

BROADSIDE

NEWSLETTER OF THE THEATRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Vol. 33, No. 2 TLA's 69th Anniversary Year Fall 2005

Madeleine Nichols Addresses TLA

Madeleine Nichols, distinguished retiring Curator of the Jerome Robbins Dance Collection of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, addressed the TLA membership, following the October 28th Business Meeting. In the gracious atmosphere of Sardi's Penthouse in Manhattan, Ms. Nichols held the audience with her comments on twenty-first century challenges to librarians in the fundamental activities of acquisition and preservation.



Marti LoMonaco

Madeleine Nichols

In the past, Ms. Nichols explained, research librarians focused on a five-point process, which included identifying materials, acquiring them, and processing or cataloging them, facilitating the efficient use of materials by researchers, and, finally, preserving them. Development offices in large libraries organized their efforts and energy to excel in these separate areas. However, the process has recently undergone a radical modification in the digital realm. Ingest has become a key concept, suggesting that the process must be adapted, condensing its earliest stage to its final one, to suit the format and conditions of the future use of materials.

The gradual awareness of the need for the development of new frontiers in librarianship was sharply focused for Ms. Nichols by a request from the Mellon Foundation to the New York Public Library to create a Dance Needs Analysis. Ms. Nichols and her colleagues at NYPL, drawing upon the expertise of dancers and other performers, scholars, attorneys, library directors and technical experts, formed six working groups. Together they have articulated a comprehensive statement of goals and have formulated an initial two-year plan. Members of the six groups

agreed early in the project that they would have to re-conceptualize such fundamental terms as time, standards, and cataloging, thus allowing them to move beyond the linear thinking of earlier days to a consideration of multiple goals.

Among the new developments in research librarianship, Ms. Nichols mentioned the use of feedback loops that are uncurated. If a library supports such a site, material submitted by a wide range of researchers, practitioners and collectors may be made available to users. Such a development, Ms. Nichols suggested, reverses one hundred years of professional thinking on the development and use of a research collection. Other extensions of the role of research libraries have included studies of how to make widely available to users the work of numerous dance companies that have documented their performances on videotape. Topics under consideration include methods of organizing the videotapes, the feasibility of a centralized site for the distribution of tapes, and the possibility of the research library writing a template to describe the videos.

Copyright law has become an area of increasing significance to the research librarian. Ms. Nichols, who holds a law degree and is expert in copyright law, spoke of the urgent need for the librarian to advocate fair use and recommended the Stanford University website, <http://fairuse.stanford.edu>, as one tool the research librarian might use to keep abreast of current copyright issues. Peppering her remarks with references to contemporary artists such as Mikhail Baryshnikov and Elizabeth Streb, who hold divergent views on the use of their material, she cited the value of a template to protect the work of the creator and to satisfy the needs of students and devotees of dance.

Scanning current issues in research librarianship, Ms. Nichols called the possibility of cataloging by image "a drumbeat" at professional meetings and referred to current research projects on sound and image indexing;

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Editor's Note:

Submission deadline for the Spring 2006 issue is March 17, 2006.

Ellen Truax

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in addition, she cited the possibility of motion indexing and visual indexing. She spoke enthusiastically of the close connection between West African dance and contemporary American forms, and she described the current project of the Jerome Robbins Dance Collection: working with Jacob's Pillow, the Library of Congress and selected other libraries in the Dance Heritage Coalition, New York Public Library is to select five videos of dance performance and to make them available digitally to the others; the other libraries will reciprocate. The project thus demonstrates selection criteria, technical sophistication, and protection of the rights of the creator.

In response to questions and comments from an enthusiastic audience, Ms. Nichols noted the heightened cooperation among research libraries and the increased number of partnerships that have developed as a result of the creation of the new frontiers in research librarianship. She cited the achievements of TLA in facilitating relationships between and among individuals and groups, particularly in its work with SIBMAS and IFTR.

President Marti LoMonaco, in appreciation of Ms. Nichols' invaluable contributions to research librarianship and to TLA, in particular, presented her with a crystal clock, appropriately engraved "With deep gratitude and best wishes" on the occasion of her upcoming retirement. The evening concluded with a congratulatory reception.

Phyllis Dircks

BROADSIDE PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

Broadside is the principal medium through which the Theatre Library Association communicates news, activities, policies, and procedures. Collectively, past issues also provide historical information about the organization and the profession of performing arts librarianship. *Broadside* has no ambition to serve as a scholarly journal. Scholarly and other articles or monographs may be considered for TLA's other principal publication, *Performing Arts Resources*.

In addition, *Broadside* serves as a means for the exchange among members of information that advances the mission of the organization. Examples of this include short news items about recent activities of both individual and institutional members; short reviews of relevant books and other resources; news of relevant exhibits, conferences, and other developments in performing arts librarianship, collections, and scholarship.

In keeping with the aims of a newsletter, and to help the editor and the TLA Publications Committee to maintain fair and consistent editorial policies, the Publications

Committee has developed the following guidelines.

1. Priority in the publication of articles will be given to the association's officers, members of the Board, and chairs of committees. These articles provide the most important means by which the leadership of the association communicates recent Board decisions, upcoming TLA-sponsored events, appeals for member involvement, etc.
2. TLA members in good standing are encouraged to submit news items that are in keeping with the statement above. All submissions are subject to editing for length, clarity, and factual confirmation.
3. Letters to the editor are encouraged, but must be limited to 200 words, due to space considerations.
4. Reviews of books or other resources are an excellent way for members to contribute to TLA and the profession. Reviews should be limited to 500 words and should include a concise summary of the resource, a comparison of it to similar resources, and a brief evaluation. Suggestions and unsolicited reviews should be sent to the Book Review Editor.
5. The copyright of all articles published in *Broadside* will be owned by TLA. Permission to re-publish an article may be requested from the Editor.
6. Ideas for articles—other than brief news items, book reviews, or submissions from officers and committee chairs—should be submitted to the Editor in advance in order to allow sufficient time to plan layout, provide constructive suggestions, and occasionally seek guidance from the Publications Committee. Articles should relate to performing arts libraries, library resources, or related topics in performing arts scholarship, rather than to general performing arts topics.

