

September 2010

# 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

Christopher Silsby

Welcome from the DTSA Board!

The fall rains are here, the summer's heat finally breaks only to return again, must be the beginning of the Fall semester.

Welcome back to the start of the school year. I am excited about our new DTSA board and the activities we have planned. Your representatives this year are Dan Venning (First Vice-President), Emily Clark (Second Vice-President), Nicole Boyar

(Secretary), Kayla Yuh (Treasurer), Kelly Aliano (Professionalization Committee Representative), Julia Goldstein (Admissions and Awards Committee Representative), Rayya El Zein (Curriculum and Exams Committee Representative), Eero Laine (DSC Program Representative), and Debra Hilborn (GC Program Representative).

We are looking forward to extending some of the initiatives from last year's board, led by Boris Daussà-Pastor. Specifically, the DTSA website (<http://opencuny.edu/dtsa>) will be the focus of some streamlining, revamping, and improved communication tools. Please let me know ([dtsa.silsby@gmail.com](mailto:dtsa.silsby@gmail.com)) if there are parts of the current website that you find particularly useful.

There has also been interest in the possibility of a grad student conference, building on the success of our last two conferences in 2008 and 2010. Stay tuned for more information.

Christopher Silsby  
DTSA president



## 2010 EDWIN BOOTH AWARD

Emily Clark

Welcome back!

As some of you may know, due to the tremendous success of the Edwin Booth Award, the annual event that has become a highlight of our school year, we are hoping to continue building the event of the award this year. If you have not already heard from me, you will! We hope to begin the process even earlier this year in anticipation of again organizing a one-day conference in conjunction with

this year's recipient. Thanks to the commitment and hard work of several of our students, the Graduate Student Conference, (Re)making (Re)presentation, accompanying the evening's ceremony honoring Charles Mee, was an exciting endeavor and we hope to be able to continue that success this year. Those of you who wish to be involved, express interest when asked, and come out and make the Twenty-Ninth Booth Award event one to remember!

Emily Clark  
DTSA Second Vice President



## PROFESSIONALIZATION ACTIVITIES

Kelly Aliano

Welcome back (and Welcome to our new students)! As this year's Professionalization Representative, I wanted to take this opportunity to bring some of our great upcoming events to everyone's attention. We already have a great schedule lined up, jam packed with interesting and informative sessions. There are events for students at every level of study: we have demystifying the handbook events on topics such as language exams (September 16) and the First Exam (October 28), perfect for students in their first years at the Graduate Center, as well as a Mock-Interview Marathon (December 3) and Dissertation Colloquium (December 9), ideally suited for students who are finishing up their academic program. A special highlight of our Fall schedule is the guest lecture from Professor Edward Miller from the College of Staten Island on October 14. Most events are held from 4:15-6:15pm in the Green Room. Check out the complete schedule (there are copies in the Green Room) and come out to any and all events that interest you... or be a Professionalization Event star and attend them all!

Kelly Aliano  
DTSA Professionalization Representative



## ATHE DIARY: LOS ANGELES

Boris Daussà-Pastor

By all means this year's ATHE Conference in Los Angeles was smaller than the monumental one organized jointly with AATE last year in New York City. Budget cuts for travel funds and the scheduling of the conference so close to FIRT in Munich were some of the reasons given for several of the absences. Indeed, three of the central Faculty of our Theatre PhD program participated actively in FIRT Munich, but did not make it to L.A. We still had a great representation of non-central Faculty, as well as alumni and students from our Program. The conference took place in Century City, an area of L.A. not particularly inviting to tourism that made it less painful to stay five days locked in a hotel going from panel to panel all day long. Actually, I enjoyed my every minute in the conference: it was energizing and offered several refreshing highlights. Josh Abrams (an alumnus from our program)

and Gwendolyn Alker, co-organizers of the conference did a great job.

**Monday Aug 2:** It was pre-conference day and the GC presence was already strong: from participating as audience or reading papers (also in emerging scholars panels!), to organizing some of some of the pre-conferences entirely. I attended the AAP (Association for Asian Performance) pre-conference, which had a strong GC presence and an impressive panel reviewing the field of Asian Theatre scholarship in the US ... and it ended up in a yummy dinner with all the AAP folks!

