



# The Fellows Gazette

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## Remarks on Becoming Dean of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre

Kennedy Center, 22 April 2012

by Felicia Londré



Thank you, Milly Barranger, for your splendid example of deanship for the College of Fellows of the American Theatre. It has meant a lot to me to watch and try to learn from you how to work with the board and the heads of the many projects and the membership in

general, how to keep tabs on all the business matters, and how to remain a paragon of grace under pressure.

In photo above, continuing a Fellows tradition, incoming Dean Felicia Londré presents outgoing Dean Milly Barranger a gift from Londré's city—a bottle of a popular Kansas City BarBQ sauce.

Given how high I have to aim to follow your example, I will say that I do have one major qualification for becoming dean: I have attended every Fellows weekend since my induction in 1999. I'm proud of that record, which was originally motivated by my desire to continue the legacy of our late Fellow Patricia McIlrath. But now I just couldn't bear to miss a year in any case! My attendance record also means that I have had the opportunity to be impressed by the leadership of one remarkable dean after another: Carole Brandt, Jerry Crawford, Oscar Brockett, Gresdna Doty, Gil Lazier, Scott Parker, and now Milly Barranger.

Obviously it is daunting to follow in those illustrious footsteps and for that reason I don't hesitate to ask for help, advice, and—very probably--indulgence from all of you. What you are getting is a slightly hard-of-hearing academic whose most natural mental habitat is around 1912 and who will always be romantically dazzled by the artists of the theatre. But I will work hard and try my best to live up to the high standards set by my predecessors.

I have noticed that all our past deans have one thing in common besides their extraordinary leadership talents: each Dean gets a crisis. There was the crisis

when the little hotel that everyone loved so much was suddenly converted into a dorm and new affordable lodgings had to be found. There was the time the Fellows weekend coincided with Easter and the diminished attendance put a big dent in the budget. There were the escalating costs of the Saturday evening formal dinner at a hotel, and those costs motivated the search for alternatives that turned out to be the wonderful Cosmos Club setting. And there was the crisis caused by an erupting volcano in Iceland, which meant that our Stevens Lecturer couldn't get his flight from London in time to give the announced lecture.

It has come to look like Fate to me: each Dean gets a crisis. This could be very daunting indeed if I had not seen over the years how each crisis is met by the creative thinking and generous solution-finding of our members. Fate works in mysterious ways and we always emerge stronger and better than ever.

Milly Barranger has dealt with quite a succession of issues during her two years as Dean, and she finessed them all. Not only that, but she did so much visionary advance planning that she has eased the way for the next two or three deans!

Thank you all for the trust you have placed in me. ■

## “American History, Shakespeare, Culture, and Other Trivial Matters” Roger L. Stevens Address by Edward Stern

Let me begin with one simple statement of fact: I deliver this speech one year after Jack O'Brien. I repeat: I deliver this speech one year after Jack O'Brien. Jack: relaxed, witty, urbane, positive, inspiring. Me? . . . well, I am a New Yorker: never relaxed, funny not witty, urban not urbane, and depressing. I will have succeeded if I make you as depressed as I am. Misery truly does love company.



But this journey together won't be about me or my twenty years running Cincinnati Playhouse. I am sorry if that disappoints anyone. Not discussing me does not

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## Citations of 2012 New Fellows

### New Fellow: Robert L. Benedetti Citation by Jeffrey Koep

I have known Robert L. Benedetti for a long time. Yet, I felt I knew Beny prior to our introduction. He was described by a mutual friend as an individual who, in the period of one weekend, could, and would: tear down a motorcycle; write a book, be it a novel or textbook; conduct rehearsals for a play he was directing; write a script; review a film script he was producing; prepare lectures for class; and, by Monday morning ride the now reconstructed motorcycle to teach class and share the books and scripts he had written. Beny is a remarkable individual.



His educational theatre experience is outstanding with a teaching career that began at the University of Chicago in 1959. From 1966-1968 he was Chair of Interdisciplinary Studies in the School of Fine Arts at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. He served as Chair of Acting and Directing Programs at the Yale Drama School, Chair of Theatre at York University, and Dean and Artistic Director for the School of Theatre at California Institute of the Arts. Recently, he retired as Professor of Theatre at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he served as Artistic Director of Nevada Conservatory Theatre.

In 2005, the Association of Theatre in Higher Education awarded him a "Career Achievement Award." He has written seven acclaimed textbooks including *The Actor at Work*, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> edition.

Professionally, Beny has directed at The Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, The Melbourne (Australia) Theatre Company, PCPA Theatrefest, Odyssey Theatre in Los Angeles, Pittsburgh Playhouse, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Court Theatre in Chicago, Nevada Conservatory Theatre, Great Lakes Theatre Festival, and Colorado and Oregon Shakespeare Festivals to list a few. He received Chicago's Joseph Jefferson Award and Los Angeles's Drama-Logue Award for Directing.

