

BROADSIDE

NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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Fall 1996

MINUTES OF ANNUAL THEATRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION MEETING

TLA President **Geri Duclow** brought the annual business meeting to order at 5:00PM on Friday, October 25th, 1996 at the Shubert Archive. She called for the approval of the minutes of the last business meeting.

Richard M. Buck, TLA Treasurer, handed out his report indicating that TLA remains solvent but that membership was declining slightly by attrition. **Maryann Chach**, editor of *Broadside* and chair of the Publications Committee, noted that the Spring-Summer issue of *Broadside* is out and that the Fall issue would be out after the TLA meeting. *Broadside* is still looking for editorial help. *Performing Arts Resources* (vol.20) on Denishawn collections is late but in good shape. **Susan Brady**, guest editor, has almost all the copy and plans to get the volume to the printer by the end of November. The volume will include articles on **Ted Shawn/Ruth St. Denis** material at NYPL's Dance Collection, the John Lindquist Collection at the Harvard Theatre Collection, the Killinger Collection of Denishawn, and Ted Shawn and his Men Dancers' Costumes at Florida State, and an article on Denishawn Dances Notated for Purchase. **Bob Taylor**, Chair of the Strategic Planning committee, spoke about the committee's work in addressing TLA's long range goals.

Geri then introduced **Marti LoMonaco**, the Chair of the Nominations committee. Marti thanked her committee for their efforts in choosing an excellent slate of candidates and she also thanked all the nominees

for their participation. She then announced the winners. **Geri Duclow** (Free Library of Philadelphia) was reelected President. **Susan Brady** (Yale University), a board member, became

"...Knowing you has actually strengthened my belief in God..."

Vice President. **Rosemary Cullen** (Brown University) and **Paul Newman** (a lawyer and private collector) were returned to the board. **Kevin Winkler** (New York Public Library for the Performing Arts) and **Annette Fern** (Harvard University) were welcomed as new board members. The next board meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 7th at the Shubert Archive.

Geri then introduced current Vice President, **Robert Taylor** (Billy Rose Theatre Collection, NYPL) who hosted a fond, mini "Roast" of **Dick Buck**. Bob recalled growing up listening to a weekly musical theatre program on the radio. On the show, the host would offer a tribute to some leading light of the Broadway musical theatre. One night, Bob remembered the radio host said "Stay tuned -- in a few moments, we will be back

to paeon Ethel Merman." [SAY ALOUD]. Reprising the radio host's phrase, Bob announced, "Tonight, we are here to paeon Dick Buck." [LAUGHTER]. **Geri Duclow** read a letter from **Dorothy Swerdlove** (now retired to Arizona). **Don Fowle** shared some reminiscences. **Steve Vallillo** read **Mary Ann Jensen's** note. [See boxes p.1-2 for excerpts]. **Catherine Johnson** prefaced the presentation to Dick of a money clip from Tiffany's (we hoped an appropriate gift) with the remark -- "That if Dick had been in charge, this would have been completed. As it is, we are giving you the money clip only to take it back to have it engraved. The engraving will read, To Richard M. Buck, 'The Buck Stops Here' TLA." The Shubert Archive contributed the

Mary Ann Jensen on Dick Buck:

A confession: when I first met you a quarter of a century or more ago, I thought you were most formidable and incredibly intimidating. Some years later at a TLA meeting, I watched you across a table as you delivered one of your inscrutable treasurer's reports, and suddenly I realized that you reminded me of a Muppet taking off without benefit of a Hensen or an Oz at the controls!...during my presidency of TLA, I always knew that I could depend upon your willing helpfulness and energy in times of need... You are a wonder! You are unique! You are eccentric as hell! You have been the pepper -- and sometimes the salt -- in the oddly spicy blend that is TLA! And I miss you already! Now, my dear, I cannot close without one last confession: knowing you has actually strengthened by belief in God. I am convinced that no merely human author could have created the character that is Richard M. Buck!

refreshments -- cheese, champagne and cake [my daughter, **Emily Vallillo**, loaned the cake decorations -- a parrot in a Lego palm tree shading a man lolling in a beach chair under an umbrella]. Bon Voyage, Dick.

