

September 2011

# THE GREEN ROOM

The Newsletter of the Doctoral Theatre Students Association

Ph.D. Program in Theatre of the CUNY Graduate Center •365 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10016

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Kelly Aliano

I am so excited to kick off the 2011-2012 academic year!

We have many great DTSA events planned, including a great line-up of professionalization events as well as theatre outings. Please join us for anything that is of interest to you...or be a DTSA all-star and attend everything!

I'm really looking forward to serving you all as DTSA President. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions, comments, concerns, or just to say hello!

Kelly Aliano  
DTSA President

## 2011-2012 DTSA BOARD

María Cristina García

I hope this newsletter finds you settling into an exciting new academic year!

Here's a list you can refer to as the semester progresses and you find yourself in need of a specific board member.

President: Kelly Aliano  
First Vice President: María Cristina García  
Second Vice President: Brad Krumholz  
Secretary: Sissi Liu  
Treasurer: Kayla Yuh  
Officer for Admissions and Awards: Andrew Friedman  
Officer for Curriculum and Exams: Maria Mytilinaki  
Officer for Professionalization: Brooke Christensen  
Representative to Doctoral Students Council: Stefanie A. Jones  
Representative to Graduate Council: Andrew Kircher





## ATHE DIARY: CHICAGO

Shari Perkins

This August, I attended ATHE at the Palmer House Hilton, where the organization's first conference was held in Chicago twenty-five years ago. It was a wonderful year to be present as the membership celebrated a quarter-century of scholarship and debated the future of the organization and of theatre in academia. As a (virtually) first-time attendee, I found ATHE richly rewarding and occasionally overwhelming. Therefore, I will use this diary to share some strategies for making ATHE as fruitful as possible for future attendees.

First, I recommend taking advantage of the mentorship program that ATHE offers. I was paired with ATHE Treasurer Frank Trezza, who offered to meet me in New York before the conference began, then took the time to meet up with me several times while we were in Chicago, advising me about which sessions to attend. He also quickly introduced me to many members of the governing council as well as to friendly and supportive past graduates our program, whom it might otherwise have taken me much longer to meet.

Second, watch for hidden opportunities in the schedule. The most useful session I attended (thank you, Frank!) was “Focusing on the Conference: How Can ATHE Serve You?,” which ended up being a voluble and valuable hour-and-a-half conversation between four past conference Vice-Presidents, myself, and just two other attendees. What had looked like a dry business meeting became a fantastic opportunity to get advice from Harvey Young, Nina LeNoir, Michael Ellison, and Judith Sebesta. “Publishing Your First Journal Article: Conversations with Editors” was a one-stop opportunity for learning what the editors of various journals—including David Savran for *JADT*—are looking for from submissions.

Third, get into small gatherings whenever possible. I learned from Dan Venning that there is an annual, private party for those who have published anything—including book or performance reviews—in the ATHE journals (*Theatre Journal* or *Theatre Topics*) during the year. The small size of the gathering makes it an ideal way to meet people and follow up on past contacts. Writing a book review is very possible, even if you are early in the Ph.D. program; write one, then find out when the party is next year at ATHE (you might have to ask around—I never got the emailed invitation!). It's worth the effort.

Finally, don't forget about committee meetings—they are open to anyone and can give you opportunities to get involved with the organization. The Professional Development and the Research and Publications committees look especially promising.

Of course, ATHE isn't only about meeting people. It's most of all about a lot of wonderful scholarship. Among the most interesting panels I attended were: “Fresh Print: Performing Remains,” a discussion of Rebecca Schneider's new book; the Theatre History focus group's session on interdisciplinarity in theatre departments; “Black Holes in Our Memory: Undiscovered Legacies of the African American Theatre,” which sparked a vigorous discussion of the importance of recovering forgotten theatre artists; and “Disrupting Genre/Fracturing Form,” in which a scheduling error resulted in no panelists at all, an impromptu paper by chair Kyle Gillette, and an enjoyable and productive three-way debate on the practical implications of breaking generic boundaries.

What I saw was a fraction of ATHE's offerings, and there are as many stories to tell as there were

attendees in Chicago. The Graduate Center was well represented in Chicago by faculty, students, and program graduates (I won't attempt to list everyone). Although ATHE can be daunting, it is also exciting to participate in a conference with such a high level of discourse. Hopefully, I will see many of you next year in Washington, DC!

