

TLA

BROADSIDE

39/2 Spring 2012

a newsletter of THEATRE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Bravo!

A Century of Theatre in Fairfield County

TLA Past President Marti LoMonaco, Professor of Visual and Performing Arts at Fairfield University, has added “curator” to her resumé with the fascinating exhibition, *Bravo! A Century of Theatre in Fairfield County*, on view through April 1 at the Fairfield, Connecticut Museum and History Center. Using original costumes, props, set designs, photographs, and correspondence, the exhibition documents the remarkable histories of three theatres: Lucille Lortel’s White Barn Theatre in Norwalk, the American Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford, and the Westport Country Playhouse.

Entering through a red, gold-fringed stage curtain, visitors see a replica of part of the White Barn (with its original sign), a converted cow barn on Lortel’s estate, where she produced new and experimental plays by European writers such as Eugène Ionesco, Jean Genet, and Samuel Beckett, and Americans including Edward Albee, Terrence McNally, Paul Zindel, and Adrienne Kennedy. Lortel’s Foundation not only provided funding for the exhibit but also loaned archival material, including a portrait of Ms. Lortel and the very dress which she wears in it.

The American Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford, founded in the early 1950s by Lawrence Langner, brought a stream of luminaries such as Katharine Hepburn, Morris Carnovsky, John Houseman, and Christopher Plummer to its audiences. Because of the Theatre’s troubled financial history and its final demise in 1989, its records and artifacts were the most difficult for Marti and Fairfield’s curatorial team to unearth, many of them stored away in attics around the area. In spite of this, they’ve gathered an impressive sampling of photographs, costumes, and props, including costumes designed by Jane Greenwood for a 1969 staging of *Much Ado About Nothing* and a throne created by Rouben Ter-Arutunian for Stratford’s greatest success: a 1960 *Antony and Cleopatra*, starring Ms. Hepburn and Robert Ryan.



Marti LoMonaco at the entrance to the *Bravo!* exhibit at the Fairfield, Connecticut Museum and History Center, 2012.

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About BROADSIDE

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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 republish 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.

BROADSIDE (ISSN: 0068-2748) is published three times a year and is now open access—no login required—and available via *BROADSIDE* online at <http://tla-online.org/publications/broadsideonline.html>.

Contents ©Theatre Library Association

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Executive Board, Mission, and Membership

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TLA website: <http://www.tla-online.org/>
TLA on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Theatre-Library-Association/326948200637>

MISSION STATEMENT

Founded in 1937, the Theatre Library Association supports librarians and archivists affiliated with theatre, dance, performance studies, popular entertainment, motion picture and broadcasting collections. TLA promotes professional best practices in acquisition, organization, access and preservation of performing arts resources in libraries, archives, museums, private collections, and the digital environment. By producing publications, conferences, panels, and public events, TLA fosters creative and ethical use of performing arts materials to enhance research, live performance, and scholarly communication.



JOIN US!

Membership

(Annual dues: \$30 personal, \$40 institutional; \$20 student/non-salaried members. In order to defray the rising costs of international postage, members with non-U.S. mailing addresses are now required to pay a \$10 surcharge.) Includes *Performing Arts Resources*, published occasionally. Dues can now be paid online using PayPal.

For availability and prices of past issues of *PAR* and *BROADSIDE*, contact info@tla-online.org

TLA listserv: To Subscribe:

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

President's Report

Update on TLA's Activities

TLA's Executive Board met on February 10, 2012 in Fairfield, Connecticut, at the Fairfield Museum and History Center. Past-President Marti LoMonaco had invited the Board to view an exhibition she recently curated, *Bravo! A Century of Theatre in Fairfield County*.

During lunch we toured the intriguing and visually splendid installations, organized as a series of individual festival stages featuring the significant work of the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre in Stratford, Westport Country Playhouse, and White Barn Theatre. Many leading performers—Katharine Hepburn and Eva LeGallienne among them—lived in Connecticut, and the exhibition also explored the legacy and contributions of Morris Carnovsky, Lawrence Langner, Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward.

Working with exhibition designer Mara Williams, Marti *rescued* and rebuilt several notable costumes from Stratford, each documented with production photos. TLA Board members John Calhoun and Karen Nickeson at Lincoln Center's New York Public Library for the Performing Arts had been extremely helpful in securing artifacts and loans of arresting documents and material. New Board member Tiffany Nixon of the Roundabout Theatre coordinated with the Lucille Lortel Foundation for treasures from the White Barn. Board members enjoyed and were inspired by this installation.

75th Anniversary Year

2012 marks TLA's 75th Anniversary year, as we were founded in 1937 as part of American Library Association. It is truly an honor to be serving my final year as your President during this banner year. We have a number of exciting activities planned. Angela Weaver designed an attractive 75th Anniversary logo adorning this publication and our letterhead. Please mark your calendars for our Annual Book Awards and Business meeting, which will be followed by an Anniversary Gala, on Friday, October 12th at Lincoln Center's Bruno Walter Auditorium.

For the Gala, Marti LoMonaco and TLA Executive Secretary David Nochimson are planning an entertaining program consisting of Testimonials and

performances from the year 1937. They will also be publishing an issue of *Performing Arts Resources* providing an overview of our honored profession over the past 75 years. The Fall issue of *BROADSIDE* will be our 75th Anniversary commemoration, and even the TLA Plenary at the American Society for Theatre Research Conference in

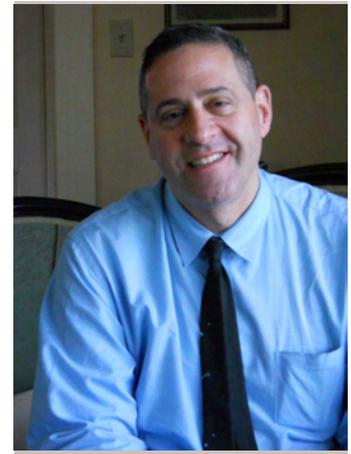
Nashville is themed, *TLA at 75: Collecting the Future by Mediating the Past*. This theme, in fact, has become our new tagline.

Oral Histories and Legacy

As part of this Anniversary year and in preparing the PAR volume, we've stepped up our commitment to recording Oral Histories with some of our distinguished members. Marti LoMonaco and Susan Brady had a discussion with TLA Historian Louis Rachow last year, and David Nochimson fortuitously captured an interview with former Secretary-Treasurer Dick Buck in Miami before his passing at the end of 2011. We'd like to acknowledge the contributions of former members Dick Buck and theatre historian Mary C. Henderson, for whom we've included Tributes in this issue of *BROADSIDE*. Theatre Library Association has a valuable history, and it's critical we document it on a timely basis.

Stratford Shakespeare Festival

Speaking of Stratford [Connecticut], the Board will be travelling to the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Ontario, Canada for its Spring Board meeting at the end of June. Board member Francesca Marini, Archives Director at Stratford, has generously invited us for an action-packed weekend to view their new Theatre Museum and, of course, to see some of the finest Shakespeare productions in North America.



Kenneth Schlesinger, 2011

President's Report

Update on TLA's Activities

Publications

I'm pleased to welcome Leahkim Gannett of University of Maryland as new Chair of the Publications Committee. Already Leahkim is reenergizing this important standing committee of the Association. As part of her report, she presented revised Editorial Guidelines and procedures for distributing review copies of *PAR* to significant publishers. The Board approved Stephen Johnson's recommendation that the Editor's name appear forthwith on the cover of *PAR* volumes.

John Calhoun is making excellent progress with the third volume in our design series—*Documenting: Scenic Design*—which should go to press soon. Stephen Kuehler is shepherding the Proceedings of last year's Shakespeare Symposium, which will prove an important record of this event.

