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With one year as Head of the School of Drama now under my belt, my appreciation for the faculty’s dedication to teaching, the support offered by the staff, the engagement of the alumni and the diligence of the students knows no bounds. What a year we have had - great productions, a steady stream of high profile alumni returning to the school, support from benefactors and the University to refurbish our technical equipment in the theatres and rising applications for those wishing to attend the school. We live in exciting times as the arts entertainment world expands and evolves. The school’s mission remains focused on educating imaginative artists to lead the arts entertainment industry in the coming years and in doing so build on the school’s esteemed reputation as a center of excellence.

Enjoy our fall/winter newsletter and best wishes to you all for a safe, healthy and creative 2010.

Peter Cooke PhD OAM
Professor and Head - School of Drama
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

A HOLLYWOOD HOMECOMING: PAULA WAGNER AND STEVEN BOCHCO VISIT SCHOOL OF DRAMA

Paula Wagner and Steven Bochco, two of Carnegie Mellon University’s most notable alums in Hollywood, came home this fall to share insights, wisdom and advice with students in the School of Drama.

Wagner became the first female agent at the Creative Artists Agency (CAA), producing numerous blockbusters including Mission Impossible I, II, III; The Others; and The Last Samurai.

A writer and producer, Bochco is best known for his groundbreaking television work including Hill Street Blues, LA Law and NYPD Blue.

"It's an extraordinary event ... what I think has been a great celebration for two days in the company of two remarkable people," said Peter Cooke, Head of the School of Drama, as he introduced the pair at the start of a panel discussion.

Bochco considers his education as a writer invaluable. "But my world education — in terms of learning about a community of like-minded artists — was probably the singularly most important thing I took away from my years here on campus," he said.

Wagner, who is also a trustee of the university, said the most important thing she learned here was how to learn.

"So much of my education came after college when I was thrown into the real world, but learning how to learn is a very important quality that I got from this school," Wagner said.

Both stressed the importance of being a good collaborator and that you've got to work as hard at getting a job as doing a job.

Alana Clapp (A'10) spent time in a small group discussion with Bochco — one of many he and Wagner participated in during their October 6-9 visit to campus.

"He was open and welcoming, offering his personal assistance to us if we found ourselves with more questions later," Clapp said. "It was a pleasant surprise to meet someone of his caliber, to be so accessible, and you could tell his interest in the well-being of the students was genuine."

Drama student Frank Capello (A'10) appeared to glean equal parts hope and reality during the visit.

"One of the greatest things about spending time with Paula Wagner was that it affirmed the idea that there are truly creative, innovative, encouraging and kind people who exist and work at that level of the entertainment industry," Capello said. "It was like a beacon of light shining through an incredibly stark, realistic view of what my future in the movie business might be."
J. Patrick Adair (MFA Scene Design 2008) was an Art Director for THE LATE LATE SHOW WITH CRAIG FERGUSON and Production Designer for the film IMBALANCE.

Jason Antoon (BFA 1994) has appeared in numerous TV series, including NUMB3RS, KINGS, LIPSTICK JUNGLE, CASHMERE MAFIA, and all of the LAW & ORDER series. His new movie COLUMBUS CIRCLE comes out in 2010. Previous film work includes MUSIC AND LYRICS and MINORITY REPORT.

Mary Bacon (BFA 1994) and Bob Ari (MFA Acting 1995) were part of The Actors Company Theatre revival of Sidney Howard’s rarely produced The Late Christopher Bean at Off-Broadway’s Beckett Theatre in Theatre Row. Mary also played Alma in ECCENTRICITIES OF A NIGHTINGALE at the Clurman Theater in New York.

Tennyson Bardwell (BFA 1983) wrote and directed the film THE SKEPTIC.

Brent Barrett (BFA 2005) plays Billy Flynn in the Broadway production CHICAGO.

April Bartlett (BFA 2007) is an Art Director for NBC’s THE TODAY SHOW.

Tina Benko (BFA 1994) was in the cast of THE AGE OF IRON at the Classic Stage Company.

Kyle Beltran (BFA 2009) is in the national tour of IN THE HEIGHTS.

Lourdes Benedicto (BFA 1996) plays Valerie Stevens in V.

Allison Bergman’s (MFA Directing 2002) book ACTING THE SONG (Co-Authored with Tracey Moore) was published by Allworth Press last year, and is available at Drama Book Shop in NYC, Samuel French in L.A., and through all major book stores online. It is a new pedagogical approach to teaching performance skills to musical theatre artists. Allison has also joined the faculty at North Carolina State University as Assistant Director of University Theatre. She directed IT’S A WONDERFUL LIFE: A RADIO PLAY.

Audra Blaser (BFA 2004) guest starred in LAW & ORDER and SHERRI.

Holly Hunter (BFA 1980) is a nominee in the category Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Drama Series for her role in SAVING GRACE.

Matt Bomer (BFA 2005) played Bryce Larkin in the TV series CHUCK and currently plays Neal Caffrey in WHITE COLLAR.

Christian Borle (BFA 1995), Elizabeth Derosa (BFA 2004) and Barrett Davis (BFA 2008) are in the Broadway cast of MARY POPPINS.

Abby Brammell (BFA 2001) played Tiffy Gerhardt in THE UNIT, guest starred in THE MENTALIST, MEDIUM, and LIE TO ME and can be seen in the upcoming film LIKE DANDELION DUST.

Will Brill (BFA 2009) is in the cast of OUR TOWN.

Jack Carpenter (BFA 2006) played Rich Munsch in I LOVE YOU BETH COOPER and guest starred in LAW & ORDER.

Arthur Chadwick (BFA 1997) is a set designer on the TV shows ACCIDENTALLY ON PURPOSE and BIG LOVE.

Donna Lynne Champlin (BFA 1993) is in the Broadway cast of BILLY ELLIOT.

Gaius Charles (BFA 2005) played Duke/Lodovico in Peter Sellar’s OTHELLO at the Public Theater and his new movie TAKERS opens in February 2010.

