Edward Albee, Neil Simon, Stephen Sondheim, Arthur Miller, and Lanford Wilson. The festival celebrates Inge's legacy with a four-day intensive series of performances, readings, workshops, panel discussions, and retrospectives.

The fellowship provided an all-expense-paid trip for Hollon and

her actors, Jake Staley, Katie Herbert, and Anna Brownsted, to the Inge festival in Independence, KS, Inge's childhood home. There the students performed RAINY DAY AFTERNOON, a short play by William Inge, as one of only three performances presented at the festival for festival participants and theatre, television, and film professionals,

Durang, currently co-director, with Marcia Norman, of the playwriting program at the Juilliard School, Division of Drama, is an actor and a playwright who many works include SISTER MARY IGNATIUS EXPLAINS IT ALL FOR YOU, THE ACTOR'S NIGHTMARE, and BEYOND THERAPY. His award-winning plays have been produced on

and off-Broadway, around the country, and abroad.

"We are excited to honor one of modern theater's funniest and most topical playwrights, whose noteworthy achievements include inspiring a new generation of young playwrights," said Peter Ellenstein, Inge Center Artistic Director.



Inge festival fellowship winner Amy Hollon (second from left) with actors Katie Herbert (left), Jake Staley, and Anna Brownsted (far right) and playwright Christopher Durang (second from right).

including Christopher Durang, one of the most influential playwrights of contemporary American theater, and Honoree of the 27th William Inge Theatre Festival, April 23-26, 2008, in Independence, Kansas.

As invited guests of the festival, Hollon and her actors were also able to participate in master classes with theatre legends such as Tony-award winning actress Michele Pawk and Broadway director Michael Pressman.

## Prof. Larry Hazlett Retires

As many of you may have heard by now, long-time professor Larry Hazlett has announced his retirement from the University of Wyoming effective July 2008.

Once a leading tenor in many opera productions throughout the U.S., Larry has been part of the core of our design/tech faculty since 1987. While at UW, Larry designed lighting for over 140 productions and served also as Technical Director for over 100 of those shows.

Former students and friends feted Larry during the last production of

our 2007-2008 season to honor his 21 years of service to UW. Many alumni wrote in to thank Larry for his impact on their professional and personal lives, including the following comments:

*"From the very beginning you have been my role model and mentor. You expected professionalism, dedication, and quality work."*

*"Thank you, Larry, for teaching me that there are many types of responsibility and that character matters when making decisions that touch the lives of others."*

*"When you're doing focused, careful,*

*and complete work, you look over at Larry, and you see a man who is doing the same exact thing. Day in, day out, semester in, semester out."*

*"Larry will always be over my shoulder with that little piece of the puzzle, encouraging me to be better than myself. And I can't help but listen."*

*"There are SO many things I could say about this wonderful man. I'm just so grateful to have had the opportunity to know and work with him."*

Thanks for your years of dedicated service, Larry! We hope you enjoy every minute of your well-earned retirement.

## Summer Festival Has Broad Appeal

The 2008 Snowy Range Summer Theatre and Dance Festival has just finished the theatre segment and the dance festival is currently in full swing.

This fourth installment of the combined summer and theatre and dance festival, was great fun during the theatre portion and students dancers are currently chasseeing and tapping away the Fine Arts Building

**Leigh Selting** served as artistic director for the UW Summer Theatre portion of the festival, while **Marsha Knight** and **Jennifer Deckert** are heading up the dance portion.

The summer theatre season featured three comedies that were a hit with audiences. The season opened with **William Missouri Downs'** new play, **COCKEYED**, which was directed by recent graduate Anna Brownsted. Downs' comedy about an ertswhile philosopher turned accountant who falls hard for the boss's beautiful secretary ran June 10-14 and featured UW alum and Equity actor **Brandon Taylor**, as well as recent UW student actors **Jake Staley**, **Stephen Post**, and **Katie Stearns**.

Next came **LAST TRAIN TO NIBROC**, Arlene Hutton's

old-fashioned wartime romance about a feisty young woman and her charming young flyer. Directed by **William Missouri Downs**, the play featured recent UW alumnus **Nick Linn** and student **Katrina Despain**

and ran June 24-28.

Closing out the summer theatre season was **ROUNDING THIRD**, a hilarious comedy by Richard Dresser about two mismatched fathers battling it out in the box as they coach their team through an entire season of Little League ball. Directed by **Leigh Selting**, this production featured Equity actors **Brandon Taylor** and **Michael Cameron** and ran July 8 - 12.

