



The Fellows Gazette

Volume 54

Published by the College of Fellows of the American Theatre

Fall 2010

Fellows Under Cover: A Call for Tributes



Felicia Londré hard at work

How about a gold-bronze cover for the American Theatre Fellows 50th Anniversary volume?

Each of our distinguished new members these days receives the bright red 40th anniversary edition edited by Fellows Orlin Corey and John R. Cauble. Before that we had the blue-and-gray *American Theatre Fellows: The First Thirty Years*, edited by Fellow Jed H. Davis. Anticipating our 50th year in 2015, Dean Milly S. Barranger has set things in motion for the next volume.

With the board's approval of the editorial team, Fellows Felicia Londré, Robert A. Schanke, and Barry Witham have begun the planning process. The big concern is to keep the cost manageable while creating a volume that truly celebrates the "golden" 50th anniversary. Serving both as a handbook with business records and a souvenir album, the book will be distributed to all Fellows and given to new Fellows at their investitures beginning in 2015.

Given budget constraints, the new volume will not reproduce all of the material in the earlier volumes, but it will include up-to-date citations of all those invested since 2005. In addition, the editors envision a 100-word citation for each

Fellow from our entire history. To that end, the editors are now putting out a call for volunteers to write 100-word bios on our deceased Fellows. If a Fellow admired a Fellow who is no longer with us, it should be a pleasure to do a bit of research beyond culling from the original citation; this would allow the bio to list achievements after the year of investiture. To that end, we offer this example written by Felicia Londré:

McIlrath, Patricia (1917-1999) inducted 1976, nominated by Jed H. Davis. "Dr. Mac" surprised her mentors when she left a faculty position at the University of Illinois to direct theatre at the small University of Kansas City as a way of giving back to her hometown. By 1964, she had created a professional summer repertory theatre, which grew into a renowned Equity company, Missouri Repertory Theatre, with a touring wing and state-of-the-art facility. She was the beloved artistic director of that theatre and chair of the Theatre Department at the University of Missouri-Kansas City until 1986. She also served on numerous arts boards.

Please contact Robert A. Schanke at Schanke@aol.com to reserve the names of those Fellows to whom you want to pay tribute with a short bio.

Felicia Londré

Something New!

Starting with this edition of *The Fellows Gazette*, we will spotlight one of our Fellows each issue. The editor will ask Fellows throughout the year to prepare a 300 word essay about another Fellow. Hopefully, this will provide us with up-to-date information about our colleagues and remind us all of the enormous contributions our Fellows have made to the American Theater.

Our first "In the Spotlight," written by Fellow Rose Bank, focuses on Fellow Felicia Londré and is found on page 5.

Fall Greetings From Your Dean

It has taken three years for us to revisit an Easter weekend as the date for our annual meeting. I realize that this is not an ideal time for some, but, as you know, the staff of the Education Department at the Kennedy Center sets the schedule for the dates and spaces that are available to us. I've been warned by other Deans that this weekend augurs a drop in attendance and early departures. Please remember that Washington is beautiful in the springtime, the resident theatres are vibrant with activity, and friends and families always enjoy the nation's capital in April.

I ask that you defy predictions and come to Washington this April 23-24 to enjoy the following activities: a reception on Saturday evening at Washington's Cosmos Club arranged by Fellow Bonnie Nelson Schwartz; and, taking place at the Kennedy Center on Sunday, the investiture of four new Fellows, the Roger L. Stevens Lecture promised by Broadway director Jack O'Brien, and planning for our 50th anniversary celebration in 2015.

I have asked the editors of the 50th anniversary souvenir volume to present their ideas and plans for this celebratory edition. Also, I want to invite all Fellows to share your thoughts on how best to celebrate those fifty years that began as a wing of AETA (and its successor ATA) in 1965, and evolved into our present, independent sphere of outstanding professional practitioners and theatre educators.

