



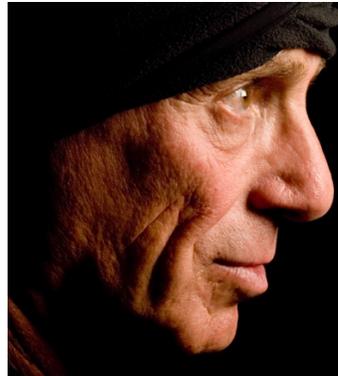
The Fellows Gazette

Volume 81 Published by the College of Fellows of the American Theatre Fall 2019

SEVEN NEW FELLOWS TO BE INVESTED IN 2020.



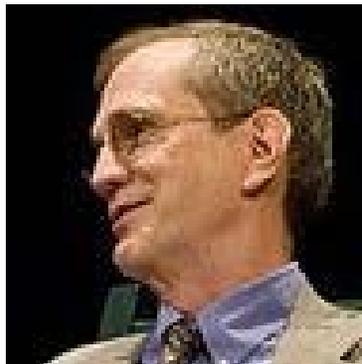
BENNY SATO AMBUSH



LEE BREUER



DOROTHY CHANSKY



JOHN MACKENZIE CLUM



NAOMI IIZUKA



RHONA JUSTICE MALLOY



MOLLY SMITH

From the Dean



I hope each of you is enjoying a happy holiday season. I want to take a few minutes to share information about the new Fellows to be invested next spring as well as some news from

current Fellows. Additionally, I want to make you aware of a few details about our annual meeting and remind you of adjustments to our nomination process. Finally, I want to encourage you to participate in that process if you are so inclined.

The class of 2020 includes three members who were to have been invested previously but for various reasons could not join us at that time. They will join four newly elected members to create a class of seven. I hope you will join us for this special day on our College of Fellows calendar.

I also want to express my appreciation to **Randy Reinholz** who has agreed to take on the responsibilities of Corporate Secretary. Randy is in the midst of a tremendous professional run of success in virtually every aspect of his career, so this most recent decision is a testament to his ongoing willingness to be of service even as he continues to pursue his own artistic goals. There's an old saying: "If you want to get something done, give it to a busy person." I don't know anyone who is busier than Randy, so I am particularly grateful to him for stepping up.

I am also pleased to announce that the 2020 Roger L. Stevens Address will be given by **Kathleen Conlin**. I'm sure you all join me in excited anticipation of what will undoubtedly be a highlight of our time together.

I'm happy also to call your attention to Dean-Elect **Gail Humphries Mardirosian's** interview with **Charlene Gordon**, whose support of our advocacy initiatives has helped us move forward into new areas of engagement. I believe this interview will be

informative for all Fellows, new and old.

Finally, please remember that if you intend to nominate someone, you need to include a draft of the formal citation along with the cv/resume and two supporting letters. This will help the board during the vetting process and will also help the annual investiture process move smoothly.

I wish you all continued success and joy throughout the year.

Dan Carter

A block of rooms has been reserved at

The River Inn

Make Your Reservations Now.

By Calling

202-403-2616

When making your reservation, mention the

College of Fellows

in order to receive the discounted rate.

Deadline: February 15, 2020

NOMINATE NEW FELLOWS

Procedures can be found in the

Members Only Area

of the web site

<https://www.thecollegeoffellows.org/>

Contact me if you need the password.

Deadline for submission

Is

March 23, 2020.

BRIEF BIOS OF 2019 INDUCTEES

Benny Sato Ambush has been Artistic Director of three theatres (Rites and Reason Theatre

Company, Oakland Ensemble Theatre, Theatre Virginia), a teacher of acting and directing at the

BA, BFA and MFA levels nationally, a freelance SDC director, consultant, and published commentator. Formerly (select): Director - Institute for Teledramatic Arts and Technology, California State University, Monterey Bay; Senior Distinguished Producing Director-In-Residence, Emerson College Department of Performing Arts; TCG Board member. Current Member, The National Theatre Conference; Steering Committee Member, National Alliance of Acting Teachers. MFA - University of California, San Diego; BA - Brown University.

Lee Breuer is a writer, director, poet, lyricist, and filmmaker. His theatrical presentations span performance art, theater, film, video, music, visual arts, poetry, literature, and opera. His blending of disciplines and techniques from widely different cultures creates a unique genre in which visual arts, sound, music, dance, and puppetry fuse into an original form. A founding artistic director of Mabou Mines Theater Company, he has worked on six continents, including directing the first American play produced by La Comédie-Française, Tennessee Williams' *Un Tramway Nommé Désir*. His productions of *The Gospel at Colonus* and *Mabou Mines DollHouse* are now classics of the contemporary stage.