HENDERSON ON MIELZINER

Virginia Woolf described the challenge of the biographer by asking rhetorically, "How can one make a life of six cardboard boxes, full of tailors' bills, love letters, and old picture postcards?" Mary Henderson provided a unique response to that challenge as she previewed her major new work on the life and career of legendary scenic designer **Jo Mielziner** at the Theatre Library Association's annual meeting, hosted by the Shubert Archive, on

The stagehands...were by far the best and most informative interviewees...

October 25th. Henderson is well known to TLA constituents and the academic world through her years as Curator of the Theatre Collection of the Museum of the City of New York, and her many publications, including *The City and the Theatre* (1973), *Theater in America* (1986), winner of the George Freedley Award, and *Broadway Ballyhoo* (1989).

Henderson began by giving the crowd some humorous instruction in how to say -- and how *not* to say -- the designer's famously mispronounced name, and then went on to place Mielziner in the context of the contemporary theatre. His career, which began in the early 1920s and extended through five decades and 270

Broadway shows, ending with his last production, *The Baker's Wife*, in 1976. For a 20 year period, from the mid-40s through the mid-60s, Mielziner was Broadway's preeminent set designer. Henderson noted that not only was he one of the first set designers to excel as a lighting designer, he also contributed costumes to his shows, a surprise to many in the audience.

Henderson's research took her through the 40 transfiles and 80 boxes of drawings that comprise the Jo Mielziner Collection at the Billy Rose Theatre Collection of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. Much of her energy was spent sifting through reviews of all his production, many of which, she pointed out, ignored the set designer's contributions. More importantly, Henderson drew upon her memories of Mielziner's work, including some of his most acclaimed productions, such as *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *Death of a Salesman*. She described her research as a "fascinating journey" during which she interviewed dozens of Mielziner's friends and colleagues, a number of whom, such as **Walter Kerr**, have since died. While **Elia Kazan** and **Arthur Miller** were prominent among her interview subjects, Mary did not equivocate in her favorites: the stagehands, she said, saw a different side of the designer, working closely with him to translate his design concepts to the stage, and were by far the best and most informative interviewees.

Dorothy Swerdlove on Dick Buck:

To begin with, Dick took over as TLA Secretary-Treasurer (from "moi") circa 1970, and gradually converted a very informal operation into an efficient system that extended from member mailings and subscription records to high-interest bank accounts and CDs in order to pay for our various publishing ventures. He is a public relations expert -- getting newspaper coverage for the Freedley-TLA Awards -- and he seems to have an uncanny ability to secure celebrity guests for our receptions and panel discussions. He has also served many times as Master of Ceremonies at these meetings. (Dick, baby, you've come a long way from the days when your chief claim to fame was home-made cheese balls to keep our receptions expenses down)...I would like to close on a personal note. I've known Dick for about 35 years, both as a colleague in the Library and as a fellow member of various organizations. We've attended many conferences together both in the U.S. and abroad, and while I admire his thoughtful (if occasionally overly-detailed) presentations, what I cherish most are our pre- and post-meeting jaunts around the various conference cities. He is an excellent guide and a truly Good Companion. Thank you for everything, Dick, and all the best in your new home.

Henderson spoke of her initial trepidation in attempting her first biography, describing how she immersed herself in information about Mielziner's background, including the voluminous correspondence in his collection, biographies by contemporaries such as **Joshua Logan**, and dissertations and masters theses. She also spoke quite candidly of the frustrations of the five year book project, to be published in 1997 by Knopf. Her interviews resulted in over 130 audio tapes which she painstakingly transcribed herself. Many details of Mielziner's early life, which

she found in his mother's correspondence and included in early drafts, were eliminated by her publisher. She humorously noted the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing her bed as a combination file cabinet and processing space.

A lively question and answer session ended Henderson's presentation, and she spoke with great enthusiasm of her interviews with important Mielziner colleagues. **Elia Kazan**, she said, was particularly eloquent in his praise of Mielziner's contribution to the original production of *Death of a Salesman*. (She also noted that his skeletal set for that play, with its translucent walls, was a highly influential design concept that remains in use today). **Arthur Miller**,