Shari Perkins  
Doctoral Student, Graduate Center, CUNY



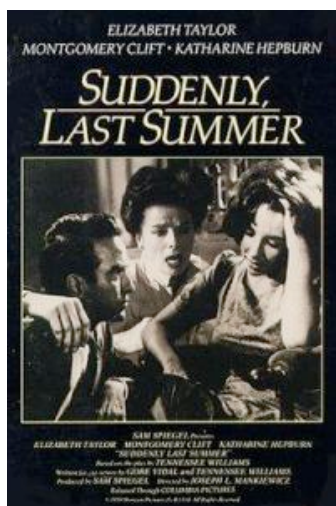
## THEATRE OUTINGS

María Cristina García

Each semester, the DTSA gets group tickets to see two or three shows. We had several submissions, and I encourage you to check the ballot if you find yourself with a free evening and a hankering for theatre, and sign up to join us if you want some company. Nineteen of us will be attending Elevator Repair Service's *The Select* this Friday evening. The second theatre outing, which I'm pleased to announce for the first time here, will be to *Fragments*, from texts by Samuel Beckett, directed by Peter

Book at Theatre for a New Audience the weekend of November 12. Save the date; more details will be coming soon!

María Cristina García  
DTSA First Vice President



## FACULTY UPDATES: SEPTEMBER 2011

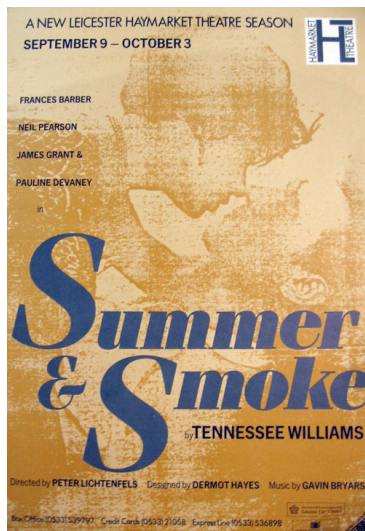
**Marvin Carlson:** 2011 has been a busy year for travel. In January I delivered a lecture "Digital Space in the Theatre" at Trinity College, Dublin, in April, two keynote addresses, the first on "Challenges of Translating Arabic Drama" at a conference on Drama Translation in Belfast Northern Ireland and the second at the AITR convention in Pecs, Hungary, on "Space in the Theatre." In June I was in Prague, serving as a member of the international jury for the Prague Quadrennial. While there I gave an address for the architecture division on "What is (a) Theatre?" Following that I gave two further keynote addresses, the first on "The Performative City" for the Performacity Conference at the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisbon, Portugal, at the end of June and the other "Marley was Dead to Begin With" for the Ghosts and Theatre conference held in early July in York England. In August I attended ATHE in Chicago and appeared on a

panel on Teaching Global Theatre History. I finished my most recent book, a history of theatre in Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria, co-authored with the Moroccan scholar Khalid Amine, this summer. It will be published by Palgrave this fall.

**Jean Graham-Jones:** In late June I returned from a four-month residency in Berlin as a Fellow at the Freie Universität's International Research Center (Interweaving Cultures of Performance), where I completed drafting the four major chapters of my current book project on Argentina's female icons. Late spring and summer saw the publication of *Avant-Garde Performance and Material Exchange: Vectors of the Radical*, edited by Mike Sell, in which I have two contributions, as well as an article on censorship and Argentinean theatre and performance in *Theatre Research International*. I also prepared the forty-three entries on Argentine actors and actor-training for the upcoming *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Actors and Acting*, as well as essays that will appear in edited collections with Palgrave and Routledge. In July and August I participated in the professional meetings of the International Federation for Theatre Research (Osaka); the VI Simposio Internacional, Centro de Estudios de Narratología (UNESCO) (Buenos Aires); and the Teatro Avante Festival (Miami). It was an extremely productive sabbatical, but I'm pleased to be back in NYC with my suitcase –temporarily—stowed.

**Judy Milhous** is on sabbatical, mostly in State College, PA, where she has spent the summer gardening, playing with cats, watching wild life, and working on the Panizzi Lectures for the British Library. Best wishes to all for an enlightening semester!

**David Savran:** David Savran gave two keynote addresses in June. The first, "The Curse of Celebrity: Toward a Sociology of the Broadway Musical," I delivered at a conference entitled *The Battle of the Brows: Cultural Distinctions in the Space Between, 1914-1945*, at McGill University in Montreal. The second, "The Kindness of Strangers?: Tennessee Williams in France and Germany," I delivered at the Tennessee Williams in Europe Conference, University of Nancy, France. I spent the month of July in Berlin seeing theatre and opera and working on my German. My review of Kurt Weill's *Street Scene*, which I saw at the Semperoper Dresden, will be published in the *Kurt Weill Newsletter*. I was on four panels at ATHE in Chicago in August, the most interesting of which was a Roundtable on the Limits of "Musical Theatre." And I am continuing to work on my book on branding.



## STUDENT UPDATES: SEPTEMBER 2010

**Kelly Aliano (Level II):** Kelly is so geeked to be your DTSA President for this academic year! She had a fun summer: teaching reading, presenting at the Association for Asian Performance at ATHE, and reading some great books for the second exam under the Long Island sun. She is really looking forward to kicking off a fab academic year (& to playing the tenth anniversary edition of Halo!). Please feel free to contact her with any questions/concerns/suggestions that you may have!

