



The Fellows Gazette

Volume 64

Published by the College of Fellows of the American Theatre

Spring 2014

Preserving the Past as Legacy for the Future by Dean Felicia Londré

Planning for the near future was the subject of my essay for the Fall 2013 *Gazette*. With the sudden realization that this issue carries my last front-page column as Dean of the College of Fellows, I'm inclined to look to the past, to reflect on the importance of the history of our illustrious organization and on our efforts to preserve our collective and individual histories.

Having just finished reading *The Group Theatre: Passion, Politics, and Performance in the Depression Era* by our late Fellow Helen Krich Chinoy. I am in awe of her accomplishment in scouring living memories to bring a wealth of fresh insights that help preserve that company's story; and I'd like to express the overwhelming gratitude we surely all feel toward Fellows Milly S. Barranger and Don B. Wilmeth for working from a draft manuscript and other papers to edit the volume and nurture the material to publication. What a beautiful example of Fellows carrying on the legacy of Fellows!

Our Living History project is another example of respect for individual histories that intertwine to become the larger chronicle of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre. When the video-recording project began in the 1990s, it was already too late to capture our founding Fellows in interviews, but many Fellows have contributed to capturing as many of us as possible. We thank Fellows Jean Korf and Judith Kase Polisini Cooper for having the idea and organizing the project. Fellow Judith Cooper's husband Jim Polisini handled much of the early camerawork and technical support.

Living History became a permanent committee. Fellow John Cauble took on the project and worked tirelessly to get as many Fellows as possible on the record. He would take his video-recording equipment to annual ATHE conventions after lining up conference-going Fellows to interview less-

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Fellow Jill Dolan to Deliver Roger L. Stevens Address

Jill Dolan is the Annan Professor in English and Professor of Theater at Princeton University, where she also directs the Program in Gender and Sexuality Studies. In 2013, she received the Distinguished Scholar Career Achievement Award from the American Society of Theatre Research. She is the author of *The Feminist Spectator as Critic* (1989), which was reissued in a 2012 anniversary edition with a new introduction and extended bibliography; *The Feminist Spectator in Action: Feminist Criticism for Stage and Screen* (2013); *Theatre & Sexuality* (2010); *Utopia in Performance: Finding Hope at the Theatre* (2005), and many other books and essays.



Prior to her 2008 appointment at Princeton, Dolan held the Zachary T. Scott Family Chair in Drama at the University of Texas at Austin (1999-2008), where she was elected to the elite Academy of Distinguished Teachers. During her tenure at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York (1994-1999), she chaired the Theatre Program and was the executive director of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies. At the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1988-1994), she chaired the Department of Theatre and Drama after she received tenure.

In 2009 Dolan was inducted into the College of Fellows of the American Theatre and in 2011 was elected into membership in the National Theatre Conference in the U.S. She won the 2011 Outstanding Teacher Award from the Association for Theatre in Higher Education and a 2011 lifetime achievement award from the Women and Theatre Program. She writes "The Feminist Spectator" blog at www.TheFeministSpectator.com, for which she won the 2010-2011 George Jean Nathan Award for dramatic criticism.

mobile Fellows in whatever city was hosting ATHE. Thus John preserved on video the personalities and reminiscences of many Fellows who are no longer with us. He has been diligent about seeing that those early video interviews—all deposited in the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas-Austin—get upgraded to the existing technology. As Fellows archivist, John Cauble also oversees the organization of Fellows documents that are deposited there.

After several years of videotaping as many hour-long interviews as could be crammed into the annual Fellows weekends, Fellow John Cauble was succeeded as committee chair by Fellow Don Drapeau. Meanwhile, the work had expanded to include videotaping the investiture ceremony. And now, after assisting Don for two years, Fellow Kathy Perkins has graciously stepped up—using her own equipment—to continue interviewing new Fellows as they come into the College and, whenever possible, recording interviews with those who were somehow missed.

Given this history of generosity by Fellows contributing to the preservation of our history, I now have two requests. First, is there a Fellow who would volunteer to assist Fellow Kathy Perkins and eventually succeed her as chair? Second, as I work from secondary sources to write a history of the Fellows for the 50th Anniversary Volume to be published in 2016, I would love to collect your first-person anecdotes, especially about Fellows activities in the years before I was invested in 1999. If you have stories, please email them to me at londref@umkc.edu

News of the Fellows

MILLY BARRANGER: Don Wilmeth and Milly Barranger have been invited by the American Theatre and Drama Society to present Helen Krich Chinoy's book on the Group Theatre at New York's Drama Book Shop on March 20, 2014 at 6 pm. The book, coedited by Wilmeth and Barranger, is titled "The Group Theatre: Passion, Politics, and Performance in the Depression Era" and published by Palgrave Macmillan, 2013 (see photo page 3).