Rhys Coiro (BFA 2002) played Sean Hillinger in 24 and Mr. Shields in the movie THE UNBORN.

Alex Cole (BFA 2008) plays Hunter McDermott in AS THE WORLD TURNS and can be seen in the upcoming film SHE’S OUT OF MY LEAGUE.

Amanda Cooper (BFA 2010) plays Aleisha in the film HOMECOMING.

Patrick Cummings (BFA 2007) performed in HAPPINESS at the Lincoln Center Theater.

Tami Dixon (BFA 1996) was featured in and Matt Morrow (BFA 1996) directed Bricolage’s highly acclaimed new show NEIGHBORHOOD 3: REQUISITION OF DOOM.

Adam Donshik (BFA 1998) guest starred in LIE TO ME and CSI: MIAMI.

Claudia Duran (BFA 2005) was the director of the film THE LAST WHITE DISHWASHER appearing at the Reel Rasquache Film Festival in LA.
Graham Fenton (BFA 2005) is in the national tour of JERSEY BOYS.

Dylan Fergus (BFA 2002) plays Patrick in the series FLOORED AND LIFTED.

Sara Jean Ford (BFA 2005) is in the cast of FINIAN’S RAINBOW.

Josh Gad (BFA 2003) guest starred in WOKE UP DEAD, THE DAILY SHOW, and NUMB3RS and can be seen in the upcoming films LOVE AND OTHER DRUGS and MARDI GRAS.

Kent Gash (BFA 1982) was named Director of NYU Tisch School of the Arts New Studio on Broadway: Music Theatre and Acting. Previously, he was Associate Artistic Director for The Alliance Theatre.

Sarah Glendening (BFA 2004) guest starred on COLD CASE and took over the role of Lucy Montgomery on AS THE WORLD TURNS in 2008.

Paloma Guzman (BFA 2006) was in CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC and guest starred in CSI: MIAMI and THE GOOD WIFE.

Sean Hamrin (BFA 2008) has a part in ITS COMPLICATED.

Van Hansis (BFA 2004) was a 2009 Outstanding Supporting Actor Daytime Emmy Nominee for his portrayal of Luke Snyder in AS THE WORLD TURNS.

Ian Harding (BFA 2009) got a major (recurring role) on an ABC FAMILY pilot, PRETTY LITTLE LIAR.

Hunter Ryan Herdlicka (BFA 2009) and Bradley Dean (BFA 1993) are in the Broadway cast of the new revival of A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC that opened December 13.

Susan Heyward (BFA 2005) was Hilda Wangel in Yale Repertory Theatre’s production of Henrik Ibsen’s THE MASTER BUILDER.

Megan Hilty (BFA 2004) and Nikki Crawford (BFA 1993) were nominated for OVATION AWARDS (the west coast equivalent of TONY’s). Hilty as Lead Actress in a Musical for her portrayal of Doralee Rhodes in 9 TO 5: THE MUSICAL and Crawford as Featured Actress in a Musical for her portrayal of Young Lena in STORMY WEATHER.

Antwayn Hopper (BFA 2007) plays Dion in the new musical WHITE NOISE that had its full-scale premiere at Le Petite Theatre in New Orleans this past summer.

David Hornsby (BFA 1998) plays Matthew Mara in IT’S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA.

Erik Jensen (BFA 1992) played Dr. Jules Braun in the movie VIRTUALITY and guest starred in THE GOOD WIFE and can be seen in the upcoming movies LEADCATCHER and ORANGES.

Amy Kaissar (BFA 1999) is Managing Director of Bristol Riverside Theatre. She also directed Stone Soup Theatre Arts’ WHAT HAPPENS TO WOMEN HERE at the Richmond Shepard Theatre. The production included Michael Petranek (06) as Associate Director and Laura Taber Bacon (BFA 2008) as Assistant Costume Designer.

Fred Koehler (BFA 1997) guest starred in CASTLE.

Lindsey Kyler (BFA 2008) starred in the world premiere drama LEGACY OF LIGHT at Arena Stage.

Telly Leung (BFA 2002) was in the national tour of RENT.

Kara Lindsay (BFA 2007) plays Laura in the national tour of LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE: THE MUSICAL.

Gabriel Macht (BFA 1994) plays Robert Pryce in WHITEOUT and can be seen in the upcoming film LOVE AND OTHER DRUGS.

Joe Manganiello (BFA 2004) will be a regular (werewolf) on TRUE BLOOD for HBO this season.

Crystal Manich (BFA 2004) is Assistant to the Artistic Director on Cirque du Soleil’s QUIDAM South American Tour.

Rob Marshal’s (BFA 1982) new musical movie, NINE, opens nationwide on December 25. NINE was produced by The Weinstein Company and has a cast that includes Daniel Day-Lewis, Marion Cotillard, Penélope Cruz, Judi Dench, Kate Hudson, Nicole Kidman, and Sophia Loren.

Noel Maxam (BFA 1990) was a 2009 Outstanding Drama Series Directing Team Daytime Emmy Nominee for DAYS OF OUR LIVES.

Heather Mazur (BFA 1998) played Amy Battaglia in the series CRASH and guest starred in MEDIUM and THREE RIVERS.

John McDonald (BFA 1968) received The Westchester Broadway Theatre’s Cab Calloway Lifetime Achievement Award.

Michael McMillian (BFA 2002) plays Steve Newlin in the series TRUE BLOOD and guest starred in THE MENTALIST.
Kristen Merlino (BFA 2005) was Art Director for the 2009 PRIMETIME EMMYS, THE TEEN CHOICE AWARDS, AND THE 7TH ANNUAL TV LAND AWARDS. She is now the President of WCDAC.

Patina Miller (BFA 2006) stars as Deloris Van Cartier in the London production of SISTER ACT.

Katy Mixon (BFA 2003) plays April Buchanon in EASTBOUND AND DOWN and can be seen in the film in THE INFORMERS.