**Tuesday Aug 3:** Pre-conferences went on until lunch (Zack Fuller conducted a wonderful movement workshop that morning), and ATHE itself started to gear up. From my privileged position as a student volunteering at the reception desk, I could see the jet-lagged faces and confounded expressions of those trying to figure out their way to the conference rooms for the first time. The highlight of the day was clearly the Keynote address by Suzan Lori-Parks. For those of us who had never seen her do “her stuff,” it was simply hilarious. Entertaining, witty, sharp, and with a perfect theatrical timing. The ensuing reception became the perfect moment to find again these long-lost friends that you see once a year at conferences.

**Wednesday Aug 4:** ATHE in full gears, and some people starting to wear out. The warm-up session that I joined at 7:15 am was poorly attended, but really got me ready for an intense day. Josh Abrams, wearing a funny top hat that identified him as one of the planners, would pop up any corner; he was busy but still happy about organizing the conference. GC alumni and student names were a staple of the conference program. I was so exhausted after that long day that when I ended up missing the MicroFringe Festival, which feature a number of performances in different venues at the hotel. Apparently some of them were quite good.

**Thursday Aug 5:** I got my star-appearance at the conference on this day, as a respondent on a session with an artist and her intercultural work. My job done, all papers and sessions finished for me, I could relax becoming a conference audience member. I heard good comments about several papers from GC alumni and students, and I particularly remember someone talking about Naomi Stubbs’ paper. This evening, DTSA President Christopher Silsby hosted a get-together for GC-related people. It was a small group, but we enjoyed the company and drinks. After that things get fuzzy...

**Friday Aug 6:** By Friday, warm-ups at 7:15 am were definitely not crowded. People were starting to leave, and there was the clear feeling that the conference was about to be over. I made a last-minute visit to the exhibitors’ hall to see if we could get some good deal in last-day book sales (and yes! I did get good deals). I hugged goodbye more people than I can remember this day. The feeling I had at the end of Friday morning is that the conference had been productive and that the academic conversation keeps going on with the Graduate Center as an active player in it.

Next year’s conference in Chicago may probably draw even a larger GC presence, considering that housing costs and transportation there may be a little bit easier than in L.A. I really hope that more GC students will end up joining next year’s ATHE, it is great experience. I may not do it myself, since it is again scheduled almost at the same time as FIRT (which will be in Osaka).

Boris Daussà-Pastor  
Doctoral Student, Graduate Center, CUNY



## THEATRE OUTINGS

Dan Venning

Each semester, the DTSA gets group tickets to see two or three shows. I received over a dozen suggestions of fantastic-looking shows happening this semester, and there will be an outing to see Sarah Ruhl's adaptation of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*, directed by Rebecca Taichman, at Classic Stage Company, on Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. Our second theatre outing will be to *Throne of Blood*, directed by Ping Chong and adapted from the film by Akira Kurosawa, on Friday, November 12.

Dan Venning  
DTSA First Vice President



## ABOUT the DSC (Doctoral Students' Council)

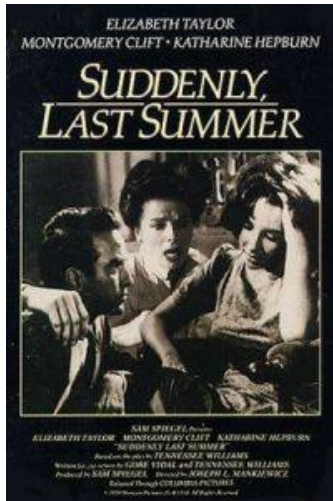
Eero Laine

Please take a minute to look at the Doctoral Students' Council website: [cunydisc.org](http://cunydisc.org). The website has important information about student services, funding opportunities, and the governance of the Graduate Center. Here is a short list of opportunities and services funded by our Student Activity Fees and administered by the DSC:

- Free legal consultation
- Grants for conferences and workshops
- Information about health services
- Interdisciplinary organizations
- Discount movie tickets
- Web services ([opencuny.org](http://opencuny.org))
- Parties!

I will keep you updated on current issues throughout the year with posts to the DTSA listserv. If you have any questions or concerns or you just want to know more about the DSC, please email me ([eero.dsc@gmail.com](mailto:eero.dsc@gmail.com)) or stop by the DSC during office hours, which are listed at [cunydisc.org](http://cunydisc.org).

