Drama’s Field Station Debuts in Los Angeles

How do you help drama students at the Claire Trevor School of the Arts make the transition from the university stage to the professional stage? One of the ways is through the Field Station Theatre, a program recently initiated by Drama Department Chair Robert Cohen. Although the department’s campus productions and curriculum emphasize a professional environment, it is the added step provided by the Field Station Theatre (FST) that can give student actors greater insight into what to expect after graduation. The premise is simple: stage professional productions at established professional theaters using students, faculty and alumni.

The program is something of a labor of love for Cohen who has long wanted a theater off campus that would provide valuable collaborative opportunities for both students and faculty. Besides using some of his own research grants to fund the FST, he recruited School professors to help stage its first show. Machiavelli: The Art of Terror, which Cohen wrote, had a critically acclaimed run at the Hayworth Theatre in Los Angeles through August.

New Faculty Arrive with Diverse Talents

The Claire Trevor School of the Arts faculty has grown by six, with new professors in all departments.

The Dance Department welcomed assistant professors Molly Lynch and Jodie Gates. Lynch is the former artistic director of Ballet Pacifica, Orange County’s only professional ballet company. She was director from 1988 to 2003. Lynch, who studied with Ballet Pacifica Founder Lila Zali, is credited with turning the company into a well-respected professional troupe known for staging new works. Lynch received her BA and MFA in Dance at UCI in 1979 and 1981, respectively.

Gates has enjoyed a stellar dancing career. She was the lead dancer with the Joffrey Ballet from 1983 to 1995 and with the Frankfurt Ballet from 2000 to 2004. She now choreographs works for distinguished companies like the San Francisco Ballet and the Paris Opera Ballet. After moving to Laguna Beach about two years ago, Gates founded the Laguna Dance Festival, a fall program that includes performances, dance workshops and films.

Professor Michael K. Hooker has joined the Drama Department. Hooker has impressive professional credentials, having been the Senior Media Designer for Walt Disney Imagineering. He helped create sound design and audio systems for Disney theme parks in Hong Kong, Tokyo and Paris. Hooker has pioneered the development of sound design programs at the University of Cincinnati and the California Institute of the Arts.

The Music Department is delighted to welcome Hossein Omoumi as Masae Professor in Persian Performing Arts, and Michael Dessen, a well-known composer and performer.

Omoumi comes to UCI from the Seattle-based Haft Dastgah Association, which he founded to preserve the classical Persian music tradition. In addition to teaching classical Persian music at the University of Washington in Seattle, UCLA and the University of Paris-Sorbonne, Omoumi has performed in U.S., France, Turkey, Greece, Denmark, Switzerland and England. He is an accomplished player of the ney, the Persian reed flute, and has numerous CDs to his credit.
Dear friends,

Our Claire Trevor School of the Arts community is brimming with talent, energy and enthusiasm. This was an amazingly busy and productive summer as faculty and students spread through the U.S. and abroad taking part in festivals, joining touring theater companies, exploring art in other countries and developing new artwork. The Medici Scholars traveled to the East Coast, Great Britain, France and Romania to participate in workshops, develop exhibitions and perform in international master classes; interdisciplinary groups of faculty and students collaborated in theatrical pieces making their debut in Italy, Romania and Poland; other faculty performed in South America, the Far East and Europe; and both students and alumni exhibited their work in major art centers.

After such a busy summer, fall never disappoints. A talented group of new faculty and students join our ranks and everyone gathers together with the momentum that quickly starts driving activity for the year. With a new Assistant Dean (Ramona Agrela) to oversee our operations and a new Director of Development (Ryan Marsh), we have a finely tuned ensemble ready to expand both our international connections and community partnerships.

We are committed to making the arts vibrant in our community. Our ongoing partnerships—including those with the Orange County High School for the Arts, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, county elementary schools and our community’s excellent performing and visual art organizations—enrich our lives and those who we serve, particularly our students. Irvine Mayor Beth Krom, who was the Keynote Speaker at our 2006 Commencement ceremonies, inspired our graduates with words of the adventures that lie ahead. Indeed!

We invite you to visit us often and enjoy the many public events we present during the year. As we begin the 2006-2007 academic year, we look forward to the future and our rich partnerships.

