DEPARTMENT NEWS

Arthur and Molli Wagner cut the cake at the Arthur Wagner Theatre dedication ceremony on November 21st.

At the December 2nd Chancellor's Laureates Dinner MFA actors Johnny Wu and Jessica Watkins performed a scene from the Department’s recent production of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead. It was a wonderful performance, greatly appreciated by Chancellor Fox and the esteemed guests.

Allan Havis’s four character script The Tutor produced last June at the Lyceum Space downtown, has been published by Broadway Play Publishing.

Faculty and Alum Alison D. Smith screened her videodance Aqueous and performing a new solo at the Electric Lodge in Venice on Friday and Saturday the 23rd and 24th of January at 8pm. as part of La Mer, an evening of art and dance inspired by water and preservation., The Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave, Venice CA. 90291.
Gay and Lesbian Times picked the following UCSD shows for best of 2008’s Student Productions:

- **Pericles, Prince of Tyre**: “A zany kitchen-sink interpretation of this busy Shakespeare play featured shipwrecks, pirates, music from Appalachian folk to vaguely Renaissance and acting styles from Chaplin to Greek tragedy to Pirates of the Caribbean. Great fun.”

- **The Physicists**: “Friedrich Dürrenmatt’s satire on the responsibilities of scientific advancement offered fine acting, a whodunit and a thought-provoking subject.”

- **Tango**: “Freedom, social convention and absolute power are explored in Polish playwright Slawomir Mrozek’s play, which featured not only fine acting but also a sensational set and costumes.”

- **Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead**: “Fate, free will and the illusion of choice are the topics in this wild Tom Stoppard play, wonderfully interpreted.”

*GLT* also lauded alum **Monique Gaffney** (BA ‘93) in the Best Actress category, calling her performance “riveting” in the Diversionary Theatre production of *No Exit*.

*Marianne McDonald’s* translation of Euripides’ *Trojan Women* was performed by [Ion Theatre Company](http://www.iontheatre.org) in San Diego recently. Her translation of Euripides’ *The Baccae Trilogy* was directed by Mihai Maniutiu at the UC Irvine Claire Trevor Theatre in February. “In a bold new production, Mihai Maniutiu, one of Romania’s most distinguished and esteemed theatre directors, makes his American debut as he brings his brilliant vision to this powerful Greek classic.” Marianne’s pet peacocks were extras in the production.

The 2009 Pattés are In – Winning for “Outstanding Costume Design” is **Christine Crook** for her work on *Rosencrantz and Guilderstern are Dead*. **Adam Arian** won “Outstanding Direction” for that production. Professor **Allan Havis** won the “Playwriting Award” for *The Tutor*. The Patté Awards, in their twelfth year, were presented at a gala event last Monday at the Westin Gaslamp Quarter in San Diego. Emmy Award-winning theater critic **Pat Launer** created the Patté Awards™ for Theater Excellence (their tag-line is “cause theartemakers ain't chopped liver!”) to honor the broad diversity of San Diego theater and to give something back to the community. The event should be available for viewing on Ms. Launer’s website soon.

Congratulations to our winners!

**Jim Ingalls** designed the lighting for *La Passion de Simone* for Peter Sellars and the Los Angeles Philharmonic recently at Disney Hall. He's sorry that he couldn't get down and that no one could get up to see it, but will be in La Jolla from February 24th through March 5th to meet the graduate lighting design students.
Head of Directing Gabor Tompa was named “Ambassador of Culture” by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Hungary recently at a ceremony at Carnegie Hall in New York. The award is given to people of Hungarian citizenship, or from other countries, who have obtained with their activity outstanding results in the representation of Hungarian culture abroad, and, by their achievements and initiatives, have contributed to the consciousness of Hungarian culture and to its recognition in other countries.

**Playwriting Competition Deadline Extended** - The University of California San Diego’s Theatre and Dance Department seeks from all enrolled undergraduate students submissions of previously unproduced, unpublished scripts highlighting the African-American experience in contemporary or historical terms. A $1,000 honorarium will be awarded to the winning playwright and the play will receive a staged reading on April 25th in the MFA Baldwin New Play Festival, to be attended by twelve national theatre professionals. See [here](#) for details.

