REVIEW

From the Director

One important aspect of program life in educational theatre is the myriad of ways in which students can develop their artistic craft. The opportunities for students to refine their acting and backstage skills are extensive, as are the occasions when students can be director, designer, and playwright, not to mention spectator for a wide range of program-sponsored events.

For instance, at the beginning of the fall 2009 semester our student club Theatrix! created the 24 Hour Instant Gratification Festival. Undergraduates and graduates wrote and performed their own plays all within the time constraints of one day. What a wonderful way to launch the semester with such an exceptional showcasing of our students’ abilities in varied domains.

Not long after this festival, the program presented Georg Buchner’s classic nineteenth century text Woyzeck in our Black Box studio. Often considered the beginnings of modern drama, and paving the way for the likes of Piscator and Brecht, our students rendered a complex translation of Buchner’s text into a compelling production. It was thrilling to see such a fruitful collaboration which included the participation of faculty and alumni. And then most recently, we hosted an evening of short plays for young audiences written by high school students, but directed and acted by our colleagues.

In this issue you will read about the many partnerships in which we are engaged. We feature an article by Dr. David Montgomery, Visiting Assistant Professor of Educational Theatre, on Social Studies and Theatre Workshops at the New-York Historical Society, high school levels congregated at the New-York Historical Society for professional learning workshops sponsored by Becoming Historians/Teaching American History, (Out)laws & Justice, and The Program in Educational Studies.

Profiles

Remembering Augusto Boal, 1931-2009: A Teacher Recalls El Mestre

By Jason Zanitsch, PhD Student

In 2007, I found myself in the hotel lobby of a hotel in Rio de Janeiro, waiting for Augusto Boal to arrive to take my group of NYU Study Abroad students to his Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed. I was one of 15 or so graduate students in NYU’s Program in Educational Theatre about to embark on ten days of work with Boal and his Jokers at CTO-Rio. When the man himself came into the lobby, a buzz ran through the staff. It was a moment reserved in the US for celebrities and sports figures, not 76-year-old theatre director/teachers. I asked one of the concierges why such a fuss. He responded that Mestre Boal, (a term meaning both “teacher” and “master”) was more

continued on page 2

Social Studies and Theatre Workshops at the New-York Historical Society

By Dr. David Montgomery, Visiting Assistant Professor of Educational Theatre

During the first couple of weekends in May, social studies teachers from the elementary, middle, and high school levels congregated at the New-York Historical Society for professional learning workshops sponsored by Becoming Historians/Teaching American History, (Out)laws & Justice, and The Program in Educational Studies.

continued on page 7

Inside 7 Not Just Art for Art’s Sake 8 Profile: “I Just Tell Stories” 10 Looking for Shakespeare 13 NYU V-Day 16 Developing Dramathematics
Inspiring Transformations in Applied Theatre

(Or How I missed the first week of classes for a trip to the U.K.)

By Teresa Fisher, PhD Candidate

I’ll take any excuse to spend time in London, but my recent visit to the United Kingdom for a biannual conference on Applied Arts and Health was well worth the trip. After spending a relaxing Labor Day weekend in London, I traveled to the University of Northampton, a leisurely hour’s train ride north, for a conference on Applied Arts and Health. From September 8th through the 10th, I had the privilege of connecting with arts and health practitioners throughout the world at the conference hosted by Dr. Ross Prior, a Principal Lecturer and Journal Editor in Studies in Applied Arts and Health at the University of Northampton (and who was also a tutor on our study abroad program in London), and Cath Poyser, a Senior Lecturer in Occupational Therapy.

This was the second Applied Arts and Health Conference, but the first international one. Along with the many artists, occupational therapists, and others working in the fields of applied arts and health in the United Kingdom at the conference, I met practitioners from Belgium, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, Australia, and the United States.

In addition to attending inspiring and thought-provoking keynote addresses, including an enthusiastically received one by our very own Dr. Philip Taylor, I enjoyed attending a bevy of paper presentations, performances, narratives, and workshops on a host of applied arts and health issues. Artists, therapists, and other practitioners shared their challenges, their successes, and their thoughts about the intersections between arts and health during these talks. While facing the same economic issues that we face in the United States, it was heartening to see so many dedicated professionals focused on continuing their works of service to those in need. These professionals work with diverse populations including the grieving, prisoners, those with traumatic injuries, and the aged. They also teach in educational programs geared towards addressing subjects such as illiteracy and AIDS awareness/prevention. The conference was set up so that attendees could eat meals and have breaks together which facilitated even more sharing of information as well as networking with fellow attendees.

I gave two presentations at the conference. I co-presented with Leslie Smith, a fellow PhD student, on a paper we wrote titled “Strengthening the Bridge: Using Informed Consent Principles to Enhance Participants’ Trust and Understanding in Applied Theatre Practice.” In the paper we explored a particular strategy for enhancing participation and facilitator efficacy in applied theatre work. I also facilitated a workshop exploring obesity through theatre. Both presentations were very helpful in fine-tuning our thinking through the feedback we received.

Another highlight of the conference was the launching of a new journal, helmed by Dr. Ross Prior, called the Journal of Applied Arts and Health, whose inaugural issue is soon to be released. The journal will come out twice a year and NYU’s library is purchasing a subscription to it. Included in the inaugural issue is an article by Professor Robert Landy, the head of the Drama Therapy program at NYU.

The next international Applied Arts and Health conference will occur in two years. I know that I will be there and I hope you will, too.
Remembering Boal: Ready to Fly
By Pip Gengenbach, MA Student
(Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities, EDTC)

After Augusto Boal, the father of the Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) movement, died in May, just months before we were scheduled to begin studying with him, there was administrative discussion of cancelling the TO in Rio program. No one, however, dropped out of the program after Boal’s death, and the decision was made to move forward, in part on the strength of the Boal-trained Jokers (master-practitioners of Theatre of the Oppressed), including his son, Julian. Our instruction at their hands was physically intense, emotionally exhausting, and incredibly rewarding. Their insight and wisdom, as well as their frequent anecdotes about Boal, taught us much more than we could have gleaned from books alone.

The performance of our Forum Theatre scenes was the culmination of eleven days’ study for 25 NYU masters candidates (under the leadership of Dr. Philip Taylor). During our time in Rio we enjoyed a whirlwind of activities, from visiting favelas (slums in Rio) to samba clubs, from luxurious beaches to hospitals for the mentally ill. Part of the value of this sort of study abroad course is found in the incredibly rich variety of experiences to which you would never be exposed otherwise. For example, I jumped off a giant mountain! Two things can be said about that: A) I had a hang-glider and experienced instructor strapped to me at the time, and B) I would never have done that on West 4th Street.

The cultural learning alone would have made this course worthwhile, but when combined with the academic content and the instruction we received at the Center for Theatre of the Oppressed, I know we all found our time in Rio to be life-changing.

If you think of Theatre of the Oppressed as a tree (this isn’t original thinking on my part—see Boal’s book, Aesthetics of the Oppressed), rooted in ethics and solidarity, with different branches representing the various aspects of TO, then you can imagine little birds perched in the upper branches, ready to fly off to apply TO methods and theories in other places, with other people in other schools and classes, everywhere. Hopefully, those little birds are us.