Dorothy Chansky is Professor of Theatre in the School of Theatre and Dance at Texas Tech University. She is the author of *Composing Ourselves: The Little Theatre Movement and the American Audience* (2004) and *Kitchen Sink Realisms: Domestic Labor, Dining, and Drama in American Theatre* (2015). She is immediate past president of the American Theatre and Drama Society; the current Vice President for Publications of the American Society for Theatre Research; a former editor of *Theatre Annual*; and a former book review editor of *Theatre Journal*. Dorothy writes criticism for New York Theatre Wire.

John MacKenzie Clum is Professor Emeritus of Theater Studies and English at Duke University. His books include *Still Acting Gay: Male Homosexuality in Modern Drama*, *Something for the Boys: Musical Theatre and Gay Culture*, *He's All Man: Learning Masculinity, Homosexuality and Love from American Movies*, *The Drama of Marriage: Gay Playwrights/Straight Unions from Oscar Wilde*

to the Present, and *The Works of Arthur Laurents: Politics, Love and Betrayal*. He is the author of numerous essays on modern and contemporary British and American drama and musical theatre as well as plays produced throughout the United States and libretti for two operas which have had New York premieres. John resides in Chicago and is Board President of the Raven Theatre.

Naomi Iizuka's plays include 36 VIEWS, POLAROID STORIES, ANON(YMOUS), GOOD KIDS, LANGUAGE OF ANGELS, ALOHA, SAY THE PRETTY GIRLS, CONCERNING STRANGE DEVICES FROM THE DISTANT WEST, AT THE VANISHING POINT, and SLEEP. Her plays have been produced at theatres nationwide including Brooklyn Academy of Music, Berkeley Rep, the Goodman, Actors' Theatre of Louisville, the Public, the Guthrie, Children's Theater Company, the Kennedy Center, the Huntington, Dallas Theater Center, and Soho Rep. Iizuka is an alumna of New Dramatists and the recipient of a PEN/Laura Pels Award, an Alpert Award, a Joyce Foundation Award, and a Whiting Writers' Award.

Rhona Justice-Malloy is a professor in the Department of Theatre and Film at the University of Mississippi. She is a Fellow of the Mid-America Theatre Conference and a Fellow of the Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies. She was recently awarded the University of Mississippi, College of Liberal Arts, Research, Scholarship, and Creative Achievement Award. Justice-Malloy is a member of the National Theatre Conference. She has served as the editor of *Theatre History Studies* and the President of the Mid-America Theatre Conference. She is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

Molly Smith (*Artistic Director*) has served as Artistic Director of Arena Stage since 1998. Her directorial work has also been seen at The Old Globe, Asolo Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, Trinity Repertory, Toronto's Tarragon Theatre, Montreal's Centaur Theatre, Canada's Shaw Festival, and Perseverance Theater in Juneau, Alaska, which she founded and ran from 1979-1998. In 2014, Molly made her Broadway debut directing *The Velocity of Autumn*. Molly has been a leader in new play development for over 30 years and has championed projects including *How I Learned to Drive*; *Passion Play, a cycle*; *Next to Normal*; and *Dear Evan Hansen*. She has been

Advocacy and Philanthropy

Many of you know **Charlene Ann Gordon** through her recent attendance at our annual meetings. Her philanthropical support has made it possible for us to establish the Arts Impact Award in association with KCACTF and to participate in National Arts Advocacy Day. Recently, Dean-elect **Gail Humphries Mardirosian** invited her to respond to a few questions electronically.



1) What stirred your interest in this particular form of philanthropy?

My past business background and career path centered around software & technology. I can share from my heart what I learned from my past experiences. I think of myself more as a facilitator or connector, the neck that turns the head. The bridge between introductions that could benefit both parties in a future endeavor. I had business skills that served me well in the past: creativity, effective communication skills, the ability to work as part of a team, and the ability to be empathetic. Whether it is making the introduction of friends to a not-for-profit organization or supporting others, this was the direction I would follow. I didn't want their job, I just wanted to help, be that pushy little voice in the background suggesting new ideas.

As a young child I had exposure to music through my grandfather. He was a High School music teacher and played the violin. School concerts and marching bands were a big part of my early years. I didn't play an instrument, I was the audience watching the performance. He was appointed to President Kennedy's Council on Education for the Midwest, an impressive honor that made the family very proud.