A planning committee for a Gala celebration will be announced shortly in the full knowledge that between 2011 and 2015, three Deans will have been involved in planning for and producing our "golden" anniversary and all members of the College will have contributed to the planning of the celebration.

But, first, in 2011, let's begin sharing thoughts, ideas, and funding strategies with one another during our annual gathering at the Kennedy Center on April 24.

I look forward to seeing you in Washington in April.

Cordially,
Milly Barranger
Dean, ATF

A Hearty Welcome: Four New Fellows!

In April we will be investing four distinguished new Fellows into the College.

JOHN LEE BEATTY

Nominated by Fellow Don Wilmeth, John has become one of the country's most prolific and industrious designers, with some eighty Broadway credits and numerous awards, including Tonys, Obies, and Drama Desk Awards.



ROGER L. BEDARD



Nominator Lin Wright applauds Roger's creation of the MFA in Children's Theatre at Virginia Tech and his designing the first Ph.D. in Theatre for Youth in the country as well as masterminding the creation of the American Alliance for Theatre and Education.

FRANKLIN J. HILDY

Felicia Londré's nomination of Frank highlights his scholarly research and publications, including his co-authorship of Fellow Oscar Brockett's *History of the Theatre* in addition to his formidable, first-hand knowledge of historical theatres.



EDWARD STERN

A pre-eminent director as well as producing artistic director of the Tony Award-winning Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Ed also co-founded the Indiana Repertory Theatre and has directed at numerous regional theatres.



News of the Fellows

ROBYN BAKER FLATT: Robyn reports that the Dallas Children's Theater at Rosewood Center for Family Arts is now being powered partly by the sun, thanks to Green Mountain Energy Company and its customers! Additionally, Dallas Children's Theater launched its 27th season with the original bad kids of Room 207 with *Miss Nelson is Missing!*

MILLY BARRANGER: Milly received the 2010 Regional Award from the New England Theatre Conference in November. Other Fellows who have received this award are Patricia Whitton Forrest and the late Errol G. Hill.

KAREN BERMAN: Karen travelled to the Czech Republic to direct a play she wrote entitled *The Women of Havel and Kafka* which was performed in the International Theatre Festival in Hradec Králové as well as in Prague. The play shows how female muses inspired Havel's and Kafka's works (see photo on page 8).

JAMES BRANDON: His book, *Kabuki's Forgotten War: 1931-1945* is receiving glowing reviews—"a



major, scholarly work but also an intensely readable one," "a monumental work of scholarship that will forever change the way we view this supposedly 'unchanging' art." The book has been

named an "Outstanding Academic Title" by the editors of *Choice*. Critic Donald Richie of the *Japan Times* lists it #1 on his list of the Fifty Best Books on Asia in 2009.

JOHN CAUBLE: John and his wife, Martha, attended the Los Angeles Ahmanson Theatre opening night of *Leap of Faith* with costumes by Fellow William Ivey Long.

JACK CLAY: In July, Jack toured Ireland, his first time there. It was charming, green, and rainy, just like back home in Seattle! Clay learned how to make scones in a cooking class (see photo on page 8).

JERRY CRAWFORD: Jerry has moved to Marquette, Michigan, a small port city on the shores of Lake Superior. His daughter Keli assists him in the final care for his wife, Patricia, now in Home Hospice status. A lovely, new log-cabin home in a wooded area with huge fireplace motivates Jerry back to his writing. He and Pat send thanks to all who have sent warm support

as Pat confronts both COPD and Waldenstrom blood cancer.

TONY DISTLER AND DON DRAPEAU: These two Fellows (Professors Emeriti at Virginia Tech) were feted last academic year by VT theatre alumni from the 1970s with the planting of two trees (with bronze plaques) to commemorate their



Tony Distler



Don Drapeau

inauguration of the Theatre Program in 1967 and its first two graduates in 1970. The celebration for Tony and Don also coincided with the opening of the newest of the Department of Theatre & Cinema's three performance spaces, Theatre 101—named for the original curriculum's seminal course (taught by Tony) that was the basis for the 1970s undergraduate curriculum. Citations for Tony and Don are now also permanently mounted on a wall in the lobby of Theatre 101.

