January, 2010

DEPARTMENT NEWS

You are cordially invited to an Opening Night Benefit of The Revengers Tragedy on Friday, February 12th, at 6:30pm. All proceeds from this event will go to the Department of Theatre and Dance Graduate Student Residency Program at the La Jolla Playhouse. Tickets are available at $50 and include the performance, a pre-show wine reception, a discussion with director Christopher Ashley, and a Backstage Tour. Click for more information or contact 858-534-4574.

The Pattés Are In! – The Thirteenth Annual Patté Awards Ceremony, held on January 18th at the Westin Hotel in downtown San Diego, was the latest in of what has become an annual community tradition. “The Awards highlight the best productions, performers, and designers in the San Diego community, and through them, The Patté Foundation ensures that San Diego continues to recognize and appreciate the creativity of its theater artists.” As always, UCSD was well represented by our graduate students: Ian Wallace was given a Patté for his Scenic Design work and Alina Bokovikova received a Patté for Costume for UCSD’s production of Camino Real; Ronald McCants won in the Playwriting category for Refraction; and, Janet Hayatshahi was recognized for her direction of Nine Parts of Desire for the Mo’olelo Performing Arts Company. Design alum Robin Roberts (MFA ‘94) was also awarded a Patté for Scenic Design for his work on ANON(ymous) at USD. The awards were televised, but video will be available here. Congratulations to all! Photos are online. Several UCSD personalities are among them. Faculty member Alan Burrett is designing Sayed and the Dream for the Caracalla Dance Company in Beirut, Lebanon. He is assisted by alum Stephen Sakowski (MFA ‘09). This show will be presented in Paris and London. Later in the year Professor Burrett will also design Billy Budd at the Paris Opera and the Shakespeare Festival, directed by Adrian Noble, at The Old Globe this year. James Tan (3rd Year MFA Lighting Design Student) is working with acclaimed choreographers Kevin Wynn (Artistic Director of Kevin Wynn Collections, New York) and Lin Kun-Yang (Artistic Director of KYL & Dancers, Philadelphia) on Awakenings, a production that explores the four seasons in a wholly new perspective. Combining the best brains and creativity of experienced arts maestros from Singapore and USA, DES Arts also invited Scott Mcpheeters, Jennifer Rose (Principal Dancers of KYL & Dancers) and Liu Wen-Chun (MFA, Dance of SUNY Purchase College) to be guest performers. Yan Choong Lian is the Artistic Director.
Crossing Boundaries: Design Improvisations 2010, featuring the works of students and faculty from the departments of Theatre and Dance, Visual Arts, and Music at UC San Diego, and a telematic performance with UC Irvine, directed by Shahrokh Yadegari in collaboration with Victoria Petrovich and Tara Knight, was staged on January 12th at the Calit2 Theatre - Atkinson Hall.

Faculty members Liam Clancy, Eric Geiger, Allyson Green, and Yolande Snaith performed Live – Collaborative Dance Theatre at UCSD on January 23rd in the Molli and Arthur Wagner Dance Building, Studio 3.

Emeritus Professor Jorge Huerta sent photos of his new grandchildren, Zephyr Titouan and Alize Flor, taken while he was visiting the family in France. Congratulations, Jorge!

ALUM UPDATES

Ricardo Chavira (MFA ‘00) will be seen in the upcoming movie Piranha 3-D with Richard Dreyfuss, Jerry O’Connell, and Christopher Lloyd due out in April. “In Lake Victoria, Arizona, a tremor causes the lake's floor to open, setting free scores of prehistoric piranhas... They're back! Every year the population of sleepy Lake Victoria explodes from 5,000 to 50,000 for a single, wild weekend - the 4th of July, a riot of sun, drunken fun and sex-crazed mayhem. But this year, there's something more to worry about than hangovers and complaints from local old timers....”

Steve Cosson (MFA ‘99), of “Civilians” fame, will be directing William Inge’s Bus Stop at the Kansas City Repertory Theatre from March 12th – April 3rd.

Fellow alum of both UCSD and the Civilians, Damian Baldet (MFA ‘01) is performing as “Timon” in The Lion King at the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas. There’s a video online of him explaining how to bring a puppet character to life.

UCSD was well-represented at this year’s LA Ovation Awards. The play award at an intimate location prize went to Chalk Repertory Theatre's production of MFA ‘01 alum Julia Edwards' Family Planning, which also won the directing award for Larissa Kokernot (MFA ‘05). The complete list of winners was published in the Los Angeles Times Arts blog.
Playwriting MFA alum Rachel Axler (MFA ‘04) got a great write-up in the New York Times Entertainment section recently. Rachel is a writer for Parks and Recreation on NBC TV, and has a new off-Broadway show, Smudge.

Melanie Marnich (MFA ‘98) is a writer for Big Love for HBO TV. An upcoming episode written by Melanie – The Mighty and Strong – will air on Sunday, January 31st.

Raina Simone Moore (MFA ‘04) is “Cherise” in The Prospects, a comedy directed by David Brundige about the Park Slope neighborhood in Brooklyn. The film is currently in post-production.

Johnny Wu (MFA ‘09) writes: “My two episodes of FOX’s "24" will air as part of the two-night, four-hour season premiere starting at January 17, 2010, at 9pm on FOX. Also, I will be playing the role of Hiro in our very own Naomi Iizuka’s World Premiere production of her latest play Concerning Strange Devices From The Distant West up at Berkeley Rep directed by former faculty Les Waters who just had a tremendous opening for his Sarah Ruhl play on Broadway at Lincoln Center. Rehearsals start the last week of January and opens the first week of March, closing on April 11.”

IN MEMORIAM

With great sadness we report that alum Eric Bowling (BA ‘04) passed away after a sudden illness over the holidays. Eric had been exceedingly active in our theatre program as well as in the professional theatres in San Diego. He graduated from Grossmont College summa cum laude and from UCSD with Special Honors in Theater. He was enrolled in the graduate program in Children’s Literature at San Diego State University at the time of his death. Eric loved the theater, dramaturgy, Harry Potter, and Comic-Con, where he hosted the Harry Potter panel. His first publication of a serious essay (on the fictional life of Harry Potter) is found in Scribbulus. Eric was thirty-two years old. A lovely eulogy for alum Eric appeared recently in the Marshall Blog.

Peter Gottlieb, MFA class of 1984, passed away recently. Peter was an independent theatrical lighting designer in Los Angeles and an adjunct professor at several California colleges. Our condolences go out to Peter’s family and friends.