For more information on the Brazil Abroad Program, please visit http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/study_abroad/programs/Theatre_of_the_Oppressed_2

Inset: The Center for Theatre of the Oppressed in Lapa, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Remembering Augusto Boal, 1931-2009: A Teacher Recalls El Mestre
continued from page 1

loved in Rio than the mayor, the president of Brazil, or most “stars.” “He speaks for us all,” the man said.

Augusto Boal was born in Rio in 1931 to a family of Portuguese immigrants. Theatre was not his initial calling. He began as a chemist, coming to New York City to pursue a doctorate in chemistry in 1952. There, he became immersed in theatre, eventually writing and directing his first play in 1955. Upon returning to Brazil, he began work with the Arena Theatre in Sao Paolo where he began using theatre forms to critique the authoritarian government. When the government declared certain scripts forbidden, Boal pioneered the “living newspaper,” a form of theatre which took as its base script the government promoted newspapers, but juxtaposed the text with images created by the cast as comments upon the reality of the government’s oppression. This led to his arrest and torture and eventual exile from Brazil in 1971.

While studying with Boal on NYU’s Study Abroad Program in Rio, I was always struck by the passion and care that radiated from him. Though even then his health was not great and he spent much of the time sitting watching us work with his team of jokers, when he spoke to us it was with an obvious joy and sincerity that I have never seen matched. In his words and in his spirit there was always a sense of hope...that we could make a change, each of us, in the world.

Sections of this article originally appeared in Teaching Theatre, the quarterly journal of the Educational Theatre Association.
Study Abroad: Youth Theatre, London, UK

By Allyn Rathus, MA Student (Theatre K-12, EDTA)

On July 3rd, 2009, you could hear a pin drop as 16 bright-eyed students of educational theatre watched one of our most heroic leaders, Gavin Bolton, raise his glass of champagne to toast New York University for having "long been recognized as a 'vineyard' of scholarship and research." Gavin continued that, "One of its principal wine-growers, Professor Nancy Swortzell, promoted a grape called 'Theatre'. Her responsibility at NYU was to help trainee wine-growers teach young people how to achieve the best quality of color, clarity, smell and taste in theatre."

Thirty-six years later, it still proves the utmost importance for us M.A. candidates in Educational Theatre to follow the path that Professor Swortzell laid across the globe, and particularly spent much time cultivating in London, England.

We were not sure what to expect of our three weeks abroad—migrating to London and trying to fit into its educational theatre community, but not one of us would trade the experience of travelling and learning with our fearless leader, Dr. Philip Taylor. Not only did Dr. Taylor organize our viewing of twenty different theatrical performances, he assembled a team of tutors and cooperating teachers who worked tirelessly with us toward our growth as teachers and learners. He also introduced us to the best of the best — legends in our field: Dorothy Heathcote, Gavin Bolton, Cecily O’Neill, Judith Ackroyd, and the fierce educators of the Royal National Theatre. Experiencing these facilitators talk to us as colleagues and compliment our unique strengths as educators was priceless.

It is my opinion that, if we are lucky, we are either becoming new members of existing communities or building new communities. I cannot speak to what expectations were met for all sixteen of us and therefore, I am not sure which assumptions were proven true and which were proven false. What I am sure of is that we had never been part of such a strong and collaborative ensemble—the kind of ensemble that is crucial both to successful drama practice and social growth. In London, we all spoke the same language, a language that we shared with the brilliant practitioners that we met. In London, we all achieved success.

In the words of Mr. Bolton, “Let us propose a toast to those wine developers who, by introducing this ‘Study Abroad’ program, have helped refine our understanding and our skills.” And let us hope that this program continues to yield success for another 36 years.

For more information on the London Abroad Program, please visit http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/study_abroad/programs/Youth_Theatre

Study Abroad: Journeys in Ireland

By Christopher Goslin, MA Student (Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities, EDTC)

My experience in Ireland was absolutely amazing. Not only did I travel the emerald isle and take up some of the Irish culture and history, but I also had the opportunity to start my journey in graduate school at NYU’s Educational Theatre program. I, along with 23 other students, ventured into Ireland to study community-based theatre. Within the applied theatre course, we observed and participated with professional Irish theatre organizations and their local communities. Some of these experiences included Theatre-in-Education in Dublin, youth and community theatre in Drogheda, and the use of theatre in prison communities while in Belfast. Along with the experiences that occurred in these theatre groups, we also had the chance to work in several student groups that were personally tutored by professionals at Trinity University in Dublin.

When I first looked into the Educational Theatre Program at NYU, I thought this was a perfect time to get my masters and expand my employment opportunities. Ireland seemed like a double positive experience: not only would I be able to start my studies in the program, but it would serve as a summer vacation, too. To my surprise, it was intense and exciting. The effect that Applied Theatre can have on communities was startling.

For more information on the Ireland Abroad Program, please visit http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/study_abroad/programs/Applied_Theatre
Study Abroad: Collaborations & the Arts in Puerto Rico

By Rachel Jamieson, MA Graduate (Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities, EDTC)

The Theatre Practices winter intersession course in Puerto Rico is more than just a class in theatre practices. It is an experience that crosses the lines between all of the arts and instills the value of community in an inter-disciplinary arts circle and the greater community at large. It not only delves into the heritage, politics, and arts of the Puerto Rican culture; it also inspires an obligation to collaborate and play many roles in your own arts community.

There were so many remarkable artistic experiences and members of the Puerto Rican arts community we met along the way in our travels around the island. Most of our time was spent in the Teatro Estudio Yerbabruja in Rio Piedras, where half the class took an intensive course in physical theatre with Javier Cardona and the other half of us took a course in mask with Deborah Hunt. We spent a night in the mountains of the University of Puerto Rico’s Cayey campus, where we toured the Pio Lopez Martinez Museum and took a class in the Afro-Caribbean “Bomba” dance with Jessica Gaspar. That night we danced under the stars to the live music of Luis Rodriguez, whom we deemed to be the Puerto Rican Jason Mraz. Also in Cayey, we toured the burned remains of the University of Puerto Rico students, Jovennes de 98, with whom we also spent a morning doing workshops and collaborating. In Puerto Rico’s capital city, San Juan, we saw a physical theatre performance by Pepe Alvarez and his company, and later that day we took a class with Rosa Luisa Marquez focusing on Boal’s Image Theatre. We were very lucky to have studied extensively with so many of the leading theatre practitioners and artists of Puerto Rico.

What was most striking to me was the incredibly strong sense of community among these artists. Across the island, they all knew each other and supported each others’ work. Many of them had worked together at one time or another and they all attend each others’ performances or exhibits. One significant example of this is in a video we watched of the memorial performance around Antonio Martorell’s burnt house. Artists of all types — writers, musicians, actors, dancers, and visual artists all came together to rally around their wounded comrade and then worked to repair that wound with collaborative, inter-disciplinary art. They were compelled by their sense of community obligation to bring hope to Martorell and help him rise from the ashes. This sense of community was also extended to us, as members of the Jovennes de 98 exchanged phone numbers with us and led us through the street festivals in San Juan, attended our performance and after party, and took us to their regular bar, Boriqua, where NYU students and UPR students, together with other Rio Piedras patrons sang, played drums, and danced until the wee hours of the morning.