JILL DOLAN: Jill recently published *Theatre & Sexuality* (see photo on page 8). Her edited collection of the plays and performances of Peggy Shaw, *Menopausal Gentleman*, is now in production at the University of Michigan Press. She is working on a book that collects her entries on "The Feminist Spectator" blog (www.feministspectator.blogspot.com), and finishing another on the work of playwright Wendy Wasserstein.

HARRY J. ELAM, JR.: Harry has just been appointed the Freeman-Thornton Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education at Stanford University.



GERALD FREEDMAN: Gerald directed *The Diary of Anne Frank* at the Westport Country Playhouse earlier in the fall. He then returned to UNC School of the Arts where he has been Dean of the School of Drama for 20 years to direct Moss Hart's *Light Up the Sky*. Spring 2011 he will direct an all school production of *Oklahoma!*, with students from the Schools of Dance, Design and Production and Drama.

News of Fellows continued on page 4

GIL LAZIER: Last August, Gil received the 2010 ATHE Award for Career Achievement in Academic Theatre. Fellow Bob Schanke presented it to him (see photo on page 8). He has been busy directing—*Ghosts* in June for the Banyan Theater Company in Sarasota and *August: Osage County* in August-September for the FUSION Theatre Company in Albuquerque. Shortly after "August" opened, Kathryn and he left on a three-week cruise for Russia, Japan and China.

SAMUEL L. LEITER: Sam received an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Emeritus Fellowship for study in Japan, where he spent the spring researching for his next book, a history of *kabuki* from 1952 to 1965 (see photo on page 8). While there, he wrote a blog, *Kabuki Woogie*, which can be accessed by googling those words. He visited the oldest *kabuki* theatre, built in 1836 and reconstructed in the mid-1980s. Last spring, he published "Edo *Kabuki: The Actor's World*," in *Impressions: The Journal of the Japanese Art Society of America*.

DONN MURPHY: In August, Donn and his partner, Jon Carrow, enjoyed outdoor theatre double-headers in two countries: the four-century-old *Oberammergau Passion Play* in Germany (see photo on page 8) and the following evening, Bizet's *Carmen*, in the 2,000-year-old *Arena di Verona* (Italy). Both productions had casts and choruses numbering more than 300, plus animals (sheep, donkeys, horses, pigeons and camels) and large orchestras. Donn will retire from the position of Executive Director of Washington's National Theatre in December. *DBM@80*, a birthday celebration, will be held in his honor at Georgetown University in October (<http://dbmat80.com>).

BONNIE NELSON SCHWARTZ: Her HBO documentary special, *Studs Terkel: Listening to History* premiered on HBO on May 15 (see photo on page 8) and is currently playing on HBO On Demand. In September, she produced the first of the "Backstage at the Lincoln" series of playreadings at the historic Lincoln Theatre in Washington, DC. The first play was *The Green Book*, based on the Negro Motorist's Guide, a kind of Fodor for Black travelers during the days of segregation. It made page one of *The Washington Post*.

KATHY A. PERKINS: Kathy coordinated at the University of Illinois a nine day festival, *Celebrating African Women Writers*, focusing on eight African artists representing six countries. (See <http://www.theatre.uiuc.edu/pages/african-diaspora-festival>). Kathy's lighting designs

included the premiere of E. Patrick Johnson's *Sweet Tea* at the About Face Theatre in Chicago. This season they include Crystal Rhodes's premiere of *The Trip* at ETA-Creative Arts in Chicago; *Ruined* at the St. Louis Black Repertory; and Charles Smith's premiere of *The Gospel According to James* at the Indiana Repertory Theatre.

CAL PRITNER: Cal performed his *Mark Twain Traveling* in Ashland, OR, Arcata, CA, at Cal Arts, and in NYC. He also performed *Mark Twain Unlearning Racism* in Ashland, OR.