Dr. Benedetti's expertise has extended to television and film where he has earned a reputation as an excellent producer. His talent and skill have resulted in three Emmy Awards, including an Emmy for *Miss Evers' Boys* starring Alfre Woodard and Laurence Fishburne. Other awards include AFTRA Award for Direction, Cable Ace Award, NAACP Image Award, and Golden Globe Award. In 1997 the Producer's Guild of America honored him as *Producer of the Year*. Few have connected theatre and visual media as effectively as Beny.

It is with great pride that I present Robert L. Benedetti to the College of Fellows of the American Theatre. ■

### New Fellow: Beverley Byers-Pevitts Citation by Gil Lazier

Founding president of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education, editor and author, published and produced playwright, distinguished theatre educator, university president, provost, and chair—Dr. Beverley Byers-Pevitts has been a leader in higher education and theatre for more than a generation.

Most recently, Dr. Byers-Pevitts served as President and Professor of Theatre at Park University. Previously, she served as Provost at Texas Woman's University, Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts at the University of Northern Iowa, and Chair of Theatre at UNLV. She holds a PhD and MA from SIU, Carbondale, and a BA from Kentucky Wesleyan.



Here are a few highlights of Beverley Byers-Pevitts's many contributions to American theatre. Very active in ATA, she not only served on its Board, but also was President of UCTA and the Women's Program. She helped develop ATHE and served as its Founding President. She was the first editor of "Theatre Topics." She served on the ACTF National and Executive Committees. She founded the first National Conference for Women in Theatre and co-coordinated the first three conferences.

As a playwright, Byers-Pevitts created scripts for adults and children, some produced in New York, some commissioned, some winning awards. Her articles have appeared in a variety of publications. She has lectured widely on leadership, strategic planning, access and equity in higher education, and many other topics. She has been honored for academic excellence, leadership, and as a distinguished alumna. She holds an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from her undergraduate alma mater.

I've known Beverley for over 40 years, have served with her on many national committees, and have the utmost respect for her and her many contributions to our profession, including, her courageous and successful lobby for women's rights in higher education. I am happy to call her a friend. I am proud and honored to welcome Beverley Byers-Pevitts to the College of Fellows of the American Theatre. ■

come from false modesty. Believe me, my life isn't all that interesting. But I actually have a more important tale to tell. And while it is depressing, I do think it has a positive and hopeful conclusion.

So let's start this journey together. And we'll begin in 1885, with the great American novel, *Huckleberry Finn*.

Two rogues, who pass themselves off as a duke and a king, invade the raft of Huck and Jim and plan to raise monies by performing scenes from *Romeo and Juliet* and *Richard III*. Realizing that they would need material for encores – audiences will naturally demand them – the duke starts to teach the king Hamlet's famous soliloquy, which he recites from memory:



To be, or not to be: that is the bare bodkin  
That makes calamity of so long life:  
For who would fardels bear, till Birnan Wood do  
    come to Dunsinane,  
But that the fear of something after death  
Murders the innocent sleep,  
Great nature's second course,  
And make us rather sling arrows of outrageous  
    fortune  
Than fly to others that we know not of . . . .

Remember that these performances were not destined for Boston, New York or other eastern cities. The raft was going to small Mississippi River towns.

Now also remember Mark Twain is not writing for the upper classes, the (pardon the expression) 19th century 1%. He is writing for the masses: for the 99%. And these people would know Shakespeare and get the joke. How many Americans today would honestly laugh at this?

Throughout early American history, Shakespeare proved a great resource for parody. A minstrel show had the following riddle:

When was Desdemona like a ship?  
When she was Moored.

Here, too, even minstrel audiences got the joke.  
Depressed yet? Relax, I'm only just beginning.

John Quincy Adams, born in 1767, wrote, "at ten years of age I was as familiarly acquainted with his (Shakespeare's) lovers and his clowns as with *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the Bible. In later years I have left Robinson and the Pilgrim to the perusal of the children; but have continued to read the Bible and Shakespeare."

One of my favorite books I read in high school was Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. As de Tocqueville made his way through many log cabins in Tennessee and Kentucky, he consistently found two books in them: the Bible, and the complete works of William Shakespeare. Literate and barely-literate frontiersmen had these two books. De Tocqueville read *Henry V* for the first time in a log cabin in the woods.

Between 1800 and 1840 in Cincinnati, Louisville, St. Louis, Detroit and Lexington, Shakespeare's plays were performed more frequently than those of any other playwright.

In 1832, an English visitor Frances Trollope attended the theatre in several American cities. In Cincinnati, Trollope observed coatless men with their sleeves rolled up, incessantly spitting and reeking of onions and whiskey. Trollope enjoyed the Shakespeare but abhorred the perpetual noises: "The applause is expressed by cries and thumping with the feet, instead of clapping; and when a patriotic fit seized them, and 'Yankee Doodle' was called for, every man seemed to think his reputation as a citizen depended on the noise he made." Do note: 'reeking of onions and whiskey' with 'sleeves rolled up'. This is American Shakespeare for the working man.

Something I have always abhorred: when I hear 'scholars' say that American history has always had a bias/a bent against the arts, everything supports that notion except the facts.