A Seattle TV station recently aired a news article about a successful $5 million dollar funding drive at Intiman Theatre. Julia Collins, previous joint staff costume shop manager and now the production manager at the Intiman, is heavily featured in the story.

*The Myth Project IV: “Fairytales From the Fringe,”* a premiere work conceived and directed by faculty member Patricia Rincon, is inspired by the fairytales of the 15th-18th-centuries, the metaphors handed down over hundreds of years and retold in story form. Fairytales delves into the mythology of these olden stories with tales of human heroism, beauty, morals, and poetic fantasy. Set in two different site-specific locations - a cathedral and a library - on two different weekends, and using dance theater, storytelling, various classical, live organ and original composed music, visual art, and a little magic, to create a contemporary take on ancient myths as a way of asking questions and looking at how we live today. Each site has been modified and transformed to take advantage of its unique characteristics. February 20th & 21st and March 6th & 7th. Find more [info here](#).
Annie Smart and Les Waters are working on the World Premier of Sarah Ruhl’s *In the Next Room, or The Vibrator Play* at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Annie is designing the set and MFA alum Maria Dizzia is in the cast. Play opened February 4th and plays until March 15th. It’s a comedy set in the late 19th century and is about the use of the electrical vibrator to cure women of hysteria.

Charles Isherwood, of The New York Times, has given In The Next Room, or The Vibrator Play a great review.

Alum Maria Dizzia, left, and Hannah Cabell
Photo: Kevin Berne, NYTimes

Theatre Lecturer emeritus Ron Ranson (Design and Production) returned to campus on Friday, February 27th, as part of the nation-wide celebration honoring the Peace Corps. Ron was a featured speaker at the Peace Corps information session at the UC International Center near Library Walk and Gilman Drive (map). Ron served in the Peace Corps in Nepal and taught English at the high school and college level for 2 years (using a lot of classroom theatre projects). He taught design and production in the department from 1979 to 2003.

ONSTAGE

*The Misanthrope*, by Molière - January 29th - February 7th in the Mandell Weiss Forum Theatre

*The Misanthrope*, directed by James Winker, is set in the fashionable social milieu of seventeenth-century Paris. Alceste, the misanthrope of the title, is disgusted by the hypocrisy, injustice, and overall corruption in human society. Alceste's concern with the issue of justice has to do with the fact that he is embroiled in several lawsuits, the outcomes of which are determined not by which party is in the right but by who has the most influence in court. Nonetheless, Alceste is in love with Celimene, a young widow with a reputation for flirtation and for surrounding herself with suitors and who is a prime example of the insincerity that Alceste despises in others. *The Misanthrope* is concerned with themes of honesty and hypocrisy, justice and injustice; the manipulative social games people play; and, the conflict between the individual and society.

Photo by Manny Rotenberg
James Winker is a professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance at UCSD. He has worked at the Old Globe Theatre (where he is an Associate Artist), San Diego Rep, South Coast Repertory in Costa Mesa, the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco, Hartford Stage, the Actors Theatre of Louisville, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and the Guthrie in Minneapolis. He has directed The Two Gentlemen of Verona at the Globe's Carter Theatre for the USD/Globe MFA program. For the UC San Diego Department of Theatre and Dance he has directed As You Like It, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Richard III.

Danton's Death, by Georg Büchner, directed by Quinn Martin Guest Chair in Directing, Dominique Serrand. February 19th - February 28th in the Mandell Weiss Theatre.

With passionate characters in epic spaces, Danton's Death takes place after King Louis XVI and his queen are beheaded. Charismatic leader Danton sees the massive use of the guillotine as a kind of shadow logic to the seeming benevolence of the law erected in the desire of the masses to be free.

Artistic Director and co-founder of Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Mr. Serrand studied at the Ecole Jacques Lecoq in Paris. He has acted, conceived, directed and designed for most Jeune Lune productions for more than 25 years, concentrating more on directing. His directing credits include The Kitchen, Lulu, The Bourgeois Gentleman, Romeo and Juliet, Red Noses, 1789, Children of Paradise: Shooting a Dream, Three Musketeers, The Pursuit of Happiness, Queen Elizabeth, Tartuffe, Gulliver, The Seagull, The Miser, The Little Prince, and Amerika or The Disappearance. He staged several operas including The Magic Flute, Cosi Fan Tutte, Don Juan Giovanni, Figaro, and Carmen.

