

UC SAN DIEGO THEATRE & DANCE

Week 0

September 22nd, 2016

In This Issue

Department News

Department News

New Play Readings

Come see two new play readings by incoming first-year playwrights Stephanie Del Rosso and Ava Geyer on Friday, September 23rd, 2016.



(Stephanie Del Rosso, left; Ava Geyer, right)

FILL FILL FILL FILL FILL FILL FILL

By **Stephanie Del Rosso (MFA Playwright)**

Directed by **Zora Howard (MFA Actor)**

Stage Managed by **Hsiu-I Lu (MFA Stage Manager)**

Arthur Wagner Theatre, Galbraith Hall (GH) 157

5:30pm

BEEP B DROPS THE BOMB

By **Ava Geyer (MFA Playwright)**

Directed by **Dylan Key (MFA Director)**

Stage Managed by **Jackie Mullen (MFA Stage Manager)**

Arthur Wagner Theatre, Galbraith Hall (GH) 157

7:30pm

Studio Project: Angels in America Part Two: Perestroika



Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika is the second half of Kushner's seven-hour epic Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes. Noted for its controversial commentary on the themes of sexuality, politics and race in 1980s America, Perestroika remains unnervingly relevant and loud in 2016's struggle for racial, sexual and political justice.

**This production contains heavy adult subject matter including language, nudity and brief violence.*

Molli & Arthur Wagner Dance Building

Saturday, September 24th, 7:30PM

Sunday, September 25th, 2:00PM & 7:30PM

TICKETS

<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2597699>

The Cast

Louis Ironson - **Martin Mercouri (MFA Actor)**

Prior Walter - **Kyle Hester (MFA Actor)**

Joe Pitt - **Hunter Spangler (MFA Actor)**

Harper Pitt - **Katherine Ko (MFA Actor)**
 Roy Cohn - **Sean McIntyre (MFA Actor)**
 Belize - **Terrance White (MFA Actor)**
 Hannah Pitt - **Caroline Siewert (MFA Actor)**
 Henry/Emily/Ethel Rosenberg - **Mary Glen Fredrick (MFA Actor)**
 The Angel - **Janet Fiki (MFA Actor)**
 Percussionist - Fiona Digney

The Creative Team

Director - **Jon Reimer (PhD Student)**
 Production - **Zora Howard (MFA Actor) & Martin Mercouri (MFA Actor)**
 Scenic - **Anna Robinson (MFA Scenic Designer)**
 Projections - Stefani Byrd
 Lighting - **Joel Britt (MFA Lighting Designer)**
 Costumes - **Junior Bergman (MFA Costume Designer)**
 Sound - **Steven Leffue (MFA Sound Designer)**
 Stage Management - **Kasson Marroquin (MFA Stage Manager)**
 Graphic Design - **Zora Howard (MFA Actor)** and Elijah Bean

Steven Leffue & Grady Kestler: In Amsterdam & France



Saxophonist **Steven Leffue (MFA Sound Design)** and sound designer **Grady Kestler (MFA Sound Design)** present their work on an artificially intelligent system for musical creation. Using probabilities and algorithms to mimic decisions and impulses of creativity, a musical personality is created which not only reacts to performers but also generates it's own content. Inspired by advances in electronic music, noise music, and free improvisation, this system raises interesting questions regarding the role of the individual and our capability to replicate human nature in a musical setting.

Salle d'Art Lyrique

14h30 - 16h: Presentation and opportunity for musicians to experiment

16h30 - 17h30: Concert

Steven Leffue: Rave Review in the New York Times



Check out this excerpt from the New York Times review of **Steven Leffue's (MFA Sound Design)** sound design in Toshiki Okada's new play "Quite Comfort" at JACK Space in Brooklyn, New York:

"The peacefulness is short-lived. Mr. Rozzell restlessly moves about the space, dodging the lounging audience. Colored lights go on and off, seemingly randomly. Static fades in and out; sometimes the show feels unnervingly like a concert by the noise artist Merzbow. (Amith Chandrashaker and Steven Leffue handled the superlative lighting and sound design.)" --Elisabeth Vincentelli

[Click here to read the full review.](#)

Katherine Ko & Kyle Hester: At Santa Cruz Shakespeare



(Kyle Hester, left; Katherine Ko, right)

This summer **Kyle Hester (MFA Actor)** and **Katherine Ko (MFA Actor)** played Lysander and Hermia in Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in the inaugural season at Shakespeare Santa Cruz's new theatre.

Inspired by Shakespeare, Santa Cruz Shakespeare creates and strengthens community by bringing audiences and theater artists together to celebrate stories about our collective humanity.

For more information about their 2016 summer season, [click here](#).

Caroline Siewert & Will Detlefsen: At Chautauqua Theatre Company



(Caroline Siewert, left; Will Detlefsen, right)

Caroline Siewert (MFA Actor) spent the summer in the Acting Conservatory with the Chautauqua Theatre Company in New York. She played Cath in Chelsea Mercantel's "Tiny Houses" directed by **Joshua K. Brody (MFA Directing Alum)** and Lucentio in Shakespeare's "The Taming of the Shrew."

Dedicated to the next generation of theater artists, the development of new work, first-rate productions of modern and contemporary classics, and fresh insight into Shakespeare's canon, CTC produces the best of a year-round regional theater within an eight week summer season as the resident theater of the Chautauqua Institution.

Chautauqua Theater Company is where the finest theater artists of tomorrow bridge the gap between their training and the professional world.