Rob Melton

Chair, Publications Committee

New Book Review Editor Appointed

The Publications Committee is pleased to announce that Professor **James Fisher** of Wabash College's Theater Department has agreed to assume the duties of the newly-created position of Book Review Editor for *Broadside*, effective with the next issue. Professor Fisher, who is also beginning a 3-year term on TLA's Board in 2006, is the author of *The Theatre of Yesterday and Tomorrow: Commedia dell'Arte on the Modern Stage* (Edwin Mellen, 1992), *The Theater of Tony Kushner: Living Past Hope* (Routledge, 2001), and three volumes—*Al Jolson* and *Spencer Tracy*, both 1994, and *Eddie Cantor*, 1997—in Greenwood Press's *Bio-Bibliographies in the Performing Arts Series*. For more information about (and pictures of) Jim, see his personal webpage: <http://persweb.wabash.edu/facstaff/fisherj/new/>

The idea of creating a new "sub-editor" position to solicit, coordinate, and edit book reviews comes about largely in acknowledgment of the fact that our current

indomitable editor, Ellen Truax—who also doubles as TLA's Webmaster—was simply being asked to do too much for us! Jim will be able to devote sole attention to soliciting books and reviews, and Ellen will have more time to devote to writing, editing, and “mastering” our Web content.

Although we still hope to obtain occasional review copies from publishers, Jim and the Publications Committee would like to urge all TLA members to consider reviewing new books that they see in their own libraries or bookstores for *Broadside*. To accommodate as many reviews as possible, reviews should be limited to 500 words and should therefore focus on providing a concise summary of the book's thesis or scope, a comparison to any similar books, and a brief recommendation as to whether libraries, scholars, or collectors should acquire or read the book. Please let Jim know of your interest in reviewing a book before you submit it. Contact him at: fisherj@wabash.edu .

We are pleased to add Jim's expertise as a scholar, reader, and reviewer to our publication.

Rob Melton

PRESIDENT'S REPORT—October 2005

Greetings to all! This report will highlight the events of three recent meetings: the Fall Executive Board and Annual Business Meetings, both held on Friday, October 27, at Sardi's Penthouse in New York City and the ASTR-TLA Annual Conference, held in Toronto, Canada, November 10-13.

Fall Executive Board Meeting:

I am pleased to report that most of the initiatives and on-going concerns we discussed at our meeting are being actively pursued and are reported on elsewhere in this edition of *Broadside*. These include TLA's relationship with ASTR, Symposium 2007, new Membership drive, Call for Nominees for the Distinguished Librarian Award, *In Media Res*, and a Special Invitation to TLA Members to view the Brander Matthews Museum Exhibition at Columbia.

One board action item that we request all of you to assist with is TLA's declining membership. Treasurer Paul Newman reports that as of September 16, 2005, we had only 282 paid memberships as compared to 364 in September 2000. The 2005 total includes 140 institutional, 115 personal and 27 non-salaried members; in 2000, there were 182 personal members (at that time, there wasn't a separate non-salaried category) and 182 institutional members. We suspect that institutions, many of which are academic libraries, are eliminating as many memberships as they can in order to save money. I know from personal experience, however, that if faculty and staff insist that certain memberships remain intact, the libraries usually will assent. Since the TLA Membership for institutions is so inexpensive—it's still cheap at our new rate of \$40 per year (as of 1 January 2006) as opposed to the hundreds or thousands of dollars it costs to maintain memberships in organizations/journals in the sciences—this should be an easy argument to make. Please check with your libraries and make sure that

TLA is still an active member. If not, please advocate that your institution join or, as the case may be, re-join! If the library staff has had trouble with our new policies regarding the occasional publication of *PAR* or has not received recent issues, please have him/her contact our secretary, Nancy Friedland. As to recruiting more personal members, please see Membership Chair Judy Markowitz's insert in this issue.

Publications: On a happy note, Newman reported that he deposited a \$1165 royalty check from McFarland for sales of *PAR 23, American Puppetry*, which was also awarded a recommendation by *Choice*. We have also been selling copies of *PAR 24, Performance Documentation and Preservation in an Online Environment*. *PAR 25, Lighting Design* should go to press in February 2006. We anticipate that *PAR 26* will be the proceedings of Symposium 2007 and there are numerous suggestions for future issues including foci on costume design, online resources, set design and architecture, and resources for teachers. The Publications Committee welcomes your additional suggestions, particularly if you would like to edit a volume. Contact Rob Melton, chair, at rmelton@ucsd.library.edu for more information.

Regarding *Broadside*, we have changed our publication schedule from 4 to 3 issues a year to coincide with our Executive Board meetings. We also would like you to note the new publications guidelines published in this edition. Finally, we continue to debate whether *Broadside* should be published digitally. This would streamline the process and save the association postage costs. We could print out hard copies of the newsletter and send them to members without computer access. Please let us know your thoughts.

Programming: We were pleased to welcome Angela Weaver, head of the Drama Library at the University of Washington, and Colleen Reilly, a doctoral candidate at the University of Pittsburgh, to present their proposal for the TLA program at the American Library Association's 2006 Annual Conference in New Orleans (yes, in case you hadn't heard, ALA has affirmed its commitment to convening in New Orleans next year!). The Board enthusiastically approved their excellent proposal and thanked Angela and Colleen for taking the lead in proposing this panel.

I also reported on the offer we received from Claire Hudson, president of SIBMAS, to hold a joint conference in 2010. Assuming that construction has been completed, SIBMAS would like to hold the event at the new Museum of the Performing Arts in San Francisco; second choice would be a venue in New York City. We are eager to pursue this venture and in order to learn more about how SIBMAS conducts its conferences, I hope to represent TLA at the SIBMAS conference in Vienna in August 2006. Finally, we have chosen Friday, June 2 as the date for the 2006 Book Awards, to be held once again at the Bruno Walter Auditorium at the Library for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center. Book Awards chairman Dick Wall has asked us to bring significant books from small presses, with which he may not be in contact, to his attention for consideration for the 2005 award. You can contact him at Queens College/CUNY Library, (718) 997-3672 or

via e-mail to richard.wall@qc.cuny.edu.