ROBERT BENEDETTI: "Beny" is treading the boards again after many years, in the San Diego Rep's production of *Detroit*, in the role played by John Colum in New York. The show runs February 25 to March 16.

JIM BRANDON: In retirement, Jim continues his research and publication regarding Japanese *kabuki* theatre. His translation of a *kabuki* play about Mussolini's life, staged in Tokyo in 1928, was

published in *Japanese Theatre Transcultural: German and Italian Interweavings* (Munich, 2011). A review of Jim's translation and analysis in the *Asian Theatre Journal* said "the play and analysis are astonishing and illuminating" in anticipating the Japan-Germany-Italy Axis Pact ten years in the future.

JERRY L. CRAWFORD: Jerry finished his novel framed as a play (all 436 pages). His drama agent is trying to figure out what to do, perhaps send it to literary agents. Title—*Splinters, Ashes, and Son: A Chronicle of a Father and Son Relationship and America in the Recent Decade*. Jerry just finished a new play. Title—*Closer Than That*. He will rest now, watch football and hoops as he prepares for spring training (Cleveland Indians to win World Series in 2014! In February, to NYC for a week of theatre, Las Vegas in March (Madness and family), and to D.C. come Easter for The Fellows.

JILL DOLAN: Jill received the Distinguished Scholar Career Achievement Award from the American Society for Theatre Research in November 2013. Her latest book, *The Feminist Spectator in Action: Feminist Criticism for Stage and Screen* was published by Palgrave Macmillan in July 2013. With Stacy Wolf, she is co-editing an issue of *TDR: The Journal of Performance Studies* on "desire." She is still at work on her monograph about playwright Wendy Wasserstein.

TOM EVANS: The fall was busy as Tom directed/designed and helped construct settings for three consecutive productions for Two Pigs Productions at the Brown County Playhouse in Nashville IN—*Grace and Glorie* in October, *Shipwrecked!* in November and *It's a Wonderful Life* (a radio play version), in December. In January the *Shipwrecked!* production was transferred lock, stock and barrels (yes, *barrels*, for there are three used whiskey barrels as part of the set) to the South Carolina Repertory Theatre on Hilton Head (see photo page 3). The arrival of summer will find Tom in Raton, NM directing three more plays for Two Pigs: *Grace and Glorie* (with his Equity wife, Barbara Farrar playing Grace), *Turn of the Screw* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Barbara as Lady Bracknell).

RUTH BEALL HEINIG: At Western Michigan University's Homecoming 2013, Ruth, WMU Professor Emerita of Communication, was inducted into the College of Communication's Alumni Academy, a distinction usually reserved for alumni of the college, which she is not. The honor, which is for professional achievement and civic service, was a surprise announcement. Currently, Ruth is engaged in monthly storytelling sessions for children's groups at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts

Library. She is pictured with Peggy Sue, her puppet partner for over ten years of storytelling in libraries (see photo page 3).

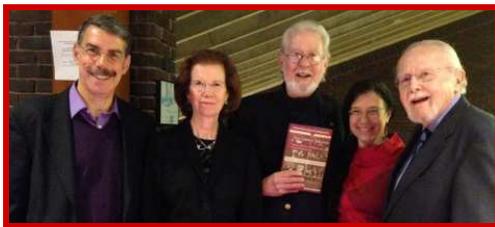
FELICIA LONDRÉ: Felicia continues her research on theatre artists during the Great War (currently working on vaudevillians in the Over There Theatre League as a contributed chapter to a book on humor in World War I), along with a slight digression to later decades. She has a contract with Methuen for a book on American drama of the 1940s, and a new essay on Tennessee Williams's transitional plays of the 1960s in *The Theatre of Tennessee Williams*, ed. Brenda Murphy, published by Bloomsbury in 2014.

ETHEL PITTS WALKER: Ethel officially retired from San Jose State University in December. She taught for 25 years in the Department of Television, Radio, Film and Theatre and was honored with a special reception by her Department (see photo page 3). She was also recognized with a reception by the University's African American Faculty and Staff Association. Fellow Walker is looking forward to spending more time with her 2½ year-old granddaughter in Southern California.