Will Detlefsen (MFA Director) assisted Sherri Eden Barber on Nick Gandiello's new play "The Glow Overhead" as a part of Chautauqua Theatre Company's New Play Workshop.

Hunter Spangler, Sean McIntyre, Zora Howard, Jessie Medofer, Justin Humphres, & Charles Means Work on "Junk" at La Jolla Playhouse



(Check out this promo video and meet the cast of "JUNK")

MFA Actors Hunter Spangler, Sean McIntyre and Zora Howard, MFA Stage Manager Jessie Medofer, and MFA Scenic Designer Justin Humphres each completed their residency with La Jolla Playhouse by playing a part this summer in the world premiere production of Ayad Akhtar's "JUNK: The Golden Age of Debt" directed by Doug Hughes. The Production Stage Manager for "JUNK" was our very own **Charles Means (Stage Management Faculty, Department Chair)**.

The cast also featured recent alums **Zakiya Markland ('16 MFA Acting)** and **Keith Wallace ('16 MFA Acting)**.

Alumni News

Check Out Some of the Amazing Things Our Alums Have Been Up to This Summer!

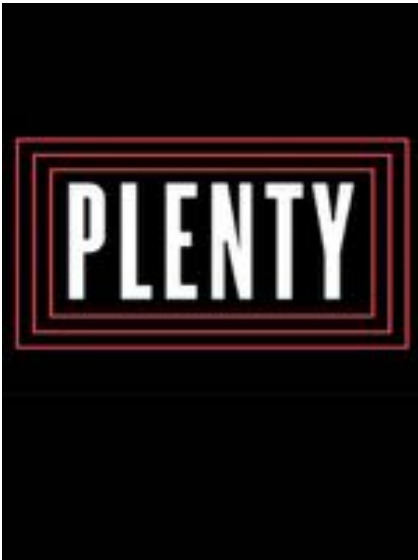
Jesca Prudencio: Recipient of the Julie Taymor World Theater Fellowship

Jesca Prudencio ('16 MFA Directing Alum) is the recipient of the very first Julie Taymor World Theater Fellowship.



The founding principal of The Julie Taymor World Theater Fellowship is to provide travel opportunities for enterprising young theater directors to immerse themselves in artistic experiences beyond our borders; thereby, expanding their creative horizons to include previously undiscovered styles and techniques which can best be experienced in direct dialogue and work with creative artists from other cultures. It is our hope that through travel to and dialogue with world theater artists, American fellowship recipients will increase their creative capacity and return to enliven the American theater with new productions fueled by their expanded perspective of world theater in Africa, Central and South America, Asia, and/or the Middle East.

Jesca Prudencio: Assisting David Hare's "Plenty" at The Public



Jesca Prudencio ('16 MFA Directing Alum) was recently selected as one of 2016's Drama League Fall Directing Fellows. Through the Drama League program, Jesca is assisting David Leveaux on David Hare's play "Plenty" at The Public Theater starring Rachel Weisz and Corey Stoll.

A groundbreaking work by the Tony and Olivier Award-winning writer of *Skylight* and *The Hours*, *Plenty* is the story of Susan Traherne, a fiercely intelligent British secret agent flown into France during the second world war. Susan's experiences among her war-time colleagues and over the two decades that follow are distilled in powerful scenes in this endlessly layered work about a woman of remarkable bravery, who cannot find in peacetime the values and relationships she cherished in war.

Emilie Whelan: Directs Critically-Acclaimed Production of "Ragtime"



This August, **Emilie Whelan ('16 MFA Directing Alum)** directed *RAGTIME* in response to the deep history of armed resistance, and the racism surrounding the second amendment and Black men. Emilie Whelan and her company Cripple Creek worked in partnership with Malik Rahim, the former secretary of the Louisiana Black Panther in the 1970s, and also worked with the NOPD for conversations around the history of oppression, brutality and fear between the police and the Black community of New Orleans. *RAGTIME* opened at the Marigny Opera House and celebrated an entirely sold out run. *RAGTIME* was heralded a "startling, visionary production...energizing and ennobling New Orleans audiences for some time to come" - The Times Picayune.

An excerpt from the review:

"Director Emilie Whelan and her cast - 17 actors portraying more than three dozen roles - exquisitely bring out the timelessness of the musical's themes as America continues to struggle with issues of racism, class differences and immigration."

To view the full article, [click here](#).

Emilie Whelan: Directs Treemonisha Opera



(Opera Creole, pictured above)

In March 2017, **Emilie Whelan ('16 MFA Directing Alum)** will direct Treemonisha - the opera by musical master Scott Joplin with longstanding OperaCreole at the Orpheum Theatre in New Orleans. Written in 1911, the opera tells the story of an 18 years old woman who who realizes her destiny as a beacon of spiritual illumination on a former slave plantation.

Ubuntu Theater Project's 2016 Season Finishes with Critical Acclaim



(Chaz Shermil in "Hurt Village")

Ubuntu Theater Project closes their summer season with a production of Shakespeare's "Othello" and Katori Hall's "Hurt Village" to critical acclaim. "Othello" was directed by co-artistic director **Michael Moran ('15 MFA Directing Alum)** and included performances by **Emilie Whelan ('16 MFA Directing Alum)**, **Ronald Kirk ('14 MFA Acting Alum)**, **Francisco Arcila ('16 UG Acting Alum)**. **Andrew Vargas ('16 MFA Sound Design)** designed the sound for "Othello". "Hurt Village" included a performance by **Chaz Shermil ('13 MFA Acting Alum)**.