REPORT on the 21ST SIBMAS CONGRESS, HELSINKI, AUGUST 31-SEPTEMBER 6, 1996

The topic of the 21st Congress of SIBMAS (International Association of Libraries and Museums of the Performing Arts) was "Winds of Change-New Technology." **Hanna-Leena Helavouri**, head of the **Helsinki Theatre Museum**, organized the meetings and social events, ably assisted by her colleague, **Meri Eerola**. The Congress sessions were informative and useful to the attendees, especially those sessions that emphasized new internet technologies and creations of home pages by performing arts museums and libraries. There was a discussion of virtual reality and interactive animation, as well as the copyright problems created by the internet. A paper on the clearance of ownership when seeking multi-media rights was both amusing and informative, giving an overview of how devilishly complicated a process it is. The plenary papers on fund-raising were somewhat less successful, since the presenters emphasized the commercial aspects (advertising, selling product, and seeking commercial sponsorship), rather

she said, called Mielziner's set for his play simply "the greatest set design in the twentieth century." She noted, too, **Robert Edmond Jones** and **Lee Simonson** as strong influences on Mielziner's development as a scenic artist. Mary was particularly informative in responding to questions about Mielziner's design of theatre spaces, describing the numerous compromises he faced in designing such theatres as the **Mark Taper Forum** in Los Angeles and the **Vivian Beaumont Theater** at Lincoln Center.

Henderson also discussed the upcoming Mielziner exhibition "Scenic Poet of the Theatre," for which she is curator. The exhibition, which runs November 20,

than foundation giving and estate planning, which most institutions represented depend on in some way, rather than "going commercial."

At the Council meeting on Sept 1, budgets were approved, nominations for the officers, Executive Committee and Council were made, recommendations for the locations of the 1998 and 2000 Congresses were made, the suggested modifications of the SIBMAS rules were approved in principle (pending approval of the General Assembly), and the successful publication of the First Edition of the new SIBMAS International Directory of Libraries and Museums of Performing Arts was discussed.

At the Directory Commission meeting later in the week, it was suggested that in order to establish more uniformity in the entries for later editions, that countries concerned with this problem would establish committees to examine the directory entries and send their

1996 through April 26, 1997 in the Performing Arts Library's Main Gallery, will feature sketches and renderings, as well as correspondence with notable Mielziner collaborators. (On December 4th, Mary will also present a free public program on Mielziner at the Performing Arts Library).

Henderson concluded with the observation that she could never undertake such a massive project if she didn't genuinely like the person whose life she was tracing. Her presentation demonstrated not only her respect and admiration for Jo Mielziner, the designer, but a deep affection for Jo Mielziner, the individual. --**Kevin Winkler**

comments to **Paul Ulrich** in Berlin. Other suggestions included updating the Directory every 4 years, instead of two.

At the General Assembly, most of the Council recommendations were approved, except the revision of the SIBMAS rules. The most radical change in the proposal was the elimination of National Centres and giving every individual member one vote (including one vote for each institutional member). This had been approved by the Council twice, but at the General Assembly, a group of members representing countries with strong National Centers used the present weighted votes to defeat the change in the rules. Another subcommittee of the Council will be appointed by the new SIBMAS president, **Noelle Guibert**, head of the Department des Arts de Spectacle of the **Bibliothèque Nationale**, to re-examine the rules once again.

Other new SIBMAS officers are **Claire Hudson** (**Theatre Museum**, London)

and **Maria Theresa Iovinelli** (**Biblioteca e Raccolta Teatrale de Burcardo**, Rome), Vice Presidents, and **Willem Rodenhuis** (**University of Amsterdam**), Secretary General. **Georg Geldner** (**Austrian Theatre Museum**, Vienna) remains as Treasurer/Membership Secretary. **Rosabel Wang** (**Theatre Research Data Center**, Brooklyn College) was the only United State representative elected to the Council. I hope that TLA members will support

Rosabel in her representation of the United States in this most important international organization.

The General Assembly approved the Theatre Museum in London, England, as the site for the 1998 Congress (either directly before or after the 1998 Congress for the International Federation for Theatre Research in Canterbury, which will probably be July 6-13. The site for the 2000 Congress will be Paris, France, probably at the

new Bibliotheque de France, dates to be determined.

This was my last SIBMAS Congress in an official capacity. My years working to produce a new International Directory, and representing TLA on the Council, I believe, were well spent. I hope that there will continue to be a close relationship between TLA and SIBMAS and among the individual members of both as well. --**Richard M. Buck**

BOOKS RECEIVED:

Act One '95, the Complete Plays. A Festival of New One-Act Plays, April 25-June 26, 1995 at the Ensemble Studio Theatre. Edited by Marisa Smith. (Contemporary Playwrights Series). Lyme, NH: Smith and Kraus, 1996. ISBN: 1-880399-97-0, paper, \$17.95.