Conference Planning

As usual, TLA's active Conference Planning continues under TLA Vice President Nancy Friedland's leadership. TLA Officers had a successful meeting in Montreal with our counterparts at ASTR, who appear to be committed to integrating TLA more closely and successfully into the upcoming Nashville conference. As a consequence, Nancy proposed a TLA Working Session, *Digital Humanities and the Performing Arts*, which we look forward to possibly offering.

Nancy and I are also at work coordinating a proposed Megaconference with SIBMAS for 2014, tentatively titled *Building Community—Reimagining Collections*. This three-and-a-half day extravaganza—hosted by Columbia, CUNY, Dance Heritage Coalition, New York University, and New York Public Library for the Performing Arts—will explore the interrelated themes of *Digital Humanities*, *Dance Preservation*, and *Material Culture*. Pending approval of the latest iteration by our SIBMAS colleagues, we're planning a joint working session at the 2012 SIBMAS Conference in London.

Funding for Academic Libraries

ASTR further proposed an additional critical issue for discussion and exploration: the imperiled funding state of academic libraries, particularly for humanities collections. At our Board meeting, I charged an ad hoc Committee and designated Diana King from

UCLA, Doug Reside of Lincoln Center, and Angela Weaver from University of Washington to represent TLA in this ongoing dialogue. I also requested that Diana reach out to ACRL Arts for inclusion.

With declining public funding for higher education, shortfalls in library resource budgets, growth of electronic resources and eBooks, and precipitous rise in journal subscription prices, academic libraries are facing challenges like never before in collection development and sustainability. We need to explore alternative publishing models such as open access and institutional repositories for posting faculty scholarship in the humanities. By banding together with likeminded professional associations, we can hopefully advocate for strategic changes to address these seemingly overwhelming challenges.

Distinguished Service Award and Student Scholarship

Phyllis Direks recently posted a Call for Nominations for TLA's annual Distinguished Service Award, a great way to recognize the best and brightest in our profession. We've secured funding to guarantee offering our new student scholarship, *Brooks McNamara Performing Arts Librarian Scholarship*, for the next three years. Please encourage your interns and those new to the profession to apply for this worthy honor: <http://www.tla-online.org/awards/scholarship.html>

Membership and Treasurer's Report

TLA membership stood at 327 at the end of 2011. For our Anniversary year, we aspire to reach 400. If you haven't already renewed for 2012, please go online: <http://www.tla-online.org/members/join.html>. Why not consider joining at the \$75 at 75th level? TLA's finances are currently at \$69,859.59, with our Savings Certificate worth \$5220.46, which affords us the opportunity to underwrite the ambitious programs and publications we have planned for this landmark year.

Kenneth Schlesinger
TLA President

Bravo!

A Century of Theatre in Fairfield County



Marti LoMonaco and Board members viewing a replica of the White Barn Theatre.

(continued from page 1)

The Westport Country Playhouse, which has grown from a summer stock theatre into a major regional producer of new plays and revivals, has contributed a gallery of set models, including the maquette for its 2011 revival of Terrence McNally's *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*. The Playhouse also loaned pieces of its building's history, such as an old ticket box and a massive section of stage rigging. Like the other theatres featured in the exhibit, Westport has long employed students as interns, and one of those students—a 20-year-old Stephen Sondheim—wrote a letter explaining his late arrival for the intern class of the summer of 1950. That letter, on Williams College stationery, is in the exhibit along with a group photo of Sondheim with his fellow interns and stars Dennis King and Gertrude Lawrence.

Because *Bravo!* is targeted at a general audience of all ages, not just theatre aficionados, it includes interactive stations which teach a basic understanding of playwriting, acting, set and costume design, and lighting. The last of these is represented by a hands-on display created by TLA member Karl Ruling (a lighting expert and Marti's husband); visitors can manipulate the controls of a lightboard to illuminate a stage model in various ways. This educational aspect of *Bravo!* appears as well in the special programs scheduled in conjunction with it: lectures, performances, and a film screening. For a list of these events, and more information about *Bravo!*, visit its website at <http://www.fairfieldhistory.org/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/>. The exhibit runs through April 1, 2012.

Stephen Kuehler
Harvard University

In Memoriam

Reminiscences and Tributes

Richard M. Buck

"Ask Louis, he was around at the founding of TLA." This was Dick Buck's response to questions posed at meetings regarding TLA's activities and events of the past. 'Tis true. I was around in that historical year, but far from the bright lights and sounds of New York. I was a mere boy growing up on a small farm in southeastern Nebraska.

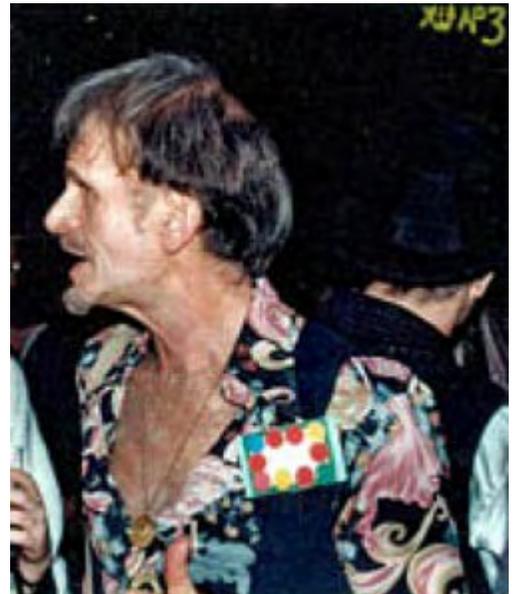
My experiences working with Dick were, indeed, challenging, unpredictable, and memorable. He served as Secretary-Treasurer of the Theatre Library Association before, during, and after my presidency, and as a member of the council of the American Library Association during my years on TLA's Board of Directors. As editor of *BROADSIDE*, my working relationship with Dick became more active. (Those were the days of hand delivered copy to the publisher.)

Dick's dedication and devotion to Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway theatre companies, as well as support, was most admirable. As an administrator of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, one can find collections of his favorites. To Dick,

Louis A. Rachow

Dick and I worked a few doors down the hall from each other in the Library for the Performing Arts, but my favorite memories of him are the trips we took together to various conferences. He was a delightful traveling companion—interested in everything, whether a museum, a park, a restaurant, or an historic section of the city we were visiting, or just sitting in a street café, drinking wine and watching the world go by. And, most of all, he loved seeing old friends and making new ones at the meetings.

His favorite foreign city was Paris, although he steadfastly refused to learn a single word of French—Dick firmly believed that if he spoke slowly and loud enough, everyone would understand him. On one memorable trip, he decided to telephone Pamela Harriman to congratulate her on her recent appointment as U.S. Ambassador to France. (We had met her when the Library put on an exhibition honoring her late husband, Broadway producer Leland



Dick Buck, 1985.

Hayward.) I was amazed at his "chutzpah," but the next morning we received an invitation to an informal reception Mrs. Harriman was giving at her residence. After going through the receiving line, we were turned over to members of her staff who were delighted to relax somewhat from their official duties. They showed us all around the rooms on the first floor, where we admired the furnishings, including several paintings from her private collection, and just had a good time chatting.

Dick was truly a "good companion" and he will be missed.