(Ronald Kirk as Othello)

Ubuntu is a Zulu proverb that means 'I am because we are' and 'I am a person through other people. My humanity is tied to yours.'

The Ubuntu Theater Project is a collection of artists that are committed to creating compelling works that unearth the human condition and unite diverse audiences through revelatory, heart-pounding theater.

Founded in Oakland, California, in 2012, the Ubuntu Theater Project shared three annual summer theater festivals and produced 14 plays in five Bay Area cities during that time. The Ubuntu Theater Project is now proud to offer year-long theater for Oakland and the Bay Area with our inaugural 2015-16 season: Threatened Homes.

Kate Jopson: Directs Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" with Coeurage Theatre Co.



Reenvisioning "Twelfth Night" through millennial-tinted glasses, Coeurage Theatre Company's revival in Burbank transposes Shakespeare's plot and theme of cultural alienation into a contemporary fable about diversity and tolerance.

Director **Kate Jopson's ('14 MFA Directing Alum)** freewheeling adaptation certainly has the courage of its convictions, making inventive use of the entire venue and its park environs (including the usually invisible tech booth).

To read the full review, [click here](#).

Matthew Wilder: "Dog Eat Dog" at the Toronto Festival

The screenwriter of Paul Schrader's "Dog Eat Dog", **Matthew Wilder ('94 MFA Playwriting)**, shares his experience premiering a film at Cannes this year.



(Video still from Matthew Wilder's "Dog Eat Dog")

Here is an excerpt:

"I collapsed on my bed in the Hotel Cristal in Cannes, the curtains blowing in the breeze, just like in Roy Scheider's room before he gets the piano wire in *Marathon Man*, and somehow managed to dimly fall asleep until the text function on my phone started quacking. It was the girl I love, in Los Angeles, texting to say, *I missed my flight. I don't know what to say. I'm sorry.* What? Sorry? How can you even *be* sorry for missing a flight to Cannes-especially after I had added on a leg from Istanbul to Nice so she wouldn't miss the opening-night parties? I was crushed. Heartbroken. We talked, but I knew it portended something bad. And I was especially pissed because this came a mere *three and a half hours* before my movie, *Dog Eat Dog*, was going to have its premiere in the Marriott hotel next to mine, as the closing-night selection of the Directors' Fortnight."

Take a look at the [full article here](#).

Jennifer Barclay Newsham: Recipient of the 2016 Smith Prize for Political Theatre

NNPN Affiliated Artist **Jennifer Barclay Newsham ('09 MFA Playwriting)** received the 2016 SMITH PRIZE FOR POLITICAL THEATRE, established in 2006 by Timothy Jay Smith and a group of socially conscious donors to encourage emerging playwrights to tackle the pressing issues of our times. Her project, *Ripe Frenzy*, will examine the role that media plays in perpetuating the mass shootings in the US. Set in a small fictional town, the play will be told in part through some of the oldest storytelling approaches - a Greek chorus, and stories shared around a campfire - and in part through contemporary media techniques. For the latter, Jennifer has teamed up with [Jared Mezzocchi](#), an award-winning projections designer. Barclay is a Chicago-bred actor-turned-playwright who recently relocated to Washington D.C. to join the faculty at the [University of Maryland](#). She previously developed work with NNPN at the 2009 MFA Playwrights Workshop, in conjunction with the Kennedy Center.



Rachel Axler: Article Featured in the New Yorker



Check out an excerpt from **Rachel Axler's ('04 MFA Playwriting)** article in the New Yorker, called "Behold Your Newest Silver-Screen Sex Goddess, Jane Neighbor."

"In America, we want our women to be girls and our girls to be sex fairies, and for those sex fairies to live next door to us, for some reason. This Sharktaugust, there is only one such radiant sex-fairy star to watch. In fact, you should probably close your eyes when she's offscreen and sort of block out with your fingers the parts of the screen she's not on when she's in a scene with someone else. Unless you are a complete idiot, you already know this star's name: Jane Neighbor."

To read the full article, [click here](#).

Carlos Angel Barajas: In Lisa Kirazian's "On Air"



Scripps Ranch Theatre presented their 5th Annual Out on a Limb - New Plays from America's Finest City. These Festival pieces are all new, world-premiere plays written by area playwrights, and have a common theme of having something to do with San Diego.

Carols Angel Barajas ('16 UG Acting Alum) performed in "On Air" by Lisa Kirazian.