Lincoln, when facing the difficulties of the Civil War, oftentimes quoted heavily from Shakespeare. James Fenimore Cooper called Shakespeare the "great author of America" and insisted that American had "just as good a right" as Englishmen to claim Shakespeare as their countryman.



There is a lovely statue of Shakespeare in Central Park. It was dedicated in 1872. With his familiarity to Americans taken for granted, the inscription reads: "Old World, he is not only thine."

In his commemorative poem, Bayard Taylor wrote:

"He came, a household ghost we could not ban:  
He sat, on Winter nights, by cabin-fires;  
He preached within the shadow of our spires;  
    . . . and became  
The master of our Thought, the Land's first citizen."

You may be familiar with Richard Nelson's wonderful play *Two Shakespearean Actors*, the Lincoln Center production directed by Jack O'Brien. May 10, 1849 – on the same night in New York, an old-school famed British actor – Macready – and a new-school famed American actor – Forrest –

performed the Scottish Play. Anglo-philes and Anglo-phobes fought in New York. The riot resulted in at least 22 dead and 150 wounded or injured. The Astor Place riot took its place in American history. Want to argue about classical acting differences between Ralph Fiennes and Liev Schreiber? Probably not.

My lovely piece of trivia: In 1845 in Corpus Christi, Texas, soldiers of the Fourth Infantry Regiment wait for the impending Mexican war. To pass the time, they would occasionally stage plays, including a performance of *Othello*, featuring for the beautiful, fetching Desdemona, a young lieutenant, Ulysses S. Grant.



1940 Hollywood cartoon: *Shakespearean Spinach* – Romeo unforgettably portrayed by Popeye to Olive Oyl’s memorable Juliet!

Today Shakespeare is, for many, the cultural equivalent of spinach. You ‘take it’ because it is good for you – even if you don’t like it.

In the mid-70’s, while artistic director of Indiana Repertory Theatre, I was planning a school tour of *Midsummer*. After a while, I realized that there were no takers. Not one school. I contacted some English teachers I knew in the state. The answers were disconcertingly uniform: they had effectively destroyed Shakespeare for the students. Nothing would change that.

In the late 70’s, PBS was preparing to air the BBC Shakespeare series – show after show of really mediocre Shakespeare, I might add. I found it telling that PBS treated it more as education than entertainment. The marketing of the series was depressing.

Yes, I know of all the Shakespeare companies and festivals around America, many of which are most successful. But the days of Shakespeare being the ‘people’s playwright’, the ‘first American’, are gone.

Does the trajectory of Shakespeare in America similarly show the pathway of arts and culture in our history?

The U.S., of course, is an immigrant society. In many cases, people came here to escape their past – religious persecution, economic pressures, etc. Yet when they helped form this nation, they did not disown their art and culture. Their communities were founded on the arts – it was their bedrock.

John Adams wrote in 1780: “I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study . . . navigation,

commerce, and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture . . .”

From politics and war to science and commerce, then finally to the arts – this radical transformation seems natural and inevitable. The arts must be a birthright of democracy.

Thomas Jefferson: “You see, I am an enthusiast on the subject of the arts.”

Arts in America flourished. By 1850, Boston and the eastern region contained a group of world-class writers. Italian opera was the rage in New York. The Hudson River School of painting developed a uniquely American style and vision.

By the mid-20th century, the United States boasted pre-eminent traditions in literature, art, music, dance, theatre, architecture and cinema. The New World called America became the source of great world culture.

Where is popular culture these days?

1. Each year, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics issues an annual American Time Use Survey. In 2010, the average amount of television viewing for adults was 2.73 hours per day. Close to 42 days a year. Arts and entertainment: 8 minutes a day. (I believe this includes going to the movies.)
2. Several years ago, I read a report that said the average American 14-year old has seen over 200,000 simulated acts of violence. Now that’s depressing.
3. I remember with horror reading the President’s Report on the Arts and Humanities when Bill Clinton was in office. The sentence that stuck in my mind: “Younger Americans are unlikely ever to attend live performances of musical and dramatic theatre.” Ever.

So often I am asked to talk about what changes are needed to train the next generation of theatre artists. Yet the bigger question remains: how do we develop the next generation of theatre audiences? What is the point of creating these artists if the seats are empty?

A 2009 NEA report found that the number of Americans attending the arts was at its lowest level. since the NEA had begun conducting the poll in 1982. People who attended at least one arts event in 2009: 34.6% -- down from 39.4% in 2002. Attendance for non-musical plays: from 1982 to 2008, a decline of 21%. For musicals, the decline was 10.2%. Clearly, we are experiencing a shift in the American public’s relationship to the arts.

Growing up in New York, I went to the theatre with my parents at an early age. They loved musicals and took

me to just about every musical on Broadway. This was a family event.

Today, at least in Cincinnati, *The Nutcracker* and *A Christmas Carol* clearly bring families to the performing arts. Sadly, this participation is but a seasonal one.