Annual Business Meeting

We had a good turnout for the Annual Business Meeting, no doubt to hear our distinguished guest speaker, Madeleine Nichols, outgoing curator of the Jerome Robbins Dance Division at the Library for the Performing Arts. In addition to summarizing the information cited above, I was pleased to announce our election results. All of our By-Laws Amendments, as well as the Revised Mission Statement, passed unanimously. Look for these changes on our website. I was also pleased to announce the election of new board members, who will serve 3-year terms, 2006-2008: Nena Couch, James Fisher, Mark C. Maniak (re-elected), Catherine Ritchie, and Angela Weaver. Finally, I saluted our distinguished out-going board members Pamela Bloom, Maryann Chach, Annette Fern and Louis Rachow, all of whom have served the association well over the course of many years. Many thanks, Pamela, Maryann, Annette and Louis, for your dedication and energies beyond the call of duty!

ASTR-TLA Conference

I am happy to report that TLA is gaining a more active presence at the conference itself and in the all-important planning sessions for future conferences. Tobin Nellhaus, our out-going liaison, has been a terrific advocate for TLA in the ASTR Executive Committee meetings and, as a result of his efforts, a major revision occurred in two proposed ASTR By-Law amendments. ASTR has planned the creation of two new committees, one on conferences and its function and the second as a program committee for specific conferences, both of which are being put forth to the membership for a formal vote. Through Tobin's advocacy, "a Theatre Library Association representative," has been added to the list of committee members in each instance. Should these amendments pass, we determined at the conference that Vice President Kenneth Schlesinger will serve on the Committee on Conferences in his capacity as chair of our newly renamed Conference Planning Committee, and Susan Brady, who has agreed to succeed Tobin as TLA Liaison to the ASTR Executive Committee, will serve on the Program Committee. Many thanks to all for your willingness to serve.

As you will read elsewhere in this issue of *Broadside*, both the TLA Plenary and Brown Bag sessions were well planned, well executed, and well attended sessions that continued to gain huzzahs from conference-goers throughout the weekend. TLA was also pleased to co-sponsor a fascinating tour of the historic Winter Garden and Elgin Theatres, which constitute the only double-decker theatre of its kind in the world. The Winter Garden is an enclosed roof garden theatre, decorated in the grand tradition of outdoor roof gardens, replete with preserved birch tree boughs entwined with colored lights suspended from the ceiling, that sits atop the larger Elgin below. Both theatres have been fully restored and are in active use thanks to the efforts of the Ontario Heritage Foundation which owns and operates both houses. Some of us attended Opera Atelier's marvelous production of Jean-Baptiste Lully's

seldom performed opera, *Armide*, in the Elgin, which attested to the hall's excellent sightlines and acoustics. TLA also hosted our annual Hospitality Suite evening which was well attended and gave both new and old members an opportunity to chat and relax over wine and munchies. Finally and significantly, the TLA President now has a standard "slot" to address the full conference during the Awards Luncheon. Kevin Winkler inaugurated this new precedent last year in Las Vegas and I was pleased to continue the tradition in Toronto. For many of you who felt that TLA has been marginalized at this "joint" conference in the past, I think you will be pleased to learn that we are finally coming into our own. I'd like to thank Kenneth Schlesinger and Susan Brady for chairing our two excellent sessions and Tobin Nellhaus, who is now taking over as ASTR Treasurer while fortunately still remaining on the TLA Board, for their yeoman's service in making this conference such a glowing success.

Winter Executive Board Meeting and Exhibition at Columbia

All TLA members are invited to attend the Winter Executive Board Meeting to be held at Columbia University's Butler Library, 11:30 AM to 6:00 PM, on Friday, February 17, 2006, in conjunction with the *Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum Exhibition*, which has been extended for our benefit (see below).

Marti LoMonaco, President

A Special Invitation to TLA Members

The Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Columbia University opened a wonderful exhibition of theatre posters, prints, photographs, puppets, masks, set models, manuscripts, books, and ephemera in September 2005 celebrating the history of one of the oldest theatre collections in the United States. James Brander Matthews (1852-1929), the nation's first professor of drama, amassed a large collection of theatre memorabilia as a teaching tool to better acquaint his students with the artifacts, images, and texts of the theatrical past. He donated his collection to Columbia upon his death to encourage the burgeoning study of worldwide theatre history. A generous endowment allowed the museum's holdings to grow long after Brander's death. The Dramatic Museum was housed in Low Library at Columbia until it was closed in 1971; since then the collections have been located in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

The exhibition offers an overview of the Dramatic Museum's collections and a peek at some truly delectable items. Included are a five-foot tall marionette of Don Quixote designed by American puppet maker Remo Bufano in 1924 for the premiere of Manuel de Falla's operetta *El Retablo de Maese Pedro* (*Master Peter's Puppet Show*); set and costume designs by Joseph Urban, James Woodman Thompson and Leslie Powell; a set of French Punch and Judy puppets purchased in Paris in 1925, including a character based on Charlie Chaplin; a manuscript of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *School For Scandal*; 19th-century armored Sicilian puppets made for folk performances of the epic poem *Orlando Furioso*; and costume sketches by

Caspar Neher for a production of *Macbeth* in the early 1950s.

Although the exhibition was slated to close on January 27, 2006, curator Jean Ashton and Jennifer Lee of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, have worked with TLA's indefatigable secretary, Nancy Friedland, to keep the exhibition intact so that TLA Members can view it on Friday, February 17, when we convene at Columbia for our winter board meeting. We will meet at the Kempner Gallery in the Rare Book and Manuscript Library on the sixth floor of Butler Library on the main campus (Morningside) at Columbia at 10:00 AM to view the exhibition; we hope that curator Jean Ashton will be on hand to give us a personal tour. Our business meeting will begin at 11:30 AM in a room one floor below the Gallery and will run until 6:00 PM (with a break for lunch). All members are invited to join us both at the exhibition and for the meeting. Please contact Nancy Friedland at Columbia University, e-mail nef4@columbia.edu or telephone (212) 854-7402, to let us know you're coming.

On behalf of TLA, I would like to extend our warmest thanks to both Jean Ashton and Jennifer Lee for making these special arrangements and our hearty congratulations. Since I was honored to be at the exhibition's opening on September 30, I can assure you that this is one show not to be missed.