The 2008 festival closes out with with the Dance Concert Series. The free Student Showcase Concert on July 24 features festival participants, while the the Dance Festival Gala Concert on July 26 features festival resident dancers from **BALLET WEST** and **David Dorfman Dance**, as well as festival participants performing repertory works by festival faculty **Vincent Brosseau**, **Lawrence Jackson**, **Susan Israel Massey**, **Jacob Mora**, **Kaye Richards**, **Keith Saunders**, and **Ellie Sciarra**.

UW Theatre & Dance would like to thank everyone who has come to or givent to our summer programs and helped them to grow. *We appreciate your support!*



Michael Cameron (left) and Brandon Taylor (right) watch for stray fungoes in **ROUNDING THIRD**.

# UW Students Claim Top Honors at Region VII KCACTF

University Theatre & Dance students and faculty members received top honors at the Region VII Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) and Northwest Drama Conference (NWDC), held at UW in February.

A UW actor won the KCACTF Region VII Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship competition for the fifth straight year, picking up UW's 12th regional award since 1990. Senior **Nick Linn** won both the Region VII Irene Ryan competition and the Classical Acting Award. Senior **Stephen Post** won the Irene Ryan Best Partner Award.

Linn and his partner, senior **Chelsey Byrd** will advance to the national festival April 14-20, at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

Senior **Amy Hollon** won the prestigious William Inge Festival Student

Directing Award. Her scene, featuring UW students **Jake Staley**, **Katie Herbert**, and **Anna Brownsted**, was performed in Independence, Kansas, at the William Inge Festival in late April. Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Inge produced such works as *PICNIC* and *BUS STOP*.

Senior **Anna Brownsted** was the Region VII One-Act Play winner for



Graduating senior Nick Linn, one of two 2008 Region VII Irene Ryan winners.

her piece, "Niagara Fell." Brownsted was also first alternate for the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers 10-Minute Play Directing Fellowship.

UW doctoral student in psychology, **Nicholas Gene Terpstra-Schwab** won the Region VII 10-Minute Play competition with his piece, *SHARING THIS ROOM WITH YOU*.

Senior **Nicole Watts** won a KCACTF Meritorious Achievement Award in Makeup Design for her work on *UNCLE VANYA*. Junior Laura Shockley won a Meritorious Achievement Award in Costume Design for her work on *THE 'M' WORD*.

UW Professor Larry Hazlett won the Region VII Faculty Excellence Recognition in Lighting Design Fellowship, while department head and Professor of Theatre and Dance Leigh Selting won the Region VII Classical Acting Coach award.

## DANCESCAPES Performers Invited to Turks & Caicos

Dance faculty **Jennifer Deckert**, along with UW students **Nikki Canete**, **Brittany Roney**, and **Brianna Figueroa**, was invited to take part in the dance troupe DANCESCAPES residency in Providenciales, Turks & Caicos, in April.

The brainchild of lighting and scenic designer Peter Jakubowski from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, DANCESCAPES is comprised of dancers from both UNLV and UW. The troupe's visit to was sponsored in part by the Turks & Caicos Friends of the Arts Foundation (TCFAF), whose

mission is to promote a heightened appreciation of the performing and visual arts in the TCI.

While in residency, the troupe

presented an eclectic mix of work ranging from classical ballet to contemporary modern dance and jazz dance. at the Gustarvo Lightbourne Sports Center, Bratyon hall Theatre, the Ashcroft School, Provo Primary School, Precious treasures, and Beaches. They also gave seven lecture demonstrations, reaching 1250 students in 14 schools, and taught five master classes for local dancers.

**Jennifer Deckert's** piece "A Perfect Thorn," was a favorite with young audiences and garnered special recognition in local publicity.



UW dancers Brittany Roney (bottom left), Nikki Canete (bottom center), and Brianna Figueroa (back center) with students in Turks & Caicos.

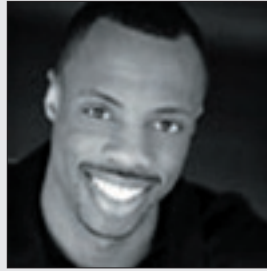
## UW Theatre & Dance Welcomes New Faculty

Please join us in welcoming new faculty members John O'Hagan, and Lawrence Jackson, who will join UW Theatre & Dance in Fall 2008.

**John O'Hagan** (MFA, University of Idaho) comes on board as Assistant Professor in Acting. John spent many years as freelance actor and teacher, director of education with Idaho Theatre for Youth and the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, and company member of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival before taking a position with UW.