Dorothy Swerdlove

MR. LPA/MR. TLA

By now, everyone knows that Richard (Dick) Buck, longtime TLA stalwart, died in December 2011 in his adopted retirement home of Miami, Florida. Dick was born and raised in upstate New York, and in 1958 arrived in New York City to begin graduate studies in history at Columbia University. He joined the New York Public Library as a part-time clerk the following year. Soon, he transferred from the history to the library science program at Columbia and received his

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MLS in 1961. Over the next few years, Dick worked at a number of branches before being appointed Assistant to the Chief of the newly formed Library for the Performing Arts (LPA), where he remained until his retirement in 1996.

Besides day-to-day administrative duties, Dick curated several major exhibitions and arranged a special fundraising performance by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, without which LPA would have closed its doors in 1971. Dick also coordinated a spectacular four-hour "Star Spangled Gala" at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1976, which raised over \$100,000 for LPA. In the course of these efforts, Dick developed a fiercely loyal cadre of LPA volunteers and supporters, and it was with their assistance that he organized the giant "Bazaars," held from 1972 until 1998, bringing LPA over one million dollars. Dick was always on the lookout to make money for LPA, and it was not unusual to walk by his office and see Edward Albee signing Playbills from his shows to be sold at the Bazaar.

Sometimes his efforts were unorthodox, to say the least. Once, not long before his retirement, Dick arranged with the family of a deceased patron to take all personal effects from her apartment and sell them to benefit LPA. For a week, the hallway in the basement resembled a garage sale, with the lady's clothes, china and silverware, small appliances, and stationary displayed for shopping by the staff. (I bought light bulbs and a very nice ceramic serving tray.) The patron had been diminutive and no one on staff could fit into her clothes except for a petite security guard who haggled with Dick for several days over one particular item. I never found out what she paid, but for the rest of the winter, the guard arrived each morning at her post in a full-length, Blackglama mink coat.

Dick was a true eccentric and actually a little scary when you first met him. But he cared passionately about LPA, and knew more about its collections and operations than anyone else. For many, he was, simply, "Mr. LPA." Whenever I had a question, my first thought was to reach out to Dick. His office was a veritable time capsule crammed full of materials covering exhibitions, fundraisers, and finances from LPA's history. It was always great fun to stop by his

office to have coffee (and for Dick, a cigarette) and learn something new about the library or grab a piece of juicy gossip. Dick was one of the last unapologetic smokers and long after smoking was banned inside the library, he would unrepentantly light up at his pleasure—usually, but not always, with the door closed. When he retired, I was assigned his longtime office, and while he did a remarkably thorough job of boxing and labeling his files, the biggest challenge was to clean 30 years of smoke from the walls. Even the metal bookcases smelled of Lucky Strikes! After a thorough cleaning and painting, the office could still occasionally emit a whiff of Dick's cigarettes. I came to welcome the scent; it kept me connected to Dick and to his deep understanding of the building we both loved.

Of course, Dick was also "Mr. TLA." He served as Secretary-Treasurer from 1970 to 1994, and Treasurer from 1994 to 1996, and was its liaison to other professional associations. For many years Dick took charge of the TLA sessions at ALA conferences, working with local TLA members to present panels and arrange theatre tours. Dick's most high profile TLA effort was in producing and hosting the annual TLA Book Awards presentations. Somehow he always managed to find just the right celebrity presenter for each award, and he always made the event not only glamorous and fun, but deeply respectful in honoring authors who had contributed to our written record of theatre and film.

Similar to inheriting his office, I found myself following Dick as TLA liaison to ALA, organizing programs at the annual national conference for a number of years. But my most daunting replacement assignment was filling his shoes for the Book Awards. I've had a number of important jobs during my career, but none struck terror in my heart like picking up where Dick left off with the book awards. This was TLA's big night, it's most high profile event, and Dick had placed his indelible stamp on it for many years. How did he get celebrities to come to LPA on a Friday evening during the summer? How did he corral all that information from authors and publishers for the program? Order the awards certificates? Get the invitations printed? Ballyhoo the whole thing to the press? Dick gave me lots of guidance from Miami during the first few

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years ("Just pick up the phone and call some people! You'd be surprised how many stars answer their own phones"), but his shadow continues to hover over the proceedings. Dick fully expected TLA to fade away once he retired and was no longer involved. Happily, that didn't happen, and TLA is more vital than ever, with innovative leadership, dynamic programs and publications, and a fully engaged membership from around the country. I like to think of the new blood as "TLA: The Next Generation." But the next generation could never have excelled without the template established by its predecessors. And Dick Buck was the principal architect of that template.

Dick belonged to an earlier, more freewheeling era of library administration, and I suspect he would have chafed at the stricter, more bottom line-oriented years to come. He said goodbye to both LPA and TLA with "A Reminiscence Upon Retirement," which took up most of the Winter 1997 issue of Broadside. Following details of his many notable accomplishments with both organizations, he ended by stating that he wouldn't really miss LPA all that much. After noting that he had already given up on the theatre ("too expensive, and mainly boring") and New York City ("too inconvenient and too crowded"), he was now ready to give up on LPA, mostly, he wrote, "because I feel my work is done. The niche that I created for myself has become mostly unnecessary or superseded by the activities of others; the needs now are different, and at this time of my life I do not feel I can change enough to support the differences. It is time to move on." I found this to be a remarkably clear-eyed assessment of his career with the library, and of his place in the chain of its leadership. He was not sad, regretful, or bitter. He had done his job well, and was now ready to move on to the next phase of his life. We should all exit so gracefully.

Kevin Winkler
The New York Public Library

The following are excerpts from David Nochimson's interview with Dick Buck.

In late April of 2011, I went down to Miami Beach to

interview Dick Buck as part of an Oral History Project celebrating TLA's upcoming 75th Anniversary. I had never met him in person before. I had received many emails from him—as his eyesight deteriorated, he took to writing his messages in all caps, giving the not entirely inaccurate feeling that he was yelling at you—and I had spoken on the phone with him on several occasions. And I had heard stories of his larger than life personality... lots of stories. By the time I met him, his eyes were probably the least of his worries. He was emaciated, and severely stooped over, but his mind was still sharp, and he was thrilled at the prospect of company, not to mention the opportunity to reminisce about his life.

His apartment was filled to the rafters with books, pictures, and other assorted detritus from his life, and the air was stale from cigarette smoke, so we conducted our interview in another unit in the Art Deco apartment complex where he lived. We recorded nearly three hours of formal interview with a break for dinner, but I spent three evenings with him in all. In our informal conversations, he told me stories from his personal life, his travels, and perhaps most of all, of the theatre he had seen. While he clearly knew which stories were appropriate for the official record and which were not, he was as lively and candid when the mic was on as when it was off. The following excerpts were recorded on the evening of April 26, 2011:

In '67, as I said, I became Thor Wood's assistant, and as luck would have it, I guess luck would have it—Thor Wood was the director of the whole entire third floor, PARC [Performing Arts Research Center, in the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts], which included theatre, dance, music, and the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound, which is a whole other story—I became very involved in Rodgers and Hammerstein as the years went by, especially with Ted Chapin and his mother, Betty Chapin.

Anyway, my office was right next door to Betty Corwin's, who started Theatre on Film and Tape in 1971, and then down the hall from her was the Curator of the Theatre Collection, who was Paul Myers at the time, and at the end of this line of offices was Dorothy Swerdlove, who was the Assistant

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Curator of the Theatre Collection. I didn't even know what Theatre Library Association was. I had vaguely known Louis Rachow from other sources, I had never seen a copy of *Broadside*, it was all, as I said, about Barbara Cook in *Plain and Fancy*, it was all very new to me.

