



Places, Please!

SPRING 2007

News from
the UW
School of
Drama

Playhouse Theatre Getting More than a Face Lift

There are exciting changes planned at the corner of 41st & University Way NE. Next month, the Playhouse Theatre will begin major renovations and upon re-opening will be given a new name.

With costs exceeding \$9M, the project has been funded in part by the Washington State Office of Financial Management (\$7.5M). An additional multi-million dollar gift was received from the Floyd and Delores Jones Foundation which enabled the school to significantly expand the scope of the renovation. In recognition of this gift, the theatre will be renamed the Floyd & Delores Jones Playhouse upon re-opening.

We're sure that audiences will immediately appreciate the more spacious lobby, much improved restroom facilities, better sightlines, acoustics and lighting. Backstage, student actors and crew are looking forward to nicer dressing rooms,



Left: The renovated Playhouse from 41st St. NE. **Right:** The renovated Playhouse from the intersection of 41st St. and University Way NE.. Renderings © LMN Architects & Widmeyer Design

a “real” green room, and catwalk lighting access. In addition to these changes, the building will receive upgrades on all major systems, including HVAC, electrical, and accessibility (ADA) and seismic deficiencies will be corrected.

We feel extremely lucky that the award-winning architectural firm of LMN

Architects is heading up the project. If you've been to Benaroya Hall, McCaw Hall or the main branch of the Seattle Public Library, you've seen LMN's outstanding work. Smaller projects include the Edmonds Center for the Arts and the Lee Center for the Arts on the Seattle University campus.

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Valerie Curtis-Newton takes on Directing



Photo: Chris Bennion

After ten years on the UW School of Drama faculty, Valerie Curtis-Newton has moved on—moved on to head up the very program she graduated from—the MFA Directing program. After graduating from the program at the UW in 1996, Valerie acted as director of the Ethnic Cultural Center for two years and in 1998, was invited to join the faculty.

With her unique perspective on the program's history and the school itself, Valerie is catapulting the program forward not only through its three year intensive course of study, but also with a proactive approach of mentoring, internships, assistance, fellowships and other assistance necessary to launch a successful professional career. A primary focus under Valerie's watchful eye is to introduce the

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students and their work to those outside the UW. Faculty are utilizing their professional networks to introduce students to key industry players and the School will further facilitate

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Places, Please!

Student, Director, Intern, Dramaturg:

Brandon Ivie does it all



Brandon Ivie is not your typical college student. In fact, he's not typical at all. Not only does he maintain a rigorous class schedule, but his extracurricular activities are enough to qualify as a full time job.

As a senior at the UW, Ivie takes advantage of every theatre opportunity possible. He is the executive director of the Undergraduate Theatre Society (UTS), dramaturge for the Village Theatre, an artistic intern at the 5th Ave Theatre, and the artistic director of his own musical theatre company.

Founded by Ivie in 2003, Contemporary Classics is breaking ground in the Seattle musical theatre scene as a young, hip company. Featuring up-and-coming performers, Contemporary Classics is dedicated to hosting shows that might not find a home in the more traditional theatres in Seattle. While the company is currently operating out of the Ethnic Culture Center at the University of Washington, they hope to one day move to a permanent home of their own.

With seven shows under his belt in this year alone, Ivie is no stranger to long days and longer nights. In early March, Ivie wrapped up work at the 5th Avenue Theatre as the assistant to the director on *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*. With no time wasted, he's already cast and has begun directing the UTS production of Sondheim's *Into the Woods*, which opens May 24th at the Playhouse Theatre and runs through June 3rd. Tickets range from \$5-15 and will be available at brownpapertickets.com early in May.

Playhouse (from p.1)

The Playhouse was originally a warehouse, remodeled in 1929 into a theatre space by Florence and Burton James, co-founders of the then Seattle Repertory Playhouse theatre company.

Seattle's renowned architect, Arthur Loveless, re-designed the building into an "English Rambler" style proscenium theatre. Last renovated in 1967 under the leadership of Greg Falls, it was changed to a

thrust stage to support contemporary staging practices. It will remain a thrust stage configuration.