For more information on the Puerto Rico Intersession Study Abroad Program, please visit http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/study_abroad/programs/Theatre_Practices
“The Freshman Experience” is a term that seems only to be utilized and on the minds of people who are not freshmen. When I was one of the newest to arrive on campus, I was single out. Everyone wanted to know how and what I was doing. Did I like New York? What classes was I taking? How were my roommates? Did I miss home? I was even required to attend the New Students Seminar, so the university could make sure I was acclimating to college life. So why was everyone so worried about my fellow freshmen and me?

College can be stressful. In my first semester at NYU, I was taking a full load of eight classes, and I was fortunate enough to be cast in the department’s production of The Class Project. Between reading twenty chapters in Genesis for World Cultures, finishing my progression for Writing the Essay, trying to remember what a butt joint is for Stagecraft, and rehearsing and conducting interviews for the show, I was exhausted. There was never a shortage of things for me to do. Not to mention that nagging feeling that what I was putting off would eventually come back to haunt me as due dates loomed nearer (i.e. this article). Ironically, my teachers encouraged relaxation and emphasized the importance of living in the moment and not worrying about the future. How could I possibly “explore” the here and now when I had a paper to write, a midterm to study for, and dress rehearsals to attend? It was doable, though, as I successfully completed all of my assignments, attended all of my rehearsals, received decent grades and, remarkably, survived in one piece.

New York City is a new experience in itself. It is huge and exciting, “the center of the world,” as some would say. It is easy to get swallowed up or simply become distracted by everything that is going on here. Why would I want to sit in my dorm and do my homework when I could go see a Broadway show or take a dance class at Steps or go shopping in SoHo? I found myself facing this dilemma almost daily.

Additionally, finding myself in a place full of people who were all buried in their own agendas was somewhat shocking. There were definitely days of invisibility, but for the most part, I was invigorated by the city and the endless possibilities it had to offer. As I walked to class in the brisk autumn air, I took in my surroundings and was always genuinely excited to be in the Big Apple.

College can be lonely. I must confess that this was the hardest part for me. Coming from Las Vegas and being so far from home was more difficult than I ever imagined. Across the country, while my family and boyfriend were still back in Vegas. None of them were close enough to visit, and no one was able to come and see The Class Project. However, what helped me, and what I feel sets Educational Theatre apart, was the sense of community perpetuated on all levels of the program. As a by-product of having almost every class together, the freshmen class (or the Ed. Theatre Palooza, as we liked to call ourselves) became a tight-knit group with a plethora of shared experiences and inside jokes. We were able to quickly form an ensemble amongst ourselves, and I felt like I had a true support system when I needed it. Through my involvement with The Class Project, I also had the opportunity to meet and work with a few of the amazing graduate students in the program. I was surprised as to how open they were to me; I was treated like an equal right away. They were extremely supportive of me and my fellow undergraduates, and I benefited greatly from their advice and knowledge. My teachers were an integral part of making me feel welcome in the program, always treating me like a person rather than a student. They all were happy to answer any questions or clarify any concerns that I brought up, and they consistently showed that they cared about me and truly wanted me to succeed in the program.

In only my first two months at NYU, I experienced a wide range of challenging situations. Between using power tools for the first time, making my first college show, learning how to breathe correctly, discovering that the greatest super objective is love, feeling like I had no one, and figuring out that I already made some great friends, I was a busy girl. I would say I survived the beginning of the “freshmen experience,” if only by the skin of my teeth. I understand why there was cause for worry, but I think I had it covered.
IT’S NOT JUST ART FOR ART’S SAKE:
A Former EDTC Student Reflects on the Role of Arts Programs in Prisons

By Javier Cardona, MA Graduate (Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities, EDTC);
Program Director of RTA

As recently as this past summer, arts programs in New York State prisons have been questioned. This should not come as a surprise, considering that according to mainstream culture, confinement and punishment give sense and purpose to a penitentiary system. On the other hand, distant from this popular idea of prisons as coercive spaces for retribution and deterrence, there is an understanding of prisons as a space in which redemption can occur. One in which, through progressive education praxis and holistic rehabilitative approaches, incarcerated people can transform themselves into conscious citizens who re-enter society not only to creatively continue moving toward their personal growth, but also to contribute to the healthy development of their communities. And this is where the role of the arts inside prisons takes place, and makes sense.

To say that a theater program inside a correctional institution teaches incarcerated people “how to act,” or that it trains them to “go to Broadway,” is disingenuous at best. Arts education programs within educational and rehabilitative settings such as prisons serve multiple purposes, simultaneously. Through the multidisciplinary approach of the arts, participants are engaged in a hands-on teaching and learning journey in which they generate and practice not only academic skills, but cultural, emotional and social competencies as well. Among these: critical thinking, effective communication, non-violent responses, personal and social responsibility, empathy, creativity, cooperative work, and a broader knowledge of self in relation to their multiple realities. No longer are the arts, as a space for “action, reflection and transformation”, confined to theater buildings, museums, wealthy schools and liberal universities. Arts as an applied practice are quite welcome in community centers, shelters, mental health clinics, outreach programs, and half-way homes as a forward-thinking way to promote a more dynamic dialogue for holistic human development.

I believe that the mission of arts education programs inside prisons, such as Rehabilitation Through The Arts, RTA, which shares with NYU’s Educational Theater Program an arts in prison initiative, is consistent with the mission statement of the New York State Department of Corrections to “… provide appropriate treatment to address the needs of all inmates so they can return to their communities better prepared to lead successful and crime-free lives.” Statistically, 93% of all American prisoners are eventually released to society. Doesn’t it make sense to prepare prisoners to successfully re-enter a complex and diverse society? As we have learned through our work in the prisons, applied theatre is one way to equip them for success. This is the least we can do as progressive and sensitive citizens.

Social Studies and Theatre Workshops at the New-York Historical Society

continued from page 1

Theatre. The goal of the workshops was to help teachers understand what it feels like to be in, and to plan for, a process drama designed to teach historical content. Vigilantes and Vigilance: Social Issues in the Civil War Era Through the Life of Jesse James, Outlaw or Hero, was the title of the workshop—a two-and-a-half day experience which compelled participants to enter the complex topic of slavery and the civil war through the narrative of Jesse James.

An examination into the life of Jesse James and his connection to the Bushwhackers and the opposing Jayhawkers, both detached units of the regular armies operating as predatory bands behind the army lines, highlights an important part of the social history of the Civil War era. These united bands of outlaws reveal the tensions and the debate that existed about pro-slavery, anti-slavery, and other perspectives that were in play in the mid-west, as well as in New York City.

On day one of the workshops, participants were placed into the role of historians. Having teachers in role as historians for the rest of the days of the workshops compelled them to approach each dramatic activity, and research task, with a sense of urgency as they were compelled to investigate and discover, like a detective looking for clues, the answer to questions that they themselves had created. As such, participants were able to analyze artifacts in the New York Historical Society Museum, examine primary source documents, and explore the emotional and social implications of the time period and its characters within the world of the drama.