Marti LoMonaco

HOW TO CONTACT THE TLA BOARD

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c/o The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
40 Lincoln Center Plaza
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TLA Announces Board Election Results

Congratulations to the five newly elected members to Theatre Library Association's Board of Directors: Nena Couch, James Fisher, Mark C. Maniak, Catherine Ritchie, and Angela Weaver. They will serve three-year terms from 2006-2008. Their bios follow.

TLA President Marti LoMonaco gives special thanks to departing Board members Pamela Bloom, Maryann Chach, Annette Fern, and Louis Rachow for their dedication and hard work over the past several years. She also acknowledges the other candidates for the Board, who pledged their commitment to volunteer for this organization, as well as to Mark Maniak, Chair of the Nominations Committee.

NENA COUCH is Professor at The Ohio State University Libraries, and Curator of The Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute. She received the B.A. and M.M. degrees from George Peabody College for Teachers and the M.L.S. from Vanderbilt University. Her publications include *The Humanities and the Library* (co-edited with Nancy Allen); "Dance Collections" in *Managing Performing Arts Collections in Academic and Public Libraries*; *Sidney Kingsley: Five Prizewinning Plays* (editor); articles on Twyla Tharp and "The Catherine Wheel" in *The International Dictionary of Modern Dance*; "Western European Renaissance and Baroque Dance" in *A Core Collection in Dance*; *Dance from the Quill* (with Karen Eliot, Tim Glenn and A. William Smith); and others. With Karen Eliot (OSU Department of Dance faculty), Ms. Couch adapted Alexander Pope's poem "The Rape of the Lock" as a Baroque-style ballet, reconstructing dance notations from the period as well as choreographing in the style. As a performer she has appeared in the United States and Canada, and was a founding member of the Baroque dance troupe Les Menus Plaisirs. Ms. Couch was the 2000 recipient of the Howard D. Rothschild Fellowship for Research in Dance, awarded by the Harvard Theatre Collection.

JAMES FISHER is Professor of Theater at Wabash College (Crawfordsville, Indiana), where he teaches a range of courses in theater history, dramatic literature, criticism, and theory and directs (recent productions include Plautus's *The Braggart Soldier*, the musical *1776*, David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, and others). At Wabash, he was the McLain/McTurnan/Arnold Research Scholar in 1999-2000 and 1987-1988 and the LaFollette Lecturer in 1992-93. In 1997, he was named "Indiana Theatre Person of the Year" for 1996 by the Indiana Theatre Association, an award given to "particular individuals who have contributed to the cooperative development of theatre at all levels within the state of Indiana." He is the author of several books, including the forthcoming encyclopedic work, *The Historical Dictionary of the American Theater, Modernism, 1880-1930* (with Felicia Hardison Londré); *The Theater of Tony Kushner: Living Past Hope* (NY: Routledge, 2001 [hardback], 2002 [paperback with new preface]); biobibliographies of Al Jolson (1994), Spencer Tracy (1994), and Eddie Cantor (1997) for Greenwood Press (Westport, CT); and *The Theater of Yesterday and Tomorrow: Commedia dell'arte on the Modern Stage*

(Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992). He is also editor of the *Puppetry Yearbook* and served for nearly twenty years as book review editor of the *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*. He is on the editorial board of the Southeastern Theater Conference's *Theatre Symposium* and has published on theater and film in a wide variety of publications.

MARK C. MANIAK is Collections Archivist for the Archives and Special Collections Department at Williams College. Prior to that he was at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts for seven years where he worked as a Library Technical Assistant, Archival Assistant and Senior Archivist, all in the Billy Rose Theatre Collection. He is a member of the New England Archivists, Society of the American Archivists and the Mid-Atlantic Archives Conference, where he has served on the Program Committee. In addition to his library and archival work he has performed in New York with his own company, White Noise Theatre, at various venues in New York, including PS 122, the Performing Garage, and the Ohio Theatre Space, among others. He has also worked as an independent actor, stage manager, technical director and set and lighting designer, both in New York and regionally. For ten years he worked as an actor/teacher with the award winning Grumbling Gryphons Traveling Children's Theatre, touring in the northeast, as well as the mid-Atlantic and southeast states, Florida and California.

CATHERINE RITCHIE is the Theatre Librarian in the Fine Arts Division of the Dallas (TX) Public Library, responsible for reference services, collection development in both print and audio-visual formats, and maintenance of special collections in theatre, film, and television; she has been at Dallas since 2000. She has a B.A. in English, with departmental honors, from Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota, along with Masters degrees in both English and Library Science from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. Prior to her time in Dallas, she worked for 12 years in the adult services department of the Decatur (IL) Public Library, before resigning in 1998 to obtain a Certificate of Advanced Study in library collection development from the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign.

ANGELA WEAVER is currently the Head of the Drama Library at the University of Washington. Prior to her appointment, she held the position of Fine and Performing Arts Librarian at George Mason University; before that, she was employed at the University of Mississippi as the Library Instruction Coordinator and Theatre and Dance Bibliographer. She received an M.L.S. from Rutgers University, an M.F.A. in Playwriting from the University of California, San Diego, and an A.B. in Psychology from Duke University. She has written book reviews; published an exploratory study on reference librarians and personal web pages; and contributed a chapter to a book of conference proceedings on library instruction. In addition, she has been a Regional Stringer for *Broadside*, a past editor of the "Re: Sources" section of *Theatre Survey*, and has been writing RILM abstracts for the past two years. Her interests are African American theatre, particularly, female African American playwrights, Japanese theatre and culture, and science fiction. She has had both staged readings and full productions of her plays and

her first screenplay was a semi-finalist in the Chesterfield Writer's Film Project.

Kenneth Schlesinger,
Vice-President

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: DISTINGUISHED LIBRARIAN AWARD

Please give your thoughtful consideration to nominations for the Theatre Library Association's "Distinguished Service in Performing Arts Librarianship Award."