So, one day, now these years become blended, and we're not sure exactly how it works, somewhere around 1971, 2, or 3, some people say '71, I say maybe late '71 or early '72, Dorothy came—I knew Dorothy from being there, she was right outside, and she walked by my door constantly, and she was a very nice person—and she came to me, and said, Dick... would you consider, first of all, joining Theatre Library Association? I said, what is it? I guess. Well, it's this organization of librarians—she gave me the history—founded by George Freedley, Paul Myers' predecessor, and it's a few hundred theatre librarians who specialize in theatre librarianship. Okay, well, that sounds good. And furthermore, would you like to become Secretary-Treasurer? What's that? She said, well, I'm Secretary-Treasurer right now, I have been for some years... So, I said, what does that entail? It entails sending the dues notices out, to get the dues back; being the banker, taking care of the Treasury; depositing the checks; you know, doing those things. She says, you're right here, I consider you part of the Theatre Collection, which was not true, but I really felt more a part of the Theatre Collection, than Music or Dance. So, I said, I guess, I said, you know, why not? Let's do it.

So, shortly after, probably the next day, she brought me her file boxes of the cards with the names of the members, and the fact that they paid their dues or not. This was all done by hand. It didn't seem like an insurmountable job, it turned out that it was not. But it was all confusing, because she had checkbooks—with the cancelled checks and the checkbooks—she had this box of cards, and I think that she told me that by then *Broadside*, Old Series, had either ended or going to end in 1971—so maybe this was '71. Sarah Chokla Gross, who was the Editor, was no longer going to be able to edit *Broadside*, and that Louis Rachow, whom, as I said, I'd known from other—I knew he was the librarian of the Players—and that he was going to be the Editor of *Broadside*, and start a new series. And she said, you need to be involved with that, because

that's the publication—the official publication—of TLA. And there's a company called Joseph La Banca Company on 42nd Street, or 4th Street—they moved during this, they were on—they were right near the Public Library main building, anyway. I think they were first on 42nd. They will be printing *Broadside*, and you have to become involved in that. And so Louis, being another person of our equanimity, I was fine with that. So, I started, in whatever year it was. Let's split the difference and say it was 1972, before the first issue of *Broadside* came out...

It was that last time that ALA met in New York, in 1993. They met down here in Miami Beach in '94, and they met in New York in 1993 [the actual year of the New York conference was 1996]. Now that year was the year I knew I would never have another TLA at ALA again, so I went whole hog. I did this advance announcement. It was going to be a panel on how professionals in the theatre use theatre libraries. And my panelists were Edward Albee, supposed to have been Marian Seldes, Jules Fisher, Ming Cho Lee, and a very famous lighting designer, whose name is right on the tip of my tongue, she's won many Tonys—not lighting, Jules Fisher is lighting—costume designer, one of the ones who was still working in 1993, I know that...

Anyway, we sent the notices out, it was a free event, and the auditorium [the Bruno Walter Auditorium at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts] seats 212 people, and we got hundreds, like eight or nine hundred requests for seating. And so we had to return their requests, I only allowed like 230 total, knowing there'd be a few dropouts. And the night came, and we had people banging on the door. We only let in the ones who had tickets, and then there were a few seats in the back that were empty. We allowed a few of the staff members who were hanging around to come in. I think we finally filled the 212 seats. We aren't allowed to have anybody sitting on the floor in the aisles, unlike some theatres.

Just a few days before—a week or two before the event—I had a call from Marian, and she said I'm out of town in New England in Edward's new play, *Three Tall Women*, and I can't make it into New York for your event, which was a Monday night, I think. So, I said, okay, I'll get somebody else. So, I called Estelle

Parsons, and she said, oh yes, honey, I'm free, I'll make it, I'd love to come be there, so she came, she substituted for Marian. So, we had a wonderful evening. It could've gone on forever, probably went on for two and a half hours. Questions from the audience... And I had an audiotape of it, but it was never videotaped. And so that was my swan song as TLA at ALA. And they've been doing things since, but not quite at that level, but I thought I'd try to go out with a whoosh or a bang or something, and to me it was very memorable...

I could've gone more deeply into some of the different situations, it might've embarrassed some people, it might've been intriguing to some people, but I think I covered most of the waterfront. And to quote Marlon Brando, I could've been a contender.

David Nochimson

Mary C. Henderson

Theater historians are a unique breed. We love the vibrancy of theater, but we spend countless hours in libraries, rigorously researching the details of long-ago productions, plans for theater buildings that are not with us anymore, photographs of performances whose sounds and gestures have evaporated.

Mary C. Henderson was one of the most dedicated and passionate of this breed. A true person of the theater, she was gifted with the desire and skill to preserve how theater—particularly New York City theater—looked and functioned in decades past.

Her *The City and the Theatre: New York Playhouses from Bowling Green to Times Square* is an eternally rich compendium describing all the many theater buildings that once populated New York, uptown and down, Manhattan to Brooklyn. Likewise, *The New Amsterdam: The Biography of a Broadway Theatre* is a vivid account of the reclamation of one of 42nd Street's theater jewels. *Stars on Stage: Eileen Darby and Broadway's Golden Age* pays tribute not only to an extraordinary photographer, but also to the incandescent performances Darby captured as she knelt in an aisle or crouched in a front-row seat to take her shot.

And what joy Mary had digging for historical materials: collecting photographs, amassing clippings, sifting through collections, particularly those of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

She leaves behind an invaluable collection of books for today's students of theater history and tomorrow's theater historians. And she remains an example of how an historian can make the theater's past live in the present.

Alexis Greene

Student Scholarship Essay

From Legacy to Frontier: The Future of Performing Arts Librarianship

Brooks McNamara Performing Arts Librarian Scholarship Award Essay

When I was a very small girl, I fell in love with a film called *The Red Shoes*, a 1948 feature about a dancer rising to stardom within a prominent ballet company. I loved the costumes, the deep colors, the music and the dancing. Above all, I loved the way the film immersed me in the swirling drama of the preparations and rehearsals leading up to its centerpiece, a literal performance of a ballet. The shots of newspaper headlines, programs, and marked-up scores became iconic images in my impressionable mind. In the years since, that film has become a standard touch-point for my developing interest in the layers of meaning surrounding an event, and the way those meanings manifest through artifacts, ephemera, and adaptation. I am not alone in this; in fact, that same fascination, on the part of both librarians and patrons, has sustained performing arts libraries for many years.

On a fundamental level, the performing arts resist preservation. Traditionally, librarians and library collections have addressed this by documenting the various elements that go into a performance (e.g., the history of stage design, musical terminology, biographies of actors) and by collecting images, audio, or video that record an aspect of a particular event. But, as David Miller and Patrick Le Boeuf point out in a 2010 article that describes the limiting conceptual framework of standard cataloguing practice, there is much to be resolved when it comes to the preservation and accessibility of a performance. The Theater, as both a historically defined mode of expression and a physical space in which expressive production takes place, simultaneously occupies many conceptual areas. The products which define knowledge of performing arts are thus simultaneously grounded in physicality and persistently ephemeral.

Due to the nature of performance as a time and location-based medium, performing arts librarians have a deep-seated investment in the preservation and access of relatively new and rapidly evolving technologies. What I find particularly fascinating about performing arts librarianship is its dynamic nature—it is a field that demands the use and implementation of recently developed tools, while also relying on a long history of special collections



Abigail Garnett and Nancy Friedland,
TLA Awards Ceremony, 2011

and archival materials. The types of material that can now constitute the foundation of a collection, from streaming audio to restored film footage, are dramatically changing the way we can understand and represent the history of performance. On the other side of things, the innovative nature of preservation efforts means that librarians are also changing where and when documents can be accessed, and who can be on the receiving end of that information.