Nohema Fernández

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could collaborate in forming a summer theatre.” He imagined a program “where selected faculty and alumni could perform in the ‘field’ that professional theater normally flourishes: a downtown metropolitan district.”

However, Cohen says, other campuses could not be persuaded to participate and his plan slipped into hibernation. Until now. He thinks the benefits will soon be obvious. “Well, the point of the FST is to give the Drama Department a professional arm in the city of Los Angeles, to provide entry-level acting, design and stage management— and some day perhaps directing—opportunities for graduating students and alumni in the city and to create a venue to showcase UCI productions in a more metropolitan setting,” Cohen explains.

“Students will learn how to work without university-level budgets, permanent staff assistance, office support, scenery and costume shops and all the security features that university theater properly enjoys. They will see their fellow alumni, students and professors alike moving the floors, building the sets, writing the publicity brochures, managing the concessions and probably handing out the programs when the audience enters. It will be truly entry-level for all, including me.”

Goheen, a frequent Cohen collaborator, agrees, adding that it also fills a gap in drama’s curriculum. “There is considerable precedent for this idea in other top-tier graduate theater programs across the country,” he says. “We need look no further than UC San Diego and its La Jolla Playhouse. And there are many others to be found nationally.”

He continues, “FST will not only provide a rewarding off-campus ‘laboratory’ for our own professional students and faculty, but will hugely increase public visibility of the School in general and the Department of Drama, particularly.”

Cohen says that he plans to have two FST productions next year with more to come in succeeding years. “I’ve got the energy and the means to do this. Now is the time.”

New Faculty Arrive with Diverse Talents continued from page 1

Assistant Professor Monica Majoli has joined the Studio Art Department. Majoli’s “fetishistic” paintings have appeared in dozens of exhibitions in museums and galleries. Her work has been shown at the 2006 Whitney Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City, the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Cultural Center in Los Angeles and the Fowler Museum of Cultural History at UCLA, among others. She has lectured at several universities, including UC Berkeley, Yale University and the San Francisco Art Institute.
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Faculty

David Brodbeck, Music Chair, gave an invited paper entitled Czech Music in Liberal Vienna: Language Controversy, National Property, and the Rhetoric of Deutsch at the 14th International Conference on Nineteenth-Century Music held at the University of Manchester, England (July 4-7).

Music Professor Christopher Dobrian’s composition Cyclos Interrupted for soprano, tenor saxophone, piano, and live computer sampling was premiered at the Live Sampling Festival in Greenville, SC (May 19). On June 7, he presented a co-authored article, Musical Expression with New Computer Interfaces at the conference, in New Interfaces for Musical Expression (NIME) held at the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique-Musique (IRCAM) in Paris, France.

Dance Professor Jennifer Fisher received the prestigious de la Torre Bueno Prize, awarded annually for the year’s most distinguished book of dance scholarship, for her book, Notsacker Nation: How an Old World Ballet Became a Christmas Tradition in the New World. The award was presented at the 2006 conference of the Society of Dance History Scholars at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta, Canada (June 15-18).

Israel “El” Gabriel, Lecturer in Dance, premiered his ballet, Pari Ti, March 4 at the Theatre Agualindo, in Manila, Philippines. The work was performed by the Miriam Ballet Company. June through August, Gabriel taught workshops and master classes in Colorado, Alaska, California and Mexico.

The Men in Blaque, directed by Professor Joseph Huzst, won two silver medals (Men’s Chamber Choirs and Musica Sacrae) at the World Choir Games in Xiamen, China in July. Four hundred choirs from 80 countries participated in the largest choral competition in the world. The UCI ensemble was one of only three choirs invited to present a solo concert. Concerts were also performed in Beijing and Shanghai.

Richard Chagnon (MFA Music 1989) has been appointed director of Choral Organizations at San Diego State University.

Alumni

Richard Phillip Thompson was the dialect coach of this Holocaust-themed play, performed in four languages (English, German, Yiddish and Hebrew), and the cast consisted of alumnus Martin Swoverland, undergraduate Christa Mathis and graduate students Laura Simms and Adrian Alita. Doctoral students Greg Ungar, Adam Bryx and Cipriana Pete also participated in the production, as stage manager, assistant stage manager and tour coordinator, respectively. Graduate lighting MFA student Sara Broadhead managed the lighting on the tour.