The project is part of the UW's "Restore the Core" effort, which is renovating a series of older campus buildings. Major construction is expected to be completed Fall 2008 and although we can't say "Save the Date" yet, we hope you'll join us the gala opening including an extra special production in Spring 2009.

Curtis-Newton (from p.1)

Sarah Nash Gates, executive director of the School states "It is for this type of thinking, that the faculty knew that Valerie was the best person to head the program. She has the clarity of thought and the vision to take it to next level. The changes she has made demonstrate her excellent leadership."

For example, this past month the first year students traveled to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and were able to observe design meetings and company presentations.

Desdemona Chiang, one of those students, says "Because graduate school is such an intensive experience, and we can become so immersed in it, we lose sense of the greater picture--both locally and globally. Our recent trip to OSF was a wonderful opportunity to observe the professional working world to which we aspire to join."

Valerie's steadfast commitment to the program, the students and to the advancement of theatre is crystal clear. She states "In working with young directors, we are shaping the next generation of leaders in American Theatre. We want them to do courageous, fearless, innovative work, and we have the opportunity and responsibility to provide the groundwork to make that happen."

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UPCOMING EVENTS

ON STAGE

April 22–May 6

Arcadia

by Tom Stoppard
directed by Tamara Fisch
Location: Playhouse Theatre

Stoppard's brilliant, inventive comedy is part detective story, part love story and farce, with mathematics, poetry, literature, gardening, chaos theory and thermodynamics thrown into the mix.

May 20 – June 3

The Water Children

by Wendy MacLeod
directed by Valerie Curtis-Newton
Location: Penthouse Theatre

The battle of reproductive rights gets personal when Megan, a staunch liberal, stars in a commercial for the right-to-life movement.

Tickets: **206-543-4880** and online at: <http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrama>

SPECIAL EVENTS

PATP Showcase

May 7, 7:00PM

A Performance and Benefit for the Professional Actor Training Program Class of 2007

Admission: \$50-\$100

Location: Leo K. Theatre

For more information: 206-221-6797

President Sarah Nash Gates!

We are pleased to announce that the School's Executive Director Sarah Nash Gates is now the President of U/RTA, the country's oldest and largest consortium of professional theatre training graduate programs.

GradBag

Are you listed? If not, let us know what you are up to – even if you're not doing theatre. Send your info by s-mail or e-mail your information to uwdrama@u.washington.edu.

In Memoriam

Katie Dolan

Katie Dolan died this past November in Seattle at the age of 82. Katie spent the last forty years as a pioneering activist for the rights of disabled people in Washington State. She was instrumental in passing the Education for All Act, assuring that Washington state children have a constitutional right to education in the public schools.

Katie was a stage actress, a fashion model, and also hosted two shows on KIRO-TV, "Woman's World" and "Eye on Seattle" in the early sixties, before working full time on behalf of disabled persons.

Since the mid forties, Katie was an active member of Arena, a group of School of Drama alumni who raise money and administer the Glenn Hughes Scholarship Fund. The group awards two full scholarships to students every year.

Katie is survived by her husband of 60 years, Duane Dolan and their son, Patrick.

1946

Dori Pelto (BA) has returned to her hometown of Seattle, after having worked for 10 years as an actress in New York, and 33 years in Ojai, California as an actress, director, and teacher.

1964

Brian Biggs (BA) was appointed Executive Director of Young Musicians & Artists Inc. in Portland, OR.

1971

Richard Nichols (Ph.D) contributed the Korean entries in the Encyclopedia of Asian Theatre, published by Greenwood Press.

1973

Linda Hartzell (BA) directed *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*,

Goodnight Moon, and *Afternoon of the Elves* at Seattle Children's Theatre.

1976

Rebecca Pratt (BA) co-produced an Off-Broadway revival of *Room Service* at SoHo Playhouse.

Michael Cone (BFA) appeared in *Well, I Say Do!*: Yes, We Can Can, an eclectic concert by Broadway Concerts Direct.