Ty Granderson: Film "Diamonds" Premieres in Multiple Festivals



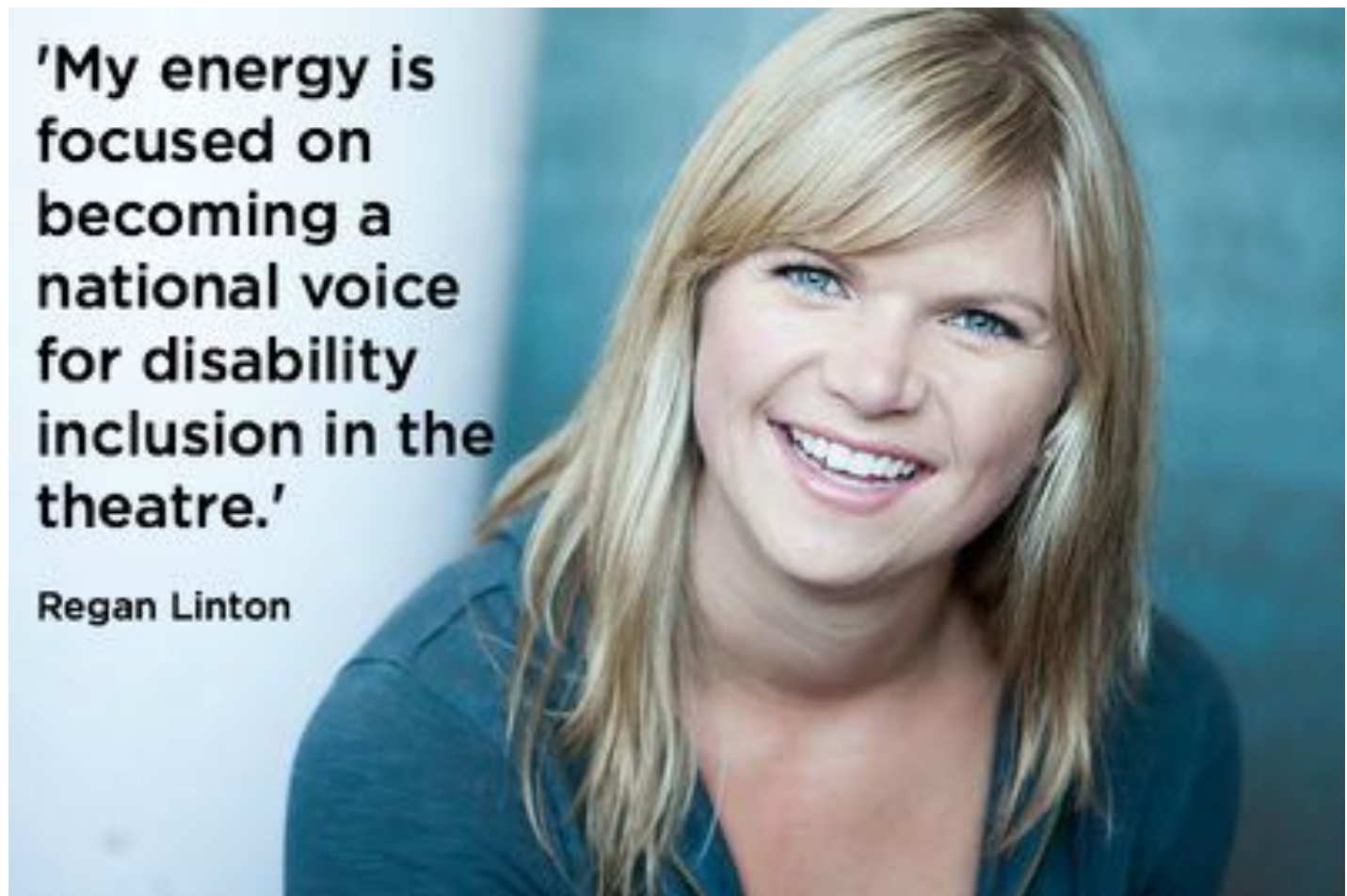
Creole Celina Entertainment along with Vital Spark Productions & the Diamond Team are proud to announce the 12th Annual Action on Film International Film Festival Official Film Nomination: BEST ACTION SHORT OF THE YEAR!

"DIAMOND" is written, produced, directed by and co-starring **Ty Granderson Jones ('82 MFA Acting)**.

(MFA Acting Alum). Premiering at the 12th annual ACTION ON FILM FESTIVAL.

For more information, [click here](#).

Regan Linton: New Interim Artistic Director at Phamaly Theatre Company



Regan Linton ('13 MFA Acting Alum) is the new interim artistic director at Phamaly Theatre Company in Denver, where she previously spent six years as a company actor. Linton is a leading activist for the inclusion of actors with disabilities in the national theatre. According to Theatre Communications Group, Linton "will become the only artistic director in a wheelchair to lead a major U.S. theatre company."

Phamaly's 2016-17 season opens next month with "James and the Giant Peach" and continues with "Tiny Tim's Christmas Carol," "Pygmalion," "Spirits of Another Sort" (based on "A Midsummer Night's Dream") and "Peter Pan." Performing in a wheelchair does not seem to have limited Regan's work. At UC San Diego, her parts included the lead in "Elizabeth I."

Maurice Williams: Series "Broke" Picked Up by BuzzFeed Motion Pictures



(Maurice Williams, far right)

BuzzFeed Motion Pictures' plot to take over the world of digital video is coming along well. Comedian and BFMP producer Quinta Brunson has now sold two series - one for YouTube Red, and another for Verizon's go90, *The Wrap* has exclusively learned.

Brunson's "Broke" is an 11-episode scripted comedy about friends (played by **Maurice Williams ('13 MFA Acting Alum)** and Paul Dupree) who've recently graduated from college and are, well, broke. It will debut on YouTube Red on Sept. 28.

To read more about the series, [click here](#)

Mikeah Ernest Jennings: In "Drowning" & "Funnyhouse of a Negro" at Signature Theatre



(Mikeah Ernest Jennings, left, in "Drowning")

Mikeah Ernest Jennings ('01 UG Acting) had an exciting summer of theatre performing in two roles in rep at Signature Theatre this summer: "Drowning" by Maria Irene Fornes and "Funnyhouse of a Negro" by Adrienne Kennedy.