The most exciting part of the workshop transpired when participants witnessed and interacted with middle school students in a drama lesson led by Dr. Philip Taylor. As the middle school students created statues inspired by a photo of Jesse James where James is posing in a Bushwhacker uniform, everyone in the room became curious to answer the question: What led Jesse James, at the age of 16, to pose for this picture that would identify him as a Bushwhacker? Students and teachers devised scenes to explore the events that may have transpired prior to the moment the photo was taken, as Jesse James was growing up. These illuminating scenes were shared, and a lot of deep and rich discussion happened along the way, expertly facilitated by Dr. Taylor.

In the final section of the lesson,
By Kathy Emori, MA Student  
(Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities, EDTC)

Have you thought about where knock-knock jokes come from, or why salmon swim and jump upstream rather than downstream? Do you know why the frog croaks, the woodpecker pecks, or the firefly lights up at night? Or how to get water from a rock when it is squeezed? If you don’t, don’t worry, there is a large group of children (and adults) that can now tell you the stories they heard from Manhattan, Norway, Bali (just to name a few) in the Professional Storytelling at NYU series presented by the Department of Music and Performing Arts Professions this past Fall. For nine years now, the Program in Educational Theatre has been hosting internationally renowned storytellers that have shared their tales through many styles and materials, to both children and adults, three times a semester at the historic Provincetown Playhouse. Two fundamental figures in the creation of this series, Laura Simms and Diane Wolkstein, who are among the top storytellers in the world and are based here in Greenwich Village, have also appeared in the series most years. Storytelling has a long and rich history here in New York, with such local organizations as the New York Storytelling Center, founded in 1982. The storytelling renaissance in the U.S. started in the late 1960’s and gained momentum in the 1970’s. Simms and Wolkstein were two of the four founders and have continued to be active ever since.

For the past six years, the Professional Storytelling at NYU Program has been produced by Regina Ress, who is also the professor of a weekend intensive course offered each semester in the Program of Educational Theatre. Ress describes the program as an “array of world class professional storytellers who have all performed on both the national and international stage.” In years past, stories and folktales from around the world in both English and the native tongue of the speaker have been included. Hiroko Fujita told delightful children’s stories in Japanese. Spain’s best-known storyteller, Ana Garcia Castellano, told tales from Don Quixote in Spanish. Beninese storyteller Raouf Mama told a story in Fon.

For the past six years, the Professional Storytelling at NYU Program has been produced by Regina Ress, who is also the professor of a weekend intensive course offered each semester in the Program of Educational Theatre. Ress describes the program as an “array of world class professional storytellers who have all performed on both the national and international stage.” In years past, stories and folktales from around the world in both English and the native tongue of the speaker have been included. Hiroko Fujita told delightful children’s stories in Japanese. Spain’s best-known storyteller, Ana Garcia Castellano, told tales from Don Quixote in Spanish. Beninese storyteller Raouf Mama told a story in Fon.

“Storytelling takes me so many different places ... I can’t say where I’d like to take it. It’s where it will take me. I go where I am called.”

Regina Ress

PHOTO COURTESY OF REGINA RESS

continued on page 17

“Storytelling takes me so many different places ... I can’t say where I’d like to take it. It’s where it will take me. I go where I am called.”

Regina Ress

PHOTO COURTESY OF REGINA RESS

continued on page 17

By Meredith Lewis, MA Student  
(Theatre K-12, Social Studies 7-12, ETSS)

In February 2009, New York University awarded Dr. Christina Marín with the Martin Luther King Junior Faculty Award. This University-sponsored honor annually recognizes an exceptional professor who has consistently reflected Dr. King’s spirit in his/her teaching, research and practice. While Dr. Marín’s extensive curriculum vitae speaks volumes about her research and experiences within the fields of applied theatre, social justice activism and diversity education, no document can sum up what a powerful feeling it is to be a student in one of her classes.

Dr. Marín’s ability to facilitate deep self-exploration and seamlessly fuse this inquiry with broad, socially conscious applications helped me to identify my window in. In only my first semester with her, Dr. Marín was able to change my perceptions of traditional Social Studies instruction and guided my inquiry of dramatically infused interdisciplinary learning. Dr. Marín introduced me to the power and transitive nature of theatre when it is used to motivate socially charged dialogues. It was her unwavering adherence to student-centered education that helped me to realize the key to powerful and effective Social Studies Education.

Claude Blenman, Director of Faculty Affairs (right), congratulates Dr. Christina Marín for winning the MLK Junior Faculty Award.
In the spring of 2009, the Educational Theatre Department produced *The Giver*, a Theatre for Young Audiences piece based on the book by Lois Lowry and adapted for the stage by Eric Coble. The story is about Jonas, a 12 year old boy, who is coming of age in a community that is governed by a Committee of Elders that strictly enforces “sameness” and controls all decisions. Jonas is bestowed the honor of becoming the community’s next “Receiver of Memory.” This distinguished position entitles him to be the sole person responsible for holding all the feelings and memories of generations past, present and future. *The Giver* portrays Jonas’ journey as he struggles with learning new and astounding aspects of the world from which he was previously sheltered. For example, we watch Jonas learn about the color red, the definition of warfare, and what it means to be “released” in his community. But most of all, *The Giver* challenges young audiences to understand that their opinions matter and encourages them to think for themselves.

The directors, David Montgomery and Jonathan Shmidt, the Dramaturg, Corrine Miller, and the Design Team, Daryl Embry (Set & Lights), Amy Cordileone (Costumes), and Blake McCarty (Sound), were dedicated to leaving several aspects of the production open to interpretation as Lois Lowry does in the book. The set, lighting, and sound design helped support Jonas’ journey through several memories and eventually off into “elsewhere.” This production was a complete collaboration between actors, directors and designers. The script was very succinct and needed to be expanded to allow the audience the opportunity to digest the events taking place on stage. Blake recognized this and gave the actors music in order to move seamlessly through transitions. The cast worked closely with the directors to choreograph these transitions, which helped both the audience and actors create depth and meaning during the short scenes. Rituals were also created in order to help add dimension to the community.

The collaborative approach to producing this piece was truly unique. Our first rehearsal consisted of a lengthy conversation where we discussed the time period of the book, the components, benefits and detriments of the community it portrays, and the different roles within that community. The book resonated with everyone on multiple levels and this dialogue helped pinpoint several questions we had about each character’s intentions and relationships. The dialogue continued throughout the process, and rehearsal was frequently paused when something needed clarification or if another question surfaced. The flexible nature of the rehearsal process allowed the actors and directors to come to conclusions together and created an extraordinarily strong sense of community among the team.
Looking for Shakespeare, But Finding Ed. Theatre

By Robert Stevenson, Freshman in the Undergraduate Program

The first time I really noticed the Provincetown Playhouse was the summer before my freshman year of high school. I was passing by the small, historic theater (now a void between buildings on MacDougal) with my parents, when one of them noticed a poster for a play being performed that evening: The Comedy of Errors, presented by high school students.

So we went. Now, I’m not one to make grand generalizations, but I really think going to that show affected the course of my life. The production was presented by Looking for Shakespeare (LFS) — an Ed. Theatre program for high school students which proves that Shakespeare can be made accessible to young people. The program benefits the Ed Theatre program, too, as it allows graduate students in the department to gain valuable experience in working with young people. After seeing the show, I appreciated the fact that I could see the students’ input. It was clear that they had been deeply involved in the analysis of the text, as well as the design and production choices.