Darryl Taylor, Assistant Professor of Music, performed at the Songs Across the Americas Festival in Conway, AK (May 15-20). In June, he starred as Aladdin in the Hot Springs Music Festival’s production of Cole Porter’s Aladdin in Hot Springs, AK.

Students

Sophomore music major Glenn Ellington participated in the 2006 Salzburg Summer Festival in Austria.

Students

In March, sophomore music major Chantelle Foullks took first place in the Stockton Opera Guild competition, winning a $2,500 prize.

Bye, Bye Birdie; Beryl Pomerantz (drama) (drama)

Matthew Potterton (MFA Music 1989) led the Modesto High School Concert Choir to the Sweepstakes Award at the choral competition in Anaheim, CA in April. Potterton will direct the University Choir at The University of Colorado at Boulder as he takes residency for the doctoral degree in choral conducting.

James Slowiak (MFA Drama 1988), Professor of Theater and artistic director of the New World Performance Laboratory, recently received the Outstanding Teacher and Researcher Award from the University of Akron (Ohio).

Joann Yarrov (MFA Drama 2000) is the newly appointed artistic director of Prometeo Theater of Miami, one of the nation’s leading Hispanic theater companies.
Ryan Marsh Steps into Development Role

I t gives us great pleasure to announce the appointment of Ryan Marsh as Director of Development for the Claire Trevor School of the Arts. Ryan comes to us most recently from Utah State University in Logan, where he held a number of key development positions. Ryan is an accomplished fundraiser and a dedicated professional. He has successfully raised funds for Utah State, as well as representing the university in regional outreach efforts. “I am thrilled to be joining a school with such a wonderful reputation, a talented faculty and a very professional staff,” says Marsh. “The thing that excites me most about my job is pairing people’s passions and interests with a way they can make a real difference. When you can match an opportunity for support with something that someone truly cares about, it’s pure magic.”

Sponsorship Program Begins at Claire Trevor

T he school has officially launched its corporate sponsorship program this summer. We have the good fortune to have Jerry Mandel, former President of the Orange County Performing Arts Center, serving as the Senior Advisor to the School’s external relations team to establish this new initiative. There are a variety of levels of sponsorships available to corporations to increase their visibility in the community while demonstrating their support for the arts in Orange County.

Mainstage Musical: $25,000;
Drama Mainstage Series: $15,000 three productions;
Dance Series: four concerts $15,000;
Studio Art: professional exhibition $15,000;
Symphony Series: four concerts $25,000;
Jazz Series: five concerts $10,000.

Are you looking for a dynamic sponsorship opportunity to increase your marketing exposure to art patrons and college-age students in Orange County? If so, contact Ryan Marsh at (949) 824-8750 to discuss these opportunities.

From Studio Art to the Web and More

K aryo Lawrence, Drama
Duke in London Drama Program
Karyn Lawrence

Self Portraits by Glenn Kaino

ALUMNI PROFILE – GLENN KAINO

Kaino clearly relishes the challenge of being innovative in the arts and beyond. When teaching New Genres, a course emphasizing digital arts, at USC, Kaino would routinely pose a question to students: “How can we create relevant things that have meaning – how does anything become meaningful?” That would lead to asking what it means to be an artist and what an artist can accomplish in our society, Kaino says.

In order to help build a healthy foundation for up-and-coming artists, Kaino merged his efforts with three of his peers to create Deep River, a “not-for-profit, and not not-for-profit” exhibition space in Los Angeles that boasted the warning “No art critics allowed” on its front door. “In the art world,” Kaino explains, “collectors, curators, and critics have much more influence than the artists in what art gets shown, and made and supported. We wanted to work away from that critical system of validation. We launched a lot of careers.”

Until recently, Kaino was the chief creative officer at Napster, where he helped decide the company’s musical choices, art design and production. Kaino’s hand in the company began in his UC days when he started a company called Pressplay. After several projects for major companies like Disney and Fox, Pressplay became Napster.

“You’re really awesome how Napster has evolved,” Kaino says. “I’m happy to have been a part of it.”

The Falls

Photo: Jacqueline Sisemore

Ryan Marsh: Director of Development

Photo: Donna Barry

Ryan Marsh

Steps into Development role

(self-portrait by Glenn Kaino)