Dominique's directing stages include Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The La Jolla Playhouse, Yale Repertory Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Alley Theatre, The Guthrie Theater, and the Children's Theatre Company, amongst others. Dominique has been knighted by the French Government in the Order of Arts and Letters.

Photos from Danton's Death
(Manny Rotenberg)
The Mistakes Madeline Made, by Elizabeth Meriwether. Directed by Johanna Gruenhut In the Arthur Wagner Theatre, February 25th through March 1st.

What’s the point of being clean when the world feels dirty? The Mistakes Madeline Made is a hilarious and moving story about the strange contours of loss, love, and coping. Having recently lost her journalist brother and stuck in a soul-crushing job as the personal-assistant to a Personal-Assistant, Edna does the only reasonable thing she can - she stops bathing! As she begins to reek and withdraw from life, she hatches a plan to sabotage her boss and pollute her sterile workplace. Instead, she finds herself drawn back in by an unlikely love. In the darkly comic world of The Mistakes Madeline Made personal hygiene becomes political and disobedience can be an act love. Director Johanna Gruenhut recently directed No Child... for the Weston Playhouse.

BillyJoel Took Me To The Prom.Com, which she directed for American Globe Theatre’s Short-Play-Festival took home awards for best play and best director. Her short-film Thanksgiving 2001 was a finalist at the Redstone Film Festival in Boston. Johanna has directed new plays for Andy’s Summer Playhouse, Bright Young Things, Manhattan Theatre Source, The Tank, and Dock-Street Project. Associate director credits include collaborations with Hal Brooks, Daniel Kramer, and Kim Rubinstein. She has served as assistant director to Max Stafford-Clark, Gordon Edelstein, and Oskar Eustis. Upcoming projects: a workshop with Israeli playwright Yosef Bar-Yosef on his newest play, This Wide-Winged Sea.

Photos from The Mistakes Madeline Made
By Manny Rotenberg

1001, by Jason Grote, directed by Kim Rubenstein. A potent, passionate, funny, kaleidoscopic re-imagining of the classic Arabian Nights. Nationally celebrated playwright Jason Grote's politically charged theatrical maze explores current Middle Eastern tensions as it shifts back and forth and through mythic Arabia and modern-day New York City. Jason Grote's plays include 1001 (Denver Center world premiere, Page 73, Theater @ Boston Court, Contemporary American Theater Festival, Mixed Blood), Box Americana, Darwin's

Challenge, Hamilton Township (Salvage Vanguard Theater world premiere; upcoming, Soho Rep), Maria/Stuart (Woolly Mammoth Theater world premiere; upcoming, Theater Schmeeater), and This Storm Is What We Call Progress (Rorschach Theater world premiere). He is currently working on the screenplay for What We Got: DJ Spooky's Quest for the Commons and co-hosting The Acousmatic Radio Theater Hour on WFMU (91.1FM in NY/NJ, around the world at wfmu.org). 1001 runs February 26th - March 7th in the Mandell Weiss Forum Studio.

Prior to joining the faculty at UCSD, Kim Rubinstein was the Associate Artistic Director of the Long Wharf Theatre where she directed Guys and Dolls, A Midsommer Night's Dream, Private Lives, Santaland Diaries, and The Cocktail Hour. Other recent directing credits include The American Plan for The Old Globe, The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow for Portland Center Stage and San Jose Repertory Theatre, and Much Ado About Nothing and Romeo and Juliet for Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Ms. Rubinstein is a recipient of the TCG/NEA directing fellowship and was nominated for the Alan Schneider Directing Award, among other directing and teaching awards. Active in the development of new plays, she has done readings and workshops at places like New Dramatists and the Long Wharf.
Coming Soon - winterWorks! Directed by Eric Geiger. March 12th – 15th. Sure to inspire, this exciting range of interdisciplinary collaborations in dance theatre highlights the unique talents of our students in original, innovative choreography by faculty choreographers Eric Geiger, Margaret Marshall, Patricia Rincon, and Yolande Snaith, who welcome this season’s guest artist from New York, Miguel Gutierrez.


Click here for advance tickets to all Department productions.