Eero Laine  
Theatre Program Representative  
Co-Chair for Student Affairs  
Doctoral Students' Council



## FACULTY UPDATES: FALL 2010

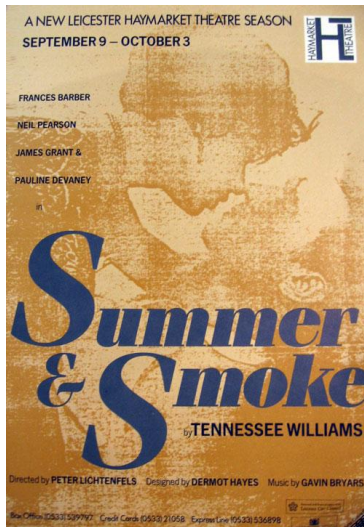
**Marvin Carlson:** I participated in a panel on Jews and the Making of the Modern German Theatre at the FIRT Conference in Munich in July and earlier in the summer gave a keynote address on “Site-Specific Theatre in the Arab World” at a conference in Tangier. My major summer project, in addition to preparing my fall seminar on theatre and performance in the Arab/Islamic world, was continuing work on a book project under contract to Palgrave on theatre in the Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia), co-authored with a scholar in Morocco. I also wrote two solicited essays, one for a German publication on the politics of space and another on the German director Kriegenberg for *Theater Forum*. A discussion with Janelle Reinelt on “The Local Meets the Global in Performance” appeared in a collection with that name published by Cambridge Scholars and two other essays appeared in collections this summer: “Das Theater ici” in *Politik des Raumes*, ed. Erika Fischer-Lichte and “Space and Theatre History” in *Representing the Past*, ed. Thomas Postlewait and Charlotte Canning. I am working on another essay for *The Cambridge Companion to Theatre History*, ed. David Wiles, and for a series of lectures to be delivered this fall at the University of Brussels.

**Daniel Gerould:** This August, David Willinger (City College/Graduate Center) and I completed the manuscript of *The Maeterlinck Reader*, which will contain new translations of five plays—*The Princess Maleine*, *The Intruder*, *The Blind*, *Pelleas and Melisande*, and *The Death of Tintagiles*—and excerpts from Maeterlinck’s theatre theory, poetry, fiction, aphorisms, and writings on the life of the bees and the life of the termites. The book, with many illustrations and introductions by the co-editors, will be published by Peter Lang early next year.

**Judy Milhous** retreated to State College, Pennsylvania, where she gardened for a couple of hours at dawn most mornings. This included planting seven trees, some just switches, but others recognizable trees. One of those is to celebrate the Carlsons’ fiftieth wedding anniversary. The cats and the garden are flourishing. Most of the rest of her time was spent wrestling with materials for her part of the Panizzi Lectures, an endowed series of book history lectures at the British Library, which she and Rob Hume have been invited to give in November 2011 (a frighteningly near date). Best wishes to all for the new semester!

**David Savran:** This summer, David Savran’s *Highbrow/Lowdown: Theater, Jazz, and the Making of the New Middle Class* (University of Michigan Press) won the Joe A. Callaway Prize for the Best Book on Drama or Theatre published in 2008-09. He presented a new work, a paper entitled “Branding as Cultural Performance,” which studies the marketing of the 2009 revival of *Hair*, at the Northwestern University Summer Institute in Performance Studies and at the FIRT conference in Munich in July 2010. He is continuing his project on the branding of U.S. theatre both domestically and abroad.

**James Wilson:** My book, *Bulldaggers, Pansies, and Chocolate Babies: Performance, Race, and Sexuality* (University of Michigan Press) was published this summer, and my review of Monica Miller’s *Slaves to Fashion: Black Dandyism and the Styling of Black Diasporic Identity* is forthcoming in *Theatre History Studies*. After attending ATHE (and seeing so many great panels populated by CUNY folk!), I spent a few days in Memphis. Apparently, every year in mid-August Elvis Week kicks off, and the city is crawling with Elvis impersonators and performances. It may not be Oberammergau, but there is probably a great article to be mined for anyone interested.