**Lawrence Jackson** (MFA, Florida State University) joins UW Theatre & Dance as an Assistant Professor of Jazz Dance and Modern Dance. As a professional, Lawrence spent five years performing with the internationally known modern dance company, Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Ensemble. He has taught at dance schools and summer workshops throughout the U.S. and abroad.



**Adam Mendelsohn** (M.F.A. University of Nebraska-Lincoln) joins the department as Assistant Professor



of Lighting and Sound, a position he also held at the University of Texas and Stephens College in Columbia, MO. Previously, Adam designed and developed the technical theatre curriculum at Lawrence Academy, Groton, MA. Adam has a deep interest in dance and performance art, and has lit and produced over 150 shows on the academic and professional stages.

## Wilson & Humphrey Present Vertical Dance Performance in Greenland

Dance faculty Margaret Wilson and Neil Humphrey (Geology and Geophysics and adjunct in Theatre & Dance), recently presented a performance of vertical dance at the Katuaq Culture House, in Nuuk, Greenland.

The performance included five pieces choreographed for the Greenland venue. Three solo works and two duets were augmented by video of the Greenland landscape. Between the dance pieces, video of vertical dance performances produced at UW was presented.

The video of the Greenland landscape came from the area surrounding Kangerlussuaq, including the ice margin, and from the Ice Sheet at Crawford Point, where Humphrey was based for a research.

Humphrey's current research exam-

ines the effects of climate warming on the melt of the Greenland Ice Sheet. Humphrey, along with researchers from the University of Montana and the University of Colorado, is conducting research to help predict the amount of water that will run off from Greenland as the climate warms.



Neil Humphrey performs in Nuuk, Greenland.

The Greenland performance was partially sponsored by UW's Office of International Programs and was intended to seed interest for future projects involving students and additional faculty and artists from UW.

Wilson and Humphrey's residency also involved discussion of long-term collaborative planning with personnel from NAPA, the Nordic Institute of Greenland. The two also met with high school students in a lecture demonstration where they discussed vertical dance and UW.

## Faculty Spotlight

**Jennifer Deckert** took three dancers, Nikki Canete, Brianna Figueroa, and Brittany Roney, to the Caribbean island of Turks & Caicos April 3 - 20, for three performances and several lecture demonstrations, serving more than 1200 schoolchildren on the island. Jennifer is also co-directing the 2008 Snowy Range Summer Dance Festival with **Marsha Knight** this summer.

**William Missouri Downs** gave a talk entitled "Does Television Stifle Creativity?" at the 23rd Annual Humanities Festival at Casper College. His answer was "Yes." Bill's play **BOOKS ON TAPE** was presented by the Northwest Playwright's Alliance, and read for a playwright's showcase in Denver. Also, his play **COCKEYED** is a finalist at the New Play Festival at the Hot City Theatre in St. Louis. Bill also had a monologue published by Playscripts in Actor's Choice.

**Dr. Rebecca Hilliker** received the College of Arts & Sciences Exemplary Faculty award for 2008. After serving with the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival National Selection Team in Regions I and IV during the past year, this summer, Rebecca becomes the National Vice Chair for KCACTF.

(Continued on p. 6)

## Two UW Theatre & Dance Students Among A&S Top 20 Graduates

UW Theatre and Dance students Danielle Fullerton and Anna Brownsted are among the College of Arts & Sciences



Danielle Fullerton (bottom center) with adviser Larry Hazlett (top left), Dean Oliver Walter (top right), and her parents.

outstanding graduates for the 2007-2008 academic year. Each year, the college's Scholarship Committee, with members from each of the college's divisions, selects the outstanding graduates from among top students nominated by their advisers and instructors.

Fullerton and Brownsted had their names engraved on a bronze plaque mounted in the Arts & Sciences lobby and were recognized at the college's commencement ceremonies May 10.

Fullerton earned a BFA in Theatre in the Design/Tech concentration area. She will be enter graduate school in Carnegie-Mellon this fall, pursuing a degree in Stage Management.

Brownsted earned a BFA in Theatre in the Playwriting/Directing concetration.

She will begin graduate work this winter at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London.



Anna Brownsted (bottom center) with adviser Bill Downs (top left), Dean Oliver Walter (top right), and her parents.