ALUM NEWS

Damian Baldet (MFA ‘01), of The Civilians, performed his new work, Pugilist, “a dark, often hilarious exploration of modern man's search for vindication in a society with no formal code of honor” at the Barrow Street Theatre, New York, this last weekend. Alum Allison Weller (MFA ‘01) was co-creator and director.

Chalk Theatre, a new theatre company in LA started by alums Amy Ellenberger (MFA ‘07), Jennifer Chang (MFA ‘06), Larissa Kokernot (MFA ‘05), Ruth McKee (MFA ‘06), and Hilary Ward (MFA ‘07) presents their first production, Three Sisters, starring alum Ricardo Antonio Chavira (MFA ‘00) of Desperate Housewives in the role of Vershinin and featuring Joy Osmanski (MFA ‘03), Jennifer Chang, Aileen Cho (MFA ‘08) and Feodor Chin as the Prosorov family. The production ran January 30th through February 22nd at the Hollywood Forever Cemetery. The LA Times ran a review recently. The production was directed by Larissa and featured Raquel Barreto's dazzling costumes and scenic designer Tom Ontiveros' (MFA ‘07) use of the grant hall of the recently restored Masonic Lodge in the Hollywood Forever Cemetery “to house a world of dreamers clinging to crumbling mythologies”. “Éva Wielgar”- our own Eva Barnes - also appeared in the production.

Don Mackay (MFA ‘90), who teaches the Department’s Professional Prep for the Actor class, and Samuel Stricklen (MFA ‘06) appeared in the Old Globe’s Six Degrees of Separation. Opening Night was January 15th. Click for the Playbill writeup.

L-R: Thomas Jay Ryan, Karen Ziemba, and Samuel Stricklen

photo by Craig Schwartz/Playbill
Chane’t Johnson (MFA ’01) writes: “I'm currently shooting a Lead Role in the new Todd Solondz (Happiness, Storytelling) film which hasn’t been named yet. It also stars Allison Janney, Shirley Henderson, Ally Sheedy, Paul Reubens, and Ciaran Hinds. I've also just recently completed two pilots Ernesto for FOX starring Wilmer Valderama and Dan's Detour of Life on CINSAY.COM from the writer/producers of That 70's Show. We'll start shooting 13 more episodes of Dan's Detour late Feb 2009. Look for my Without A Trace Guest Star, Criminal Minds Guest Star and Girlfriends Guest Star eps in syndication.”

Mikeah Jennings (BA ‘01) is currently appearing in The Shipment at The Kitchen in New York. His photo (left) appears on the front page of the arts section of the January 13th edition of the New York Times.

All Together Again! - On Wednesday night, January 21st, on the eve of the Department’s MFA 4-day actor auditions there was a gathering of alumni at the Telephone Bar in New York. Faculty members Kyle Donnelly, Charlie Oates and Department MSO Mark Maltby were there from UCSD along with NY-based: (Graduate Actors) Alex Cranmer, Emily Donahoe, Scott Drummond, Liz Elkins, Brad Fleischer, Carmen Gill, Daoud Hedami, Rebecca Kaasa, Michael Keyloun, Carly Kleiner, Rufio Lerma, Ryan McCarthy, Eduardo Placer, Alex Smith, Andrew Smith, Mark Emerson Smith, Ryan Shams, and Lisa Velten; (Graduate Designers) Tim Becker and Emily DeAngelis; (Undergraduate Designers) Whitney Adams; (Graduate Directors) Suzanne Agins, West Hyler, and Joe Ward; (Playwright) Josh Tobission; (Dance) Debra Lohse; and (Stage Manager) Andrew Haver. Previous production staff member Dan Weiner was also present. It was a really nice evening of socializing with alums coming and going as necessary with their hectic schedules. [Send photos!]

Lila Rose Kaplan (MFA ’08) invited all to Bureau of Missing Persons on Monday, February 2nd at 7:30pm at Bedlam (formerly known as Al's Bar) in Los Angeles. Assuming you have a FaceBook account, you can learn more at http://www.facebook.com/n/?event.php&eid=44359558564 .

Amy Lynn Stewart (MFA ‘04) was in a two person show, Emilie’s Voltaire, at the Beckett on Theatre Row through February 7th.

Anne Kauffman (MFA ‘99) is directing Sixty Miles to Silver Lake, by Dan LeFranc, at Soho Rep in New York.