By the following spring, I had decided to apply to LFS myself. Since seeing the play months earlier, I had learned that one of the student performers from the show had also started at my high school that year. Once I found out who he was and met him, he gave me the information to apply to the program for the following summer. What serendipity!

I was accepted into LFS in the summer of 2007 and participated in a production of Measure for Measure. Doing the show changed the way I looked at being in plays. Instead of simply reading lines, as I was accustomed to doing at school, we spent days investigating the meanings of our lines, as well as the lines and motivations of other characters. I saw that theater is an absorbing, rather than a superficial, experience.

I participated in Looking for Shakespeare the following three summers, and realized as I toured and considered colleges the summer before my senior year, that the Ed. Theatre program is a splendid creature. It nurtures my love of traditional theater, while also giving me a base in teaching, thereby showing me how to spread the craft to others, and how to better understand it myself.

In the end, it was no accident that I chose Educational Theatre — the program was meant for me. Passing the Provincetown on that summer day was fate, not coincidence.

For more information on the Shakespeare Youth Ensemble, contact Joe Salvatore at js1655@nyu.edu
How does a teenager living in modern-day New York City even begin to understand the life of a character whose role was written centuries earlier? Is it possible to truly realize a character’s emotions, longings, and expectations when your own sense of reality is so far removed from this imaginary one? What if the differences between you and your character aren’t simply historical and societal, but biological as well? These are just some of the questions the cast members of NYU’s Shakespeare Youth Ensemble found themselves faced with as they prepared the production of *Two Noble Kinsmen* under the direction of PhD candidate Amy Cordileone.

In spring 2009, NYU’s Shakespeare Youth Ensemble was composed of young people aged 12-18 from throughout New York City. Unlike previous years, this incarnation of the youth ensemble was nearly composed entirely of young women, with only one young man. The fact that the cast was predominantly female presented these young adults with a series of unique challenges regarding the development of their characters. This was especially true since several of the girls were cast in male roles, or were portraying both male and female characters in the play. To help the cast better understand the characters in *Two Noble Kinsmen*, I conducted a series of gender workshops where we discussed the significance of gender roles in Shakespeare’s world and how they compared to the gender roles of today, as well as exploring how gender could be “performed.”

To close our workshops, I asked the youth ensemble how any of the exercises and discussions could possibly help them as actors. One youth ensemble member stated that it made her more aware of the preconceived notions of gender and how her performance might have to conform to these notions in order to help the audience understand her character. Another expressed that in order to develop a character, it is important to “research the gender role and tweak it a little bit so it fits with the character and the lines.” One girl said examining gender roles increased her awareness of the significance of her character’s actions and lines in the play. Many of them described the overall workshop experience as “important,” “informative,” “thought-provoking,” and “enlightening.” After working with the dynamic and talented cast of *Two Noble Kinsmen*, I can honestly say the feeling was mutual!

For more information on the Shakespeare Youth Ensemble, contact Amy Cordileone at amy.cord@nyu.edu.
Every September NYU’s program in Educational Theatre holds its very own 24-hour play festival in the Black Box Theatre. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to meet and collaborate on original pieces of theatre and as the name suggests, it all takes place in 24 hours. Last year, I was new to New York City and wrote a play in 12 hours thinking that it may help me make friends and establish myself at NYU. This year, I decided to participate again by giving directing a go.

I expected the experience to be very much the same as last year, however it wasn’t. Firstly because directing is a completely different art than writing and also because of the way the event was structured. There was no meeting on Friday night for directors, the writers were given their cast list without us, and instead of there being multiple objects all six writers were given the same one: a dusty old rug. The idea that every play must contain one line remained and this was, “wow that rug really ties (tied) the room together” from The Big Lebowski. Thus, I was allowed to sleep easy(sh) on Friday night, knowing that my part in this epic venture would begin on Saturday at 7 am. I arrived at the venue excited and very nervous for the production meeting. Whose play would I end up with? Would I like the writer? Would I be able to do their writing justice? What actors would I be working with? Will we have enough time? So many questions!

Luckily all answers emerged after 30 minutes and I found to my delight that I knew my writer and most of my actors well, therefore creating a comfortable and enthusiastic working environment.

We worked solidly for 12 hours, which passes quickly, but I was fortunate enough to have such a strong ensemble that we steamed ahead and finally found a state of being where we all felt the piece was ready to hit the stage for tech. Our technical team was brilliant and within 30 minutes we had set light and sound cues, as well as completed a run-through. I felt comfortable and elated at how much we had achieved in just one day. The true sense of accomplishment however doesn’t arrive until every seat in the house is occupied to the extent that you have to give yours up and lurk at the back, watching calmly the fruits of your labor and seeing your writer smile with joy. That combined with the applause is what truly brings the sense of satisfaction we all deserved.

The Three Kings and I

By Karl Williams, MA Student
(Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities, EDTC)

As an educator/teaching artist/social activist/whatever you want to call yourself in this title and label driven age, sometimes the real “aha” moments won’t necessarily come from reflecting on Boal, Heathcote, Freire or hooks, they may just hit you from actually doing the “stuff” we read about — getting involved. If we are fortunate enough most of us may find that “stuff” in our own neighborhoods, but other times we have to step outside our own comfort zones, and find it there. And so it was that I found myself away from my hood in Kingston, Jamaica over the holidays assisting in the NuYork Pastorela: The Three Kings Day Celebration at el Museo del Barrio in East Harlem — an event I had never heard about before, in an area I had only read about.

The Three Kings event is replicated all throughout Latin American and Spanish-speaking nations around the world. It is based on the journey of the three wise men who brought gifts for the Christ Child at His birth, as documented by the Gospel Matthew in the Bible. East Harlem is considered one of the more popular Latin American communities in New York City, but history also reveals an even greater demographic blend of cultures and peoples were in and out of existence there since the dawn of the 20th century. The Three Kings Day celebration, now in its 32nd year in the neighborhood, showcases this multi-cultural unity and has been kept alive by el Museo del Barrio, a historical landmark which is now experiencing a re-birth in both physical appearance and in the restructuring of its programs and outreach activities for the community. My NYU colleagues, Jennifer Pytleski (EDTC, 2009), Natasha McLeod (Undergraduate), Daphnie Sicre (PhD Candidate) and I were asked to give advice on staging a play that was to be part of the big culminating performance for the Three Kings Celebration. Little did we know that we would end up as crucial participants in the entire production process and eventually become the actual performers in this play. Meetings turned into dramaturgical sessions, then full rehearsals and even art and craft activities — as some of us helped to make crowns for the procession that would kick off the celebrations to tell the tale of East Harlem’s history and the importance of never forgetting one’s roots. The preparations became events in themselves as we learned from each other and bonded in a way that only a theatre collaboration can provide. We became a fast family, and a working unit comprised of employees of the museum, students from the neighborhood, members of the community, friends, professional actors, and even the occasional daughter and boyfriend were part of the mix.

