

Fall 2008

NEW SCHOOL DRAMA



Scott Wynn

Jenni Banerjee, '08 and Ross Beshear, '08 in *The Awesome Dance* by Nick Starr, '08

Letter from the Director

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Join me as I welcome students and faculty back to The New School for Drama. As a national election approaches, I trust the arts will be considered central to a healthy national culture, a belief we share at The New School. Our goal here at Drama is to nurture young artists who are deeply committed to the arts and individual expression founded in truth.

An artist who exemplifies this commitment is actor John Turturro, and I'm happy to announce that he will be our artist-in-residence for 2008–2009. A graduate of the Yale School of Drama, he created the title role in John Patrick Shanley's *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* in his theatrical debut, for which he won an Obie Award and a Theatre World Award. Since then, John has returned to the stage often, recently appearing in Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He has also performed in more than 60 films, working with directors such as Martin Scorsese, Spike Lee, Robert Redford, Peter Weir, and Joel and Ethan Coen. His current projects include Columbia Pictures' *The Taking of Pelham 123*, in which he stars with Denzel Washington and John Travolta. John has also directed three films. His directorial debut, *Mac*, won the Camera d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. He also directed *Illuminata* and the recently released *Romance & Cigarettes*, starring James Gandolfini, Susan Sarandon, and Kate Winslet. I welcome John and the wisdom he will impart to our students.

Students can apply their training and develop their professional skills in three productions to be presented this fall. The second-year acting students will perform Edna Ferber and George S. Kaufman's *Stage Door* under the direction of Hal Brooks. Hal directed the Pulitzer-nominated *Thom Paine (based on nothing)*. As the artistic director for Rude Mechanicals, he directed the notable productions *Valparaiso* by Don DeLillo and *Ladies and Gentlemen, the Rain* by Will Eno. He has directed at Asolo Rep, Humana Festival, and Soho Theatre in

London and comes to us fresh from the national tour of *No Child*. The third-year acting students will present Ibsen's *The Pillars of Society* under the direction of Johanna McKeon. Johanna comes to us from Williamstown, where she directed the premiere of Anne Washburn's *I Have Loved Strangers* as well as workshops of *The Liddy Plays* by Brooke Berman and *The Stonewater Rapture* by Doug Wright. She has also directed at The Vineyard and Ontological-Hysteric theaters in New York City. In addition, students in their third year will present Shakespeare's *All's Well That Ends Well* under the direction of Stephen Fried, who comes to us from a stint as the resident assistant director of the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C. Among the noteworthy productions he has directed are *Henry V* at Milwaukee Shakespeare, *Comedy of Errors* and *Coriolanus* at Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, and *Love's Labor's Lost* at Illinois Shakespeare.

If you attended a Drama production recently, you might have noticed that you were entering a revamped theater. The new floors, paint, and other renovations are the result of New School President Bob Kerrey's leadership and commitment to the arts. We offer profound thanks to Provost Joe Westphal and Executive Vice President Jim Murtha for their counsel and support of The New School for Drama.

In administrative news, I am pleased to announce that **MATTHEW KELTY** ('02) will assume the duties of associate director of the division. The challenges of raising our program's standards of professionalism and developing our curriculum have made it clear that the school needs a full-time presence to handle the added workload and better represent the division in university settings. As associate director, Matt will continue handling academic affairs but will play a larger role in guiding the future of the program.

I would also like to welcome back our chairs, Ron Leibman (Acting); Pippin Parker (Playwriting); Elinor Renfield (Directing); Nova Thomas (Voice and Speech); and Tom Vasiliades,



Bob LuPone

(Movement). A warm welcome goes out to new faculty members Linda Gillen, who is teaching Stanislavski Technique, and Molly Goforth, who is teaching Neutral American Speech. Along with our expert and professional faculty, I am confident that the ongoing development of our curriculum—an effort of the administration that has been embraced by faculty and students alike—allows us to provide more profound and substantial training. I'm certain that as we evolve, our program will continue to enrich the field and prepare well-trained young professionals for an increasingly competitive industry. I hope you share my enthusiasm for and support of these emerging artists, who are enhancing both the reputation of The New School for Drama and the aesthetic of the theater.