## STUDENT UPDATES: SEPTEMBER 2010

**Erik Abbott (Level III):** In the spring I directed a production of David Mamet's one-act "Jolly" (from *The Old Neighborhood* trio) for a local theatre group here in Luxembourg. It was their entry in the Festival of European Anglophone Theatrical Societies (FEATS), held this year in Bad Homburg, Germany, in May. The production won Best Production and Best Actor awards. The Best Production award led to an invitation to participate in the British All Winners Festival in lovely Essex in July. There we won another award, the Sydney Fisher Trophy, for backstage organization. Meanwhile, dissertation chapter writing and revision continues.

**Kelly Aliano (Level II)** is excited for the new semester. She had a great summer filled with presenting at the Performance Studies International conference, passing the First Exam, and all around enjoying life. She is totally geeked for the new installment of Halo due out this month and hopes it leads to even more exciting research on video games.

**Jessica Brater (Level III):** I am looking forward to working on my dissertation proposal this semester, which will focus on Ruth Maleczek's collaborations in and away from Mabou Mines. I'm also beginning a new project with my theatre company based on Pixérécourt's *Alice, or The Scottish Gravediggers*, and on the related medical and legal history of dissection and body snatching. I will also be a part of the Performance & Ecology working group for ASTR, and I look forward to hanging out with fellow GC-ers in Seattle!

**Nicole Boyar (Level II)** spent most of the summer studying for the first exam, which she passed in August. In May, she traveled to San Francisco to present a paper on nineteenth-century American Shakespeare parodies at the conference of the American Literature Association. She did manage to have some vacation, and took a trip to Turkey and Greece, where she was definitely awed by the ruins of the Theatre of Dionysus. This fall, she will be teaching Text Analysis and Introduction to Theatre at Brooklyn College.

**Brooke Christensen (Level I):** In August I moved to New York after living in Chicago for three years. Prior to becoming a graduate student, I worked at the Art Institute of Chicago and directed and assistant directed with a few small theatre groups in Chicago. I also thoroughly enjoyed attending my first New York Fringe Festival before becoming a full time student again.

**Emily Clark (Level I):** While most of the summer was spent glued to various books studying for the first exam, I did manage to see some wonderful plays and go to some exciting places. It made my nerdy theatre world when I was allowed to make the thunder roar at Drottningholm's theatre in Sweden and wander around the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. If you ask me if I had a good summer, the answer is yes.

**Boris Daussà-Pastor (Level II):** In mid-May, I participated in the "Brecht in Asia" Conference at the University of Hawaii giving a paper on *Verfremdungseffekt* in Kathakali. The paper had a wonderful response and I am reworking it for possible publication in the conference proceedings. In July I gave a paper in Munich for the Asian Theatre Working Group of IFTR/FIRT on the current trends of transnational Kathakali performances. At ATHE, I participated as chair/respondent in a session conversing with Sheetal Ghandi, a US-born performer with family and roots in India, and presenting her intercultural work. I also

gave a paper at the Association for Asian Performance Pre-Conference on the implications of the Study Abroad Program in Kerala that I organize every other year with Prof. Claudia Orenstein. While in Europe I traveled to Paris to finalize some interviews on an article I am preparing on “The Heirs of Decroux” and I also went with my theatre troupe to perform in a Street Theatre Festival in Aurillac (France). I kept on building my ties with the academic theatre world of Spain during the summer and of course, I also found some time to work on my books for the Second Exam! Needless to say, I did not have much time for vacation, but I loved so much all the work that I did that I do not feel tired at all.

**Rick DesRochers (Level II):** Rick’s article “Destabilizing Vaudeville: The Marx Brothers and the Party of the Third Part” was recently accepted for publication by *The Journal of Popular Culture*. In July, Rick worked on six new plays at the PlayPenn New Play Development conference in Philadelphia where he is an Associate Artist. After a successful summer touring the playgrounds, museums, and parks of New York City with his daughter Lucy, Rick will be taking it easy by returning to teaching full time and taking the second exam in January.

**Rayya El Zein (Level I)** spent the summer between Egypt and Lebanon, working on improving her Arabic. She’s invigorated and very much looking forward to the busy semester ahead!

**Zack Fuller (Level III):** In August I presented a paper at the annual conference of the Association for Asian Performance, where I also led a movement workshop for my fellow scholars. I recently joined the ASTR working Group “Butô’s Corporeal Acts” and have been enjoying lively on-line discussions on the legacy of Tatsumi Hijikata with its members. This fall I will once again be teaching Introduction to Theatre Arts at Baruch College.