Reflecting on this experience, I wonder what made me agree to getting involved in this project. Maybe it was the Christmas spirit, the intrigue with Latin-American culture, or the fact that I needed to be part of a community around a time of year that I was accustomed to sharing with family and friends. Whatever it was now pales in comparison to the knowledge that I was part of something that brought an entire community together, overflowing from their streets into their theatre to share in the pride and history of their own neighborhood.
NYU V-Day 2009: A Memory, a Monologue, a Rant and a Prayer

By Dori Robinson, MA Student
(Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities, EDTC)

Perhaps it was the charged academic environment of the Educational Theatre program. Perhaps it was the influence of my enthusiastic peers, all of us eager to apply the skills we learned in class. Regardless, when I read about V-Day this fall, my previous notions that it was an event for other, more established theatre companies dissipated. Instead, I saw an opportunity for our community to use drama as a method to grapple with the issues of violence against women. After floating the idea to Deborah Jacoby (Publicity Chair, EDTC) and Jamie Mayer (Education Chair, EDTA), NYU V-Day 2009 was born.

V-Day is a global movement originated by Eve Ensler, most known as the playwright of The Vagina Monologues. Every year, colleges and communities around the world stage readings of Ensler’s plays as charity fundraisers for organizations whose central mission is to end violence against women and girls. Though The Vagina Monologues are Ensler’s cornerstone piece, I chose instead to do A Memory, a Monologue, a Rant and a Prayer which offer a variety of perspectives. From domestic violence (“My House is Wallpapered with Lies”), war abroad (“Darfur Monologue” and “Banana Beer Bath” set in Uganda), the slave trade (“Untitled” about Cambodia), date rape (“Maurice”), and even disillusionment (“I Can’t Wait” and “Rescue”), various topics were covered from the point of view of both bystanders and those immediately involved.

The rehearsal process was both emotional and meaningful. Each actor went on a journey to fully explore and empathize with the characters and their difficult situations. Moreover, actors felt a sense of responsibility in addressing given conflicts in the most authentic manner possible. A Memory, a Monologue, a Rant and a Prayer soon became much more than a reading; it became a journey of personal discovery.

The show was performed three times, each with wonderful responses from the audience. Talkbacks were held after the evening performances; Friday’s talkback included feedback from alum Michael Roderick and current student Norah Turnham (EDTA) — donated their space to the performance. Of its many monologues, I chose ten from A Memory, a Monologue, a Rant and a Prayer which offer a variety of perspectives. From domestic violence (“My House is Wallpapered with Lies”), war abroad (“Darfur Monologue” and “Banana Beer Bath” set in Uganda), the slave trade (“Untitled” about Cambodia), date rape (“Maurice”), and even disillusionment (“I Can’t Wait” and “Rescue”), various topics were covered from the point of view of both bystanders and those immediately involved.

The rehearsal process was both emotional and meaningful. Each actor went on a journey to fully explore and empathize with the characters and their difficult situations. Moreover, actors felt a sense of responsibility in addressing given conflicts in the most authentic manner possible. A Memory, a Monologue, a Rant and a Prayer soon became much more than a reading; it became a journey of personal discovery.

The show was performed three times, each with wonderful responses from the audience. Talkbacks were held after the evening performances; Friday’s talkback included feedback from Educational Theatre faculty, Dr. Smithner and Dr. Christina Marin. We partnered with NYU by having the Health Promotion Office lead a workshop Saturday afternoon on sexual assault. Proceeds from the weekend went to the women of the Congo, and Day One, a nonprofit organization in Manhattan.

Paula Vogel once wrote, “I believe that the playwright authors the script, the director ‘authors’ the production, and the play itself — that is, the meaning and sum experience of the work, the journey to interpretation — is written each night by each individual audience member.” Indeed, every performance was unique, gaining so much from the audience’s investment in the stories told and the conflicts raised. As activists, educators, and theatre practitioners, these are the opportunities we believe in and strive to create. From a small idea to a full weekend, our community brought V-Day to fruition, providing many individuals with a challenging and inspirational experience.
Lee R. Chasen (PhD 2003) Director of Kid Esteem Inc., a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to social and emotional learning through the arts for children, families, schools and communities, has written Surpassing Standards in the Elementary Classroom: Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement Through Educational Drama (2009, Peter Lang Publishing).

Marcie Colleen (formally Sturiale) (EDTA) has been with TADA! for the past two years as their Youth Theatre’s Director of Education. She has developed and managed TADA!’s extensive curriculum-based partnerships in the schools and throughout the New York City Metro area. She also continues to freelance teach. Her Rasaboxes workshops have gained acclaim among high school students and teachers. Last year she traveled to the International Thespian Festivals in Tennessee and Washington State.

Krista Fogle (EDTC 2003 & MA STUDENT, EDTC 2005) began working with the Creative Arts Team (CAT) when they were still stationed at NYU in 2004. Starting with the Kaplan Center, she worked on publicity for brand new. Over the past five years, she has worked, and is still working, as graphics/marketing designer, webmaster, photographer, and as assistant to Founder and Executive Director, Lynda Zimmerman. Krista has also worked in development, assisting in writing grant proposals and packaging major government contracts. Krista still plans to eventually pursue a Ph.D. in the field.

Enza Giannone (ETED 2005) presented a workshop called Developing the most important character of all: YOU!, for the Program in Educational Theatre’s conference: Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form. She began doctoral studies in Theatre for Youth at Arizona State University in 2009.

Honey Goodenough (EDTC 2006) was recently awarded the Emma Louise Warfield Memorial Scholarship to attend the Puppeteers of America National Festival in Atlanta, Georgia.

Gabrielle Gold (EDTA 2006) is the 7th grade theatre teacher at the Urban Assembly School for Wildlife Conservation in the Bronx. There, she has had the opportunity to introduce drama and the performing arts to many talented students who had not had much prior experience or exposure to them. She directed the fall talent show, which featured scenes, dance, step and songs in Albanian, English and Spanish as well as drumming. The next show is student-devised and is entitled Collision Course: Rhythm and Beats. Additionally, she is in her second year of BMI’s Musical Theatre Writing Workshop as a lyricist and has also been actively recording voice over work.

Tova Bomzer Halpern (EDTC 2009) was recently hired at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Monmouth County in Deal Park, NJ as Director of the Rising Stars Youth Performing Arts Academy. Tova is also directing the fall musical The Wizard of Oz, which premieres at the Axelrod Performing Arts Center December 12, 2009.

Dr. Robin Levenson (PhD 2007) is now teaching Acting and Introduction to Theatre at Hunter College. Last year, she taught Acting and Voice/Speech at Oklahoma City University and directed Shaw’s Man and Superman. She was voice coach on several productions, including Twelfth Night and Kindertransport. She presented at the Program in Educational Theatre’s conference, Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form in April, on “Structures of Action” dealing with actor training and our concerns in the world. She recently was nominated for Steinhardt’s Outstanding Dissertation Award.

Nina Mansfield’s (MA 2005) play Missed Exit has been published by One Act Play Depot as part of the Longwood University “0 to 60” Ten-Minute Play Contest Winners Collection. Her play Pedestrian Casualty: Bronx, USA will be produced by the 20% Theatre Company Twin Cities this coming January as part of The Fresh Five Festival.