Deadline for nominations: **January 31, 2006.**

The award will be given at TLA's Book Awards in June 2006. Nominations should be sent to:

cdee@nypl.org

or

Theatre Library Association
c/o The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
40 Lincoln Center Plaza
New York, NY 10023

Camille Croce Dee

CONFERENCE REPORTS

TLA Brown Bag at ASTR/TLA Conference in Toronto, Nov. 10-13

TLA Brown Bag, "Worth (at least) a Thousand Words: Finding and Using Visual Images", Nov. 11, 2005

On a day full of remembrance (Veterans Day in the US, Remembrance Day in Canada), TLA presented a Brown Bag session at the ASTR/TLA Conference in Toronto that offered advice on researching and capturing images online, as well as detailing two distinct collections that also dealt with the vagaries of capturing memory. Susan Brady, Project Archivist in the Arts Library at Yale University, and also the coordinator of the session, gave some practical advice on conducting research for images online. Sophie Nield, Head of the Centre for Excellence in Training for Theatre at the Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London, England and Tobin Nellhaus, also of Yale University and the In Medias Res project gave overviews of collections that documented, both in images and text, the ephemeral nature of live performance.

Susan Brady started out with an overall approach to conducting research on the Internet. She began by giving examples of "free" sources by conducting a Google search. In the course of her Google demonstration she pointed out the problems with such a wide-open search and the lack of "authority control" to help narrow down the search terms. A search under Mabou Mines, the longstanding and influential experimental theatre company in New York City, not only brought up photos of their productions but also images of Mabou Mines, Nova Scotia. The Library Of Congress (LOC) American Memory site had better control by allowing searching by topic, and Susan gave a quick, but informative, breakdown of the site. Susan also pointed out that searches on Google often presented copyright issues that may not be so obvious at first glance.

Other free sites included individual libraries, art galleries/museums (such as the National Portrait Gallery), and special collections. Susan gave a good illustration of what to expect when searching these various institutions, including the mechanics of searching, what to expect when the image comes up, the type of metadata associated with the image, and how to obtain copies. She also explained the peculiarities one would encounter with certain institutions, such as galleries/ museums offering no images of living artists. Sources that required a payment to access them included databases and indexes, which are usually available by subscription. The Academic Search Premiere, offered by EBSCO, is a good interdisciplinary source, she noted. Some examples of databases she gave included the Associated Press, for contemporary images, and 18th Century Online for period images. Commercial sites, she pointed out, require some royalty fee, but often offer limited choices, and not always very exciting ones, either. Some of the more art oriented ones include the Corbis (<http://pro.corbis.com/>) and the Getty Archive (<http://creative.gettyimages.com/source/frontdoor/DefaultImages.aspx>) Websites.

Some final advice imparted by Susan included using the website WATCH (Writers, Artists, and their Copyright Holders) at <http://tyler.hrc.utexas.edu/> for copyright help and information. She also encouraged researchers to look for images early on in the research process, to allow for time to gain permission and note sources as you find an image you might want to use. Also, to not take a one size fits all approach to obtaining images since each institution, and even different repositories within an institution, have their own policy when it comes to gaining access to images. She also noted that images downloaded from the Internet may look "very different when projected on a screen in the classroom", depending on the resolution. To supplement her presentation, Susan handed out a sheet listing the URLs for a number of the sites she discussed.

Sophie Nield took a very different approach, detailing the process involved in creating a catalogue, from scratch, and digitizing parts of a large collection, a major part of which is ephemera. The collection that she has been involved in since 2002, through an Arts and Humanities Research Council grant, is the Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchenson Theatre Collection (MMTC), one of the largest collections of theatre and performance related material in the UK. The collection came about through the personal and professional relationship of Mander and Mitchenson, actors who met in the 1930s while working on a production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Both were avid collectors who through the course of a nearly fifty year relationship amassed a collection that is estimated to contain a million items of ephemera and 15,000 books. The material includes photographs, playbills, newspaper clippings and original documents covering the period from the eighteenth century to the present. It is particularly strong in material covering the theatre in London during the Victorian and Edwardian periods. It also contains files on regional theatres, actors, actresses, and subjects such as the circus, puppetry

and pantomime, as well as props and costumes, including those belonging to Henry Irving and others.

Sophie was given a grant in 2002 to develop an online catalog to create a form of access to this rich repository. Her presentation dealt with the issues involved in creating a catalog from scratch, including defining the terms of description, the different levels of description (collection and item level) and the decision process in determining which items to digitize. Being a scholar rather than a librarian or archivist, she presented this process from a unique and unusual perspective. There will be 1,850 collection level records and 6,000 item level records (the pre-1890 London theatre records). In addition, an initial digital media archive of 2,000 images is being created, with every second item cataloged being digitized. Digitization is considered a key form of access, especially since so much of the collection is ephemera. Sophie pointed out that the digitized image, while not a substitute for the original item, will be easier to use and navigate while reducing the risk of damage to the item. These images will be of a good resolution and fully searchable.

This initial three-year project is only the first step in cataloging the entire collection, but Sophie pointed out that they are continually planning for the future. She noted that all the digital files are being made into PDFs and jpeg files which will allow for full-text searches of, for example, playbills and programs. Funding, as always, is a continuing source of concern, as well as finding a permanent home. Sophie briefly described the various schemes involved in gaining money, as well as the limitations and pitfalls. The MMTC has had a history of being on tour, as it were, and has been in three different locations, including its present site at the Old Naval College, since 1984. It is now part of the Jerwood Library of the Performing Arts at Trinity College of Music. This too, however, has its problems as the only current gateway to the collection online is through the Trinity site, not an altogether easy way in. By January, however, they hope to have an easier and more direct gateway. In conclusion she emphasized the commitment on her part as well as the staff at the MMTC to developing ways to make the collection available to all users as well as developing work "in the fields of archives, ephemera and object-based learning." They have established an e-mail contact list to let people know the progress of the project and Sophie encouraged those who would like to be on this list to contact her at s.nield@cssd.ac.uk

The final presenter was Tobin Nellhaus, Librarian for Drama, Film, Theater Studies at Yale University. Tobin discussed the In Media Res project, a performance media database, which is currently under construction, but is targeted to open on January 1, 2006. The database can currently be found at www.performancemediacollection.org. In Media Res is a joint project of TLA, ASTR and ATHE, and is supported by Yale University Library. Tobin is currently on the Editorial Committee and is the present Convenor. In Media Res is a database of performance video recordings and sound recordings, as well as CD-ROMs and online resources on performance. The type of performances represented range from theatre to

workshops, including dance, musical theater, mime, and improvisation, among others. It will consist of three parts: a Resources List (which will be the core of the database), featuring information on performance video recordings and sound recordings, documentaries, CD-ROMs, Web sites and other information sources for performance history and biography and acting, directing and stagecraft instruction. The other two parts will consist of Vendor or Access Information (when available) and Reviews (when provided), both Adjudicated and Non-adjudicated.