Ten years ago, Cincinnati Playhouse utilized focus groups to analyze how we were describing upcoming productions, as well as any visuals attached to the show. I am behind a two-way mirror, allowing a well-trained focus group leader to introduce the shows. We were opening the season with *King Lear*, much to the delight of one of the women in the group. "This is terrific," she said. "I have a teenager in high school. I hope the school will take her class to see it." The focus leader suggested that if the school did not, she herself could take her daughter. "Oh, no," she replied, "I would never want to see that again. But every student should go." Suddenly theatre attendance was not a fun family outing but a required school function.

Theatre attendance as a required school function? Let's look at today's arts education. By 2008, only half of all 18-year olds had received any arts education in childhood – a decline of 23 percent since 1982. According to the NEA, a 'turning point' in national access to arts education likely occurred in the mid-1970's and early 1980's. It seems reasonable to infer that the national decline in arts attendance rates resulted partly from cuts in school-based arts instruction.

Should also point out: "From 1982 to 2008, Hispanics and African Americans accounted for a highly disproportionate share of all adults who reported not having received arts education in childhood.

We are in the business of making people fall in love with the magic of live theatre. An important tool for that to occur is to have a citizenry which understands, respects, and adores the spoken word. How do you do that in a country where 44 million adults can't read well enough to read aloud a simple story to a child? Twenty-one million Americans can't read at all, 45 million are marginally illiterate, and one-fifth of high school graduates can't read their diplomas.

In 1913, an American lady in Paris asked Ezra Pound what he thought art was for. "You might as well ask me what a rose bush is for," he responded. We talk about all the values of art – how it is an important economic engine (which is true), how it brings business to a particular region (which is true), how it helps students in school (which is also true). But we don't talk enough about how art enriches the soul. How it makes us better human beings. And, for me, our increasing inhumanity and incivility comes with our decreasing appreciation of the arts.

A Quaker man during World War II decided to volunteer as an ambulance driver in the front lines. In taking the

wounded away from battle, he saw the worst of what man can do to man. Not having any family, he could not pull out a photo of a loved one to give him sustenance. In his pocket, he kept a picture of a Queen Anne chair. It reminded him with its beauty of the best of man.

How do we make our country rekindle its necessary passion for education and the arts? Saul Bellow talked about 'the ordeal of democracy'. How do we create a smarter and more engaged citizenry when a recent survey of employers indicates that only a quarter of college graduates have the writing and thinking skills necessary to do their jobs? A further note: in 1961, students spent an average of 24 hours a week studying. Today's students spend just slightly more than half that amount of time.

Despite these disheartening statistics, I do believe there is a hunger in this country for something more. Stella Adler said, "Life beats you down and crushes the soul and art reminds you that you have one." That hunger is for a way to reinvigorate the soul.

Around the time of the first anniversary of 9/11, I was in New York, directing a one-act for Town Hall. An evening of one-acts, commemorating that day was scheduled on 9/12, giving us the day off on the actual date. So on the first anniversary of 9/11, I decided to do something as a New Yorker – a Manhattan boy, no less – that I had never done before. I walked the island of Manhattan, starting at 7:00am at 125th and Lenox, the heart of Harlem, and ending at sunset at Ground Zero. It was a gorgeous day. I planned for pit stops along the way – the Guggenheim, the Met, and the New York Historical Society on the West Side. On this beautiful week day, the museums were filled, jammed. These were not tourists but New Yorkers wanting to deal with their psychic scars by seeing something beautiful, permanent – their Queen Anne chairs. There is a hunger.

A couple of weeks after its opening, I visited the new MOMA. Beyond of course the brilliance of its permanent collection, I was struck by what I heard – at least five or six different languages. People coming from throughout the world to embrace art. Our differences melted away in the face of this beauty.

In this age of political and social extremism, with so much negativity, I remember W. H. Auden's line, 'show an affirming flame'. The arts ask us to celebrate our common humanity.

Which brings me back to Shakespeare.

This past year I directed *As You Like It*. One of the marvels of doing a Shakespeare comedy is to hear the laughs. Rosalind censures Phebe:

"But, mistress, know yourself. Down on your knees, And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love; For I must tell you friendly in your ear, Sell when you can; you are not for all markets."

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No director's spin, no actor's re-interpretation. Just say the words clearly and be ready for the audience's embrace of the line. The same laugh that ties us with an audience over 400 years ago. The same foibles, the same folly ties us together – generation after generation. How miraculous to feel that connection again.

Another miracle:

About six years ago, I directed at the Playhouse *Othello*. Prior to our four public previews, we planned three student matinees. Turner Construction in Cincinnati sponsored an inner-city high school to a special performance, as well as pre- and post-show classes with our acting interns. One of the interns discussed with me a particular class. After a couple of sessions about the play, our intern gave an assignment to the class: prepare a speech from *Othello*. The intern recounted one fear he had for the class. One of the students, a very large young man, was also the class clown and had proven somewhat disruptive. What would happen when he needed to 'perform'? The time finally came, with the rest of the class waiting for the comedy. He did the speech. Without the laughs. Without the nonsense. The class, including the teacher, was amazed.