Welcome to The New School for Drama!

Message from the Provost

This is a very exciting time to be at The New School.

The New School is fortunate to have students from many generations interacting on campus every day. Boomers, X-ers, and members of Generation Y all strengthen our community and bring diverse perspectives to the learning experience. Everyone benefits from engagement and debate with the views and life stories of colleagues and peers.

Students also benefit from our talented and experienced faculty in design, the arts and sciences, and the performing arts. New School professors excite and challenge students in the classroom, in the research lab, and in the community by connecting with New York City and beyond. Given that interdisciplinary approaches are a core part of The New School experience, we continually look for ways for students to engage with all colleges and programs within the university and to develop new programs that bring these diverse fields within a single curriculum.

Several of these new programs are underway or in development. In addition to an already functioning Environmental Studies program, we anticipate offering interdisciplinary programs in Food and Culinary Studies, International Studies, Management, Business and Finance, Media Studies, and Urban Studies. These and many other programs reflect a dynamic and comprehensive approach to education, connecting theory to practice, integrating the curriculum, and enhancing the student experience.

I invite you, the alumni of the university, to explore our curriculum and contact us with your ideas and suggestions for ways to improve educational opportunities for students and add value to their experience at The New School.



Matthew Sussman

Joseph Westphal

Joseph Westphal is provost of The New School. In this capacity, he is responsible for shaping the academic and research agenda of the university.

The New School for Drama is grateful to the following donors for their recent contributions:

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**** Alumni**

New School for Drama Students and Alumni Sweep the 2008 Samuel French Short Play Festival

The New School for Drama was well represented in the 33rd annual Samuel French off-off-Broadway Short Play Festival, which featured a selection of 40 plays this past summer at the Peter Jay Sharp Theater in New York City. Three plays written by New School Drama students and alumni achieved top honors: *Juniper; Jubilee* by **JANINE NABERS** ('08); *F**king Art* by **BEKAH BRUNSTETTER** ('07), whose work *Sick* took the top prize in 2006; and *The Grave* by **GABE MCKINLEY** ('09). Their plays will be licensed and published by Samuel French, Inc.

“At The New School for Drama, we challenge our students to become courageous, informed writers who are able to thrive in the professional world,” said Robert LuPone, director of The New School for Drama. “These achievements in the Samuel French Festival are an addition to a long list of accomplishments that reflect the talent of our students and alumni, who are the voices and faces of tomorrow’s theater.”

Established in 1975, the Samuel French festival makes its selections from plays submitted by writing workshops, university theater programs, and professional companies around the country. Each year, 40 plays are selected and presented to a panel of judges composed of playwrights, agents, and Samuel French editorial staff members. Six finalists are then selected from this group and have their works licensed and published by Samuel French, Inc.

Of the 40 works selected for this year’s festival, seven were written by New School Drama students and alumni: the three winning plays as well as *Good Enough* by **KITT LAVOIE** ('01), associate-directed by **KERRY FLANAGAN** ('03); *The Visit* by **DELORA WHITNEY** ('07), directed by **GRAEME GILLIS** ('01); *A New Shade of Red* by **JESSICA HINDS** ('10), directed by **MASON BEGGS** ('10); and *wild follows the queen* by **MATTHEW PAUL OLMOS**

('04), directed by **BRIAN CICHOCKI** ('04). **KATHY GAIL MACGOWAN** ('09) also participated this year directing *Seal Song* by finalist Jennifer Fell Hayes.

The cast of Nabers’ *Juniper; Jubilee* included a number of New School Drama students and alumni: **BRITTANY BELLIZEARE** ('09), **ANDREAS C. TSELEPOS** ('08), **GRACE EVANS** ('08), **RENA KRUMHOLZ** ('08), **LACHRISHA BROWN** ('10), **MIA KRISTEN SMITH** ('10), and **AYO CUMMINGS** ('10). In addition, the play was directed by **ALEXANDRA HASTINGS** ('08). Also participating in this year’s festival were actors **DAVID BLY** ('09), **MARLENE MORREIS** ('08), **DONALDO PRESCOD** ('10), and **COREY TRIPLET** ('10), all of whom appeared in Hinds’ play; alum **RICH KASS** ('06) appeared in another finalist’s entry. The strong commitment to collaborative work displayed by these Drama students reflects the school’s philosophy that the best theater emerges from an intelligent and passionate fusion of writing, directing, and acting.