Brant T. Murray (MFA Lighting Design 2003) was lighting designer for Algonquin Theater’s SESSIONS and AN EVENING AT THE CARYLYE.

John-Paul Nickel (MFA Dramatic Writing 2008) won the Jean Kennedy Smith Playwriting Award for "outstanding play on the theme of disability" for PAST PERFECT, FUTURE TENSE. He also won the Philly Regional Best Ten-Minute Play Award for THE BIG EXIT.

Ramon De Ocampo (BFA 1998) guest starred in BONES, SAVING GRACE and LIE TO ME, and can be seen in the movie LEADCATCHER.

Cote de Pablo (BFA 2000) plays Ziva David in the long-running series NCIS.

Tyler Poelle (BFA 2004) guest starred in WITHOUT A TRACE and played Boon in multiple episodes in SCRUBS.

Joshua Pohja (BFA 1999), co-founder and Artistic Director of The Duende Collective, will direct Aeschylus’ THE PERSIANS in Spring 2010 at The Write Act Rep in Los Angeles. For more information visit www.duendecollective.com.

Frank Anthony Polito (MFA Dramatic Writing 2006), in June 2009, published his second ’80s-themed novel, Drama Queers! the follow up to his critically-acclaimed debut, Band Fags! Band Fags! was named “Best Fiction” for 2008 by the members of InsightOut Book Club, and was nominated for a Lambda Literary Award. Polito is currently adapting both books for a TV series. For more info: bandfags.com and dramaqueers.net.

Larry Powell (BFA 2008) was an understudy for the Lincoln Center Theater production of BROKE-OLOGY.

Zachary Quinto (BFA 1999) stars as the young Spock in STAR TREK and continues to play Sylar in the series HEROES.

Will Reynolds (BFA 2005) new musical THE GREENWOOD TREE was produced at the New York Musical Theatre Festival. Matthew Gardnier (BFA 2005) directed, Jake DeGroot (BFA 2008) was the lighting designer, Adam Koch (BFA 2007) was the scenic consultant, Hunter Ryan Herdlicka (BFA 2009) and Stephen Schellhardt (BFA 2005) were members of the cast, and Kevin Emrick (BFA 2007) and Taylor Harris (BFA 2008) were the producers.

Eddy Rioseco (BFA 2001) plays Boq in the San Francisco WICKED.

Laura San Giacomo (BFA 1984) plays Rhetta Rodriguez in SAVING GRACE along with Holly Hunter (BFA 1980).

Alison Schmidt (BFA 1997) is a costumer on the TV shows THREE RIVERS, NUMB3RS and BIG LOVE.

Matthew Scott (BFA 2004) is in the cast of the Spring 2010 Broadway production SONDHEIM ON SONDHEIM.

Pablo Schreiber (BFA 2000) guest starred in THREE RIVERS, NUMB3RS, and THE BEAST and stars in the feature film FAVORITE SON.

Emily Skinner (BFA 1992) played Mae West and Jo in DIRTY BLONDE at Signature Theatre

Kevin Snipes (MFA Dramatic Writing 2004) play THE CHIMES was produced by the Summer Play Festival in New York.

Aaron Staton (BFA 2004) and the cast of MAD MEN won the 15th Annual Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Drama Series.

Matthew Stocke (BFA 1995) is a member of the ROCK OF AGES ensemble.

Melissa Tang (BFA 2007) is in the movies POST GRAD and BEGINNERS and guest starred in LIE TO ME.

Shonn Wiley (BFA 1999) was in CONFESSIONS OF A SHOPAHOLIC and is in the upcoming films RED HOOK and TINY DANCER.

Tommar Wilson (BFA 1999) guest starred on LAW AND ORDER.

Patrick Wilson (BFA 1995) starred in WATCHMEN and can be seen in the upcoming films BARRY MUNDAY, THE BASTER and MORNING GLORY.

GUEST NEWS

ESTEEMED GUESTS SHARE WITH STUDENTS

MEGAN HILTY (ALUM, ACTRESS)
"These are words from Megan Hilty that seemed important to me and I hope others will find them just as entertaining and informative. ‘If there is anything else that you want to do, do it now because this acting thing is full time. If acting is the only thing you have, then go for it all.’" Evan T. Barron, BFA Acting 2011

STEVEN BOCHCO (ALUM, WRITER & PRODUCER)
"Steven Bochco invited the Dramatic Writing students to pitch ideas for TV pilots we created. He listened to our presentations and provided generous feedback on how to enhance our stories and characters. Pitching in front of a renowned writer and producer was a valuable experience that prepares us for the demands of the TV industry." Carolyn Kras, MFA Dramatic Writing 2010

PAULA WAGNER (ALUM, AGENT & PRODUCER, CMU TRUSTEE)
"She gave us a lot of insight as to what it is like to be part of the business. It was inspiring to see a woman graduate from the school so accomplished and with so much world wide recognition." Lexi Soha, BFA Acting 2012

PHYLICIA RASHAD (ACTRESS)
"She taught us how to be storytellers, but most importantly how to be humans." Joshua Wilder, BFA Acting 2012

"Phylicia Rashad gave me the most inspirational experience that I've ever had in my life. She reminded me to OWN my work and that the human being is the most interesting thing, not the engagement of the human being." Gabrielle McClinton, BFA Music Theatre 2011

EDUARDO CASTRO (ALUM, TV AND FILM COSTUME DESIGNER)
“I absolutely loved Eduardo Castro! He really gave us a realistic view into the life of a film and TV costume designer. He gave us great feedback on our portfolios and advice on our individual TV Workshop pieces. He also told us how having a degree gives you more respect in your field.” Paula Ries, MFA Costume Design 2012