After several years of moving from one non-for-profit to another, I found my comfort zone was in the Performing Arts, first at Ruth Eckerd Hall Performing Arts Center in Clearwater, Florida, eventually serving on the Board of Directors in 2008. I served 10 years but wanted more. About the same time I agreed to join the University of Tampa's Advisory Council of College of Arts and Letters. In 2018 I was asked to join the Board of Trustees at UT. This was a happy place to be, especially as a volunteer. I continued to use my contacts from the Tampa Bay community which includes the cities of Tampa, Clearwater & St. Petersburg in making connections and introductions.

In 2019, the David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Performing Arts of Tampa Bay ask me to be part of their Board of Trustees. It was a perfect fit. I could be the liaison between the University and Straz., the two locations being in walking distance of each other. My mission was to continue having the students experience the Performing Arts as volunteers and paid interns. They could get experience, see free shows, and get a better idea what they would do in the future.

2) What about these initiatives and the Fellows made to want to support them?

Someone may share an idea or do the "ASK!" It is still my decision to decide if it has value and if I want to get involved further. As a volunteer one decision can open the door to future opportunities.

This continued to evolve into other opportunities where I could get involved. I would find a need and a solution. I have provided Pizza Parties for the hungry cast and crew after a play. I sent a musical theater graduate to experience the Tony Award show at Radio City, in NYC and gifted a cash award to five graduating seniors in each of the theater elements, not because they had the highest grades but because they had the "desire to succeed".

3) *How were you drawn to philanthropy?*

I retired in 2002 after 26 years in sales and management with a new goal in mind, encouraged by my husband and best friend of 21 years, Marden (Mardy) I agreed to represent our family within the Tampa Bay Area Community as a volunteer and philanthropist. I found my past work history laid a strong foundation for moving forward. Mardy and I agreed we were financially strong and could afford to help others. We wanted to give back. At first it was little things like paying tuition for summer arts classes for children, and it slowly evolved to underwriting student singing performances with cash prizes.

After several years of moving from one not-for-profit to another, I found my comfort zone was in the Performing Arts. This was my happy place. I found giving back very satisfying. I used my criteria of helping those who wanted to succeed get that extra push. Whether it was with cash awards, summer classes, pizza parties, or a trip to the Tony Awards, I was helping others. It was not about me.

4) *What has been the most vibrant arts performance/event you participated in during the last year?*

The University of Tampa December 2019 Christmas Chorus Concert that aired on PBS stations in Florida. It was "I" who introduced the College of Arts and Letters Dean to my contact at our local Tampa PBS station. They worked out the details. I assisted in funding a small stipend for the students involved. UT students practiced, performed, filmed, edited & presented a finished copy for airing. A new accomplishment for CAL at the University of Tampa. Something of value for the students to list on their resume. A great memory for life. My most exciting endeavor for 2019 was learning the University was ready to break ground on the future 90,000 square feet Fine Arts Building. My husband gifted this space to me and insisted on the name, he said "To honor my wife for her community service." it would be called "Charlene Gordon Studio Theater" The new Fine Arts Building is scheduled to open in the Fall of 2020. This theater would continue to give back to the Fine Arts program long after we are gone. In recognition the University of Tampa "awarded the Pacesetters Society" sculpture for our commitment to higher education and lifetime contribution.

5) *Anything else you might like to share?*

In this economy, students won't just have multiple jobs, they will have multiple careers. They must be prepared for careers that we haven't even dreamed of yet. Not all CAL students will perform on stage. We need future ticket office managers, performing arts management, directors, and stage crews. We need talent agents, producers, and fashion designers. So, when a business major, a future nurse, a technology and marketing student can cross over to the arts and improve their chances for a successful future, how can you not be excited. These are the facts!

- Liberal Arts majors succeed!
- Humanities majors score higher on LSAT, MCAT and GMAT.
- Theatre major can meet a deadline, can command attention, and knows how to improvise.

The liberal arts teach us not what to think, but how to think. Once we know how to think, we can think about what hasn't been done. *You learn to use both the right & left side of your brain.*

I cannot think of anything else I would consider doing as a volunteer. I really enjoy being in the audience watching each new performance.

News of the Fellows

Alan Woods appeared in *Meet Me at Momma Nellie's*, a new play written and directed by Michael Schirtzinger at Ohio's Abbey Players of Dublin, a group for senior players (the oldest is a married couple, both of whom are over 95). His short play *Not the Delany Sisters* was selected for production at the Women's Theatre Festival of Southern Illinois.