**Donatella Galella (Level I):** This summer, I did a literary internship at the Vineyard Theatre, where I read and reported on a lot of new scripts. I also got to hang out with Billy Crudup’s co-stars—the pet goldfish his character kept in Adam Rapp’s *The Metal Children*. In addition, I began working as the production manager of *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*.

**María Cristina García (Level I):** After graduating from Emerson College, my summer was spent in grueling but rewarding production work, first as the floor manager for the Goodman Theatre's fifth Latino Theatre Festival and shortly after as the production stage manager for a run of *The Producers* in my hometown. At the end of May my high school sweetheart and I were married by our favorite English teacher.

**Alosha (Aleksei) Grineknko (Level I):** Hello everyone at the Theatre department and beyond. I am Alosha Grinenko from Belarus. I am ecstatic to be part of the GC theatre program. Back in my home country, I attended several schools for a range of interrelated courses focusing on theatre, acting, dance, comparative literature (MA) and linguistics. I have also been acting at and sometimes writing and choreographing for the Belarus National Musical Theatre in Minsk since 1999. This summer I finished my eleventh season at the theatre and hopped a plane to New York City, where I am now looking very much forward to getting to know all of the GC staff and students and anticipating an amazing academic experience!

**Bethany Holmstrom (Level II):** After passing my Finnish translation exam in June, I spent the summer reading for the second exam and got in a long visit to friends/family in Virginia. My article on the first racially integrated Broadway musical, *The Southerners*, was published in *JADT* and I was fortunate enough to participate in the collaborative *Shrek* experiment that came out in *Theatre Journal*. I’m teaching

a course on American musical theatre and a section of theatre history at CSI this fall semester, and already driving those near and dear to me crazy with show tunes.

**Jake Hooker (Level II):** This summer I presented a paper at the FIRT conference in Munich as part of the New Scholars forum. I spent the rest of the summer living and working in Berlin where I co-created and performed a new piece at a wonderful little venue called *Ida Nowhere*. This fall I'm very much looking forward to teaching at two (count 'em, – 2!) different colleges on Staten Island: Wagner College (Dance History and Introduction to Theatre) and the College of Staten Island (Introduction to Theatre and Acting II).

**Brad Krumholz (Level I):** I spent the summer at NACL Theatre (<http://www.nacl.org>), the company I co-founded in 1997, which owns and operates a theatre center in the southwestern Catskill region of upstate NY. As I am on leave as Artistic Director for the school year now that I am enrolled in the Graduate Center program, this summer was a chance for me to dive back in to the world of theatre making and presenting. We held our 10<sup>th</sup> NACL Catskill Festival of New Theatre, featuring new, devised theatre works from the US, Canada, and Australia; we hosted two HERE Arts Center company retreats, one retreat for the GC's own Ben Spatz's Urban Research Theatre, one week-long silent retreat organized by Pataphysics and led by playwright Erik Ehn, a performance and retreat of the NY Neo-Futurists; and we participated in a slew of local community arts events. It was a busy summer! Now, I'm in the process of switching gears as I re-enter the stimulating and challenging world of academia.

**Eero Laine (Level II):** I spent the summer reading for the Second Exam and getting acquainted with my new position in the Doctoral Students' Council as Co-Chair for Student Affairs. Also this summer, I was accepted to Northwestern University's Summer Institute in Performance Studies, which I attended in July. I am now quickly returning to the speed of New York after some relaxing time in my home state of Minnesota.

**Thomas Meacham (Level III):** After a rather eventful Spring semester (presenting at the Medieval Academy at Yale and securing a full-time position at LaGuardia Community College), I spent the majority of my summer in solitary confinement, writing my dissertation. Though I came to appreciate the monastic life, and wrote much, I found my social skills had declined rapidly. But I have emerged, ready to begin the new semester – and, yes, I saw my shadow – four more weeks of summer!

**Hillary Miller (Level III):** I spent the summer studying for the Second Exam and moving into a new apartment. I also spent time revising an article about performance in Coney Island for an anthology about Development in Brooklyn, and I'm looking forward to presenting some of that material at the 2010 ASTR conference in Seattle. Now that the Fall is here, I'm again teaching Speech at Baruch College, and am also producing T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, which is being presented at the largest Catholic Church in Brooklyn. Shameless plug: <http://www.murderinthecathedral.com>

**Shari Perkins (Level I):** After spending the summer researching theories of adaptation and contemporary Russian drama, I am adding excitement to my life by getting married and starting a PhD in the same week.