MARY RODGERS (MUSICAL COMPOSER)
“Mary Rodgers’s visit was a welcome and un-romanticized shot of reality to the school. From her standpoint as the middle of a three-generation musical theater writing family, she brought wonderful insight and perspective with her. Hearing about Once Upon a Mattress's origins as a quickly-assembled entertainment for a Summer retreat was a particularly delightful surprise.” Max Montel, MFA Directing 2010

SUSAN DANSBY (ALUM, WRITER & DIRECTOR)
"It was a breath of fresh air to have Susan Dansby share her immense knowledge with our class. She encouraged us to broaden our horizons as actors, and to be well-rounded in this industry, in order to thrive in it. She also challenged each of us to own our uniqueness and not be afraid to showcase it in any given opportunity!" Daisy Hobbs, BFA Music Theatre 2010

SCOTT STOREY (ALUM, EMMY AWARD WINNING PRODUCTION DESIGNER)
“Scott Storey said, ‘Production Design is architecture for the impatient.’ And as an architect-turned-scenic-designer myself, I thought that this was brilliant.” Meg Cunningham, MFA Scene Design 2011

PAUL ZALOOM (ACTOR & PUPPETEER)
"Paul Zaloom challenged us to make our own theater! And to always proceed with joy.” Meg Cunningham, MFA Scene Design 2011

TRACY BRIGDEN (CITY THEATRE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR)
“Tracy provided graduating designers with great advice for pursuing work after school. Her advice focused on immediate steps that we can take as young designers entering the field.” Scott Tedmon-Jones, MFA Scene Design 2010
KATE VALK (WOOSTER GROUP CO-FOUNDER AND PRIMARY PERFORMER)
“Having Kate come in was quite the experience, especially knowing she hardly ever does this...To put it simply, she's the sort of person you strain your ears listening to because you don't want to miss a single word.” Ross Francis, BFA Acting 2010

“The innovative techniques used by Kate and the Wooster Group...explode the concept of what it means to find truth in performance by working inward from the exterior of performance. These alternative theatrical approaches, while daunting in the abstract, became quite inspiring in their practical execution with the actors.” Joshua Gelb, MFA Directing 2012

JUDY BOULEY (FILM CASTING DIRECTOR)
"The really incredible thing about Judy was her overwhelming sense of humanity. It’s the not just the training but the relationships that we form that will define our successes as artists in the future.” Gabriel King, BFA Acting 2010

STEPHEN SCHWARTZ (ALUM, COMPOSER AND LYRICIST)
"Stephen Schwartz discussed writing tools that a lyricist can use to unlock creative expression. He described how he sometimes brainstorms the lyrics for songs by writing a stream of conscious monologue from his character's perspective. Then, he reviews the raw material to select the core emotions the character should explore within a song. I will definitely try this approach in my future lyric writing.” Carolyn Kras, MFA Dramatic Writing 2010

MARSHA MASON (ACTRESS)
"What an honor it was to have the opportunity to take a master class from the respected and acclaimed Marsha Mason. The three hour master class with Ms. Mason brought new energy to the school's atmosphere and provided us with fresh tools that we can utilize in order to further discover why we have chosen to pursue a career in the incredibly demanding and challenging world of the theater.” Trevor McQueen Eaton, BFA Music Theatre 2012

CONSTANCE HOFFMAN (COSTUME DESIGNER)
“It was great to meet Constance Hoffman and see her amazing ability to bring very complex ideas into beautiful costumes. The costumes are works of art in themselves. She was very helpful in our portfolio review and we were all very inspired by her.” Paula Ries, MFA Costume Design 2012

POLLY KINNEY (COSTUME TECHNOLOGY GUEST, DRAPER)
“Polly Kinney was extremely generous with her time and sharing her talent and secrets with us. We saw one costume more beautiful than the [next] and were amazed at the very intricate and detailed bead work they do on costumes.” Paula Ries, MFA Costume Design 2012

Additional guests included Rich Costabile (stage manager), Jeffrey M. Jones (playwright), Dennis Size (alum, lighting designer), Mac Wellman (playwright), Gabriel Macht (alum, actor), and Leigh Silverman (alum, director.)
HOT PROPERTY: AN INTERVIEW WITH JONATHAN WARD

Painter, sculptor, papier-mâché artist, carpenter, shopper – these are just a few of the many hats Jonathan Ward wears as the new Properties Master at the School of Drama. After graduating from Towson University with a degree in directing, Jonathan applied for an apprenticeship at Steppenwolf Theatre Company. His first choice was the artistic management apprenticeship. “For my second choice, I thought, what’s the [apprenticeship] nobody wants? So I chose props, hoping there was a good chance I’d get it,” Jonathan stated. He did, emerging on top within a competitive applicant pool, despite having never been props master on a show. Steppenwolf Properties Master Jenny DiLuciano quickly became his mentor and made him feel “a part of the team,” Jonathan said.

Steppenwolf’s production of The Diary of Anne Frank was especially daunting. Jonathan created museum-quality items, including a replica of Anne Frank’s diary, and refurbished thirty wood chairs and ten bedside tables. The actors never left the stage, and all props had to be pre-set within the pile of furniture on an empty stage that represented the Annex. “It’s the show I’m most proud of,” Jonathan shared.

Such rigorous training prepared him for his next position as Properties Master of the Arden Theatre in Philadelphia. On the children’s show Go Dog, Go, he created eight cozy coupe cars - all on a limited budget. He managed to obtain all the cars for free, and customized the colors of the cars to coordinate with each dog. “I got to make fantastic, off-the-wall, crazy props. Everything on that show had to be made in multiples for all the dogs,” Jonathan said.

Jonathan brought the same artistry and resourcefulness to Carnegie Mellon. For The Grapes of Wrath, the production team obtained antique props from an orchard in New Jersey. “In sixty years no one had touched a barn full of wood crates, old barrels, buckets, and tools. We refurbished the items to be useable, standable, and sittable. Everything had to fit into the same world,” says Jonathan.