The initial phase of the project involved the downloading of cataloging records into the database. At the back end of the database information loaded included the title, publication information, formats (restricted to those readily available), whether or not there are CD-ROMs and/or Websites. Yale University supplied the labor, as well as the server, for this part of the project and will continue to do so once the project is up and running. Under the format heading there will be genre listings and one will be able to search by genre. Keyword searches will also be available, although currently they are very general. Tobin and his staff are toying with the idea of using some kind of rating system, such as a star system, to measure recommendations for use. They also are aiming to have links to vendors, as well as possible reviews of vendors. The reviewing system for the recordings themselves will be of two natures: one is a peer review, similar to those found in scholarly journals, and the other a more "popular" review, along the lines of the reviews found in Amazon.com, or the Internet Movie Database. Tobin envisions that the database will be valuable to teachers, researchers, and librarians by providing one source for all the information needed to obtain information, or a copy of, the various forms of media that capture the ephemeral nature of performance.

Tobin also pointed out that the database is produced and maintained by volunteers and if you are interested in contributing to it, including sending catalog records, to contact either him directly, or any other members of the current Editorial Committee. There is a contact link on the URL listed above.

Overall, it was an informative, if somewhat truncated, way to spend one's lunch, and aside from some technical difficulties when trying to make a live connection, a smooth one as well. I wish I could say as well for the lunch food, but that's another topic for another day.

Mark C. Maniak

American Society for Theatre Research and Theatre Library Association Annual Conference 2005

**TLA Plenary Session at ASTR
Saturday, November 12, 2005
8:30am - 10:30 am**

"Hiding in Plain Sight?: 'Lost' Plays, Rediscovered Masterpieces and Performance Reconstruction"

The TLA sponsored plenary session hosted three panelists, Jonathan Bank, Artistic Director of New York's Mint Theatre, Claudia Wilsch Case, DFA candidate at Yale School of Drama, and Sarah Ziebell Mann, Project Coordinator of the Robert Wilson Audio/Visual Collection at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts' Theatre on Film and Tape Archive. As artistic director, theatre scholar and archivist, respectively, their presentations documented the various issues related to reconstructing artistic works for production, scholarship and documenting and reconstructing performance in moving image.

The Mint Theatre's mission is to produce lost or neglected plays and in doing so bring new vitality to these works. They reclaim the works for today through the processes of research, dramaturgy, and, finally, production. Plays are selected for their literary and contemporary merit or are works that can provide a context for modern audiences. Past productions of the Mint Theatre include Arthur Schnitzler's *The Lonely Way*, Zona Gale's *Miss Lulu Bett*, with a restored original ending, and, most recently, a world premiere of Dawn Powell's *Walking Down Broadway*.

As artistic director, Bank noted that he works as a practitioner, not as a scholar. He believes that plays are written to be produced, not just preserved for study.

To exemplify the process of "reclaiming" a play, Bank focused his discussion on the Mint's 1998 production of Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth*. For the stage adaptation of her successful novel, Edith Wharton drew upon the talent of playwright Clyde Fitch. The New York premiere of the play was staged at the Savoy Theatre in October of 1906.

Once the Mint decided on producing *The House of Mirth*, Bank sought out typescripts, many of which are preserved at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, rather than dramatizing the novel himself. Several things immediately interested Bank. First, he noted his curiosity on choices Wharton made in dramatizing the novel by leaving out rich dialogue. Another curiosity was the 1906 production was modeled on the play used in the Detroit tryout (which was successful) but by the time the play came to New York, questions arose on how to deal with Lily's death at the end of the play. The final choice for the New York premiere was to change the ending and to somewhat alter the motivations and actions of the characters Selden and Trenor. Oddly enough, New York audiences didn't see Lily die in the bedroom. The play failed in New York after only two weeks on Broadway.

Why did the New York production fail? Was it the softer

ending? Or, the quality of acting? Why didn't this successful novel translate with equal success to the stage?

Bank reflected on early American stage acting which relied on melodrama which may account for the simplifying of the ending. He was also curious as to why Wharton didn't use the rich dialogue from the novel throughout the play. As a result, Bank worked from the original typescript with the original ending trying to balance the desire to stay as true as possible to the original intent but taking liberty to add dialogue straight from the novel and editing down speeches and scenes to make it more accessible for the audience.

Claudia Wilsch Case, DFA candidate, Yale School of Drama, presented "Using Archives to Reconstruct the Censored Performance of O'Neill's *Strange Interlude*." She chronicled the process of investigating and researching prompt books and typescripts from three collections including New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Yale's Beinecke Library and the Hammerman Collection, a private collection, to reveal choices made in cuts and revisions to the Theatre Guild's Broadway production of O'Neill's play. The Theatre Guild was hugely successful in bringing the best recent non-commercial American and European plays to the American public. *Strange Interlude*, Theatre Guild's second O'Neill play, voiced modern themes of science over religion, abortion, infidelity and employed stage techniques of soliloquys and asides. In its original form, the play consisted of nine acts and took five hours to perform.

O'Neill submitted his first draft to Theatre Guild in 1927. The Theatre Guild asked for cuts. Theresa Helburn, producer, Theatre Guild director and O'Neill enthusiast, asked the playwright to cut by limiting asides and soliloquies. In addition, Helburn helped O'Neill develop characters and make the play more palatable for audiences. As a result, the more sexually explicit material and scenes in which adultery and abortion, although central to the play, were cut for fear of censorship. Regardless, the play was produced with great success in New York and went on to win the Pulitzer Prize.

Things changed once the play left New York. In Boston, it was met with censorship. More cuts were made eliminating most references to sexuality and sex resulting in a skeletal version of what was performed in New York City. Despite these changes, the play was eventually banned from playing in Boston. Neighboring Quincy allowed the play and proclaimed the reception a success; however touring productions based on the "Bostonized" version never resembled the New York performance.