1978

Richard Greene (BA) co-produced an Off-Broadway revival of *Room Service* at SoHo Playhouse.

1979

Kathleen Collins (MFA) directed *Delete My Heart* at ACT's Young Playwrights Festival and teaches at Cornish College.

1980

Jennifer Lupton (MFA) designed sets for *Goodnight Moon* at the Seattle Children's Theatre.

1981

Kevin C. Loomis (MFA) has appeared on TV's *Law and Order*, *Criminal Intent* and will appear in the Broadway production of *Inherit the Wind*.

1983

Hugh Hastings (MFA) appeared in *Bye Bye Birdie* at the Village Theatre

1984

Christopher Hart (BA) appeared in *Oleanna* at Theatre Memphis, and received a nomination for the Memphis Theatre Ostrander Award for Lead Actor/ Drama.

1985

Frank Butler (MFA) continues as production manager for the Guthrie Theatre where he oversaw the opening of their new building.

Thomas H. Diggs (BFA) wrote *Five Wishes* as part of Vital Signs Theatre's New Work Festival in NY.

1986

David Hlavsa (MFA) published a well received book about acting entitled *An Actor Rehearses: What to Do When—and Why*.

Linda Emond (MFA) appeared in *A Spanish Play* at Classic Stage Company.

Larry Larsen (MFA) was nominated for Best Scenic Design at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

1989

Michael Wellborn (MFA) designed lights for *The Clean House* at ACT Seattle.

1990

Kurt Bernhardt (MFA) was recently promoted to Development Associate in his 10th season at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Shannon Kipp (BA) appeared in *Girl and Gods*, or *Prometheus Unwed* at Printer's Devil Theater.

1991

Leslie Law (MFA) appeared in *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* at Seattle Children's Theatre.

1992

Annette Toutonghi (MFA) has done character voiceovers for children's video games including Freddy Fish, a sleuth, and Penelope, a brainy mouse.

1993

David Morden (MFA) appeared in Arizona Opera's *The Threepenny Opera* and *The Flying Dutchman*, and is singing with the Tucson Symphony Chorus.

Leon Wiebers (BA) received an Los Angeles Ovation Award for Best Costume Design in a Larger Theatre for *Ubu Roi*.

David Veach (MFA) appeared in the new 20th Century Fox movie *Reno 911! Miami!*

Lisa Estridge (MFA) appeared in *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* at Seattle Children's Theatre and *The Buddy Holly Story* at 5th Avenue Theatre.

Jim Newman (BA) has been appointed Artistic Director of Summer Repertory Theatre in Santa Rosa, CA.

1994

Doug Scholz-Carlson (MFA) appeared as Young Jacob Marley/Squeeze in *A Christmas Carol* at the Guthrie Theater.

Monique Kleinhans (BA) directed week #5 of Suzan Lori-Parks' *365 Days 365 Plays* for theater simple.

Leyla Modirzadeh (MFA) appeared in *Undesirable Elements* with Ping Chong and Company at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania.

1995

Ingrid Sanai Buron (BA) has guest starred on such television shows as *Desperate Housewives*, *The Game*, *Gillmore Girls* and *House*, as well the movie *Because I Said So*.

1996

Tom Choi (BA) appeared in CBS's *Criminal Minds* as Agent Nick Casey.

Katie Pearl (BA) collaborated with playwright Lisa D'Amour on site specific work including *Slabber* and *Dress Me Blue/Window Me Sky*.

Carys Kresny (MFA) directed *Girl and Gods*, or *Prometheus Unwed* at Printer's Devil Theater.

1997

Doris Landolt Black (MFA) designed costumes for *Children of Eden* at Civic Light Opera and *Rhoda: A Life In Stories* at Book-It Repertory Theatre.

Chandra Cogburn (BA) graduated from Berklee College of Music in Boston with two degrees in Composition and Film Scoring. She now works in Los Angeles as a music composer for film and theatre.