Jonathan also teaches a stagecraft props class in which undergraduate students complete projects tailored to a specific production’s needs. Skills practiced include completing an aging and weathering process on surfaces, analyzing a script for prop needs, and performing research. Jonathan emphasizes, “With props it’s always changing. A props master can be painting, plumbing, or sculpting, depending on the show. What’s important is knowing where to look for information.”

His success within multiple disciplines echoes the talents of his family. His mother is an artist, and his father’s hobby was carpentry and woodworking. They also owned an antique store. His grandfather’s sculpture firm completed the statue of Art Rooney in front of Heinz field. “My grandfather was actually the model for Art Rooney,” Jonathan stated.

Jonathan is “impressed by the ability of the Carnegie Mellon students and faculty to juggle an unbelievable amount of projects. A regular theatre might be managing two shows, but here I advise four students, do a mainstage show, and am looking ahead for three other projects.” He is excited by the challenges his position involves. Jonathan concluded, “It’s an honor to be working for the School of Drama.”

PITTSBURGH ECO-DRAMA FESTIVAL DEBUTS

Wendy Arons, Associate Professor of Dramatic Literature, produced the first ever “Pittsburgh Eco-Drama Festival” October 23-25, presenting readings of four award-winning plays about the environment and ecology. She also recently published "From Mutton to Lamb: Dick's Gourmet Tour" in the volume AESTHETICS AND ANTHROPOLOGY: PERFORMING LIFE--PERFORMED LIVES, Ed. by Ina-Maria Greverus and Ute Ritschel, Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2009.
THE TEXTURE AND AMBITION OF NEW AMERICAN PLAYS: AN INTERVIEW WITH ROB HANDEL

Rob Handel, the new Option Coordinator of Dramatic Writing, states his mission as, “training playwrights who are leaders in theatre. Theatre needs more leaders.” Handel has already proven that playwrights can flourish in leadership roles. As a founding member and managing director of 13P, an Obie award-winning playwrights’ collective, Handel played a crucial part in forging a successful theatre model for playwrights who wish to create their own opportunities.

Handel sees abundant prospects for writers at Carnegie Mellon, commenting, “The level of the acting and directing is clearly so high and skilled that it is an opportunity and challenge for writers to be the collaborators who give them material. It’s what makes this school unique and exciting to be here.”

Handel received an M.F.A. from Brown University, where he studied under Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel. His plays have been produced nationally in venues such as Long Wharf Theatre (New Haven), Theater Ninjas (Cleveland), and Curious Theatre Company (Denver), among others. His many awards include the 2007 Helen Merrill award, a residency at New Dramatists, and the Summer Play Festival Donmar Warehouse Residency.

Handel is no stranger to the classroom, having previously taught at University of Missouri-St. Louis, University of Montevallo, Purchase College, The New School, Castleton State College, and the NEA Arts Corps Workshop. He also led a playwriting workshop at the Flea Theatre and served as a guest speaker at Yale University.

Handel describes his function as “Helping the playwrights figure out what the play wants to be, as opposed to telling them what it wants to be.” Rather than imposing existing frameworks on plays, he approaches each piece as its own entity, determining whether it works on an individual level. Handel points to a quotation by Erik Ehn which encapsulates his approach to playwriting, citing, “What is the question that drives you? The audience is there to observe the taking apart of the question, not to listen to you talk.” Handel appreciates the vast storytelling tools available within the theatre, saying, “theatre means whatever a person says it means . . . I encourage experimenting across genres.”

Second year dramatic writing student Dean Poynor commented on Handel’s guidance, saying, “He is a very inspired teacher who provides careful criticism. I think he expects a lot out of us, and he has the tools to help us rise to the occasion. Rob brings a wealth of professional knowledge, experience, and connections which will help us in the short-term and in terms of building our long-term careers.”

THE RANDY PAUSCH MEMORIAL BRIDGE: LINKING THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Cindy Limauro, Professor of Lighting Design, and Christopher Popowich, her design partner in C & C Lighting, designed the lighting for the Randy Pausch Memorial Bridge, the pedestrian walkway that links the Gates School of Computer Science and the Purnell Center for the Arts. The lighting looks were inspired by visual metaphors in Pausch’s book “The Last Lecture,” and include themes of water imagery to suggest penguins jumping into water, a rocket launch in reference to his dreams of outer space, and a spectacle of color and motion based on his love of Disney and the circus. The 15-minute lighting sequence runs on a continuous loop from dusk to dawn. Videos of the show can be seen on YouTube.
Dick Block, Associate Head and Teaching Professor of Design, opened LEND ME A TENOR at The Human Race in Dayton, OH directed by Joe Deer (MFA Directing) in September. He is designing Around the World in 80 Days for Virginia Stage, which opens in February.

Ken Chu, Costume Shop Manager, is designing costumes for Pittsburgh Opera Theatre’s production of BEGGAR’S OPERA.

Peter Cooke PhD OAM, Professor and Head, taught at the National School of Drama in New Delhi, India during the week of Thanksgiving.

Jed Allen Harris, Undergraduate Directing Option Coordinator, taught and participated in the Rhodopi International Theatre Laboratory for the third consecutive year. He also directed Sam Shepard’s CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS for Theatre Sofia in Sofia, Bulgaria.

David Holcomb, Production Manager, attended the Production Manager’s Forum conference in Santa Fe New Mexico, where among other things he learned that the production manager at the Opera is in charge of the facilitie’s waste water treatment plant, and has to engage in international negotiations with the neighboring Tesuque Pueblo. He and his wife opened The Fire Escape, Coffee and Tea, in Ben Avon, PA on 11/3/2009. Learn more about us at: www.facebook.com/TheFireEscape.

Barbara MacKenzie-Wood, Acting Option Coordinator and Professor of Acting, is thrilled to be named the new Raymond W. Smith Professor of Drama.

Catherine Moore, Associate Teaching Professor of Movement, just finished serving as Fight Director for City Theatre’s production of DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE, adapted by Jeffery Hatcher, and will be working there again as Fight Director for their next production, THE CLOCKMAKER by Stephen Massicotte. In December she will be performing in the Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre’s production of JANE EYRE.