The chronicle of *Strange Interlude* is fascinating on many levels. That O'Neill's play was cut and how much the artist was aware of the stripping down of his work is one question but this production also raised questions of the complex relationship that the Theatre Guild had with producing works and being concerned with a struggle between profit and the viability of a play.

The first draft submitted to the Theatre Guild is at New

York Public Library for the Performing Arts. Subsequent drafts are held at the Beinecke. This later "Bostonized" prompt book is held in the private Hammerman Collection.

Sarah Ziebell Mann, Project Coordinator of the Robert Wilson Audio/Visual Collection at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts' Theatre on Film and Tape Archive, presented "Reconstructing Einstein on the Beach" which chronicled the challenging efforts and ethical considerations in reconstructing and preserving recently discovered film and sound reels from the 1976 production. The work premiered in 1976 at the Festival d'Avignon and in New York at the Metropolitan Opera. It was revived in 1984 and 1993.

Considered to be Robert Wilson's most important work, the task of reconstructing this non-narrative production was monumental and expensive. Generous contributions and persistence drove this project forward to its completion in September 2005.

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts acquired the audio visual collection in 2001. The papers of Robert Wilson are held at Columbia University's Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

The project involved more than 1,000 items of image and sound. An inventory process helped identify what was playable, unplayable or deteriorating. Management of the project involved devising a classification of the items and the work itself. References would include four levels: work, expression, manifestation and item.

The long process involved some trying experiences such as discovering what was thought to be blank film actually contained invaluable sound content to the blissful experience of locating a complete videorecording of the production as presented at the Venice Bienalle in a television station in Europe.

The major task at hand was to determine if the entire 1976 production or work could be recreated through recordings from the original production and revival manifestations. Considerations ranged from how much could be recreated, the various camera angles, synching music and relying on film versus video content.

A next phase of the project employed Chicago Audio, a company that specialized in sound transfer, to restore both the visual and sound with existing prints and reels. The work began in earnest in February 2005 and was completed in September 2005.

The presentation was highlighted with extraordinary clips of the production illustrating the challenges of working from film and video and completing a reconstruction of the Wilson and Glass non-narrative opera.

For all of us fortunate enough to be in attendance, the plenary session was remarkable and anticipates a fabulous symposium in 2007.

Nancy Friedland,
Executive Secretary

SYMPOSIUM UPDATE

Update on 2007 Symposium on Performance Reclamation

When TLA was organizing its Plenary – *Hiding in Plain Sight?: "Lost" Plays, Rediscovered Masterpieces, and Performance Reconstruction* – for the 2006 American Society for Theatre Research conference in Toronto, it occurred to us that we had ample material to expand this panel into a one-day Symposium. Hence, this conference – now titled *Performance Reclamation: Research, Discovery and Interpretation* – will be held Friday, February 16, 2007 at New York University's new Kimmel Center to explore issues of restaging and reconstructing historic performance works.

This *Symposium* will be structured differently than most conferences. It will consist of three in-depth *case studies* of remounting works of drama, musical theatre and modern dance. Panels will be composed of artistic personnel – directors, choreographers and producers – working in tandem with researchers, dramaturgs and adapters. The challenges of performance reclamation – often based on scant research documentation or artists' notes – will be discussed and evaluated in the context of delicate issues of interpretation.

TLA is pleased to be presenting this *Symposium* in conjunction with three distinguished *producing partners*:

- **Mint Theater Company** – specializing in rescuing and restaging forgotten works from the world dramatic repertory
- **ENCORES!** – renowned for its concert stagings of neglected musical works by leading artists at City Center
- **Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival** – a preeminent producer and preservationist of historic and contemporary modern dance

Our February 2007 *Symposium* will be produced in conjunction with offerings from *Mint's* and *ENCORES!* current seasons, and we are exploring discounted tickets for attendees. The *Jacob's Pillow* panel will examine Jose Limon's 1961 solo, *Sonata for Two Cellos*, which was reconstructed in 2001 based on a 16mm silent film at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

The Planning Committee is in the process of recruiting a prominent Keynote speaker from the performing arts. TLA Board member and theatre historian Don Wilmeth has agreed to make Closing Remarks.

Please access updated program and registration information on the *Symposium* website: <http://tla.library.unt.edu/symposia.html>. For additional information, please consult Symposium Co-Chairs:

Marti LoMonaco, martilomonaco@optonline.net
Kenneth Schlesinger, kschlesinger@lagcc.cuny.edu
Kevin Winkler, kwinkler@nypl.org

Kenneth Schlesinger

Regional News

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts Spring 2006 Public Programs

LIGHT, MOVEMENT, DESIGN, DURATION: PRESERVING ROBERT WILSON AT THE THEATRE ON FILM AND TAPE ARCHIVE

Thursday, March 9, 2006

6:00 p.m.

HAVE YOU BEEN HERE BEFORE / NO THIS IS THE FIRST TIME

Selections from the Robert Wilson Audio/Visual Collection, Theatre on Film and Tape Archive

HAVE YOU BEEN HERE BEFORE / NO THIS IS THE FIRST TIME celebrates the completion of the Theatre on Film and Tape Archive's multi-year effort to make publicly available over 1,500 rarely seen performance and rehearsal recordings and video art pieces representing the forty-year career of artist Robert M. Wilson. Please join us for a glimpse inside the Robert Wilson Audio/Visual Collection.

The majority of Robert Wilson's works have been executed on the stage, and performance is, in its nature, ephemeral. Moving image and sound media have been employed as devices for harnessing creations—devices that may be rudimentary in form, sometimes are fragmentary, and often have seriously deteriorated. What that has meant in terms of the preservation of Robert Wilson's work is that not only have we confronted the ephemerality of performance but also the fleeting materiality of audio/visual media itself.

Saturday, March 11, 2006

3:00 p.m.