Several days later we did the special student matinee. The actor portraying Othello came to the speech:

“Her father loved me; off invited me;  
Still question'd me the story of my life,  
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,  
That I have passed.  
I ran it through, even from my boyish days,  
To the very moment that he bade me tell it . . .”

We were performing the show on our small thrust stage. Sitting on the side, I looked across the audience to see if I could find this student. It did not take long. Opposite me was a young man sitting on the edge of his seat, mouthing the entire speech. And then sitting back so pleased with himself. Transformed.

He was connected with us, with Shakespeare, with our humanity. There is a hunger.

As I was writing this speech and being bombarded by those depressing statistics, I began to seriously ponder why the hell I have been in this crazy business. We are clearly swimming against the stream. But the number of tales such as this young man and Othello are vast. That was a miracle, and we ultimately believe in miracles – we have witnessed them for ourselves. We can bring people together to share in our common humanity. In an age of so many fractured bits and pieces, theatre is an oasis for all to experience. I believe in miracles. I suppose I always have.

Joseph Conrad wrote:

“But the artist appeals to that part of our being which is not dependent on wisdom: to that in us which is a gift and not an acquisition -- and, therefore, more permanently enduring. He speaks to our capacity for delight and wonder, to the sense of mystery surrounding our lives; to our sense of pity, and beauty, and pain; to the latent feeling of fellowship with all creation – and to the subtle but invincible, conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts: to the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which binds together all humanity -- the dead to the living and the living to the unborn . . . . Art is long and life is short . . . .”

One final miracle. A couple of months ago, we were producing *Merrily We Roll Along* – our eighth Sondheim during my twenty years at the Playhouse. We sponsored a raffle to give away two free tickets to the opening. A few days later, the husband of the winning couple wrote to us the following note:



“To just say thank you for the tickets to last night's play could not convey my gratitude for the evening we had . . . . We have been married for 27 years now and this was the second night we had out in the past 20 years. It is just the past 20 years have brought such heartache and expense: three miscarriages . . . . then we lost our home and all we own in a fire; in '97 the flood came, and the same month our youngest son was diagnosed with a brain tumor. With the expenses of rebuilding, medications, hospital bills . . . we just have nothing extra for ourselves.

“I always had thought: why see a play, just watch it on TV or see the movie. Well, what I experienced last night changed my life. I want to experience it again and again. But more importantly for me was the impact it had on my wife. From the smile and the glow she had as she watched the play, to joy she expressed in discussing the play, I saw something I had not seen in my wife in years . . . pure joy. No thoughts of our son's pain at the moment, no hurtful memories of the things we have lost, but just pure joy at the evening we had experienced. Our drive home and the hours talking through the night were the most enjoyable we have had in years.

“It will change our lives forever.  
We need these moments of joy.

Thank you,  
D.G.”

This was meant to be the end of my speech – until Friday afternoon when I spotted on my assistant's desk an envelope that looked awfully familiar. I haven't received many of them, but I knew it was from Stephen

Sondheim. We had sent that email to the cast of *Merrily We Roll Along*, as well as to director John Doyle. John, in turn, sent it to Steve. This was Steve's response:

"John Doyle sent me that extraordinary letter from the man who went to the opening night and had an epiphany. I've forwarded it to the Dramatists Guild so that they can publish it in their Quarterly. I want them to head it "Why We Do What We Do." I think it will fire the spirit of every playwright who reads it.

Gratefully, Steve"

Miracles have a way of expanding and bringing more people into the fold. ■

### News of the Fellows

**MILLY BARRANGER:** Milly follows her recent book on Broadway producer Cheryl Crawford with *Audrey Wood and the Playwrights*, to be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2013.

**JAMES HATCH:** James has announced that the Hatch-Billops Collection, Archives of African American Cultural History, is entering its final year of publication of *Artist and Influence*. Volume 30 will be 50 pages longer than usual; therefore, the subscription cost must be raised to \$20.00. Through their program, *Artist and Influence* has published the lives of more than 473 minority writers, dancers, cinematographers, visual artists, musicians and theatre artists. He asks Fellows to subscribe to the final journal of *Artist and Influence*.

**JULIE JENSEN:** Utah State University presented a retrospective of Julie Jensen's work in April 2012, including a production of "Two-Headed," an evening of scenes from other plays of hers, and a panel discussion. She was in residence at the University for the week. The same play will be produced at the Rose Theatre, in London, England, July 3-22, 2012. Earlier in the spring, the same production was a part of the Brighton Theatre Festival. She taught a week-long seminar in playwriting and screenwriting at the University of Nevada, along with screenwriter Randy Feldman and playwright/screenwriter Sean Clark. Julie also participated in an interview by David Ives with three other playwrights (Lauren Feldman, Mark Harvey Levine, and Trace Crawford) on the subject of writing the ten-minute play. A printed version of the interview appeared in *The Dramatist*, the journal of the Dramatists Guild of America, July/August 2012.