Dr. Ann McCormack (PhD 2007) and Sujeong Lee (EDTC 1998) presented a joint paper, “Open to the possibility beyond language learning” at the International Association of Performing Language (IAPL) conference at the University of Victoria. The presentation gave the background of a multi-lingual story-telling project developed by Dr. McCormack with international and native-born students from NYU and HB Studio. This was followed by an explanation of the impact this project has had on Ms. Lee and her work teaching teachers of English at Soongsil University in Seoul, Korea. Further information about IAPL can be found at http://web.uvic.ca/~hnserc/IAPL.

Christina Neubrand (EDTC 2007) is the K-B Drama Integration Specialist at St. John’s Episcopal School in Dallas, TX. This year she presented at the NYU Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form conference as well as the International Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed conference. Christina is currently working with Middle School students on a production of Rodgers’ and Hammerstein’s Cinderella to be presented in November.

Sunny Paige (EDTC 2006) is currently teaching drama to learning disabled children at an arts-infused school, The Lab School of Washington. Sunny presented techniques to use with special education students at the Program in Educational Theatre’s conference: Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form. She recently compiled MA Student (Theatre K-12, English 7-12) her ninth summer running the theatre program at Ramapo Country Day Camp, which produces two musicals per summer.

Alex Sarian (MA STUDENT, EDTC 2007), of Playwrights Theatre of NJ, has become an active committee member of the New Jersey Arts Education Collective, a group that celebrates Teaching Artists and seeks to further establish the profession as a vital component of the Arts Education field by providing professional development, support and resources to individuals and organizations.

Diane Shilling (MA 1975) has written a children’s play The Hares and the Tortoises (The Hip Hop version) which appears in the November issue of Plays, The Drama Magazine for Young People.
CURRENT STUDENTS

Amy Cordileone (PhD Candidate) was awarded the Graduate Student Organization Award for excellence in graduate work and service to the community.

Jim DeVivo (PhD Candidate) presented “Drama as an assessment tool” at the Program in Educational Theatre’s conference Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form. In May, Jim was inducted into the Liverpool Central School District’s Fine Arts Hall of Fame as an alumnus of the district. He has been recognized with the Distinguished Service in Theatre Education Award by the Speech and Theatre Association of New Jersey. This association awarded him with a New Jersey Governor’s Award in Arts Education, sponsored by the New Jersey Department of Education and New Jersey Arts Education Partnership. In August, Jim was a panelist for two sessions at the AATE/ATHE Conference: the Debut Panel for New Voices in Playwriting and Innovative Approaches to Commissioning & Developing Plays for and with Young People.

Erica Giglio (EDTA) was awarded the Richard Hirsh Memorial Award for students in the arts.

Katie Issel (EDTC), Jennifer Pytleski (EDTC), Rachel Shapiro Cooper (EDTA), and Daphnie Sicre (PhD Candidate) presented at the Program in Educational Theatre’s conference Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form and presented at the AATE/ATHE joint conference last summer.

Jamie M. Mayer (EDTC) conducted a paper presentation entitled “Exploring Gender with Creative Drama” at the Program in Educational Theatre’s conference: Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form.

Jessica Mazo (EDTA) was the youngest presenter at the New York State Theatre Educators Association Student Conference in early 2009, and was also asked to join the conference committee to plan the 2010 Conference.

James Webb (PhD Candidate) presented an acting workshop that simplifies the process of scene analysis at the Program in Educational Theatre’s conference Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form.

Karl O’Brien Williams (EDTC) was awarded the Lorraine Hansberry Artistic Performance and Fine Arts Award for outstanding accomplishment and participation in drama, the 2009 NIA Award from the Center for Multicultural Education & Programs, and the 2009 Don & Elizabeth Doyle Graduate Fellowship for demonstration of artistic ability in Theatre for Youth.

Jason Zanitsch’s (PhD Student) article “Playing in the Margins: Process Drama as a Pre-reading Strategy with LGBT Young Adult Literature” was published in the English Journal, and he presented workshops at AATE/ATHE and NCTE’s national conferences.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

The Leadership Program

By Greg Shamie, MA Graduate (Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities, EDTC)

I started working for The Leadership Program in 2002 as a Teaching Artist. I worked as a Leadership Trainer doing violence prevention work for the In Class Enrichment Program, running after-school clubs for The After-School Project, and facilitating many professional development workshops. From 2005–2008, I was promoted to a Field Supervisor for the After School Program overseeing 17 schools and approximately 45 Leadership Trainers in Manhattan each year. Last year, I was promoted to Staff Developer in charge of training our full time staff of 27 employees and over 170 part-time Leadership Trainers. Other responsibilities include working for our Professional Development Department coordinating and facilitating workshops for teachers and administrators in the over 250 schools we service in the five boroughs.

I have also been collaborating on creating and implementing a “Building Family” series for the parents of our schools. We now offer over 50 diverse workshops to support and help our parents develop their parenting skills and cope with the challenges of raising their children.

Based upon my recommendations, The Leadership Program has employed many additional graduates from The Educational Theatre Department. We are always looking for thoroughly trained educators to join our team and the Educational Theatre Department at NYU does a stellar job in making sure that their students understand and can implement the rigors of great teaching. I look forward to our continued collaboration in serving the students, parents and educators in our schools and communities.
Last year, you and your 6th grade collaborating teacher developed a residency called “Dramathematics.” What is Dramathematics?

Initially, “Dramathematics” was a catch-phrase coined by Luis Saltos (my CT) and me but it’s a fairly accurate description of our process. “Dramathematics” is an original curriculum that utilizes drama-in-education practices to teach both math and theatre concepts.

How did the students initially respond to the idea of drama and math in the same classroom?

Most couldn’t see the connection. Some defined drama as a screaming match between two girls, either at school or on TV.

What activities did you use to achieve your goals? What worked?

What worked the best were creative writing prompts, which served as a bridge, connecting math to different contexts. Adding and subtracting fractions led to “Fractions of Our Lives.” Students answered fill-in-the-blanks with mathematical answers, in order to think critically about measurements of time while simultaneously learning about their peers. We quickly discovered that the most successful lesson plans were those which transitioned from mathematics to drama, not the other way around.

What student feedback did you receive?

We distributed exit surveys to poll reactions and held interviews with certain students we “tracked” throughout the residency. Almost every student remarked that the experience made math enjoyable and engaging; many cited examples of how math learned in the classroom can be applied to life. I was delightfully surprised to find that half my students remembered definitions of theatrical terms — beat, cheating out, improvisation, tableaux.

How has this experience helped you develop as a teaching artist thus far?

I definitely refined my classroom management skills, particularly for this grade level. Luis provided me with useful tips on how to pace differentiated 6th graders. A few times, I actually taught math, both one-on-one and to the group. By stepping into Luis’s shoes, I gained insight into the math educator’s daily process. Let me tell you, it is difficult explaining to 11-year-olds why sometimes the mode, rather than the median, is a better mathematical representation for a data set.

What changes do you have planned for the spring residency?