Carolina McNeely (MFA) toured with the production *6.25: History Beneath the Skin / Still Present Last*, which recently performed at the David Henry Hwang Theatre.

1998

Dave Gangler (BA) appeared in *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist* at Nimbus Theatre and *The Rivals* at Jungle Theatre in Minneapolis.

Andrew Lieberman (MFA) designed sets for *Rocket to the Moon* at the Long Wharf Theatre.

1999

Tlaloc Rivas (MFA) directed *radio* as part of *The Chuck Mee Challenge* in Six Figures Theatre Company's Artists of Tomorrow Theatre Festival as well as developmental reading of *De Novo, Part 1: 'Lil Silent*.

Tikka Sears (BA) received an Artist Trust / Washington State Arts Commission fellowship in performing arts.

Chazz Rose (MFA) has returned to Seattle after working in Los Angeles for seven years.

Taryn Darr (BA) appeared in *White Christmas* at 5th Avenue Theatre.

Gary Osborne (MFA) has accepted a position as the Creative Director for Paul Stuart.

Maren Perry (MFA) finished a film for the History Channel entitled *A Very Private Romance*.

James Aitken (MFA) is a member of Flying Carpet Theatre, whose production of *The Mystery of Chung Ling Soo* toured Ireland and will be performing in Dubai.

GradBag

2000

Theresa May (Ph.D) was recently appointed Assistant Professor with tenure track at the University of Oregon.

Pete Balkwill (MFA) is a performer with the Old Trout Puppet Theatre of Calgary.

2001

Aaron Blakely (BA) appeared in the independent film *Lost on the B Side*, and is currently in the University of Washington's Professional Actor Training Program.

Tommy Smith (BA) was selected to participate in the 2006 O'Neill Playwrights Conference.

Ron Simons (MFA) appeared in Classic Theatre of Harlem's *Marat/Sade*.

Matt Seidman (MFA) is a member of Flying Carpet Theatre, whose production of *The Mystery of Chung Ling Soo* toured Ireland and will be performing in Dubai.

2002

Erwin Thomas (MFA) was a panelist on a public forum discussing the legacy of Nat Turner and John Brown as part of the Central District Forum's American Heritage Series.

JR Drew (BA) received an MFA in Acting from the Chicago College of the Performing Arts Theatre Conservatory and appeared as Philemon in *Pericles* at the Goodman Theatre.

Brandon Jepson (BA) is in his eighth year with Jet City Improv, and is the webmaster for Wing-It Productions, for which he directed *Clues*.

Heidi Guttormsen (MFA) is a member of Flying Carpet Theatre, whose production of *The Mystery of Chung Ling Soo* toured Ireland and will be performing in Dubai.

Melanie Taylor Burgess (MFA) designed costumes for *A Winter's Tale* at Seattle Shakespeare Company and *The Buddy Holly Story* at 5th Avenue Theatre.

Matthew Smucker (MFA) designed sets for *Memory House* at Seattle Repertory Theatre, *Shadowland* at the Village Theatre and *The Clean House* at ACT Seattle.

Steve O'Shea (MFA) designed lights for Ezra Jack Keat's *Maggie and the Pirate* and *Apt 3* at TADA! Youth Theatre.

Len Childers (MFA) appeared in *MacBeth* at Manhattan Theatre Source.

Shontina Vernon (MFA) wrote *Etta Phifer's Testimonial Shoe Kismet*, which premiered at the Hansberry Project at ACT Seattle.

Adam Koplan (MFA) is Artistic Director of Flying Carpet Theatre, whose production of *The Mystery of Chung Ling Soo* toured Ireland and will be performing in Dubai.

2003

Lathrop Walker (BA) appeared in *Never Swim Alone* and *Crumbs Are Also Bread* at Washington Ensemble Theatre.

Mark Zufelt (MFA) directed *No Mayo* at ACT's Young Playwrights Festival.

Jennifer Zeyl (MFA) designed sets for *My Name is Rachel Corrie* at Seattle Rep.

Nikki Przasnyski (MFA) was appointed Business Manager / Registrar for Youth Theatre Northwest.