**JOHN DAVID LUTZ:** John, Chair of the University of Evansville Department of Theatre, received the award for Outstanding Career Achievement in Directing from

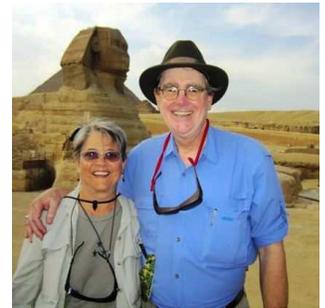


the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in April. He completed his 47<sup>th</sup> year on the faculty and has directed 71 productions at the University. Last fall, he directed Athol Fugard's "MASTER HAROLD"...and the boys, marking his 24<sup>th</sup> production showcased at an ACTF regional festival since 1971. Six of these productions were additionally showcased at the national



festival at the Kennedy Center. In 2007, by special invitation, his university production of *The Comedy of Errors* was one of the Kennedy Center's contributions to the "Shakespeare in Washington" celebration. In lieu of showcasing productions at a national festival this year, a group of 22 theatre educators traveled to all six regional festivals and have recognized the cast, crew, and creative team of the "MASTER HAROLD"...and the boys with several awards: Distinguished Production of a Play, Distinguished Performance and Production Ensemble, Distinguished Scenic Design to Assistant Professor of Scenic Design Eric Renschler, Outstanding Performance by an Actor to Dylan Frederick, a sophomore from Edina, Minn.

**SCOTT PARKER:** Since he last reported, Pat and he have traveled around Spain, Portugal, Egypt, Jordan, to Mardi Gras and the French Quarter Jazz Fest in New Orleans, attended the National Theatre Conference in NYC, and the Shakespeare Theatre Association's annual meeting in Orlando. Here they are posing before the famed Sphinx. He continues to keep his hand in consulting (most recently in South Dakota), and was honored to receive the Mark R. Sumner Award for "distinguished service to the American Outdoor Drama Movement." When not on the road, they continue to participate in English Country and Contra dances throughout North Carolina. As Scott remarked, "This is some retirement!"



**ROBERT SCHANKE:** Bob was recently elected ATHE's Vice-President for Research and Publications. In that position, he has organized a task force consisting of professors and publishers to examine the traditional requirement that a published book be necessary for tenure and promotion. In February, he and his partner traveled to Thailand and to Laos. *Richmond Jim*, an award-winning play that Bob discovered and discussed in his most recent book, *Queer Theatre and the Legacy of Cal Yeomans*, is being revived in Chicago this summer.

**JAMES STILL:** James has been busy. His new play, *The House That Jack Built*, won the Todd McNerney New Play Prize at the Piccolo Spoleto Festival. It was also chosen for development at the New Harmony Project where he was awarded the Walt Wangerin Fellowship. An excerpt from his play *I Love to Eat* was performed at Lincoln Center at the 25th annual James Beard Awards. He gave the keynote address at the theatre department of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He directed *God of Carnage* at Indiana Repertory Theatre, and he saw several productions of his plays around the country including *Amber Waves* at the Flint Youth Theatre in Flint, Michigan, *A Long Bridge Over Deep Waters* at the Long Beach Community College, and *Looking Over the President's Shoulder* at the Barter Theatre in Abingdon, Virginia.

**DON WILMETH:** The New York Theatre Museum presented Don with its Theatre History Preservation Award last April at The Players Club in NYC. At this year's May commencement at the University of Illinois-Champaign, Urbana, Don received the "Outstanding Theatre Alumni Award" (apparently the first presented) and spoke briefly to the graduating class. He and Fellow Milly Barranger are co-editing Helen Krich Chinoy's manuscript (left unfinished) on The Group Theatre. It will likely be published by Palgrave Macmillan. ■

### Sale! Sale! Sale!

Purchase of these two books will aid the Glorious 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala in 2015 of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre.

*The American Theatre Fellows:  
The First Thirty Years 1965 – 1995*  
Now \$4.00! a 90% Discount

*The American Theatre Fellows:  
The Fortieth Anniversary 1965 - 2005*  
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THE COLLEGE OF FELLOWS OF THE AMERICAN  
THEATRE  
ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  
Sunday, April 22, 2012  
South Opera Tier Lounge  
The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts  
Washington, DC  
Dean Milly S. Barranger, Presiding

### AGENDA

1. Attendance Roll Circulated.  
29 Fellows signed the roll for the Annual Meeting [Names are held in Secretary's files]
2. Call to Order and Welcome: Dean Barranger.  
65 Fellows and guests will be attending the events today in the Kennedy Center.
3. Greetings and Regrets from:  
James Brandon, Kathleen Conlin, Jed Davis, John Dillon, Jill Dolan, Julie Jensen, Bernard Rosenblatt, Mark Sumner, Dorothy Webb, Don Wilmeth, Susan Zeder.  
Dean Barranger said that several others contacted her recently to add their regrets. The good news is that many Fellows are busy making theatre, lecturing, or traveling.
4. In Memoriam: A moment of silence was observed for the loss of three outstanding Fellows:  
Edward Hastings (May 5, 2011)  
Donn Finn (November 27, 2011)  
Arthur Cole (January 22, 2012)
5. Recognition of Service to the College during the Year:  
Dean Barranger thanked the following people for their valuable service during the past year or during their now completed term of office