BARBARA REID: She missed the meeting in April because she was in London visiting her daughter, who lives there. She reports, "Had a great trip.



Saw a very good and interesting production of *Macbeth* at the Globe, and *The Habit of Art* at the National. Also spent 3 days in the Lake District. We spent the summer at our cabin in Blowing Rock, North Carolina." She is going back to London in October to see her daughter perform as Lucy Lockit in a production of *Beggar's Opera*.

PETER SARGENT: Peter designed the lighting for two productions at the Hope Summer Repertory Theatre in Holland, Michigan—*Into the Woods* and *In the Year of Frog and Toad*. He recently opened a production of *You Can't Take It With You* for The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis which moved later to the Playhouse in the Park in Cincinnati. The best part of the experience was working on his 20th collaboration with Fellow John Ezell. Peter has begun his 45th year at Webster University.

JAMES STILL: His *The Velvet Rut*, was published by Dramatic Publishing Company (see photo on page 8) and was produced by the Epic Theatre in New York. Workshops and readings of his *Love Me Some Amnesia* have been conducted at The Lark in New York, Telluride Playwright's Festival, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival where they also presented *Iron Kisses* and *The Heavens Are Hung in Black*. His *Searching for Eden* was produced at the Asolo Theatre in Sarasota and *Amber Waves* at a university in Tokyo. He directed Steven Dietz's *Becky's New Car* at the Indiana Repertory Theatre.

DOROTHY WEBB: Dorothy is deeply involved as Founder/Artistic Director of the Bonderman Playwriting for Young Audiences competition and symposium. For their 25th anniversary, seventy-eight scripts were submitted. Colleagues from

throughout the country are currently serving as reader/respondents. Eventually they will narrow the field to about 12-15 scripts and from that number select 4 for a week of development at the Indiana Repertory Theatre and another 5 or 6 to be featured with rehearsed readings of excerpts during the Symposium, April 7-10.

DAVID WEISS: David's wife, Penny, died on July 25 after a harsh year-long bout with Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS). They were fortunate to have been able to move into a very good retirement community, connected to the University of Virginia, called the Colonnades, where Penny was eventually able to get the full-time nursing care she needed until her death. David will stay on there.

Directory Changes

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The Fellows Gazette

published by

The College of Fellows of the American Theatre

submit information and photos to:

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Pleasant Hill, IA 50327
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schanker@aol.com

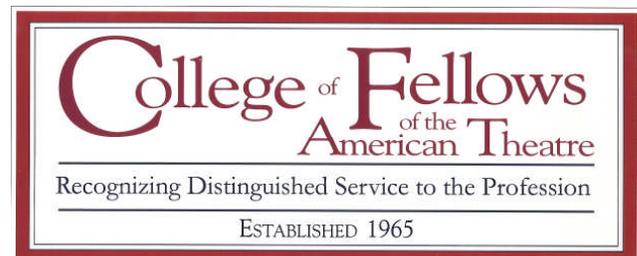
College website: www.thecollegeoffellows.org

In the Spotlight: Felicia Londré

Fellow Felicia Londré has all the qualities of a star. She is versatile—as much at home in the scholarship of Europe (see, for example, her books about Tom Stoppard, Federico Garcia Lorca, and Ramon del Valle-Inclan) as she is in the archives of the American theatre (where her work is represented in the *Historical Dictionary of the American Theater* and studies of Sam Shepard, Lanford Wilson, and Tennessee Williams, to her magisterial authorship [with Fellow Dan Watermeier] of the *History of North American Theater*). Professor Londré has an international as well as national presence, in person as well as in print, extending from Shakespeare in England to Eugene O'Neill in China to the *History of World Theater*, and through conferences from Kansas City to Moscow to Beijing. She knows how to organize the theatrical event, as attested by her long service as a dramaturg and as an officer of professional societies, to which she has selflessly given her labor and energy.