An excerpt from the New York Times review:

"In every case, this first-rate creative team has done its job. That is to say, they've created unfamiliar worlds that somehow feel deeply, ineffably familiar - the sort of places that you visit as you're falling asleep. And all the places you've ever lived, and all the people you've ever been, start to mingle and merge into one eerie, endlessly reflected entity."

Simone Moore: In Shakespeare's "Hamlet" at Shakespeare on the Sound

This summer **Simone Moore (MFA Acting)** played the role of Queen Gertrude in Shakespeare on the Sound's production of "Hamlet."

This drama is one of the great tragedy-themed plays by William Shakespeare. The themes of the plot include indecision, revenge, retribution, deception, ambition, loyalty and fate. Prince Hamlet mourns the death of this father, and the remarriage of his mother, Queen Gertrude, to Claudius. The ghost of Hamlet's father appears to him and tells him that Claudius has poisoned him, to which Hamlet swears revenge. He kills the eavesdropping Polonius, the court chamberlain. Polonius' son, Laertes, returns to Denmark to avenge his father's death.

Polonius' daughter, Ophelia, loves the Prince, but his behavior drives her to madness. A duel takes place and ends



with the death of many...

Kiersten Van Horne: Wrote Episode 4 on Season 4 of "Mistresses"



(Video still from Episode 4: "Blurred Lines" on Mistresses)

Based on a popular UK TV series of the same name, this provocative drama follows the scandalous -- and steamy -- lives of a sassy group of female friends. As the women navigate romantic relationships complete with excitement, betrayal and secrecy, and explore their own boundaries, they turn to each other for support and guidance. The group of friends includes Josslyn Carver, a willful free spirit, Karen Kim, a therapist who has had issues with boundaries, and April Malloy, who is raising a spirited daughter named Lucy.

Check out Season 4 Episode 4 "Blurred Lines" written by **Kiersten Van Horne ('98 MFA Acting)**.

Joy Osmanski: Joins the Cast of "Santa Clarita Diet" on Netflix



Joy Osmanski ('03 MFA Acting) has booked a major recurring role opposite Timothy Olyphant and Drew Barrymore and **Ricardo Chavira ('00 MFA Acting Alum)** on *Santa Clarita Diet*, Netflix's upcoming single-camera comedy series from creator Victor Fresco, Aaron Kaplan's Kapital Entertainment and Tracy Katsky's Kapital-based KatCo.

In *Santa Clarita Diet*, Joel (Olyphant) and Sheila (Barrymore) are husband and wife realtors leading vaguely discontented lives in the L.A. suburb of Santa Clarita, until Sheila goes through a dramatic change sending both their lives down a road of death and destruction - but in a good way. Osmanski will play Alondra. She and her husband Rick are Joel (Olyphant) and Sheila's (Barrymore) other next door neighbors. Alondra is quiet and reserved, and works for the city in an office job where she stays under the radar. She and Rick recently had a baby.

Osmanski will next be seen in TV Land's *Younger*. Her other recent TV work includes Freeform/ABC Family pilot *Gorgeous Morons*, Fox's *Lucifer* and Lifetime's *Devious Maids*.

Quincy Tyler Bernstein in "Small Mouth Sounds" at Signature Theatre



(Quincy Tyler Bernstein, second from the right)

Quincy Tyler Bernstein ('99 MFA Acting) is currently performing in Bess Wohl's new play "Small Mouth Sounds" at Signature Theatre in New York City, directed by Rachel Chavkin.

Here is an excerpt from the New York Times review:

"Although Mr. Baker, Ms. Bernstine and Ms. Winters are new to "Small Mouth Sounds," they inhabit their characters with the same full-hearted openness that marks the work of the actors who are returning to their roles.

In a summer of disturbing discord and violence, it's heartening to renew acquaintance with a play that leaves you moved, refreshed and, yes, maybe even a little enlightened."

To read the full review, [click here](#).

Anthony Jannuzzi Design "Tiger Style" at La Jolla Playhouse



Anthony Jannuzzi ('16 MFA Lighting Design) debuts at La Jolla Playhouse with Mike Lew's "Tiger Stile!". The show runs through October 2nd, 2016.

Star students and squabbling siblings Albert and Jennifer Chen used to represent the pinnacle of adolescent achievement. But when it comes to adulthood, they're epic failures. Albert's just been passed up for promotion and Jennifer's been dumped by her loser boyfriend. So they do what any reasonable egghead brother and sister would do and go on an Asian Freedom Tour! Travelling from California to China, *Tiger Style!* embraces the inner slacker and the outer tiger parent in all of us.

Melissa Ng Receives Mentorship at Wingspan

Recent graduate **Melissa Ng ('16 MFA Costume Design)** was recently awarded with mentorship at Wingspan. The Wingspace Professional Mentorship Program is a free one-year program for young theater artists seeking guidance at the start of their careers. We offer mentorships in set design, costume design, lighting design, sound design and projection design.



Morgan Zupanski & Zachary Schell: Broadway Under the Stars



This summer, Chris Isaacson in association with Ronn Goswick presented BROADWAY UNDER THE STARS. **Morgan Zupanski ('15 MFA Stage Management)** and **Zachary Schell ('16 UG Stage Management)** were both on the stage management team for the event.

This years show will celebrate the 35th Reunion Anniversary Concert of the legendary Tony Award-winning musical Dreamgirls. Its original stars --- Independent Spirit Award-winner SHERYL LEE RALPH, Emmy Award-winner LORETTA DEVINE and Tony Award & two-time Grammy Award-winner JENNIFER HOLLIDAY, will reunite onstage for conversation and song.