Board of Directors and Retiring Board Members:

Robyn Baker Flatt

Retiring Secretary Jon Whitmore and

Treasurer Ruth Beall Heinig

Recognition of Susan Shafer, KC ACTF

Administrative Director

Recognition of Dian Permana, KC ACTF

Intern

6. Approval of the Minutes 2011:  
Unanimous approval of minutes as distributed.
7. Treasurer's Report (Ruth B. Heinig)  
Heinig handed out a one-page summary of current interim financial status.  
Dreyfus Fund endowment now totals \$42,674. It pays nearly 5%.  
Total current assets = \$60,997.  
Estimated expenses for year = \$7,865 (beyond cost of meals, etc. of annual meeting)  
Annual contributions (45X\$75) = \$3,375.
8. Investment Committee Report (Gil Lazier, Chairman):  
Purpose: to advise Treasurer on potential investment opportunities.  
Dreyfus Market Index Fund is our focused investment portfolio.  
Dreyfus Fund endowment now totals \$42,674. It pays nearly 5%.  
John Cauble was praised for his leadership in developing the investment strategy.
9. Gazette Report (Robert A. Schanke, Editor)  
Schanke handed out a one-page report on the activities.  
Prints 100 copies three times a year for distribution to the Fellows.

55 Fellows now get the *Gazette* on line, which saves considerable money.

Schanke clarifies that people who receive the *Gazette* on line do also get the directory.

It costs \$13.59 for each Fellow annually to receive three printed *Gazettes*.

It costs only \$4.53 for each Fellow to receive the three issues electronically.

Fellows were urged to switch to the electronic version, if possible, to save us money.

**10. Corporate Secretary Report (submitted by John Cauble)**

A summary page of activities was handed out.

The archives are held at the University of Texas at Austin.

Cauble recently sent new material, digital interviews, etc. to UT.

**11. Video Living History Report (Donald Drapeau, Chair)**

Considerable progress has been made in catching up on video recordings.

Next year he wants to develop a video interview blitz, using three cameras in three rooms, to catch up on the 47 (last year we were 60 Fellows behind) interviews that have not been conducted to date.

**12. Extra copies of the Fortieth Anniversary Volume are available for \$10.**

**13. Remaining Old Business:**

Fifty for the Fiftieth Campaign: John Cauble

**14. New Business:**

Discussion of Proposal to Alternate Meeting Sites to Other Cities:

Dean Barranger asked for a study of the cost analysis and labor analysis for having alternate meeting sites for the annual meeting. Karen Berman conducted this study with the help of a consulting firm.

Kathy Perkins reported: A consulting firm gave us a report on possible locations around the country. Many hotels would be competitive with the River Inn room prices, but the main issue is needing to sign a contract that would have strong penalties if we did not meet the room number requirements. If we used outside spaces for the meetings, it would take considerable staff time/volunteer time to make the additional arrangements.

The Kennedy Center connection might be compromised if we only asked for an every-other-year arrangement.

James Still stated that being inducted in the Kennedy Center had much more meaning and impact to him than if he had been inducted in a hotel somewhere.

Dean Barranger stated that the Board unanimously backed the idea of keeping the annual event at the Kennedy Center.

Nat Eek asked to conduct a survey of the group. He then asked the Fellows to raise their hands by what year they had been inducted into the Fellows. Then he asked people to raise their hands by geographic area. Through the instant survey, it was clear that all age groups seem to be represented well and all areas of the country seemed also to be represented well.

Dean Barranger summed up the clear consensus that the Fellows will continue to meet at the Kennedy Center.

**15. Approval of New Board Members (2012-2014):**

16. Dean Barranger announced the nomination of Fellows for the positions of treasurer, secretary, and board member. The following people were nominated:

Frank Hildy as Treasurer (non-board member)

Julie Jensen as Secretary and Board member

Kim Marra as new Board member

All three were unanimously elected to their new offices.

**17. Dean Barranger thanked the following people for their ongoing contributions to planning the Gala:**

Gala Anniversary Planning Committees:

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Volume (Felicia Londré,

Robert A. Schanke, Barry Witham, editors);

Gala Planning Committee (Bonnie Nelson

Schwartz and David Young, co-chairs);

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fundraising Committee

(Jack Clay and Jeffrey Koep, co-chairs).

**18. Introduction of Dean-Elect Felicia Londré**

Dean Londré thanked Dean Barranger profusely for her excellent leadership and presented her with an inscribed glass memento. Then, keeping with tradition, Londré presented Barranger with a regional gift from her state. Since Kansas City straddles the state line between Kansas and Missouri, she brought tokens from both sides: honey-coated sunflower seeds, tornado in a bottle, and BBQ from Kansas City, and an inscribed copy of her book *The Enchanted Years of the Stage: Kansas City at the Crossroads of American Theater, 1870-1930*.