**Nicole Boyar (Level II):** This summer, I re-learned Italian and began reading for my book lists. I also spent some much-needed time in San Francisco seeing my family. At ATHE I presented at the Theatre History and Criticism pre-conference and attended my first round of meetings as the Graduate Representative to the American Theatre and Drama Society. I was so proud that we had students from our program (Rayya and Shari) on both of the ATDS emerging scholars panels! I also enjoyed seeing excellent papers by other Grad Center colleagues.

**Shane Breaux (Level I):** After graduating with an MA in theater history from Brooklyn College, I spent the summer dramaturging multiple productions around the city. Most rewarding was working with Stephen Sondheim's organization Young Playwrights and shepherding a fourteen-year-old playwright through the process of writing a new play, which was given a staged reading at Playwrights Horizons, in three days. I am also wrapping up a year's worth of work dramaturging an upcoming production of Shakespeare's King John with the New York Shakespeare Exchange. In addition, I co-founded Emerging Theatre Research Online (ETRO), a new online peer-reviewed journal for emerging scholars, which will launch this fall. I am thrilled to take up the reins as managing editor of the Journal of American Drama and Theatre this year and look forward to returning to the rigorous world of advanced study.

**Rick DesRochers (Level III):** I am looking forward to beginning my dissertation proposal this fall, and having my article "Destabilizing Vaudeville: The Marx Brothers and the Party of the Third Part" go online with *The Journal of Popular Culture*. I spent July working on my seventh season as an Artistic Associate, co-curator, and company dramaturg, with the PlayPenn New Play Development Conference. J.T. Rogers play *Blood and Gifts*, developed two seasons ago at PlayPenn, had its world premiere at the National Theatre London in fall 2010, and will receive its U.S. premiere at Lincoln Center this October 2011 in New York.

**Rayya El Zein (Level II)** spent the summer working on Arabic and German language and exploring new research interests in underground music in the Middle East. She continued to publish with Jadaliyya, an online journal run by the Arab Studies Institute and was proud to present at ATHE as one of the American Theatre and Drama Society's "Emerging Scholars." Looking forward to an engaging year ahead!

**Zack Fuller (Level III)** is this year's recipient of the June Bennett Larsen Fellowship for Dissertation Research, which enabled him to conduct interviews and archival research this summer at Dance Resources on Earth in Yamanashi, Japan. His dissertation is on the work of the contemporary dancer/choreographer Tanaka Min. Currently he is participating in the ASTR working group Performance and the Economy of Global Topographies. When possible he enjoys dancing and choreographing. His most recent dance work features his seven-year-old son Kai and was performed in June at Williamsburg Art and Historical Center in Brooklyn as part of a benefit for the victims of the earthquake and tsunami in northern Japan.

**Donatella Galella (Level I):** In June, I presented a paper on superhero musicals and camp at the annual Song, Stage, and Screen conference. When I wasn't conferencing, I was studying for the first exam, and I received a high pass! This fall, I will be teaching classes in the speech department at Brooklyn College.

**María Cristina García (Level I):** I spent my summer elbows deep in friends, family, and production work back in sweet home Chicago, topping it off with the whirlwind that is ATHE. Here's to Fall 2011!

**Benjamin Gillespie (Level I):** Benjamin spent the summer preparing for his move from Canada (Toronto/Niagara Region) to New York City. He completed his M.A. in Theatre Studies (where he also did his B.A. in Theatre/English) at York University in Toronto in 2010. Over the summer, Benjamin presented at the Canadian Association for Theatre Research conference in Fredericton, New Brunswick and at the ATHE conference in Chicago, largely about his work on Toronto-based performance artist Jess Dobkin ([www.jessdobkin.com](http://www.jessdobkin.com)). He completed two articles, one which will be published in Judith Rudakoff's book TRANS(per)FORMING Nina Arsenault: Body of Work/Body of Art, and an article for the Canadian Theatre Review's Queer Women's Performance issue, due out in Spring 2012. He is very excited to be starting his Ph.D. at the Graduate Center, looking at North American (Canada/USA/Mexico) queer contemporary performance art, theatre and drama.

**Alosa Grinenko (Level I):** I spent the month of June in Minsk, working with the Belarus National Musical Theatre on the first American-Belarusian production of *West Side Story*. The show is scheduled to open in the spring of 2012. The rest of the summer I have devoted to seeing shows in New York and Washington, DC, translating a musical play, and doing independent research. I am looking forward to my teaching assignment at the City College of New York and my coursework at the GC this fall!

**Stefanie A. Jones (Level I):** Stefanie A. Jones is delighted to have passed the first exam, and looking forward to beginning another bout of teaching and course work.