Kevin Judge (MFA ’04) designed sets for the new play Irena's Vow opening soon on Broadway (starring Tovah Feldshuh).
The NY Times had a big article about alum Steve Cosson’s company “The Civilians,” which is about to open a new show Off-Broadway at the Vineyard Theatre (This Beautiful City). Steve got his MFA in directing in ’99.

Alum Spotlight - Neal Patel (MFA ’91) writes: “Since graduating from UCSD in 1991 I have been designing for theater, opera and dance and most recently for television. I live in New York City and am married to director Maria Mileaf (UCSD ‘90) We have two incredible children: Pia (10) and Emlyn (7). I have been working on Broadway in Side Man, Off Broadway at the Public Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop and BAM as well as both Regional and International Opera at the Santa Fe Opera, New York City Opera, Edinburgh International Festival and the Nikikai Opera Theatre Tokyo. I also continue to work in the regional theater and sometimes return to La Jolla Playhouse where Des McAnuff gave me my first professional (I got paid) job in 1989 for Lee Blessing's Down The Road! I work repeatedly with Anne Bogart, who taught me my first year at UCSD, and the SITI company. I'm currently the scenic designer for La Jolla Playhouse's Page-to-Stage production of Peter and the Starcatchers with performances running from February 13th through March 8th. This year I am the production designer of In Treatment for HBO which is taping in NYC at Silver Cup studios. I also had the great pleasure of collaborating with my wife on Lee Blessing’s A Body of Water at Primary Stages in NYC as well. You can visit my website at www.neilpateldesign.com.”

Megan Bryant (BA ’88) took the time to write us: “…I won't go into all that has happened since then [graduation]. Suffice to say a lot of really cool things. Just did the lighting for a Christmas play at a local church. Sounds rinky dink right? Well not so fast. After having not touched a piece of equipment in over 15 years (got into camera work for films) I was able to light a show and I can thank all of those Friday night cabarets down at Warren's black box. (Is it still there?) I had to design and light those in three hours. For this Christmas play, I was not able to refocus one light. (Church's floor was on a slant. Church had no equipment and no money to rent a suitable Cherry picker.) I could only set lighting levels and fade from one preset to the next (on a board meant to run house lights. Not really a board at all.) I was able to rent two small follow spots and five 500 watt Fresnels to light the set. But... It came out fantastic! It was surprisingly like riding a bike. It all came back. I must now fade back into the job of Mother, Wife and "Homemaker" but it sure is a boost to know that I can still do it.”

Meredith McDonough (MFA ’04) is directing Copenhagen at Delaware Theatre Company through March 8th.

Suzanne Agins (MFA ’03) directs the world premiere of Jailbait, by Deirdre O’Connor, at the Cherry Lane Theatre in New York, March 19th through April 25th.

Chris Flanders (MFA ’94) was on the first two episodes of 24: Day 7. He plays “Todd” in the 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and the 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. episodes (Season 7, Episodes 1 & 2). [You can watch entire episodes on the 24 website.]
Virginie Magnat (PhD ‘04) has just been awarded a second major research grant by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The three-year Research/Creation Grant in Fine Arts will enable her to further develop her practice-based research on cross-cultural and trans-generational transmission processes among women in the Grotowski diaspora. The organizers of Year Grotowski events in Cuba have recently published one result of this research, Virginie’s essay, "The Stanislavski-Grotowski Lineage," in Spanish translation in the literary journal Criterios. A bilingual version of her article, "Meetings with Remarkable Women," is featured in the current issue of Le Théâtre en Pologne/The Theatre in Poland.

Melanie Marnich (MFA ‘98) writes for HBO's Big Love (and is now married to playwright Lee Blessing). Her play Quake, “about a young woman who travels cross-country to find the love of her life, with an astrophysicist/serial killer and other bizarre twists thrown in” was recently presented at the Arts Bank Theater of The University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Read a review at Broadwayworld.com.

Have News To Share?? Send it to us via the newsletter’s own email address, TandDNews at Yahoo.com, by Tuesday night and we'll put it in the next newsletter. We love photos, but please, if you send them, make sure they are no larger than 400k files. Also, don't forget to identify yourself, tell us if you had a different name at graduation, and what year you graduated. If your news features other alums, please be sure to identify them. We hope to hear from you soon!