Horton Foote. *Collected Plays: Vol. II*. (Contemporary Playwrights Series). Lyme, NH: Smith & Kraus, 1996. ISBN: 1-57525-016-0, paper, \$19.95. Includes *The Trip to Bountiful*, *The Chase*, *The Traveling Lady* and *The Roads to Home*.

John Guare. *Collected Works: Vol. I: The War against the Kitchen Sink*. (Contemporary Playwrights Series). Lyme, NH: Smith & Kraus, 1996. ISBN 1-57525-031-4, paper, \$19.95. Includes *Cop-Out*, *Home Fires*, *Marco Polo Sings a Solo*, *Moon under Miami* and *Rich and Famous*.

Terrence McNally. *Collected Plays: Volume II*. (Contemporary Playwrights Series) Lyme, NH: Smith & Kraus, 1996. ISBN: 1-57525-061-6, paper, \$14.95 ; 1-57525-093-4, cloth, \$25.00. Includes original uncut versions of *And Things That Go Bump in the Night* and *Where Has Tommy Flowers Gone?*

Fredi Olster & Rick Hamilton. *Discovering Shakespeare: A Midsummer Night's Dream*. A Workbook for Students and Teachers. Lyme, NH: Smith & Kraus, 1996. ISBN: 1-57525-042-X, paper, \$19.95.

Fredi Olster & Rick Hamilton. *Discovering Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet*. A Workbook for Students and Teachers. Lyme, NH: Smith & Kraus, 1996. ISBN: 1-57525-044-6, paper, \$19.95.

MEMBER NEWS

James Fisher (**Wabash College**) is completing work on two books: *Stephen Sondheim: A Research and Production Sourcebook* (Greenwood Press) and *Before the Theory: Edward Gordon Craig's First Productions (1900-1906)*. Jim is also editing Vol.3 of the *Puppetry Yearbook* (to be published by the Edwin Mellen Press).

Stephen Johnson (**McMaster University**) was invited to speak at the Victoria and Albert Museum's Victorian Seminar Series in February 1996. His paper was called, "Disappearing Acts: The Problem of Victorian Performance Biography in the Case of the Black Dancer, William Henry Lane, 'Master

Juba'(fl.1848)." He also gave a paper at the Mid-America Theatre Conference entitled "Myself and Uncle Josh at the Moving Picture Show: Notes on Early Film and the Technology of the Scrim," and at the annual conference of the Association for Canadian Theatre Research, "Uncle Tom and the Minstrels: The Exhibition of Race on Stage in Canada West during the American Civil War" (to be published in the journal *Kunapipi*). He continues to edit *Theatre Research in Canada/Recherches théâtrale au Canada*, and is co-artistic director of The Environmental Theatre Workshop, for which he recently produced "The Waters of Paradise" for performance at the International Association of Great Lakes Research at Erindale College, Toronto.

Laurence Senelick (**Tufts University**) contributed the articles on **G.W.L. Fox**, **Julian Eltinge** and **Neil Burgess** to *American National Biography* (Oxford University Press); on **Andrew Ducrow** and **Jenny Hill** to the *New Dictionary of National Biography* (Cambridge University Press); on **F. Anstey** to *The Encyclopedia of British Humorists*; and the bibliographies of **F. Anstey** and **James Maddison Morton** to the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature*. He was appointed to the Advisory Boards of *Theatre Survey* and

Theatre Research International; and to the newly-founded Stanislavsky Institute at Rose Bruford College, London.

Jane Suda (NYPL) has been appointed Acting Treasurer of TLA to fill Dick Buck's unexpired term. Jane recently welcomed a new addition, daughter **Sylvia Cheever**, to her family.

Sara Velez (NYPL) recently curated an exhibition entitled "Voices of Spain," featuring sound recordings, record jackets, magazines, books & photos from the **Rodgers & Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, NYPL**. Highlights included works of **Manuel de Falla** and **Federico Garcia Lorca**. Velez also gave a lecture/demonstration entitled "Federico Garcia Lorca and Music and Dance," on June 20, 1996 in the Bruno Walter Auditorium, NYPL.