For more information, [click here](#).

Joshua K. Brody Directs Lauren Yee's "King of the Yees" at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago

Check out the promo video of The Goodman Theatre's production of **Lauren Yee's ('12 MFA Playwriting Alum)** "King of the Yees" directed by **Joshua K. Brody ('13 MFA Directing Alum)**.



The affable Larry Yee remains a driving force in the San Francisco Chinese American community as the head of the Yee Family Association, a seemingly obsolescent men's club dedicated to the preservation of the Yee line. His daughter Lauren, however, is dismissive of its patriarchal culture policy, despite her father's lifelong dedication to the group. When Larry suddenly goes missing, Lauren's desperate search drops her into a strange but familiar world where she will have to embrace the past in order to get her father back. Explore the vivid history of America's largest Chinatown through the eyes of a new generation in Lauren Yee's hilarious and touching celebration of family.

For more information, [click here](#)

Janet O'Neill, Peggy Ryan, Larissa Kokernot, Eva Barnes, Adam J. Smith, & Joshua K. Brody Work at Chautauqua Theatre Company's 2016 Summer Season



(From left to right: **Peggy Ryan ('04 UG Alum)**, **Larissa Kokernot ('05 MFA Directing)**, **Janet O'Neill ('15 MFA Costume Design)**, **Eva Barnes ('83 MFA Acting & Current Faculty)**, **Caroline Siewer (Current MFA in Acting)** & **Adam J. Smith (MFA Alum)**. Not pictured and yet to arrive **Joshua Brody ('13 MFA Directing)** & **Will Garrett Detlefsen (Current MFA in Directing)**)

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Joshua K. Brody Directs Jeff Augustin's "The Last Tiger in Haiti" at Berkeley Repertory Theater



After making its world premiere at La Jolla Playhouse this summer, the cast and creative team remount the production this fall at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. **Joshua K. Brody ('13 MFA Directing)** directs.

There once lived five kids in modern-day Haiti, all entangled in a dark history of servitude. Huddled in a tent on Mister's land, they'd spin spellbinding folktales, vying for the title of best storyteller-and dreaming of their freedom. When two of them reunite 15 years later, the boundary between reality and fiction vanishes, revealing secrets of their past more haunting than any of the tales they told. In *The Last Tiger in Haiti*, Jeff Augustin weaves a remarkable and gripping narrative of survival, betrayal, and the power of a story. *The Last Tiger in Haiti* was developed in The Ground Floor: Berkeley Rep's Center for the Creation and Development of New Work.

Joshua K. Brody & David Jacobi at the Ojai Playwrights Conference

Joshua K. Brody ('13 MFA Directing) and **David Jacobi ('15 MFA Playwriting)** spent time this summer at the Ojai Playwrights Conference in Ojai, California



Every summer, theatre professionals and enthusiastic audiences from Southern California converge in the magical Ojai Valley to participate in the development of new plays for the American theatre. Under the direction of Artistic Director/Producer Robert Egan, carefully selected playwrights from all over the world join together for an intensive two-week, in-residence workshop program that enriches the cultural life of Southern California and beyond. This process culminates in OPC's popular public workshop series - known as the OPC Summer New Works Festival.

In addition to the presentation of new play workshops, prominent artists from the theatre community appear in engaging public forums for an exchange of ideas on a range of cultural and artistic subjects in the Intersections Series.

Numerous plays that have been developed at OPC receive high praise and recognition including Tony Awards, Pulitzer Prize nominations, The Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, Steinberg/ATCA New Play Awards, Obie Awards and Helen Hayes Awards. Additionally, plays developed at OPC have gone on to prominent productions at theatres throughout the United States and the world, from the Mark Taper Forum, The Public Theater, Goodman Theatre, Seattle Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Broadway, London's West End, to Asia and Africa.

Brian Smolin & Larry Paulsen, & Mike Ryan: At Santa Cruz Shakespeare



santacruzshakes

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Santa Cruz Shakespeare was home to many UC San Diego Theatre alums this summer. Pictured above are **current MFA Actors Kyle Hester and Katherine Ko** as well as **Brian Smolin ('15 MFA Acting)** and **Larry Paulsen ('80 MFA Acting)**. Not pictured is current artistic director, **Mark Ryan ('92 MFA Acting)**.

Emily Shain, Krista Knight, Emily Feldman, Ken Weitzman, Les Waters, & Naomi Iizuka at Sewanee's Writers' Conference



(From left to right: Emily Shain, Krista Knight, Les Waters, Naomi Iizuka, Emily Feldman and Ken Weitzman)

From July 19-31, 2016, the University of the South hosted the 27th session of the Sewanee Writers' Conference. Thanks to the generosity of the Walter E. Dakin Memorial Fund, supported by the estate of the late Tennessee Williams, the Conference gathered a distinguished faculty to provide instruction and criticism through workshops and craft lectures in poetry, fiction, and playwriting.

Emily Shain ('16 MFA Acting), Krista Knight ('10 MFA Playwriting), (artistic director, Actors Theatre of Louisville) **Les Waters (Faculty Emeritus), Naomi Iizuka ('91 MFA Playwriting and Faculty), Emily Feldman ('16 MFA Playwriting) and Ken Weitzman (MFA Playwriting Alum).**

For more information, [click here](#).