**Lisa Reinke (Level II):** Lisa enjoyed the aesthetic of Hollywood during this year's ATHE. She is teaching 10 credit hours this semester at Brooklyn College and the College of Staten Island. This is her first semester teaching a theatre course. Also, stop by and see her in the office on Tuesday and Friday mornings.

**Christopher Silsby (Level II):** Besides preparing for his term as DTSA President, this summer Christopher presented a paper on the Black Arts Repertory Theatre/School at ATHE in Los Angeles. The conference provided some interesting intersections between his seemingly disjointed research areas that may have helped in developing his dissertation project proposal. He also worked with Professor Daniel Gerould on a new MESTC publication of essays and translations from across Professor Gerould's career so far.

**Carly Smith (Level III)** recently passed her Second Exam. This semester, she will be working on a few writing projects with Theatre Program colleagues, teaching Speech Communication at Baruch, and working on her dissertation proposal, which concerns the marketing and branding of the Metropolitan Opera and its productions.

**Ben Spatz (Level II)** and his partner in Urban Research Theater rented the Medicine Show Theatre for two months this summer. In addition to an extended run of their performance *PLAY/WAR*, they hosted several parties, concerts, workshops, and a symposium on Masculinity and Embodied Practice. Ben is also working through his second exam lists and preparing a paper on Practice as Research for ASTR 2010.

**Naomi Stubbs (Level III):** Aside from a brief trip to LA for ATHE (where I presented on issues of class within the pleasure gardens of New York and Philadelphia), I've been in New York through this whole summer, where I have been writing, writing, writing. I also taught at LaGuardia, began volunteering through New York Cares, and took up kayaking (having only learned this year about it being free over the summer!).

**Christopher Swift (Level III):** This summer I participated in a Folger NEH Institute on late medieval and early modern ritual ceremony. I spent the days of August preparing an article on weeping in Passion Week processions, reworking my theatre history syllabus, and avoiding sharks and jellyfish on the beaches of South Carolina. I will be at ASTR this year (working group: Revisiting Medieval Performance).

**Dan Venning (Level III):** I kicked off the summer by traveling to Austria on the Cohn-Lortel International Theatre-Going Award, where I saw six productions over a week in Vienna. One was twelve hours long. The day after I returned I began an intensive course in advanced German for reading knowledge. I've spent the rest of the summer working on fellowship proposals, my dissertation proposal, and revising various articles, book reviews, and theatre reviews. Another good thing to come out of this summer: I finally got myself a gym membership (and am going, regularly)!

**Kenn Watt (Level III):** I just got hired to teach in the CUNY MA program in Applied Theatre. It's the first MA program of its kind in this country, and is based on British models.

**Melissa Wansin Wong (Level II):** I spent my summer in several cities in Asia (Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Yangon, Mandalay and Hong Kong) doing research for my project on human rights and performance, and interviewed many interesting artists and theatre groups. I also presented papers at PSi in Toronto and ATHE in Los Angeles. I am also very happy to report that I passed my French language exam. Most importantly, I was able to spend much appreciated quality time with family and friends in Singapore and Spain.

**Catherine Young (Level II):** I am beginning my fourth year in the program and my third year as a Graduate Teaching Fellow at Baruch College, where I teach Introduction to Theatre and have also taught

Introduction to Acting. I spent the summer memorizing the drive from New York City to Buffalo. You may be surprised to find out the quickest route is through New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

**Ji Hyon (Kayla) Yuh (Level I):** My summer was rather uneventful and quiet this year. My family was here for a couple of weeks from Korea in May-June, and we traveled down to South Carolina. I got my first speeding ticket in North Carolina on our way down to SC, and I guess that was my biggest non-theatre event of the summer that I can think of right now. Other than that, I spent all my summer in the city (did not go back to Korea!), read a lot, ran a lot, baked a lot, and found a new hobby which is coloring (on my nails). The first week of the semester has been hectic but very exciting, and I am especially excited with my teaching appointment at City College as I will be teaching two Intro to Theatre classes this semester. Also, I plan to work on my writing skills this semester. So, if anyone is interested in writing more and being kept accountable, just let me know!

## ↪ THE GREEN ROOM ↪