**Andrew Kircher (Level I):** After a summer with the in-laws in Long Island, my wife and I are moving into our newly purchased and renovated apartment! And last week, my many engagements with the Public Theater were formalized and I am now Associate Producer with the Under the Radar and the Devised Work Initiative (we had a great festival in LA this summer working with Redcat, CTG, and LATC).

**Ana Martínez (Level III)** is working on her dissertation and is looking forward to this academic year of writing thanks to the Magnet Dissertation Fellowship. She had a productive summer and did archival research at the Nettie Lee Benson Library at the University of Texas, Austin.

**Hillary Miller (Level III):** After defending my dissertation proposal in the Spring, this summer I began work on the first chapter of my dissertation, "The New York Financial Crisis and the Geographies of Performance in New York City, 1972-1982." In August, I was thrilled to visit Chicago for the first time, for ATHE, where I was on the Theatre History Focus Group debut panel, presenting my paper on the dramatic writing of urbanist Lewis Mumford, "Lewis Mumford: Playwright?" (I was glad to have the opportunity to see so many of my GC colleagues so wonderfully represented there, too.) I'm currently putting the finishing touches on an interview for *Radical History Review*, with Todd Shalom and Nigel Smith from the group "Elastic City," which gives participatory, performative walks in and around New York City. This Fall I'll be back at Baruch College, teaching Introduction to Speech and working as a Senior Communications Fellow at the Schwartz Communication Institute.

**Shari Perkins (Level I):** My summer has been divided between travel (honeymoon, family wedding, family vacation, conference) and ushering for the Royal Shakespeare Company, where I calmed panicky patrons by the basement-level bathrooms at the Park Avenue Armory. In June, I published "Don't Let Him Be Such A Hero: Daniel Radcliffe as J. Pierrepont Finch" in *Hot Review* (<http://HotReview.org>), and in August I presented "Edward Christopher Williams: Lost Playwright of the Washington Stage" as part of the Black Theatre Association's debut panel at ATHE. I've also been preparing articles for the fall issue of *Slavic and East European Performance* and getting ready for my first semester teaching at Hunter College.

**Carly Smith (Level III)** holds a BFA in Acting from Marymount Manhattan College, where she has also taught Theatre History. She taught Intro to Acting and Intro to Theatre at Brooklyn College and currently teaches Speech Communication at Baruch. Carly will defend her dissertation proposal in mid-September. Her dissertation will examine the Metropolitan Opera's current strategies of branding, marketing, and advertising opera under the conditions of contemporary capitalism. This November, Carly, Eero Laine, and Peter Zazzali will be co-convening an ASTR working session entitled "Corporate Cultures: Contemporary Economies of Cultural Performance."

**Ben Spatz (Level III)** got married and passed the second exam this summer! Working dissertation title: "Technique, Practice, Research: Foundations for an Epistemology of Embodiment." This semester I am

doing a Writing Fellowship at Baruch and teaching one course at College of Staten Island. In November I will premiere a solo performance called "Rite of the Butcher" at the United Solo Festival midtown, and in January my theatre partner and I will present the next phase of our "Play/War" project at Abrons Arts Center. This is also the second year of Urban Research Theater's artistic residency at Movement Research. <[www.urbanresearchtheater.com](http://www.urbanresearchtheater.com)>

**Dan Venning (Level III):** The highlight of my summer was a trip to Munich to do dissertation research for a week at the Shakespeare-Library of the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität and the archives of the Deutsches Theatermuseum. My trip was generously supported by the June Bennett Larsen Fellowship. Before going to Munich, I spent a week in Geneva visiting friends. The rest of my summer was spent working on my dissertation, reviews, articles, and fellowship applications, and a revised version of a paper on *Glee* that I presented at ATHE in Chicago. Perhaps the best news, though, especially for those of you who noticed a grad student on crutches in our department last semester: my physical therapy is complete, and I'm now pretty much back to walking normally!

**Melissa Wansin Wong (Level III):** I am happy to report that I passed my 2nd exam and am now thinking about my dissertation proposal, and I will be using my Doctoral Student Research Grant to continue my research on artists working on social justice and human rights issues in 4-5 cities in Asia this winter break. I had a chance to take a break from exam preparations this summer by attending PSi#17 in Utrecht, Netherlands. Very invigorating. I presented a paper on negotiating traumatic memory and human rights issues in Burma, I also chaired a professionalization session on academic publishing. While spending some time in Europe with friends and loved ones, I was happy to have the opportunity to interview Asian artists living and working abroad for my project. I look forward to starting my writing fellowship at BMCC this Fall. Also my first essay publication coming up in Asian Theatre Journal, very excited. Special thanks to my 2nd Exam committee for all their advice and support.

~ THE GREEN ROOM ~