### Faculty Spotlight (Cont.)

**Marsha Knight** has been co-directing the 2008 Snowy Summer Dance Festival with Jennifer Deckert this July.

After teaching in London and Italy during the pre-session, **Leigh Selting** served as artistic director for the summer theatre part of the 2008 Snowy Range Summer Theatre & Dance Festival, for which he also directed ROUNDING THIRD.

**Margaret Wilson** spent early summer in Greenland, dancing on the austere landscape and performing several vertical pieces, along with Neil Humphrey, in the Katauq Culture House in Nuuk, Greenland. Maragret and Neil's residency is hopefully the first among many with NAPA, the Nordic Institute of Greenland.

**Lou Anne Wright** was selected by Shanghai University (Shanghai, China) to teach Western Theatre history. She will spend a month teaching and traveling in Shanghai and Beijing.

Lou Anne received a 2008 Ellbogen Meritorious Teaching Award and was honored by the 2008 National Kennedy Center Selection Team recognizing special achievement at the regional festival for her performance as Dr. Mumford in THE M WORD.

In late April, Lou Anne was invited to give a talk entitled VOCAL PERCEPTIONS: WOMEN IN POLITICS at the regional convention for the American Association of University Women (AAUW).

### Class of 2008

Commencement has come and gone, taking a fantastic group of UW Theatre and Dance graduates with it! Though we'll be sad to lose so many talented students, we wish them the best of luck in their endeavors!

- Megan Antles (FA2007), BFA
- Anna Austin Brownsted, BFA
- Christopher W. Egging, BFA
- Brianna Lynn Figueroa, BFA
- Andrew K. Franks-Ongoy, BA
- Danielle G. Fullerton, BA
- Kira L. Galindo, BA
- Russell Douglas Gilbert BFA
- Shawna R. Hahn, BA
- Katharine L. Herbert, BFA
- John Byron Hill, BFA
- Kari Shawn Kontour, BFA
- Nicholas Carl Linn, BFA
- "Claudine" Mboligikpelani Nako, BFA
- Kellie Rae Rockey, BFA
- Brittany Sarah Roney, BFA
- Nicholas J. Runion, BFA
- Leean Kim Stellingwerf, BFA
- Kenneth Micheal Stellingwerf, BFA
- Courtney K. Stuckey, BFA
- Nicole Kristine Sykes, BFA
- Teresa E. Thompson, BFA



# Thank You to our 2007-2008 Friends of Theatre and Dance!

We'd like to say a sincere "Thank you!" to all our faithful supporters in the 2007-2008 *Friends of Theatre & Dance*. *Your gifts have been instrumental in supporting and growing our award-winning programs!* (We apologize for any errors.)

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# 2008-2009 UW Theatre & Dance Season

## Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse

*By Kevin Kling, based on the children's book by Kevin Henkes*

Directed by Dr. Cecilia Aragon

**OCTOBER 2-4**

Fine Arts Main Stage\*

## Rabbit Hole

*By David Lindsay-Abaire*

Directed by Dr. Rebecca Hilliker

**OCTOBER 28 - NOVEMBER 2**

Fine Arts Studio Theatre

## A Midsummer Night's Dream (Ballet)

*Choreographed by Jennifer Deckert*

## Ride the Culture Loop

*A reconstruction of an Anna Sokolow dance*

Reconstructed by Lorry May

rehearsal direction by Margaret Wilson

**NOVEMBER 18-22**

Fine Arts Main Stage

## It Goes Without Saying

*Written and performed by Bill Bowers*

Developed and directed by Martha Banta

**JANUARY 16 - 17**

## HEY\*O\*KAH / HOK\*A\*HEY

*a new work by visiting artist Bill Bowers*

**FEBRUARY 10 -14**

Fine Arts Main Stage

## Awaken/Shift

Spring Dance Concert with the UW Jazz Ensembles

*Choreographed by Marsha Knight, Vincent Brosseau, Lawrence Jackson, and Margaret Wilson*

**APRIL 2 -4**

Fine Arts Main Stage

## Gianni Schicchi (Opera)

*by Giacomo Puccini*

## The Medium (Opera)

*by Gian Carlo Menotti*

Directed by Dr. Larry Hensel

**APRIL 24-25, 27-29**

Fine Arts Main Stage

Unless otherwise noted, curtain times are **7:30 p.m.** with **2:00 p.m.** Sunday matinees (when scheduled).  
\*Curtain times for LILLY'S PURPLE PLASTIC PURSE are **6:30 p.m.** with a **2:00 p.m.** Saturday matinee.

Tickets on sale soon at (307) 766-6666 or online at <http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/FINEARTS/>

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