A basic difficulty facing performing arts librarians is that their efforts shape an information landscape that is two degrees removed from the original impetus for its creation. Rather than deciding how to record performances, a territory often populated by photographers and documentarians, they are charged with guiding those who seek to learn about that performance through a complicated network of incomplete representations—in cataloging, classification, exhibitions, and even blogs. Minimizing the loss that occurs in this double translation will continue to be important as a large portion of patron usage moves online. In order to stay relevant to those who share their passions and interests, performing arts libraries must be able to guide patrons with clarity through this changing environment, and to maximize the effectiveness with which they represent their collection's content.

With the eventual goal of digital access, preservation of materials becomes a multifarious challenge. Given the

Student Scholarship Essay

From Legacy to Frontier: The Future of Performing Arts Librarianship

fact that contemporary Art and other types of content are being produced in the form of recordings, librarians must navigate the rocky terrain of potential obsolescence for playback devices, software, and file formats. Future generations will expect that the bulk of current artistic output will continue to be available in the form of audiovisual documentation—no longer are textual documents (i.e., scores and librettos) and commentary acceptable as the only format that records a work's existence. In order to deal with the demands of scholarship and the general public, performing arts librarians in particular will be forced to realize new forms of preservation and unprecedented levels of access.

Performing arts librarianship is already becoming increasingly intertwined with digital and online curation, as evidenced by the recent appointment of a Digital Curator for the Performing Arts at New York Public Library. In a field where online marketing and promotion of library collections is becoming quite important, this niche is also an opportunity to project the spirit of a compelling collection to a wide audience. With newly prominent aspects of online

culture such as live streaming of events, diverse ways to consume audiovisual materials, and increasingly intertwined social media platforms, collections focused on the arts are uniquely suited to carving out their own place within this conversation.

I believe that most people have, at some point in their lives, experienced a connection to a performance, whether it is as a child watching a ballet dancer on a small screen, or as an adult listening to an online stream of a symphony orchestra. As the years pass and technology advances, these moments will be delivered in even more advanced and immediate ways—but traces of the experience will continue to be documented in tactile objects, textual matter, and digital forms that have yet to be explored. When I was watching *The Red Shoes* and trying to remember the details of the lead ballerina's costumes, what I really wanted was to capture those traces and attempt to understand them. Thanks to librarians, we can be assured that as the world forges ahead, someone will always have that interest in mind.

Abigail Garnett

THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

A Celebration of Excellence

Please help us recognize and celebrate a distinguished colleague. The ideal candidate for TLA's Distinguished Service Award may well be someone you know and have worked with—someone who has made a difference in your professional life, and whose energy and vision have expanded your own view of what it means to be a performing arts professional. Your candidate may even have had a transformative effect on performing arts librarianship and may have expanded the boundaries of performing arts librarianship. TLA wants to recognize and honor such an individual and acknowledge his or her expertise and creativity.

PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT to nominate your candidate, who may be a performing arts librarian, curator, archivist, or scholar. Please submit your candidate's name, accompanied by a short biography, to Phyllis Dircks (dircks@liu.edu) by **April 30, 2012**. The award will be presented at the 2012 TLA Book Awards. In making the nomination, you will be helping to bring renown to a deserving professional, as well as enhancing the state of all performing arts professionals.

Awards Committee
Phyllis Dircks, Chair
Maryann Chach
Don Wilmeth

News

Collections, Exhibits, Staff Transitions, etc.

YEAR OF SHAKESPEARE THE EXHIBITION

January 11—April 29, 2012
The Ohio State University Thompson Library Exhibit Gallery
1858 Neil Avenue Mall
Columbus, OH

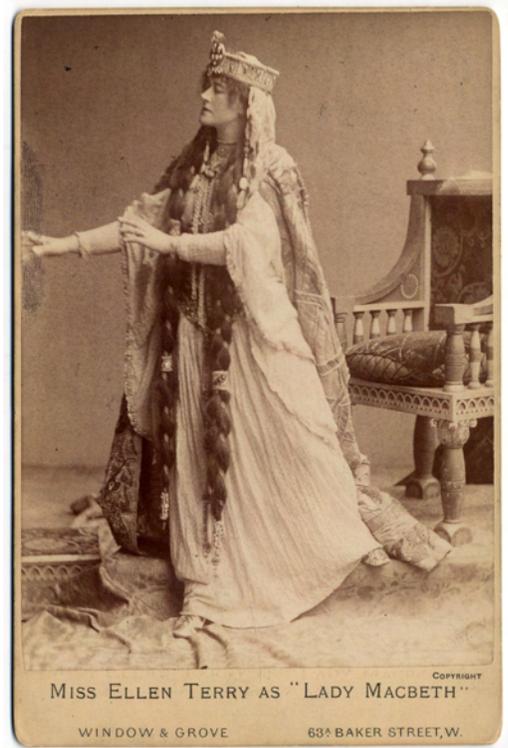
Monday-Wednesday, 10 AM—6 PM
Thursday, 10 AM—8 PM
Friday, 10 AM—6 PM
Saturday and Sunday, noon—5 PM

This exhibition is a showcase of Shakespeare-related holdings from the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute and the Rare Books and Manuscripts collections. The exhibition focuses upon materials related to *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*, as these will be the featured productions in an upcoming Young People's Shakespeare Festival. It also includes materials from The Ohio State University's partnership with the UK's Royal Shakespeare Company and their "Stand Up for Shakespeare" program.

Some noteworthy items on exhibit include:

- A 1632 edition of the collected works of William Shakespeare, commonly known as the Second Folio
- Original playbill from a 1790 production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Theatre Royal Covent Garden, London
- Photograph (cabinet card) of Ellen Terry as Lady Macbeth in the 1888 Lyceum Theatre production in London
- Several photographs from the 1936 Federal Theatre Project production of *Macbeth* (a.k.a. "Voodoo" *Macbeth*) at the Lafayette Theatre in Harlem, directed by Orson Welles
- An original costume design by Nicholas Georgiadis for Rudolph Nureyev as Romeo in the 1965 Royal Ballet (London) production of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* featuring Nureyev and Margot Fonteyn as the star-crossed lovers
- Original costume designs by OSU alumnus Toni-Leslie James for the 1998 New York Shakespeare Festival production of *Macbeth* starring Alec Baldwin and Angela Bassett.

For more information contact Beth Kattelman, Exhibition Curator, at kattelman.1@osu.edu.



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Please send news items relating to new collections, exhibits, staff transitions, etc. at your institution, or news of TLA members' professional activities and publications, to your regional reporter:

Stephen Kuehler (Northeast, skuehler@comcast.net)

Leahkim Gannett (Mid-Atlantic, leahkim@umd.edu)

Catherine Ritchie (South & Southwest, catherine.ritchie@dallaslibrary.org)

Sarah Zimmerman (Midwest & Plains, szimmerman@chipublib.org)

Rob Melton (West Coast & Rockies, rmelton@ucsd.edu)

California: Los Angeles

FIDM (Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising) has mounted the 20th anniversary *Art of Motion Picture Costume Design* exhibition (<http://fidmmuseum.org/exhibitions/current>).

Celebrating the art and industry of costume designers, this exhibition presents more than 100 costumes from twenty films released in 2011, including all five 2011 Academy Award® Nominees for Costume Design. Highlighted in the exhibition is the previous year's Academy Award® winner for Costume Design, *Alice in Wonderland*. The exhibition also showcases classic film costumes from the FIDM Museum collection and the Historic Hollywood Collection of the Los Angeles City Department of Recreation and Parks. The exhibition, which is free, is open Tuesdays-Saturdays from 10 AM to 5 PM through April 28.