This year’s achievements at the Samuel French Festival are the latest in a series of successes for the playwriting MFA program, which is chaired by Pippin Parker. In the 2007 festival, *Opening*, a work by **MATTHEW KELTY** ('02), The New School for Drama’s associate director and a Playwriting alumnus, was selected for publication. **TED NUSBAUM** ('06) took top festival honors in 2006 with his play *The Pischer*. Other alumni who have recently received honors are **JASON HOLTHAM** ('00), whose work will be developed and produced as part of the new Time Warner Commissioning Program at Second Stage Theatre; **JERRY KAREKEN** ('00), who won the fourth annual Two-Headed Challenge, cosponsored by the Playwright’s Center and the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis; and alumnus **ROBERTO MARINAS** ('03), who received the prestigious Disney Screenwriting Fellowship, one of the industry’s most prestigious writing fellowships.

THE NEW SCHOOL FOR DRAMA NAMES

JOHN TURTURRO 2008–2009 ARTIST-IN- RESIDENCE

The New School for Drama has announced that award-winning actor John Turturro will be the distinguished artist-in-residence for the 2008–2009 academic year. Turturro has received many awards and accolades for his extensive acting work in theater, film, and television. Recently, he was nominated for a SAG Award for his portrayal of Billy Martin in ESPN's *The Bronx Is Burning* and received critical acclaim for his starring role in Samuel Beckett's *Endgame* at the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

"We are fortunate to have such a versatile and accomplished actor on hand to mentor our students," said Robert LuPone, director of The New School for Drama. "John's extensive background and the variety of roles he has mastered speak to the type of well-rounded actor we hope to produce. His firsthand accounts of the intellectual, emotional, physical, vocal, and psychological demands of being an actor in the 21st century will be indispensable for our students."

As artist-in-residence, Turturro will teach several master classes in the fall and spring semesters. He will also participate in a town hall meeting, moderated by

Director LuPone, in which he will discuss his experiences on the stage and in film. The event is open to all students at Drama and will feature a question and answer session.

Turturro's residency coincides with his filming of *Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen*. "I am looking forward to the opportunity to support the artistic growth of students at The New School for Drama," he said. "I hope my experiences, including both obstacles and successes, will connect with them and help them find their path in this challenging industry."

Turturro studied at the Yale School of Drama. In his theatrical debut, he created the title role in *Danny and the Deep Blue Sea* by John Patrick Shanley. The performance earned him an Obie Award and a Theatre World Award. He has performed on stage in *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* by Bertolt Brecht (title role), and *Souls of Naples* by Eduardo De Filippo (Drama Desk Award nomination).

Turturro has performed in more than 60 films, including Martin Scorsese's *The Color of Money*, Tony Bill's *Five Corners*, Spike Lee's *Do the Right Thing* and *Jungle Fever*, Robert Redford's *Quiz Show*, Peter Weir's *Fearless*, Tom DiCillo's

Box of Moonlight, Francesco Rosi's *La Tregua*, and Joel and Ethan Coen's *Miller's Crossing*, *Barton Fink*, *The Big Lebowski*, and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* For his lead role in *Barton Fink* he won the Best Actor Award at the Cannes Film Festival and the David di Donatello Award, the Italian equivalent of an Academy Award. More recently, he appeared in Robert De Niro's *The Good Shepherd*, Michael Bay's *Transformers*, Noah Baumbach's *Margot at the Wedding*, and Barry Levinson's *What Just Happened?* He just finished filming Columbia Pictures' *The Taking of Pelham 123* opposite Denzel Washington and John Travolta. Turturro was nominated for a SAG Award for his portrayal of Howard Cosell on the television show *Monday Night Mayhem* and won an Emmy for his guest appearance on the hit series *Monk*. Turturro has also directed three films. His directorial debut, *Mac*, won the Camera d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. He also directed *Illuminata* and the recently released *Romance & Cigarettes*, starring James Gandolfini, Susan Sarandon, and Kate Winslet.