Many times honored for her research and scholarship, Felicia lends charm and warmth to every occasion and her generosity is legendary among all those who have been on the scholarly stage with her. (I well remember that, at the end of one NEH Fellowship, she distributed to the audience at a scholarly meeting the names of and data about over a hundred nineteenth and early twentieth century non-actress American theatre women her labor had unearthed and identified, so that others would take up the work she had begun and would be unable to finish.) Joie de vivre marks her every appearance and she is an indefatigable world theatre-goer. Felicia Londré: bright star of the fellowship, generous colleague, and bonne ami.

Rosemarie Bank



Mark Your Calendars Now!

The Next Meeting of

The College of Fellows of the American Theatre

April 23-24, 2011

Rooms Available for the College of Fellows at



**The River Inn
924 25th St NW
Washington, DC 20037
(202) 337-7600**

**Special Rate: \$185 per room
Mention you are with the College of Fellows**

NOMINATION FORM

It is the responsibility of each Fellow to place in nomination those persons she or he believes are qualified to become members of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre.

Persons who have distinguished themselves on a national or international level through service, artistic accomplishment, scholarship, innovation or all of these may be nominated by a current Fellow for consideration by the Board of the College of Fellows of the American Theater for membership. Nominations MUST be seconded by two Fellows who are acquainted with the work of the Nominee. The nomination letter/statement should have the depth of the presentation citation, and the seconding letters should not be simple reiterations of those facts but rather add perspective to the nomination. Due confidentiality requires that nominees not be aware that they are being considered.

Nominations on this form and two seconding letters of support (the responsibility of the nominator) must be submitted to the current Dean of the College no later than March 1. Only nominees whose files are complete will be considered during the Annual Meeting.

Since nominators will most frequently read the citation for their nominees, or be called upon to prepare the citation, it is recommended that a copy of the nomination form and letters be retained.

Please Print

Date Mailed to Dean: _____

NOMINEE _____

Title _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephones Business ()

FAX

Home ()

E-Mail

NOMINATION BY

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephones Business ()

FAX ()

Home ()

E-Mail

SECONDDERS

#1 Name _____

2 Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone () _____

() _____

E-Mail _____

Attach a Nominator's Letter/Statement and any supporting materials. In the Nominator's Statement use 250-300 words to indicate the most salient reasons for this nomination. This statement should serve as a draft of the Fellow's Investiture Citation, and should be typed or word processed. In addition, attach a curriculum vitae, Who's Who entry, or resume. If the cv/resume seems to provide the necessary details, no additional material is needed. If it is incomplete, the following information would be useful (as part of the statement or on a separate sheet): education (schools, degrees, dates); membership in theatre organizations (and significant contributions); teaching experience or involvement (if relevant); professional experience; awards and honors; publications; artistic creations (design, direction, etc.).

DEADLINE

RETURN THIS TO THE DEAN BEFORE MARCH 1

Dean Milly Barranger

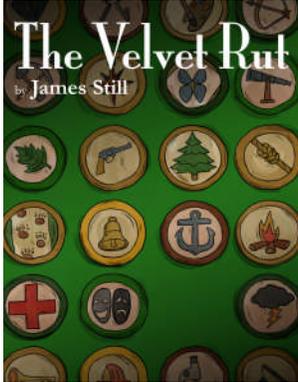
College of Fellows

245 W. 107th Street

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New York, NY 10025

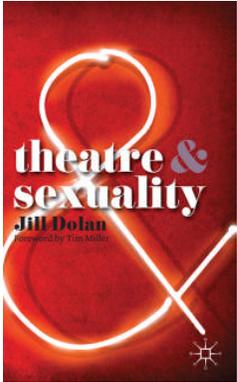
FELLOWS PHOTO GALLERY



James Still's new publication



A recent production of Bonnie Nelson Schwartz's



Jill Dolan's latest book



Jack Clay made scones!



Donn Murphy attended Oberammergau.



Sam Leiter studied in Japan.



Gil Lazier receives ATHE award!



Karen Berman with her Czech cast