Karl Gajdusek & Alison Tatlock Work on Netflix Original Series "Stranger Things"



This thrilling Netflix-original drama stars award-winning actress Winona Ryder as Joyce Byers, who lives in a small Indiana town in 1983 -- inspired by a time when tales of science fiction captivated audiences. When Joyce's 12-year-old son, Will, goes missing, she launches a terrifying investigation into his disappearance with local authorities. As they search for answers, they unravel a series of extraordinary mysteries involving secret government experiments, unnerving supernatural forces, and a very unusual little girl.

Stranger Things's Executive Producer is **Karl Gajdusek ('94 MFA Playwriting)** and Episode 5 was written by **Alison Tatlock (MFA Acting Alum)**.

Lisa Portes & Christopher Acebo Announced as Board Members for TCG



Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for theatre, announces

Kevin Moriarty, artistic director of Dallas Theater Center, as its new board chair, taking over the position from Diane Rodriguez, associate artistic director of Center Theatre Group. Moriarty joins a slate of officers that includes vice chairs Marshall Jones III and Kathryn M. Lipoma, secretary Larissa FastHorse, and treasurer Tim Jennings.

TCG also welcomes six new members to its board of directors: Kristen Coury, founder and producing artistic director, Gulfshore Playhouse, Naples, FL; Derek Goldman, co-founding director, Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics; Director, Playwright/Adapter, Professor, Georgetown University, Washington, DC; Susan Hilferty, costume and set designer, New York, NY; Eileen J. Morris, artistic director, The Ensemble Theatre, Houston, TX; **Lisa Portes ('92 MFA Directing)**, director and educator, Chicago, IL; and **Christopher Acebo ('98 MFA Design)**.

Monica Bill Barnes & Kelly Hanson Premiere New Dance Piece at Liberty Station



(Monica Bill Barnes, left)

An excerpt from the KPBS article on **Monica Bill Barnes ('95 UG DanceAlum)** below. Monica gives an awesome shout-out to **Kelly Hanson ('01 MFA Scenic Design)** in the interview.

"Monica Bill Barnes, best known for her collaboration with radio personality Ira Glass, seems like the kind of choreographer who thrives in big cities. Her style is unique, quirky and looks nothing like what audiences usually expect from modern dance. She blends classic dance moves with awkward movement - licking her shoulder or trotting ungracefully in a sparkly dress. It's easy to see why she's called the "Tina Fey of dance." But Barnes is actually a UC San Diego alumni with strong ties to San Diego. Over the years, she's staged shows with Jean Isaacs' San Diego Dance Theater, including creating pieces for Trolley Dances. (She'll also be creating something for this year's Trolley Dances, happening in October.)"

To read the full interview, [click here](#).

Josh Tobiessen: New York Times Review of "Lone Star Spirits"



Check out the New York Times review of **Josh Tobiesen's ('07 MFA Playwriting)** new play "Lone Star Spirits" which premiered this summer at the Fourth Street Theatre in New York.

Here is an excerpt from the review:

It's also a very fine coming-home story, reconciliation story and small-town-hero story - another spunky, funny work by Josh Tobiesen.

This one's called "Lone Star Spirits." As it begins, Walter (Martin LaPlatney) is in his ratty liquor store in a West Texas town, holding one of those had-it-a-million-times conversations with Drew (Aaron Roman Weiner), who once caught a memorable pass in a high school football game and can't seem to let it go, as it were. Mr. Weiner, who has a recurring role in the FX series "The Americans," is electric here, a talky bundle of stuck-in-the-past.

To read the full review, [click here](#).

Melanie Marnich Joins as Co-Executive Producer on the Netflix Original Series "The OA"

Netflix is adding another brand new series to their packed slate. But instead of spinning old material in a new way



or adapting a comic book, they've ordered an original drama from the creative team of Zal Batmanglij and Brit Marling, who have been working together in the indie scene for years.

The project is called *The OA*, and that's roughly all we know about it, unfortunately. Netflix, which ordered an eight-episode initial season, chose not to offer any plot details concerning the one-hour drama, and are keeping the narrative under wraps for now. So *OA* can stand for anything from "overachievers" to "ornate acrobats" to something much more likely to be the truth. The project's co-executive is **Melanie March ('98 MFA Playwriting)**.

Ronald McCants: Staff Writer for ABC's "Speechless"



Alumni of the Disney-ABC Writing Program, **Ronald McCants ('10 MFA Playwriting)** now currently writes for ABC's "Speechless."

Maya DiMeo, a wife and mother, is fiercely protective of her husband, Jimmy, and their three children, Ray, Dylan, and J.J. - who has a condition that leaves him with unique mobility and communication challenges. While Maya's mama bear instinct may be one of her most admirable qualities, it's not without its drawbacks and sometimes the injustices she sets out to make right end up being all in her head. Together, the family members work to make a new home for themselves and find

the right person to come in and give J.J. a voice of his own.