John Turturro

FACULTY NEWS



CASEY BIGGS (Directing) directed *Moby Dick Rehearsed* for the Acting Company, which toured 40 cities and then played in New York City last May. He also performed in

Suite in Two Keys by Noël Coward at the Berkshire Theatre Festival. The production was directed by Vivian Matalon, who directed Coward in the original in 1966.



BILL BOWERS (Movement) performed his solo show *It Goes Without Saying* in the New York City International Fresh Fruit Festival at The Algonquin Theater this past summer.

NICOLE BURDETTE (Playwriting) was the 2008 recipient of the Agnes Ranjo Capps Fellowship for Playwriting, given in conjunction with the Montana Repertory Theatre at the University of Montana. She also wrote the song “Far, Far Away” for Peter Salett’s new CD *The Ocean of the Stars*. Salett has written and composed for many films, including *Down in the Valley* and *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*.

Carla Cooks the War (formerly *Three Italian Women*) by **LAURA MARIA CENSABELLA** (Playwriting) was read at Ensemble Studio Theatre in New York City in March and at the Lyric Stage Company in Boston in April. Both presentations were directed by Melia Bensussen. Censabella’s play *Stones Fall Birds Fly* was part of the March Madness Festival, ten-minute plays presented by



EST Playwrights Unit at Ensemble Studio Theatre. This summer, Censabella taught at Sarah Lawrence College’s Playwriting Intensive Retreat and mentored three young playwrights at the Berkshire Fringe Festival.



PATRICIA FLETCHER (Voice) is currently working with Harvey Keitel on the television series *Life on Mars* for 20th Century Fox Television and is coaching

Korean pop stars J-Lim and G-Soul at JYP Entertainment in New York City. Fletcher was voted 2008 Favorite Dialect Coach by readers of *Back Stage* magazine; her text *Classically Speaking* (2nd edition) was also favorably reviewed by the magazine.



MARCIA HAUFRECHT (Acting) had a staged reading of her new play, *On Bliss Street in Sunnyside*. Actors included Haufrecht, **ROBERT LUPONE** (Drama Director), **RON LIEBMAN** (Acting Chair), and **KAREN LUDWIG** (Acting).



KAREN LUDWIG (Acting) recently appeared on an episode of *Law & Order: SVU* with Ice-T and Mariska Hargitay. She also directed a new one-act at HB Studio in New York City.



DOROTHY LYMAN (Directing) just finished shooting the feature film *Split Ends* in New Jersey. **MALINDA SORCI** ('08) was her assistant during production of the film.



BRENDAN MCCALL (Movement) directed workshop performances of two new plays: Dan LeFranc’s *Origin Story* and Rosary O’Neill’s *Behind Cut Glass*. In addition, he choreographed and wrote the dance/theater work “Stark Weather,” described by the *New York Times* as “economically and smoothly constructed ... and deeply troubling.” *Time Out New York* described his work on the remount of Michael Chamberlin’s play *Washing Machine* as “jarring choreography, which turns a little girl’s game into an industrial danse macabre.” After serving as a faculty member at The New School for Drama for three years, McCall has accepted the position of director of The International Theatre Academy Norway in Oslo. He recently finished work as production coordinator on *Meet Bess*, directed by Nicole Franklin.



PIPPIN PARKER (Playwriting Chair) directed and dramaturged *Betrayed*, written by George Packer, which received the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway

Play of the Year. The play was also nominated for the John Gassner Award for Outstanding Play by a New American Playwright by the Outer Critics’ Circle. The production was filmed by WNET/Channel 13 and will be broadcast this fall.



Now or Later, a new play by **CHRISTOPHER SHINN** (Playwriting), had its world premiere at the Royal Court Theatre in London in September.

ROBERT WALDEN (Acting) directed *The Quarrel* by David Brandes and Joseph Telushkin at the DR2 Theatre in New York City. The production starred Drama alum **FEDERICO TRIGO** ('08).