The Performing Arts Special Collections Department at UCLA has recently processed a large collection of historical production research materials compiled by

the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios Research Department for selected motion picture projects produced during the 1930s through 1940. Included are loose-bound binders of research that may include text and/or photographic research. The finding aid is located in the Online Archive of California here: <http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt7290390b/?query=metro%2520goldwyn>.

If the FIDM exhibition doesn't sate your appetite for costume, head up to Beverly Hills, where the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts (in its temporary space in the new MGM Place) is presenting *Il Teatro alla Moda: Theater in Fashion*, billed as the first exhibition to explore Italy's famous haute couture designers and their impact on the stages of opera, dance and theater. Over 80 costumes, sketches and drawings from Armani, Valentino, Versace, and others will be on display. The exhibit has been extended through March 18. Check <http://www.annenbergbh.com/> for any further extensions, days and hours, and a fuller press release.

California: San Diego

Sources of Wonder: The Homer and Betty Peabody Magic Lantern Collection is the subject of an exhibit in the Love Library at San Diego State University (SDSU), which has about 42 magic lanterns and approximately 4000 glass slides. The exhibit features approximately 30 professional, toy, and domestic lanterns dating from the late 19th to early 20th centuries and a large sampling of the different types and themes of slides, including caricature and comic, narrative, medical, travel, temperance, advertisement, and elementary education slides. It also includes a case displaying the different types of slides, including mechanical, chromolithographic, photographic, and hand-painted. The exhibit will remain up through June 29. A nine-panel sample of the collection can be viewed at <http://library.sdsu.edu/exhibits/2009/07/lanterns/index.shtml>.

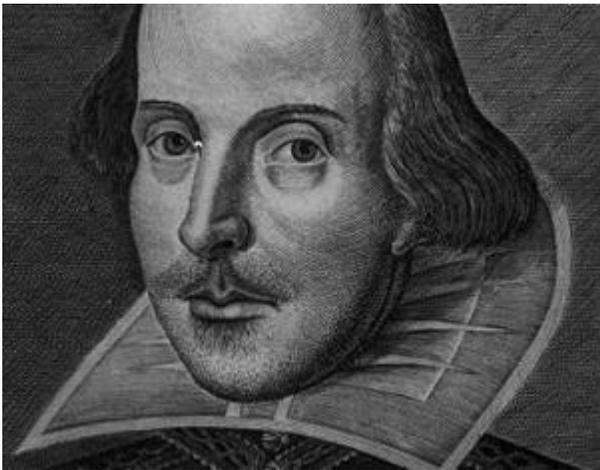
The Mandeville Special Collections Library at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) has acquired the archive of Sushi Contemporary Performance & Visual Arts, a San Diego-based nonprofit multidisciplinary presenting organization founded in 1980 that cultivates alternative voices in

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the contemporary arts and provides artists and audiences with a laboratory where creative exploration, community engagement, and new ideas flourish. The archive (MSS 741) includes administrative records, taped performances, artist files, some pieces of visual art, clippings and other ephemera, and files for Black Choreographers Moving. It is not fully processed, but available for researchers with advance request. For more about Sushi, see <http://sushiart.org/>.

Connecticut: New Haven



Shakespeare at Yale: A Semester of Special Events Celebrating the Bard (<http://shakespeare.yale.edu/>), a multi-venue celebration, displays Yale's extraordinary resources for the study and enjoyment of Shakespeare. From an exhibition of early printed editions of Shakespeare's plays in the Beinecke Library and the Elizabethan Club, to a production of *The Winter's Tale* at the Yale Repertory Theatre, to the display at the Yale University Art Gallery of the Shakespearean paintings by the American painter Edwin Austin Abbey, Shakespeare is visible everywhere at Yale this semester.

Other events include student dramatic performances, concerts of Elizabethan music, opera and musical comedy based on Shakespeare's plays, a series of Shakespearean films, and remarkable exhibitions of paintings, drawings, prints, artifacts, and medical instruments of early modern England on display at the Yale Center for British Art, the Lewis Walpole

Library, and other campus venues. A web exhibition (<http://exhibitions.shakespeare.yale.edu/>) captures highlights of these exhibits. Leading Shakespearean scholars and theater practitioners will be on campus for a variety of lectures, gallery talks, and public conversations. A video, created by an undergraduate film maker, will capture highlights of the festival, creating a permanent record of the semester.

Shakespeare at Yale Rep, a collection of 28 photographs and posters from the theater's past productions of Shakespeare's works, opened at the Whitney Humanities Center on January 23 as part of this spring's *Shakespeare at Yale* initiative. The exhibition, which draws on prints from the School of Drama's archives, tracks the role of the Shakespearean canon at the Rep from the theater's early years to the present.

Connecticut: Westport

The Westport Public Library has mounted an exhibit on *Lucille Lortel: The Queen of Off-Broadway*. In addition to founding Theatre de Lys in Greenwich Village, Lortel also founded White Barn Theatre in nearby Norwalk, CT. On March 15 at noon, the authors Alexis Greene (*Lucille Lortel: The Queen of Off-Broadway*) and Helen Sheehy (*Eva Le Gallienne: A Biography*) will keynote the Women's History Month Lecture and Lunch, "Women Behind Broadway." For more information, see <http://www.westportlibrary.org/events/riverwalk-display-case-lucille-lortel-%E2%80%94-queen-broadway>.

District of Columbia

Shakespeare's Sisters: Voices of English and European Writers, 1500-1700

This revelatory exhibition brings together the works of more than fifty 16th and 17th century women writers from England and continental Europe, writing in formats that range from poems, prose fiction, and memoirs to translations, plays, and more. In all, scholars in recent decades have identified and studied hundreds of women writers from the early modern age.

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Shakespeare's Sisters takes its title from a famous passage in Virginia Woolf's book *A Room of One's Own* (1929), in which Woolf imagines a gifted sister of William Shakespeare, completely thwarted by the social restrictions of his day. Drawing on the breadth and depth of the Folger collection, with additional rare materials from other institutions, *Shakespeare's Sisters* presents a far more complex—and fascinating—reality.

More information about the exhibit, which runs through May 20, 2012, can be accessed at <http://www.folger.edu/Content/Whats-On/Folger-Exhibitions/Shakespeares-Sisters/>.

Three screenings at the Library of Congress in April will celebrate American musical theater. On April 5, the Library will screen the *Stephen Sondheim 70th Birthday Concert*, originally presented on May 5, 2000. Hosted by Nathan Lane, and featuring Marin Mazzie, Audra McDonald, Brian Stokes Mitchell, Debra Monk, an orchestra of 25 playing new orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick, conducted by Paul Gemignani, and directed by Kathleen Marshall, this concert featured Sondheim's rarely performed *The Frogs*, followed by 13 songs by other writers selected by Sondheim.