James Still directed *12 Angry Men* in a co-production with Indiana Rep and Syracuse Stage. His play for adults *DINOSAUR(s)* was workshopped at Kansas City Rep; his play for families *BLACK BEAUTY* premiered at Seattle Children's Theatre; and his play for the very young *THE LITTLE CHOO-CHOO THAT THINKS SHE CAN* premiered at Indiana Rep. His play *LOOKING OVER THE PRESIDENT'S SHOULDER* played at Act Two Playhouse (Philadelphia) this fall.

Robert Schenkkan's play *The Great Society* starring Brian Cox, opened on Broadway at Lincoln Center for a limited run. His new adaptation of *The Trojan Women*, directed by Lee Evans, was workshopped at The Public Theater and his musical, *The 12*, directed by John Doyle, had its backers audition in NY.

Tom Evans will be directing a new play, *Salt Pepper Ketchup*, at the just opened Bryan Fonseca Theatre in Indianapolis. In March he will stage *Needville*, a compendium of poems about the coal mining industry for the Colonnades Retirement Community in Charlottesville, Virginia.

20 Questions for Marshall W. Mason by Mary Robinson is an excellent career retrospective in the December issue of the SDC Journal. To read it, go to SDCweb.org and click on SDC Journal.

Felicia Hardison Londré is president of KC Molière: 400 in 2022, Inc., a 501(c)(3)

nonprofit that is overseeing a city-wide celebration of Molière's 400th birthday on January 15, 2022. The six months surrounding that date will have performances of Molière's plays as well as dance and opera spin-offs, Baroque art exhibits, films, school programs, and book-club participation. Her new translation of Labiche's *An Italian Straw Hat* was produced by UMKC Theatre. She also served as dramaturg for the Unicorn Theatre production of *Bernhardt/Hamlet*.

Barry Witham looks forward to the publication in May of his new book, *From Red-Baiting to Blacklisting: The Labor Plays of Manny Fried*, in the "Theatre in the Americas" series from Southern Illinois University Press.

Tom Markus will direct *The Devil's Plea Bargain*, the 11th in a sequence of short plays that explore social and legal hot button topics by retired U.S. judge H. Lee Sarokin at North Coast Repertory Theatre in California.

David Leong's fights for *Porgy and Bess* at the New York Metropolitan Opera will be seen again when the opera moves into the spring repertory in early January. In mid-January, David will deliver a keynote speech *How to Build A Team When All They Do Is Fight* at the International Conference for Conflict Resolution and Mediation in Sarasota, Florida. His movement and fight choreography will also be seen in *King Lear* at Northern Stage in late January.

Bob Schanke and his partner, Jack Barnhart, saw the world-famous production of *Madame Butterfly* in Omaha, designed by artist Jun Kuneko. the national tour of *Phantom of the Opera* in Minneapolis with one of Bob's former students in a leading role. In December Bob and Jack fly off to India for three weeks followed by a month in Mexico in February.

Robert Benedetti continues his work with the New Mexico Actors Lab, the theater he founded in Santa Fe five years ago. The

expanded 2020 season will include *Shining City* by Conor McPherson, *The Children* by Lucy Kirkwood, *Radiant Vermin* by Philip Ridley, *The Cradle Will Rock* by Marc Blitzstein, and *Reasons to be Pretty* by Neil LaBute.

Randy Reinholz was selected as a 2019 American Indian Heritage Month honoree by the Los Angeles City/County Native American Commission (LANAIC) and the City of Los Angeles in recognition of the countless contributions he made to the native American Indian community. He was honored November 1st at City Hall, November 5th at the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, and November 16th at the LANAIC Pow Wow. He and his wife Jean Bruce Scott co-wrote a book chapter, *Native Voices at the Autry Case Studies in Casting Native American Roles*, that appears in *Casting a Movement*, which explores ethnic specific casting in the United States. Randy workshopped his new original full-length play *Under a Big Sky*, at Seven Devils Playwrighting Conference, MaCall, Idaho. He received the SDSU Alumni Association Award for Outstanding Faculty in the College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts for 2019/20,

Kathy Perkins was the 2019 award recipient of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) Career Achievement in Academic Theatre, presented at the conference in Orlando, Florida. She continues to stay busy as a lighting designer this 2019-2020 season with productions for People's Light, Yale Repertory, Playmakers, Alabama Shakespeare, Theatre Works (Colorado), Northern Stage (Vermont), and Speak Easy (Boston).

Karen Berman directed the play *Ballet Russes* about the famed Russian ballet company at Georgia College, where she is Chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance. The production won the 2019 Cultural Arts Award for Central Georgia from the Macon Arts Alliance.

In Memoriam

The following fellows have passed away since the last issue of the Gazette was published.

Mark Medoff

**Leonard C.
Pronko**

Peter Sargent

“... and flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.”