JON WHITMORE: Jon has been designated an "influencer" by LinkedIn. This means he is one of some 350 endorsed blogger/posters on the LinkedIn network of some 250 million 'linked' individuals. He also has become a trustee of the Committee for Economic Development, a Washington D.C.-based think tank made up of Fortune 200 CEOs, university presidents, government officials, and distinguished faculty.

DON WILMETH: (see Milly Barranger)

Fellows Photos



From left to right: Mike Chinoy, Milly Barranger, Don Wilmeth, Claire Chinoy, and Joseph Donohue at the launching of Helen Krich Chinoy's book



Ruth Heinig with her puppet, Peggy Sue



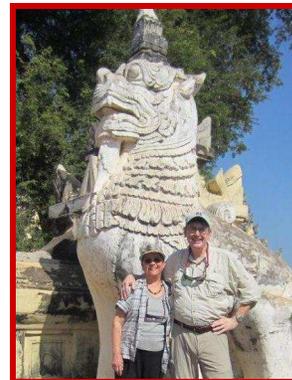
Tom Evans's production of *Shipwrecked!*



Retirement reception for Ethel Pitts Walker



Charlie Mitchell and Judith Williams performing *Love Letters*, directed by David Young, at the US Consulate in Tel Aviv, Israel



Scott Parker, Pat Peralton and fearsome friend on guard while touring Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) in January

The Fellows Gazette is published by The College of Fellows of the American Theatre submit information and photos to:

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College website: www.thecollegeoffellows.org

The Fellows Weekend

Saturday Evening, April 19, 2014

Location: The Cosmos Club
2121 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Tel. (202) 939-1557

The Club has a Dress Code: You must be “properly attired—coats & ties for men, and dresses, suits, or clothing of comparable formality for women.” There are two parking lots: the Rear Valet lot and the West Garden lot. Parking is \$15 per vehicle to be paid to The College of Fellows via Treasurer Frank Hildy (see below).

6:00 pm-7:00 pm Open Bar and Hors d’oeuvre

Gala Reception Honoring New Fellows: Attilio Favorini, Frank Gagliano, Alan MacVey, Kathryn D. Robinson, Robert Schenckan, Thomas C.Schumacher, Roberta Uno, Jim Volz

7:00 pm-8:00 pm

Introduction of New Fellows, Signing of Enrollment Register, The Fellows Toast

8:00 pm

Dinner on your own

Sunday, April 20, 2014

Location: The Kennedy Center
Take Hall of States elevator to Terrace Level

9:00 am- 10:00 am

Business Meeting, North Atrium Foyer
Dean Felicia Londré presiding

10:00 am-11:00 am

Fifteenth Annual Roger L. Stevens Address
Presented by Fellow Jill Dolan

11:00 am-1:00 pm

Luncheon and Investiture of New Fellows, Atrium

1:15 pm – 2:30 pm

Conversations with New Fellows, North Atrium Foyer, Moderated by Fellow Robyn Flatt

2:30 pm Adjournment



You will receive an official invitation from the Kennedy Center for the Investiture Luncheon. To streamline our process this year:

1. Send the RSVP and your check for the Luncheon (made payable to College of Fellows of the American Theatre) to our treasurer, F. J. Hildy (cost \$80; look for an email from Dean Londré in early March).
2. Reserve for the Gala Reception by adding \$65 for each person to the above check. Add an additional \$15 for each car you plan to park at the Cosmos Club.
3. Make sure to include the full name of each person covered by the check and clearly indicate who is attending the Gala, the Luncheon, or both. Also note if you are paying for parking at the Cosmos Club.

The RSVP and the check covering the Luncheon and the Gala (and parking, if applicable) should be sent to:

F. J. Hildy, Treasurer
College of Fellows of the American Theatre
3010 Silver Lake Court, Hyattsville, MD 20783-1461

Checks must be received no later than Thursday, April 3. No refunds can be made after that date.

Host Hotel-The River Inn 924 25th Street, NW, (phone) 888-874-0100

Special Rate: \$199 per room. Mention you are with the College of Fellows. Fellows booking ID # is 446304.
Deadline to Reserve: March 18, 2014. There is a limited number of rooms reserved at this rate, so register as early as possible.