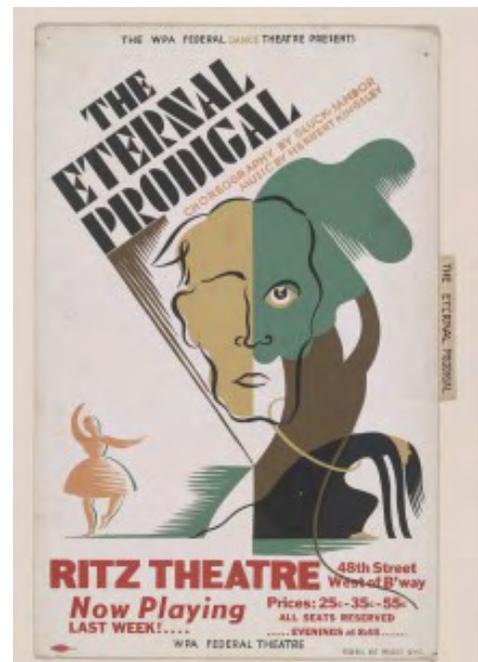
On April 12, the Library will present a rescreening of *American Creativity: The Composer-Lyricist Jonathan Larson*, which celebrated the acquisition of Larson's papers in 2004. The concert included songs from throughout Larson's too-brief career, but included several numbers that were either cut from or early versions of songs from *Rent*, as well as three Jonathan Larson Performing Arts Foundation winners performing their own songs. The company brought together *Rent*'s original musical director, Tim Weil, the show's original band, original *Rent* performers Anthony Rapp and Gwen Stewart, joined by the electric Natascia Díaz, Randy Graff, and Jeremy Kushnier.

On April 19, the Library will screen *Life Begins at 8:40: A Revue with Music by Harold Arlen, Lyrics by Ira Gershwin and Yip Harburg*, a film of the production originally presented in March 1934 following the Music Division's reconstruction of this mostly forgotten score from 1934. Bursting with an

eclectic collection of songs, this concert featured Kate Baldwin, Christopher Fitzgerald, Rebecca Luker, Brad Oscar, and Faith Prince.

All three screenings are at 7:00 PM in the Mary Pickford Theater. Tickets are free, but seating is limited.

Also at the Library of Congress, the exhibit *Politics and the Dancing Body* continues through July 28, 2012. Through the medium of dance, 20th century American choreographers created pieces that reflected the diverse spectrum of cultural expression. In addition to works that celebrated America's traditional music, folk and immigrant practices, and



Poster for *The Eternal Prodigal*, 1936, Federal Theatre Project Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress.

Native American rituals, choreographers were not afraid to craft political dances that protested injustices or advocated reform. *Politics and the Dancing Body* explores how American choreographers between World War I through the Cold War realized this vision, using dance to celebrate American culture, to voice social protest, and to raise social consciousness. The exhibition also examines how the U.S. government employed dance as a vehicle for

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cultural diplomacy and to counter anti-American sentiment.

Featuring materials drawn mostly from the rich dance, music, theater, and design collections of the Music Division of the Library of Congress, *Politics and the Dancing Body* demonstrates how dance was integral to the 20th century American cultural and political landscape.

For more information about this and other exhibits at the Library of Congress, see <http://myloc.gov/EXHIBITIONS>.

Florida: Gainesville

The papers, correspondence, photographs, and other materials by the playwright Cal Yeomans (1938-2001) have now been fully processed by the Special & Area Studies Collections division of the George Smathers Library, University of Florida. Although not as well known or frequently produced as some of his peers, Yeomans was an important voice in the gay theater movement of the late 1970s and early 1980s. The then-unprocessed archive was the chief source of material for the recently published book *Queer Theatre and the Legacy of Cal Yeomans* by Robert A. Schanke (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). The finding aid, which also contains additional biographical information, can be found at <http://web.uflib.ufl.edu/spec/manuscript/guides/yeomans.htm>.

Illinois: Chicago

Actors, Plays & Stages: Early Theater in Chicago (<http://www.chipublic.org/eventsprog/programs/exhibits.php>), continues through May 15, 2012 at the Harold Washington Library Center, Chicago Public Library. The exhibit highlights the first 100 years of the city's playhouses and performers, including memorabilia of the first performance at the humble Sauganash Hotel, the vibrant 19th century theaters, and the rise of the Loop's grand auditoriums.

New Jersey: Newark

The Newark Public Library has mounted *We Wear the Mask: Black Dramatic Theatre, In Newark & Near, from 1700s to 2012*. Curated by Sandra L. West, the

exhibit will include material relating to Paul Robeson, Louis Armstrong, Lorenzo Tucker ("The Black Valentino"), Langston Hughes (whose play *Black Nativity* was first performed in Newark), Lorraine Hansberry, Amiri Baraka and others who had personal Newark area connections or whose work appeared on Newark stages. It will remain on display through March 24. Several related lectures and special events are also being presented. For more information, see <http://www.npl.org/Pages/ProgramsExhibits/BHM12/bhm12.html>.

Ohio: Cincinnati

At the Main Library of the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County is an exhibition of colored plates selected from its collection of 19th and 20th century costume books. From 17th century French theater costumes and traditional Mexican clothing, to photos of historical Russian costumes worn by the imperial family in St. Petersburg a few years only before the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, these images are not only works of art, but they also represent a limitless source of information for the history of gender, body, ideology, and material culture. The exhibit will be on view until mid-November. See <http://www.cincinnati.library.org/programs/exhibits.html> for more information.

Maine: Portland

Drawn from the Portland Museum of Art's growing collection of celebrity portraits, *Making Faces: Photographic Portraits of Actors and Artists* examines in 35 works the way in which appearance, poses, and props help to define the public perception of an artist's work, whether it be on the stage or in a museum. The photographers include Berenice Abbott, Robert Doisneau, Philippe Halsman and Barbara Morgan. The exhibition runs through April 8, 2012. For more information, see <http://www.portlandmuseum.org/>.

Compiled by Leahkim Gannett, Stephen Kuehler,
and Rob Melton

Book and Media Reviews

Reviews of Theatre and Film-Related Books and Multimedia



Curtis, James.
Spencer Tracy: A Biography. New York: Knopf, 2011.
 1,024 pp.
 ISBN 9780307262899.

No imitators or cottage industry of Tracy t-shirts, mugs, and posters sprang up—and serious examinations of his life and work have been comparatively scant.

This vast, exhaustively researched, and highly readable biography fills a significant void in the literature of Hollywood. Spencer Tracy, often overlooked by movie scholars despite being a two-time Academy Award winner and top box office star for 37 years, has become perhaps the most respected actor of his time, noted for versatility matched by few contemporaries. Only James Cagney and Bette Davis were true peers. Tracy's acting was naturalistic and his persona unadorned; the range of characters and the genres in which he excelled were so wide that he never became iconic in the ways Cagney and Davis did. No imitators or cottage industry of Tracy t-shirts, mugs, and posters sprang up—and serious examinations of his life and work have been comparatively scant.

Previous Tracy biographies include only Larry Swindell's admiring *Spencer Tracy* (1969) and Bill Davidson's disparaging, tabloid-style *Spencer Tracy: Tragic Idol* (1988). Aside from standard series books and research volumes, including my own *Spencer Tracy: A Bio-Bibliography* (1994), Tracy is otherwise only a sidebar in a relentless torrent of biographies (no fewer than 25 to date) of his co-star and longtime love, Katharine Hepburn; or featured in books focusing on their relationship, including Garson Kanin's *Tracy and Hepburn* (1971) and Christopher Andersen's *An Affair to Remember: A Remarkable Love Story of Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy* (1998). Tracy's complex relationship with Hepburn

is undeniably fascinating, but it might be argued that his pre-Hepburn story is of greater importance in understanding his acting, as Curtis ably demonstrates.

Tracy's hardscrabble early life in Milwaukee, a mostly unsuccessful decade as a stage actor in the 1920s, and the deafness of his son were surely the psychological foundation of his singular acting. Tracy embodied pre-Actors Studio naturalness and he was also a quintessentially American male—a “mug” as he would have said—able, with seeming effortlessness (but, as Curtis reveals, with often-painful effort), to move from villainous to heroic (even romantic) roles with no discernible change in face or figure.