Joe Pino, Assistant Professor of Sound Design, held a workshop on Sound Portfolios at the regional USITT in October. Designed CRIME AND PUNISHMENT at PICT, DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE at City Theater Company, and THE QUEENS at Pittsburgh Playhouse.

Ingrid Sonnichsen, Associate Teaching Professor of Acting, just finished a very successful run in AGNES OF GOD and leaves for South Africa to direct a play, WE AND THEM, in Johannesburg over Christmas and New Years.

Don Wadsworth, Professor of Voice and Speech, has dialect coached several feature films recently: THE ROAD, WARRIOR, SORORITY ROW, HOMECOMING, ADVENTURELAND and UNSTOPPABLE and the TV show WHITE COLLAR. He’s also coached several Theater productions at the Public Theater, City Theater, The Cleveland Playhouse and assisted Joel Edgerton who played Stanley in A STREET NAMED DESIRE in Sydney, Australia, Washington D.C. and New York. As an actor his work can be seen in two movies (now on DVD) SMART PEOPLE and MYSTERIES OF PITTSBURGH.

Kaf Warman, Associate Teaching Professor of Movement, became Artistic Director of Island Theatre Workshop, Martha’s Vineyard’s longest continuously running theatre company. She brought Pig Pen to the Island for the July 4th weekend, where they marched in the Fourth of July parade and played two very well received performances.

Janet Fiendel, Associate Professor of Voice and Alexander, was participated in a book signing event with her new book, The Thought Propels the Sound. Associate Professors of Dramatic Literature, Wendy Arons PhD and Michael Chemers PhD, were also part of the book signing with their respective books: Performance and Femininity in Eighteenth-Century German Women’s Writing: The Impossible Act and Staging Stigma: A Critical Examination of the American Freak Show.
MFA IN COSTUME PRODUCTION

The School of Drama is thrilled to announce the launch of a new three-year Master of Fine Arts degree in Costume Production. The graduate program will prepare students for careers as well-informed, inventive costume artisans. Brian Russman, Assistant Professor of Costume Production, states, “There is a strong industry need for artisans. We will begin a process of training young craftspeople fully, making them viable candidates for an array of projects.” Susan Tsu, Professor of Costume Design, adds, “It is our goal to train artisans of the highest professional caliber who will have the ability to pursue many career paths when they graduate.”

The School of Drama was the pioneer professional school of the art of the theatre and the first college in the world to grant a degree in Drama. Ber Kimberly headed the Costume Program for 40 years before passing the baton to Barbara and Cletus Anderson in 1968, who then shepherded the renowned program for 35 seminal years. In 2003 Susan Tsu joined Barbara Anderson and in 2008 Brian Russman, a 15 year veteran Associate Designer and craftsperson on Broadway, joined the area to form the current Production program.

Costume Production was an unofficial concentration within the existing Costume Design program for many years. By formalizing it, the School of Drama will expand course offerings and resources specifically for Costume Production students. Russman states: “A number of classes are already in place for designers that address the artisan and the technological side of costume production. The current faculty and staff will provide a very strong learning environment for this new program, even as we plan it’s growth.”

The goal of the program is to introduce artisans to the breadth of production possibilities for their own exploration. Skills will be developed in draping and flat-patterning, tailoring and couture techniques as well as millinery, painting and dying, the creation of footwear, armor and jewelry. Management as well as film and television courses will also be offered. Students will hone their craft within the School of Drama’s many production opportunities that include plays, musicals, dance, opera and devised work. Internships with professional venues are encouraged when students are ready.

Prominent guest artists will inform students during the course of their study. This semester, Polly Kinney of Barbara Matera Limited visited, created workshops in decorative techniques including beading, sequin application, the use of trims and appliqués and insights into ballet tutu making. Constance Hoffman, a Tony-nominated costume designer, shared her extensive knowledge of felting with students in the Fabric Modification course using her designs for the opera Grendel as inspiration. In the spring, costume students will have the opportunity to learn from Pat Olezsko, a College of Fine Arts Kraus Visiting Professor of Art. According to her Carnegie Mellon profile, Pat “Utiliz[es] elaborate costumes and props . . . creat[ing] lithe performances, films and installations.” Paul Zaloom, object performer, satirist and puppeteer, will also share his expertise. Wig and facial hair artisans Joyce Degenfelder and Steven Bryant have done extensive workshops with students in the program as well as Gayle Tribick of the Stratford Festival who created costume accessories and adornments for the likes of Susan Benson and Desmond Heeley. The presence of guest artisans will enhance the core program offered by Brian Russman (crafts and make up), Kenneth Chu (draping and tailoring) and nationally renown, Marianne Kroystone, (draping and tailoring) also a staff member at CMU and continues to offer internships to current students.

UNGARS GIFT THE CRITERION FILM COLLECTION

Gary and Robin Ungar, parents of alumnus Jeremy Ungar, have made a generous gift to the School of Drama with their donation of The Criterion Collection, an extensive library of cinematic masterworks, to the directing program. This is the first time that an institution has received the entire Criterion Collection.

Gary and Robin stated, “As we believe that the key to becoming a director is developing an understanding of the great directors, we are pleased to be able to provide this library of important classic and recent films to the School of Drama’s directing students. The Criterion Collection is a unique resource and we are delighted to give these students the opportunity to view and study the breathtaking cinematic achievements included in the collection.”

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Poynor received the top prize of $25,000 for his screenplay Salk, which chronicles Jonas Salk’s search for the Polio vaccine. Franklin-Williams earned $10,000 as runner-up for his screenplay Recognizing Morgan, a script showcasing the life of Garret Morgan, an African-American inventor and entrepreneur.