This spring is going to be more product-oriented. Obviously, we’re still responsible for conveying the 6th grade math curriculum, but we plan to engage students more theatrically. Now that we know “dramathematics” works, we can move from designing and testing stand-alone lessons, to implementing a sequential curriculum where each residency day scaffolds on the last, with the end-goal of presenting a public performance for the students and staff at JHS 189.
The Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form

By Amy Cordileone, PhD Candidate

The Spring 2009 forum, Theatre Pedagogy: Teaching the Art Form, proved to be another exciting and provocative offering from the Program in Educational Theatre. We are proud to say that many of the presenters and participants came directly out of our NYU community. From the beautiful performances in honor of Dr. Nancy Swortzell to the diverse workshops and moderated panels, alumni and current-student involvement was key to each event’s success. Thank you to everyone in the program who gave of their time, energy, and artistry.

Social Studies and Theatre Workshops at the New-York Historical Society

continued from page 7

Dr. Taylor put himself in role as a gentleman representing a newspaper from the time period that had published letters from James — letters that helped to build the “legend” of Jesse James. With the middle school students in role as his newspaper board, Philip and his panel of colleagues addressed the rest of the people in the room, the teachers, as the newspaper writers. The question that was argued was whether or not to allow these letters to continue to be published in the paper. The board of the Newspaper was being told from the Governor’s office to stop publishing them immediately so that Jesse James, a robber and killer of many people, would stop being glorified by people. The newspaper writers responded with arguments around freedom of speech, censorship, and the question of who decides what is newsworthy.

Was Jesse James a Hero, Rebel or Outlaw? From this overriding question emerged a great deal of worthwhile drama, and on the last day of the workshops teachers were given time and help to begin planning drama lessons that addressed the New York City History Standards. The middle school students who worked with Dr. Taylor came from MS51 in Brooklyn, a school known for its excellent drama program thanks to the strong leadership of their drama teacher, John McEneny (a graduate of the Educational Theatre program). Their work was culminated from their studies in English, dancing, acting and teaching. Born in Pittsburgh, she always heard the call of the stage and began at the Provincetown Playhouse directing, producing, and writing her own material. Her performance background eventually led her to interests in “the potential of the earth” and its beginnings, drawing from the mythologies that told all of its secrets. Indigenous cultures and the stories of many cultures around the world are what she draws on and shares with all of her students, no matter what age they may be. This multi-cultural performance element is exactly what draws NYU students from many disciplines to take her Storytelling weekend intensive course every semester. Ress thinks that the more inter-disciplinary this course becomes, the more rich and diverse the techniques and in-class storytelling will become, further enhancing what students will take out of the class.

Michael Roderick, a graduate of the Educational Theatre program in Steinhardt who currently runs Small Pond Productions, says, “Regina is the type of teacher who makes everyone feel comfortable no matter their skill level. She has a warm, inviting presence that tells the people in the room that they can all be storytellers. She works tirelessly to create new and engaging story telling events throughout the city and has been very supportive of the shows I’ve produced. She is without question one of the best teachers I’ve had and the lessons from her storytelling class have stuck with me through my entire teaching process.”

Ress sums up her love of this gift: “Storytelling takes me so many different places … I can’t say where I’d like to take it. It’s where it will take me. I go where I am called.”

Where can it take us now?

Regina Ress performing at the Provincetown Playhouse.

Profiles

Regina Ress: “I Just Tell Stories…”

continued from page 8

Dr. David Montgomery is collaborating on a book with Dr. Robert Landy (Professor, Drama Therapy) titled The International Handbook of Educational Drama and Theatre.
LOOKING FOR SHAKESPEARE

DATES
June 29–July 25, 2010

APPLICATION DEADLINE
April 1, 2010

APPLICATION PROCEDURE
Go to http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/edtheatre/programs/summer/shakespeare

High school students work with a director and graduate students from NYU to shape an original production of Shakespeare. This program is unique in that the ensemble members will work with director Nancy Smither and a dramaturg to discover how a Shakespearean play resonates for them, within their own personal experiences. Using these connections as a source and inspiration, the ensemble members will rehearse and perform their own version of the play. The production will be supported by designers and stage managers and will be documented by a video artist.

This program will run for four weeks—June 29th through July 25th—FIVE DAYS A WEEK, from 9 am-3 pm. Lunch is provided everyday. The experience will culminate in three public performances on July 23rd and 24th at 8 pm, and July 25th at 3 pm.

There is a materials fee of $1550 that covers lunch, five tickets to the performances, a DVD and a t-shirt and poster. There are some need-based scholarships available.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Joe Salvatore, js1655@nyu.edu or 212 998 5266
Artistic Director, Shakespeare Initiative

SUMMER PROGRAMS EDUCATIONAL THEATRE
STUDY ABROAD

Applications are now being accepted on a rolling admissions basis for our summer study abroad programs in England, Ireland and Brazil. Don’t be disappointed and miss out on a space by applying late.

APPLICATION DEADLINES:
December 6, 2009
January 31, 2010
February 28, 2010*

ENGLAND, DRAMA IN EDUCATION
Arrival Tuesday, June 29 - Check out Friday July 16

IRELAND, APPLIED THEATRE
Arrival Sunday, July 18- Check out Friday August 6

BRAZIL, THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED
Arrival Sunday August 8 - Check out Thursday August 19

For more information and to apply online: http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/edtheatre/programs/summer/abroad

SAVE THE DATE
Forum on Citizenship and Applied Theatre
April 23–25, 2010

• What is a citizen artist?
• How can drama provide a forum to explore ideas of global citizenship?
• How do we prepare future artists/educators for work in applied theatre?

The goal of this forum is to facilitate a dialogue on citizenship and applied theatre contexts through exploring the field of arts-based community engagement. The forum will also investigate the perceived boundaries and barriers for artist/educators committed to understanding the roles and responsibilities of citizens in both local and global communities.

For information on the 2010 NYU Forum on Citizenship and Applied Theatre, visit http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/conference/forumoncitizenship/

Upcoming Production of Sonia Flew

By Dr. Nan Smithner

Sonia Flew is a dynamic new play from Melinda Lopez that tells the story of a bicultural family who experiences generational conflicts around the themes of war, loyalty and memory. Set in post 9/11 America, and then moving back in time to Castro’s Cuba in 1961 prior to the disastrous Bay of Pigs invasion, the play explores the ways in which momentous world events directly affect otherwise ordinary individuals.

Lopez’s sharp and compelling dialogue incorporates touches of humor with deeply layered impressions of family and security that are both thought provoking and relevant to our current time. Through family ritual of holidays and food, of airplanes and oceans the playwright explores notions of what is precious to us, and how the secrets of the past can reveal hope for the future.

Melinda Lopez came to the United States from Columbia with her Cuban-born parents when she was 3 and graduated from Boston University’s playwriting program. She was the first recipient of the Charlotte Woolard Award, given by the Kennedy Center to a “promising new voice in American Theater.” She wrote Sonia Flew in 2004 as a resident playwright at the Huntington Theatre, and the play went on to receive the Elliot Norton Award for Best New Play, and the IRNE (Independent Reviewers of New England) for Best Play and Best Production.

Performances are February 19, 20, 25, 26, and 27 at 8 pm, and February 21 and 28 at 3 pm at The Players Theatre, 115 MacDougal Street. Tickets are $15 and $5 for NYU Students and Seniors.