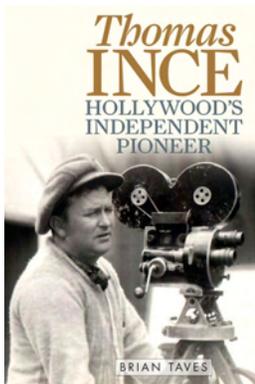
Through the creation of the turbulent internal lives of his characters, and almost certainly drawing on his own tangled nature, Tracy became the most admired actor among his peers, even by those peers. Tormented with guilt stemming from his self-perceived failure to live up to the Catholic values in which he was raised as a result of numerous affairs, harrowing bouts with alcoholism, and guilt tied to his complicated family life (he never divorced his wife, Louise Treadwell, despite many affairs), Tracy found his art in his life.

Along with unprecedented access to Tracy's daily journals and family papers, Curtis also unearthed virtually every word the taciturn Tracy spoke to interviewers, and he himself interviewed countless Tracy intimates (and profits from prior research by others) to offer a more thorough portrait of this most enigmatic of actors than previously available. At a whopping 1,000+ pages, *Spencer Tracy* presents its reader with a balanced accounting of Tracy's troubled life and impressive legacy as a screen great increasingly appreciated as the most accomplished and contemporary of Hollywood's golden age stars, if also its least iconic.

James Fisher
 University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Book and Media Reviews

Reviews of Theatre and Film-Related Books and Multimedia



Taves, Brian.
Thomas Ince:
Hollywood's
Independent Pioneer.
University Press of
Kentucky, 2012.
367 pp.
ISBN 9780813134222

Taves brings his standard clear-cut, incisive treatment of an individual life within the context of time and place...

Thomas Harper Ince (1880-1924), whose innovative contributions to early filmmaking continue to drive the industry, finally has a duly warranted, full-career biography showing his work as an innovator in all facets of production: topics and themes, location and casting, direction and distribution.

Brian Taves, a Library of Congress film archivist since 1990, began researching Ince's career while working on another title. The release of Ince's corporate papers provided the impetus; a Kluge Staff Fellowship at the Library of Congress allowed Taves to view additional archives, and together these primary sources helped clear away the innuendo surrounding Ince's untimely mid-career death. Despite proof that Ince died of natural causes due to heart disease, gossipmongers fanned flames that business mogul William Randolph Hearst killed Ince in a jealous rage. Taves brings his standard clear-cut, incisive treatment of an individual life within the context of time and place found in his other biographies, including titles on P. G. Wodehouse and Robert Florey.

Taves presents Ince's life and career topically within intersecting circles of chronology, starting at age six as a stage actor in a theatrical family, to his final push to maintain an independent brand of filmmaking at the cusp of the rise of "mogul-making." Ince carried his initial experiences filming on location in Cuba to build his California career utilizing local landscapes

for westerns with real cowboys and American Indians as actors, and cattle from his own ranch.

Ince introduced the concept of continuity—building storyboards in order to utilize time, talent and setting out of story sequence, yet providing a seamless story in preparation towards editing the final product. He fostered truth in characterization and casting.

He was a leader in sustainability; growing, cooking and serving the food for his large contingent of personnel and building a production village replete with housing, a hospital, and worldwide settings for filming. Touted as "Father of the Western," Ince gained equal reputation with Civil War films at the juncture of its 50th anniversary. His rare combination of artistic soul and entrepreneurial grit fueled the bravado to move a fledgling "novelty" of shorts into full-length dramatic features starring Broadway actors in stories of historical, social, and cultural consequence.

Taves comments in an interview: "The vast majority of Ince's films [are only] viewable in archives or their rare public screenings. Hopefully, my book will help to suggest placing more of his films in circulation, and perhaps some of the lost titles will be discovered. Ince's *oeuvre* is astonishingly modern in its concerns and sensibilities: religious hypocrisy, families abandoned by the husband, love inside and outside of marriage, and two-career couples, are all explored in his films."

Rita Kohn
Freelance Author

Book and Media Reviews

Reviews of Theatre and Film-Related Books and Multimedia



Hansel, Adrien-Alice and Amy Wegener, eds.
Humana Festival 2010: The Complete Plays.
New York: Playscripts, Inc., 2011.
400 pp.
ISBN 9780981909967.

The published performance texts serve as valuable documentation of the 34th festival, while also potentially reaching into the future, forecasting developing trends and landmark voices in American

Now in its 36th year, the Humana Festival of New American Plays at the Actors Theatre of Louisville has become a site of pilgrimage for theatre artists across the country. In an era in which the development of original plays is especially precarious, given the economic landscape, the Humana Festival remains a haven for new writing by emerging and established playwrights and ensembles. For those unable to make the journey each spring to Louisville, Playscripts, Inc. annually publishes an anthology of the works presented. The most recent collection, which documents the 34th annual festival held in 2010, offers an eclectic and surprising array of works by many promising writers.

The editors of the 2010 collection note that each of the texts included in the anthology “considers a delicate balance of venture and danger, on and offstage” (xiii). Lisa Dillman’s *Ground* evokes the beauty and peril of the agricultural landscape of the border between the U.S. and Mexico as one town’s residents struggle to survive. In *Sirens*, Deborah Zoe Lauffer’s whimsical tale, a couple celebrates their 25th anniversary at sea as the husband struggles to recapture his muse and his youth. Dan Dietz’s short piece, *Lobster Boy*, begins in a deceptively detached manner and concludes in a darkly sad and personal confession.

Several of the pieces included in the collection function meta-theatrically, to varying degrees of success. *The Cherry Sisters Revisited*, by Dan

O’Brien with music by Michael Friedman, is a somewhat cumbersome story of one of the worst acts in vaudeville, reminiscent at times of the various tributes to Florence Foster Jenkins that have also taken the stage in recent years. Another piece in the collection that presumably worked better in performance than on the page was the mock recreation/documentary piece *The Method Gun*, written by Kirk Lynn and created by the infamous Austin, Texas company the Rude Mechs.

In contrast to these two texts, which were difficult to envision staged, two collectively devised pieces stand out as the strongest examples of innovative writing in the anthology. *Heist!* was a site-specific, event-based, immersive art theft caper, which was staged principally in a downtown art gallery. The documentation of this piece clearly gives a sense of the strong characters devised by the Apprentice Company and the glorious fun the audience must have encountered in this participatory mystery. *Fissures (lost and found)*, created by an ensemble of six Minneapolis-based writers (Steve Epp, Cory Hinkle, Dominic Orlando, Dominique Serrand, Deborah Stein and Victoria Stewart) is a beautifully elegiac piece that addresses the playfulness and melancholy of memory.

This collection—as with all previous years—at once looks to the past and the future. The published performance texts serve as valuable documentation of the 34th festival, while also potentially reaching into the future, forecasting developing trends and landmark voices in American theatre.

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Upcoming Events

TLA Events and Deadlines

June 2012

29

Spring Board Meeting

10:00 AM—4:00 PM

Stratford Shakespeare Festival Archives
350 Douro Street, Stratford, ON

October 2012

12

Business Meeting

5:30 PM—6:00 PM

Bruno Walter Auditorium
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York, NY

12

Awards Ceremony and 75th Anniversary Gala

6:00 PM—7:30 PM

Bruno Walter Auditorium
The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York, NY

13

Fall Board Meeting

10:00 AM—4:00 PM

The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts
New York, NY

November 2012

1-4

2012 ASTR-TLA Annual Conference

Nashville, TN

BROADSIDE 2012 Submission Deadlines

July 2012

13

BROADSIDE Summer 2012 Submission Deadline

November 2012

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BROADSIDE Fall 2012 Submission Deadline