Poynor related his enthusiasm for his subject, saying, "I became interested in Jonas Salk because he did most of his Polio work here in Pittsburgh. Everyone I talked to of a certain generation had a Polio story. But now, because of his work, we don’t even think about Polio anymore.” He continued, “The whole story was so exciting to me, how he was compelled to find the vaccine, the effects on the country at large and on his own family, and his eventual rise and fall. All of this made writing the screenplay something I looked forward to every day.”

Each year, the screenwriting process begins with an event known as the “Sloan Symposium.” Students gather to hear scientific professionals describe their current research and discuss ideas for stories. Students also receive suggestions for selecting an appropriate technical advisor for their screenplay, a crucial requirement as screenplays are rated on the accuracy of their scientific content.

Franklin-Williams described his advisor’s role in the process, stating, "Professor David Hounshell was very helpful in terms of providing me with the research necessary to start out. We spoke of the technology of the time, the social world, where they would live, their jobs, what they ate, their situation – setting up the world.”

Integrating facts while also crafting compelling human dramas is a major challenge of the competition. Poynor shared, “There were a lot of parts of the story for which there is no historical account, such as meetings that took place, and details of how work got done. I was careful about balancing truth with imagination when the facts weren’t readily available.”

Poynor is currently working on a revised draft of the screenplay which, according to him, will include “more personal details of Salk’s life.” Poynor indicated that his polio research for SALK also informed his play Paradise Key, which recently won a national award from Trustus Theatre.

Franklin-Williams described the boost winning gave him, stating, "This was my first major award, and I didn’t start down the screenwriting path until two to three years ago. It made me feel like going down this path was the right decision, and gave me the energy and desire to keep going.” He plans to build on this momentum as he writes two new screenplays and prepares to relocate to LA.

The non-profit, philanthropic Alfred P. Sloan Foundation was established in 1934 by Alfred P. Sloan. The foundation provides grants within six arenas, including: basic research, science education, public understanding of science, economic performance and quality of life, select national issues, and civic initiatives.

THE LARAMIE PROJECT: 10 YEARS LATER AN EPILOGUE REKINDLES DIALOGUE

On October 12, Carnegie Mellon presented a reading of Tectonic Theater Project’s The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later An Epilogue. The documentary piece is an epilogue to the group’s acclaimed play, The Laramie Project. The first Laramie Project examined the reactions of citizens from Laramie, Wyoming following Matthew Shepard’s brutal murder there in 1998. Mathew Shepherd’s murder and subsequent murder trial became a watershed moment in American history that brought violence against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender communities into the public limelight. According the company’s web site, members of Tectonic Theater Project returned to Laramie to explore the question, “What does life in Laramie tell us about life in America 10 years later?”

Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama joined with over 150 theatres selected from each of the 50 states and from 14 countries around the world for a simultaneous reading of The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later An Epilogue on October 12, 2009. Before the reading began, Carnegie Mellon audience members viewed Tectonic Theater Project’s simulcast from Lincoln Center in New York City via a large screen set up within the Helen Rauh Studio. Actor Glenn Close provided introductory remarks, and Shepard’s mother, Judy Shepard, spoke of her passion to share her son’s story. Tectonic Theater Project co-founder Moisés Kaufman explained how the idea for

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THE LARAMIE PROJECT: 10 YEARS LATER, AN EPILOGUE REKINDLES DIALOGUE

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simultaneous readings was inspired by the Federal Theatre Project, which would present the same play in multiple cities in order to prompt national dialogue. After the opening remarks concluded, the simulcast ceased and the reading commenced.

Second year MFA directing student Sarah Krohn, who directed the piece, remarked, “The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later exemplifies how the theatre community can document and shape our national dialogue. The live simulcasts from Lincoln Center were thrilling and introduced yet another way we can draw on technology to enrich the experience of theatre. It was an honor to work on this project with such a talented group of Carnegie Mellon students and faculty.”

Junior actor Catherine Urbanek, who portrayed multiple roles, commented on the material, stating, “[Matthew Shepard’s] story carries a very powerful message about tolerance. The message of Laramie stays long after the performance and requires us to examine ourselves and our environment.”

The play’s issues and themes were further explored in a post-show discussion. Dramaturg Mary-Margaret Kunze described the process, “Tectonic encouraged their audiences to ‘tweet’ (send messages via Twitter) their questions directly to the Tectonic Theater Project, so as to have a live and global talkback with questions from hundreds of different companies all via live internet feed. We set up a booth both during intermission and after the piece where people could write down their questions to be sent in by our documentarian and production assistant. Two of our questions were answered by the live Tectonic Theater Project panel, securing our representation as a part of this groundbreaking piece.”

Scott Tedmon-Jones, a third year MFA scenic design student, commented on the personal importance of the original play as well as its sequel, saying, “The Laramie Project is not just a piece of theatre for me. It is a fiber of my identity. I grew up in Laramie, was studying theatre at the University of Wyoming, and came out to friends and family in the months following Matthew Shepard’s murder . . . [The Laramie Project] created a dialogue when many people would have preferred to block out the situation . . . It has touched so many lives and has provided a forum to so many communities. Being able to see the epilogue performed here at the School of Drama furthers my belief that theatre can be a powerful method for sharing experiences and creating change in our world.”

UNGARS GIFT THE CRITERION FILM COLLECTION

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Gary and Robin described the range of the library’s contents, “From the first two films in the series, Jean Renoir’s Le Grand Illusion and Akira Kurasawa’s Seven Samurai, through the work of Bergman, Fellini, Mizoguchi, Lean, Hitchcock, Welles, Truffaut, Godard, Ozu, Melville, Forman and dozens of others, the Collection offers an astonishing array of imagery and directorial styles.” In addition to classics, standout contemporary films such as Rushmore and Traffic are also included.

Gary and Robin continued, “In addition to the films themselves, each set of discs contains invaluable extras, from interviews with the filmmakers to critical appreciations of the work. The lessons learned from studying these masters can be applied to both film and theatre. Any aspiring director can only benefit from an understanding of the creative vision behind each of these singular films.”