**19. Announcements:**

Email Directory Changes to Robert A. Schanke for the *Gazette*;

Future Meeting Dates in Washington, DC:

April 20-21, 2013

April 19-20, 2014

April 18-19, 2015 \*\*\*\*

**Today's Schedule at the Kennedy Center:**

9 am – Annual Business Meeting (South Opera Tier Lounge)

10 am – Roger L. Stevens Address by Edward Stern

Introduction by David Weiss  
(South Opera Tier Lounge)

11 am – Investiture Luncheon (South Opera Tier Box)

1: 15 pm – Discussion with 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Committee Heads (South Opera Tier Lounge)

Gala Anniversary Planning Committee  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fundraising Committee

2 pm – Conversations with New Fellows:

Jeffrey Koep in conversation with Robert Benedetti and Gil Lazier in conversation with Beverley Byers-Pevitts

**20. Business Meeting Adjournment.**

A motion was presented and unanimously supported for adjournment. ■

## 2011-12 CONTRIBUTIONS

### Contributing Fellows and Honoree

<b>Berman, Karen</b>	
<b>Carter, Dan</b>	<b>Gil Lazier</b>
<b>Cauble John</b>	<b>Samuel Selden</b>
<b>Clay, Jack</b>	
<b>Crawford, Jerry</b>	<b>Davey Marlin-Jones</b>
<b>Distler, Tony</b>	<b>Ralph Allen</b>
<b>Drapeau, Don</b>	
<b>Evans, Tom</b>	
<b>Flatt, Robyn</b>	
<b>Heinig, Ruth Beall</b>	<b>Kalman A. Burnim</b>
<b>Herstand, Ted</b>	
<b>Jennings, Coleman</b>	
<b>Michael, Keith</b>	
<b>Pawley, Thomas</b>	<b>George Kernodle</b>
<b>Terry, Megan</b>	<b>Vera M. Roberts</b>
<b>Watermeier, Daniel</b>	
<b>Webb, Dorothy</b>	<b>O. G. Brockett</b>

### Lifetime Benefactor

Weiss, David

Note: John David Lutz and Kristin Linklater contributed \$50 for the 50th campaign this year instead of last. Carol Brandt made a second contribution to the 50th campaign this year.

Fellows interested in becoming Lifetime Benefactors or in contributing to the endowment are encouraged to send their checks to: Fellow Frank Hildy, Department of Theatre, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742

## COLLEGE OF FELLOWS FINANCIAL REPORT

June 30, 2012

Fiscal year: July 1-June 30

### 2011-12

**Bank Balance Carried Forward** (after \$25,000 deposited in Dreyfus investment June 22, 2011. Includes funds on hold shown below.)

\$13,372.83

### New Income

Member annual contributions and gifts toward expenses \$ 3,300.00

\*Interest on Dreyfus (fluctuates and is reinvested automatically) 3,144.73

**Total \$ 6,444.73**

### Contributions to Endowment in 2011-12 (not for expenses)

Lifetime Benefactors \$ 600.00

Contributing Fellows 1,175.00

**Total: \$ 1,775.00**

### Expenses

Dean's office, supplies, postage, copying, plaques, etc. \$ 856.99

Gazette printing and mailing, 3 issues 1,360.38

Secretary/Treasurer expenses (Sec. \$00; Treas. \$86.77) 88.63

Cosmos reception costs \$ 3,603.44

Reception income (3,240.00)

Reception subsidy 363.44 \$ 363.44

Kennedy Center Investiture costs 7,474.50

Investiture income (4,400.00)

Investiture subsidy \$ 3,074.50

**Total: \$ 5,743.94**

### Current Assets:

Bank of America Account (includes Funds on Hold) \$12,853.89

Dreyfus Fund (\$40,000.00 principal; interest is reinvested automatically) as of June 26 43,144.73

**Total: \$ 55,998.62**

### Separate Funds in Bank Account on Hold

50 for the 50th Campaign (anniversary fund) \$ 3,685.00

Fund for future video camera purchase 855.00

\*\*Contributions 2011-12 to endowment 1,775.00

**Total: \$ 6,315.00**

### Projected Operating Expense Fund

Current bank balance \$12,853.89

\*\*\*Less funds on hold and endowment contributions (6,315.00)

Subtotal \$ 6,538.89

Projected expense income from contributions (45X\$75) + 3,375.00

**Total \$ 9,913.89**

\* The interest from Dreyfus Fund is shown as new income, and may be used for expenses if needed. But because the amount fluctuates with the market, it is not included in the Projected Operating Expense Fund.

\*\* Adding this year's endowment donations, the Fellows' Endowment principal is now \$42,230.00.

\*\*\*Note that this year's endowment fund contributions are on hold in the bank. They have been deducted from the Projected Operating Expense Fund since they cannot be used for expenses.

## Fellows at the Cosmos Club



# Fellows Photo Gallery



Photos Courtesy of Fellows Bob Schanke & Felicia Londré