Jennifer Chang: New Head of Undergraduate Acting at UC San Diego



Jennifer Chang ('06 MFA Acting) will be the new Head of Undergraduate Acting at UC San Diego. Jennifer is a founding member of Chalk Rep. For the company, she has directed *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *The Debate Over Courtney O'Connell of Columbus*, *Nebraska*, "Prom Season" in *Gallery Secrets* and "The Sanctuary" in *FLASH Fest 2010*. She has acted in *FLASH Fest 2012*, *Hell Money*, *Stray*, and *Three Sisters*. Other directing credits include *Edith Can Shoot Things* and *Hit Them* for Artists at Play and *Our American Story* at the Japanese American National Museum in collaboration with East West Players. As an actor, she has worked with South Coast Rep, East West Players, Company of Angels, Mixed Blood Theatre, Fulton Opera House, and the National Asian American Theatre Company, among others, as well as TV and Commercials. Education: MFA, UCSD/ La Jolla Playhouse. BFA, NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. www.changinator.com

Elise Langer: In "Pinocchio" at Children's Theatre Company



"Pinocchio" tells the story of a woodworker, Gepetto, who creates a wooden boy to be his son. He names him Pinocchio. Pinocchio dreams of becoming a real boy, but his mischievous and adventurous nature causes him to incur several scrapes and scuffles along the way. But aside from simply sharing Pinocchio's adventures along his journey to become real, "Pinocchio" tells a story of the power of believing. Pinocchio never gives up his belief that he is a real boy or, in the end, that he will find his father again. His faith is what drives his dream to come true. Local actress **Elise Langer ('98 UG Alum)**, who plays Pinocchio, talks about the physical challenges playing a boy made out of wood can bring, and how she hopes CTC encourages families to keep make-believing.

Maria Striar: Featured in the New York Times

"We have an enormous budget," joked Maria Striar, the artistic director of the Off Off Broadway company Clubbed Thumb, which is producing the world premiere of "Tumacho." Running from June 27 through July 9, it's the final



production in Clubbed Thumb's annual Summerworks festival of new plays, held at the 89-seat Wild Project theater on East Third Street. For a month and a half, three world premieres are mounted, each with 10 performances and, at most, a running time of 90 minutes. For new-play aficionados, Summerworks is a must-see stop, especially since tickets are a budget-friendly \$18. For Ms. Striar, it's a juggling act."

To view the full article, [click here](#).

Lila Rose Kaplan, Meredith McDonough, & Tareena D. Wimbish at The Huntington Theatre Company's Summer Workshop



(From left to right: Lisa Rose Kaplan, Meredith McDonough, and Tareena Wimbish)

The Magician's Daughter

by **Lila Rose Kaplan (MFA Playwriting)**

Directed by **Meredith McDonough ('04 MFA Directing)**

This play is a Magic Show, Heartwarming and somewhat Formally Adventurous. Discretion for Viewers advised due to Potent Matters such as Fantastic Figurative Fathers addicted to alcohol and Dangerous Damsel Daughters about to grow up. Discretion for Viewers advised if you have a Father or a Daughter (or know anyone who does).

The Huntington Theatre Company's Summer Workshops are held each year in July, culminating in public readings of new plays over two days at the end of the month at the South End / Calderwood Pavilion at the BCA. "This annual development retreat is an important cornerstone for our new play activities," says Artistic Director Peter DuBois. "Boston area playwrights participate in all levels of the process - the original retreat design and the annual selection process. Plays from previous years have gone on to production both by the Huntington and other Boston companies, and I'm excited to see how these plays evolve this summer."

Adam Arian & Zach Martens Develop Short Film "Offline"



(Adam Arian, left; Zach Martens, right)

Adam Arian ('10 MFA Directing) is directing a short film which he also co-wrote. It is starring **Zach Martens ('11 MFA Acting)**. The film is called "Offline". They will be shooting this coming Sunday and Monday in NYC.

Michelle hides herself behind a screen, masking the pain of losing her fiancée. As she is still trying to find her feet in her new world, Andrew - whimsical and enigmatic - pops up out of nowhere. The universe works in mysterious ways, he says, and the signs are all around us. Michelle doesn't believe in any of that nonsense, but, agreeing to break out of her comfort zone, she goes along with him anyway. As the two spend a charming first evening together, one hidden truth will leave a lasting impact.

Keith Wallace, Jiehae Park & Christopher Scott Murillo: Recipients of the Princess Grace Award



(From left to right: Keith Wallace, Christopher Scott Murillo, and Jiehae Park)

The Princess Grace Foundation is a non-profit, publicly-supported charity, headquartered in New York City and established 34 years ago by Prince Rainer III of Monaco to honor his wife, Princess Grace's (Kelly) legacy.

Their mission is dedicated to identifying and assisting emerging talent in theater, dance, and film by awarding grants in the form of scholarships, apprenticeships, and fellowships. Since its inception, more than 800 recipients have been awarded, totaling over \$11 million.

Congratulations to **Keith Wallace ('16 MFA Acting)**, **Jiehae Park ('09 MFA Acting)**, and **Christopher Scott Murillo ('13 MFA Design)** for being selected for a Princess Grace Award.

D.J Hopkins & Shelley Or: Recipients of the 2016 Award for Excellence in Editing



(Shelley Or, left; D.J. Hopkins, right)

The Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) is a comprehensive non-profit professional membership organization. Founded in 1986, ATHE serves the interests of its diverse individual and organizational members, including college and university theatre departments and administrators, educators, graduate students, and theatre practitioners.

D.J. Hopkins (MFA Dramaturgy) and **Shelley Or (MFA Dramaturgy)** win the award for Excellence in Editing.

The 2016 Award for Excellence in Editing will honor an individual achievement in editing a single project. To submit a nomination, please complete the nomination form below, and submit up to ten letters of support for the project. Copies of the nominated project should be mailed to each committee member (addresses provided by the website after the nomination form is submitted). For questions or concerns, contact Vice President for Awards Jocelyn L. Buckner. The awardee will receive \$400 to go towards conference registration and one night free in the conference hotel.

UC San Diego

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