COLLECTIONS

San Antonio Public Library. In a project of the Friends of the Library, under the management of TLA member **John Igo**, the Performing Arts Archive of the San Antonio P.L. has been divided. Categories I-VI, which include some periodicals, the Toby Show, the Minstrel Show, and all San Antonio and Texas materials, are to be held in the Texana Department of the Central Library downtown. The bulk of the collection, Categories VII-LV, have been donated by the Friends to the **University of the Incarnate Word**, San Antonio. The donation includes material on Theatre in New York, the U.S., London, and the British Isles, Shakespeare, English Language Theatre in the Commonwealth and the rest of the world, Foreign Language Theatre, Dance, Music, Opera, Film and Television, Toy Theatres and other specialties. Theatre Reference books, periodicals, recordings and other

support items are also being transferred with the approximately 15,000 file folders. The former manager is now Broker of Performing Arts materials, routing donations; he will serve as advisor to the archive at Incarnate Word.

PERFORMING ARTS RESOURCES VOL. 20 on D E N I S H A W N COLLECTIONS

PAR 20 will be published in the early part of 1997. The theme of the volume is Denishawn [See p.1, for report]. **PLEASE DO NOT CLAIM UNTIL AFTER JUNE 1997.**

PLEASURE GARDENS - CALL FOR PAPERS

For a forthcoming *Performing Arts Resources* (PAR) volume on on **Pleasure Gardens**, the Publications Committee seeks research papers on 19th and 20th century versions of Pleasure Gardens, American or European. Please submit proposals to: Publications Committee, c/o Maryann Chach, Shubert Archive, 149 W. 45th St., NYC 10036.

TLA'S DISTINGUISHED LIBRARIAN AWARD Call for Nominations for 1996 Award

The 1996 Distinguished Librarian Award will be presented in May of 1997 at the ceremony for the Theatre Library Association-George Freedley Awards. Past award winners were Paul Myers and Dorothy Swerdlove, both former curators of the Theatre Collection, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts. The Award acknowledges and honors a member of our profession -- including but not limited to librarians, curators, scholars or collectors -- who has made an outstanding and significant contribution to performing arts librarianship. This contribution may be either a single achievement or a career of dedicated service to the field and profession. Nominations are invited from our membership at large. Please indicate the name of the person you wish to see honored along with a brief description of the person's contribution.

Nominations should be sent to:

Bob Taylor, Curator, Billy Rose Theatre Collection
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
40 Lincoln Center Plaza
New York, NY 10023-7498

CALENDAR

March 13-16, 1997, Mid-America Theatre Conference "What Makes Theatre Popular?" at The Bismarck Hotel, Chicago, IL. Keynote speaker: Brooks McNamara. Contact: Noreen Barnes-McLain, Secretary-Treasurer, MATC, Dept. of Theater - Mail Code 6608, Communications Building 1033, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901-6608. Tel.: 618-453-7594. Fax: 618-453-7714 E-Mail: lacuna@siucvmb.siu.edu

May 1997 TLA-Freedley Awards and annual meeting of the Theatre Library Association. Exact date, time and location To Be Announced.

June 23-28, 1997, Theatres and Cultures in the World: Theories and Practices in Today's Theatre. Annual Conference of the International Federation for Theatre Research (IFTR-FIRT). Contact: IFTR/FIRT Conference: Cholula 1997, Universidad de las Américas-Puebla/Departamento de Artes, Santa Catarina Mártir s/n, Apartado Postal 100, Cholula 72820, Puebla, México Tel.: (22) 29 31 74 Fax: (22) 29 31 01 e-mail: firt97@udlapvms.pue.udla.mx

July 17-20, 1997, Inter-American Conference on Black Music Research "Black Music of the West Indies and Latin America," at The Swissôtel Chicago, 323 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL. Contact: Center for Black Music Research, Columbia College, 600 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605-1996. Tel.: 312-663-1600, ext. 5559; Fax: 312-663-9019.

November 13-16, 1997, The American Society of Theatre Research-Theatre Library Association meeting in San Antonio, TX. Eight seminars. "No Theme" conference.

Officers of the **Theatre Library Association** (founded 1937): President, **Geraldine Duclow**, Head, Theatre Collection, Free Library of Philadelphia; Vice President, **Robert Taylor**, Curator, Theatre Collection, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; Executive Secretary, **Maryann Chach**, Shubert Archive; Treasurer, **Richard M. Buck**, Assistant to the Executive Director, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; Recording Secretary, **Rosemary L. Cullen**, Brown University.

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