The collection is currently housed in Undergraduate Directing Option Coordinator Jed Harris’s office, and directing students and faculty may arrange to check out the films from him. Soon, the library will be formally catalogued. Jed hopes that a more permanent home within the School of Drama will be found for the library, which he has named “The Ungar Collection.” Jed aims to create a film society within the School of Drama which will screen the library’s films.

Jed stated, “This wonderful gift will be part of the School of Drama for the next hundred years or more, and we are very grateful to the Ungars to have it.”

Gary and Robin concluded, “We thank Hilary Robinson, Peter Cooke and Jed Harris for their support in establishing this library. We also thank Peter Becker and his dedicated team at Criterion for their help in putting together the library and for their continuing efforts to restore and make available cinematic art at its highest and most inspiring levels.”
The Carnegie Mellon School of Drama Dramatic Writing program dominates the list of plays selected to be presented as readings at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Region II Festival. The Festival will be held January 12-16 at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Due to the dominance of Carnegie Mellon playwrights on the list below, the intensity of this competition may not be immediately apparent. KCACTF Region II includes colleges and universities throughout the following states: southwestern New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Washington DC, northern Virginia, West Virginia and Ohio.

**FULL LENGTH**

**A BOY NAMED ALICE**  
by Joshua Elias Harmon (MFA 2010)

Carapace by David Robinson (Ohio University)

**ONE ACT**

**BAGGAGE**  
by Dan O’Neil (MFA 2011)

Terminal Condition by David Robinson (Ohio University)

**WHISTLEBLOWER**  
by Carolyn Kras (MFA 2010)

**TEN MINUTE**

a brief theory of the cosmos by Molly Hagan (Ohio University)

**ON A CLEAR NIGHT**  
by Dan O’Neil (MFA 2011)

**ORGANUM**  
by Dean Poynor (MFA 2010)

**ORPHAN TRAIN**  
by Julie Tosh (MFA 2009)

The Field by Rachel Barclay (Catholic University of America)

The Sound of Great Flags by David Robinson (Ohio University)

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**ORIGINAL STUDENTS SHOWS: A SUMMER HIGHLIGHT REEL**

**Amy Claussen’s QUARTERLIFE CYCLE**

Quarterlife Cycle is solo performer Amy Claussen’s autobiographical piece about her childhood in Indonesia, growing up as a six-foot-tall, redhead expatriate. The show examines classism and racism, and it ran at the Theatres at 45 Bleeker Street this August as part of The New York International Fringe Festival. “Quarterlife Cycle has been an extraordinary culminating experience . . . I was so thankful that Carnegie Mellon’s Playground gave me the incubator to think I could write this thing, and was able to take both my lighting and sound designers along for the ride,” Claussen stated.

**Pig Pen Theatre’s THE OLD MAN AND THE OLD MOON**

Pig Pen Theatre is comprised of seven Carnegie Mellon actors: Alex Falberg, Ben Ferguson, Curtis Gillen, Ryan Melia, Matt Nuernberger, Arya Shahi, and Dan Weschler. The ensemble’s mission is to create shows with a unique blend of music, lights, shadows, puppetry, movement, and storytelling. This past summer, they performed The Old Man and the Old Moon at the Island Theatre Workshop on Martha’s Vineyard. Arya Shahi related, “It was a great opportunity for us, not only to be able to reach more people, but to begin to learn the intricacies of running what has become a young theatre company. The show ran for two nights and we couldn’t have asked for a better response!” Pig Pen Theatre is currently writing their fourth original show, which will premiere at Carnegie Mellon’s spring Playground Festival.

**Tenement Street Productions: Three Shows**

Nick Bonnar, producer and co-founder of Tenement Street Productions, started this collective in order to “allow active individual members to produce work utilizing the skills of the entire membership community in combination with the financial and legal resources of the company,” Bonnar stated.

The group held a rooftop benefit in Brooklyn this July. The program showcased two one-act plays: Rubble, written and directed by Bekie Berkman-Rivera, and Tales of Brave Ulysses, created and directed by Jeremy Ungar.

Rubble featured Erika Strasburg and Caitlin Kimball. “The experience of writing and directing with and for my peers in a professional atmosphere is one of the most empowering things I have ever done,” Berkman-Rivera said. Her piece “details the lives of two children growing up in a rubble pile,” Bonnar described. He continued, “Steeped in metaphor and intrigue, we follow these innocent children to an unexpected conclusion about where they really are.”

Photos by Louis Stein
FALL 2009 PRODUCTIONS

(top row) Three Days of Rain, Burial at Thebes
(middle row) Three Days of Rain, Floyd Collins, Burial at Thebes
(bottom row) The General of Hot Desire, Two Medieval Mystery Plays, Pittsburgh Welcome Play

Photos by Louis Stein
SUBSCRIPTION SERIES

February 18-27
“Provincial Russia, 1836. Thank goodness we don’t face these same kind of problems today!”

April 15-24
“Secret pacts and sexual betrayal drive this tale to its warlike climax”

April 21-24
“A blunt rendering of the most sordid elements of life.”

NEW WORKS SERIES

January 29-30, February 5-6, 19-20, & 26-27
“New Works, written by our Dramatic Writers and directed by our Graduate Directors, is arguably one of the more important events of the School of Drama calendar. Remembering that King Lear was once a new work, the New Works Series is the prism through which the coming generation of Carnegie Mellon artists will express their hopes, dreams and concerns.” Peter Cooke

DIRECTORS SERIES

DEAD MAN’S CELL PHONE
February 10-12
“A tearing down of artificial and alienating instruments of communication”

IN THE BLOOD
February 24-26
“Her friends and enemies attempt to rip away all the hopes, dreams and possessions she has”

SLOW DANCE ON THE KILLING GROUND
March 17-19
“Living life without fear of repeating one’s past”

Call the box office at 412.268.2407.

SPRING 2010 SEASON

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For more information on the School of Drama visit us online at www.drama.cmu.edu or call 412.268.3293.