Glenn Allen (MFA) was nominated for the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Lead Actor for his performance in *Cabaret* at Arena Stage, and is currently on the Acting Faculty at NYU's CAP 21 program, a BA Musical Theatre Program.

Sarah Goldblatt (BA) appeared in *Don Perlimplin* and *His Love for Belissa in the Garden* and *445: Shakespeare's Henry* at the Studio Theatre in Long Beach, CA.

2004

Marya Sea Kaminski (MFA) was voted "Best Local Per-

forming Artist" and "Best Work Onstage and Backstage" by Seattle Weekly and finished her most recent solo show *In Disdress Now: Redux*. She appeared as Rachel Corrie in Seattle Rep's *My Name is Rachel Corrie*.

Michael Place (BA) appeared in *Never Swim Alone* and *Crumbs Are Also Bread* at Washington Ensemble Theatre.

Justin Alley (BA) appeared in *The Great Gatsby* at Seattle Repertory Theatre.

Scott Giguere (MFA) appeared in the Peter Kyle Dance Company debut performance in New York.

Tricia Nelson (MFA) appeared in *The Pod Project* in New York.

Marc Kenison (MFA) appeared in *The Pod Project* in New York.

2005

Peyton Hinson (MFA) appeared in the movie *Boy Culture* and was a guest star on CBS's *How I Met Your Mother*.

Mikano Fukaya (BA) appeared in *Never Swim Alone* and *Crumbs Are Also Bread* at Washington Ensemble Theatre.

Niki Hernandez-Adams (MFA) designed costumes for the Peter Kyle Dance Company debut in New York.

Tony Nam (MFA) appeared in *Martha, Josie, and the Chinese Elvis* at Woolly Mammoth Theatre in Washington DC.

Marc Jablon (MFA) guest starred on the television show *NUMB3RS*.

Alexandra Tavares (MFA) appeared in *Crumbs Are Also Bread* at Washington Ensemble Theatre and *The Italian American Reconciliation* at Actors Theatre of Louisville.

Adam Larmer Noble (MFA) has accepted a full time tenure track position at

Indiana University in Bloomington. He will teach movement and acting.

2006

Josh Polster (Ph.D) was recently appointed Assistant Professor with tenure track at Emerson College.

Georgia Southern (MFA) made an appearance on television's *Law and Order*.

Czerton Lim (MFA) designed sets for the Peter Kyle Dance Company debut in New York and *The Maguffin* at Stone Soup Theatre Arts.

Jeremy Winchester (MFA) designed lights for Peter Kyle Dance's company debut in New York.

Ed McFall (Ph.D) will have his article *Macbeth and Dante's Inferno* published in Oxford University's *Notes and Queries* in their December 2006 issue.

Kara Reilly (Ph.D) received a lectureship position at the University of Birmingham in England and participated in the *Performance and History: What History?* conference at the Simpson Center for the Humanities.

Jessica Lustig (MFA) designed costumes for *The Maguffin* at Stone Soup Theatre Arts.

Lee Fitzpatrick (MFA) appeared in *The Italian American Reconciliation* at Actors Theatre of Louisville.

In Memoriam

John Gilbert

John Gilbert died in Seattle at the age of 67 this past November.

John was a familiar presence on Seattle stages for four decades, and was an original member of acting ensembles at both the Seattle Repertory Theatre and Intiman Theatre after graduating for the School of Drama in 1963.

He was best known for his role as Ebenezer Scrooge in ACT Theatre's annual productions of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." He played Scrooge hundreds of times between 1976 and 1995.

Gilbert was a staunch socialist. In the 1980's, he concentrated on oppositions to U.S. interventions in Central America.

In 1985, he was arrested during a sit-in at the Federal Building here. He and his co-demonstrators, who were protesting a \$1 billion appropriation for military aid to Central America, received deferred sentences.

Survivors include his son, Noah of Seattle and brother Stephen in Guadalajara, Mexico.

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Newsletter from the School of Drama

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