RECONSTRUCTING EINSTEIN ON THE BEACH

Excerpts and Commentary by Archivist Sarah Ziebell Mann

No Wilson creation has been more challenging for the Theatre on Film and Tape Archive to make accessible than *Einstein on the Beach*, the 1976 opera by Robert Wilson and Philip Glass. The Archive was given elements from a film recording of *Einstein on the Beach* at Théâtre royal de la monnaie, Brussels in the form of 16mm camera originals and magnetic sound reels, but the film had never been finished. Much of the video documentation from the 1976 run of this seminal work was deemed by restoration facilities to be so deteriorated as to be "unsaveable." A worldwide search for alternate recordings unearthed only a murky, low-generation VHS copy.

Given the critical importance of *Einstein on the Beach* and the unfortunate state of existing performance documentation, the Theatre on Film and Tape Archive took the intrepid step of reconstructing the unfinished 16mm film: fully preserving it, reuniting and re-synching the image and sound elements digitally, and producing a sequentially complete version. Archivist Sarah Ziebell Mann will discuss technical and ethical questions involved in the reconstruction process.

Programs take place in the Bruno Walter Auditorium, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, 40 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY. Admission to all programs is free and generally first come, first served. For information, call (212) 642-0142 or e-mail lpaprog@nypl.org.

Sarah Ziebell Mann

BOOK REVIEW

McCants, Clyde T. *American Opera Singers and Their Recordings: Critical Commentaries and Discographies*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., Inc., 2005. 396pp. ISBN 0-7864-1952-0. \$55 paper.

For knowledgeable opera aficionados and interested fans alike, this title represents worthy expenditure of a reader's time and attention. In 53 gracefully written, engrossing chapters, McCants offers firm but thoughtful analyses of America's most significant opera artists and their recordings.

With few exceptions---the most notable being Maria Callas, whom the author has omitted since her recordings have been discussed so frequently elsewhere---virtually every singer of importance in this nation's opera history is featured: from Mattiwilda Dobbs to Leonard Warren; from Rosa Ponselle, Norman Treigle and Helen Traubel, to Renee Fleming, Jennifer Larmore, and Neil Shicoff. The author also includes an intriguing composite chapter on "Hollywood-based" performers such as Mario Lanza and Grace Moore.

While his biographical information is minimal, McCants' critical commentary regarding the best and worst of each singer's recorded repertoire is technically detailed, yet always couched in terms fully accessible to the interested generalist. His chapters are consistently readable and entertaining.

He also provides a detailed discography for each singer, divided into "recitals/highlights" and "complete operas". And he offers a general bibliography of further informational sources on American singers, along with "periodicals of interest".

This title would be a fine tool for performing arts librarians wishing to augment their opera collections, as well as a source of browsing fascination for those among us perpetually in awe of the human voice---American style.

Catherine Ritchie
Dallas Public Library

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Online Database Makes Progress

The In Medias Res project, which is creating a free online database of videos, DVDs, sound recordings, and other media resources on performance, is slowly moving ahead. Most of the work designing the

database and turning it into a Web application is complete, after which the database will get an attractive interface. The editorial team (composed of representatives from TLA, ASTR and ATHE) has been gathering data, and a few volunteers have also stepped forward to assist in the project. The committee will also be soliciting media reviews, which will make the database even more useful. At this time we hope to go live in January or February 2006. The URL is www.performancemedia.org.

Tobin Nellhaus
Yale University

Depending on the Kindness of Strangers? The Uncertain Fate of Ephemera in Performing Arts Collections

Not unlike Blanche DuBois' box of letters at Belle Reve, the unique materials which comprise performing arts collections are inherently vulnerable to slipping into oblivion. Loss, theft, and environmental factors contribute to the demise of ephemeral collections. How do performing arts libraries manage and protect these collections? What relationships exist between organizations to connect ephemeral artifacts to related collections? In light of various hazards, how do collections safeguard the physical condition or intellectual value of ephemeral holdings? This program will feature the diverse ephemera collections that document carnival, theatre, performing arts, and popular entertainments, highlighting relief efforts for collections in crisis in New Orleans.

If you've been involved in documenting, preserving, or reclaiming a performing arts collection and are interested in presenting during the TLA program at ALA's annual meeting, please contact either Angela Weaver (aw6@u.washington.edu) or Colleen Reilly (cor11+@pitt.edu).

Angela Weaver
University of Washington Libraries

TLA Occasional E-Papers Series

Soon to be added to the TLA website (<http://tla.library.unt.edu>) will be the "TLA Occasional E-Papers Series." Our first article in this series will be "The Small Stages that Challenged Our Concept of Legitimacy in Theater" by former TLA Executive Secretary Dick Buck. It is a critical review of several recent books that explore the early days of the Off-Off-Broadway movement, with a particular focus on the Caffe Cino, supplemented by Dick's personal knowledge of that period.

Proposals for future E-Papers should be sent to Rob Melton, Publications Committee Chair (rmelton@ucsd.edu).

CALENDAR

February 17, 2006 (Friday), Brander Matthews Dramatic Museum Exhibition Extended (10:00 AM), Kempner Gallery, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, 6th Floor, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York City

February 17, 2006 (Friday), TLA Board Meeting (11:30 AM to 6:00 PM), Butler Library, Columbia University, New York City

June 2, 2006 (Friday), Theatre Library Association Book Awards (6:00 PM), New York City, NY, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Bruno Walter Auditorium

June 26, 2006 (Monday), TLA at ALA (10:30 AM to 12 Noon—Tentative), New Orleans, LA

Officers of the **Theatre Library Association** (founded 1937): President (2005-2006), **Martha S. LoMonaco**, Fairfield University; Vice-President (2005-2006), **Kenneth Schlesinger**, La Guardia Community College/CUNY; Executive Secretary (2005-2006), **Nancy E. Friedland**, Columbia University; Treasurer (2005-2006), **Paul Newman**, Private collector/lawyer
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TLA Website: <http://tla.library.unt.edu>

TLA listserv: To Subscribe: 1) Send email (nothing in the subject) to: listproc@csus.edu 2) In the body of the email message type the following line: SUBSCRIBE TLA-L your name

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TLA membership (annual dues: \$30 personal, \$40 institutional; \$20 student/non-salaried members) also includes *Performing Arts Resources*, published occasionally. For availability and prices of past issues of *PAR* and *Broadside*, contact the Executive Secretary.



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