Two new plays by **MICHAEL WELLER** (Playwriting) opened in September: *The Beast* at The New York Theatre Workshop, directed by Jo Bonney, and *Fifty Words*,

which opened at the Lucille Lortel Theatre with MCC and was directed by Austin Pendleton. *Do Not Disturb*, a film version of his play *What the Night Is For*, is in pre-production and will shoot next year. The film features Susan Sarandon in the lead role, Bob Balaban directing, and David Brown and Kit Golden producing. Weller was also selected to be the Carl Djerassi Distinguished Fellow in Playwriting at the University of Wisconsin-Madison for the 2009 spring term.

SHELLEY WYANT (Mask) directed *Rimers of Eldridge* at TAPCO (Theatre Arts Production Company School) in the South Bronx this past June.

DRAMA ALUMNI AT ALUMNI EVENT IN LOS ANGELES

On September 6, Drama alumni of all years gathered to reconnect with each other at the first all-New School networking event in Southern California. At the event, which took place at The Kress in Los Angeles, alumni shared memories, stories, pictures, business cards, and ideas for future alumni gatherings.



Get up-to-the-minute news on the "Class Notes" page at www.newschool.edu/alumni and submit your news to alumni@newschool.edu.

1997

BILL GREEN performed the role of Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* this summer with New England Shakespeare in New Hampshire.

MICHAEL SCHWARTZ recently received a \$6,000 grant from the Brooklyn Historical Society as part of their Interpreting Brooklyn Project, a venture that culminates in exhibitions, readings, and performances that reinterpret the collections of the society.

CELESTE WALKER appeared in the new play *Lingering*, written and directed by Robert DeFelice, in Philadelphia.

1998

JOHN GAZZALE appeared in *Dog Day Afternoon* with the Barefoot Theatre Company on Theatre Row in New York City.

KEVIN ALLEN JACKSON (see 2000).

M.J. KARMI appeared as the Countess in *The Women* by Claire Booth Luce with Circus Theatricals Studio Theatre at the Hayworth Theatre on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles. She is currently teaching History and Development of the Method and classes on subtext at the Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute in Los Angeles. She was an instructor at the SAG Conservatory Workshop, held on the AFI campus in Los Angeles, teaching the workshop *Approaching the Shakespearean Monologue*. Karmi also appeared in an episode of ABC Television's *Brothers and Sisters* playing Cynthia Carter.

1999

JEWEL DONOHUE and **NIC TYLER** appeared in the new independent film *Dysfunctional Book Club*, which premiered this summer at Martha Clara Vineyards as part of the Long Island Wine Country Film Festival.

2000

ANDRES FAUCHER and **KEVIN ALLEN JACKSON** ('98) presented their film *El Pasajero* at the Breckenridge Film Festival, where it won Best Screenplay and Best Ensemble Cast. The film also won Best Narrative Short at the Academy-approved Athens International Film Festival and was a finalist at the USA Film Festival. The film was also selected for the Rhode Island International Film Festival in August, and for the Los Angeles International Short Film Festival.

Manifesto, a new comedy by **J. HOLTAM**, was presented as part of Second Stage Theatre's New Works Festival. The play was directed by Kareem Fahmy and featured Adriane Lenox, Reed Birney, Terrance Mann, and Angel Desai.

2001

GRAEME GILLIS (see 2007).

KITT LAVOIE was named a finalist in the 2008 Samuel French Short Play Festival for his play *Good Enough*. The play was associate-directed by **KERRY FLANAGAN** ('03).

OMAR RODRIGUEZ appeared in an episode of the FX channel's *The Riches*.

2002

DANIEL ELLIS continues his work as director and designer with the nationally recognized vocal ensemble Five by Design. The ensemble is currently on tour with their show *Stay Tuned* and is performing with a number of symphony orchestras around the country. Ellis also directed *Great American Horror Movie Musical* as part of the Minnesota Fringe Festival in Minneapolis.

LAUREN MILBERGER appeared in the film *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants 2*.

2003

JOHN PATRICK BRAY was commissioned by the Performing Arts Society of Acadiana to write *Trickster at the Gate: The Story of a Yoruba God on Earth* under the National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read Acadiana grant. *Trickster at the Gate* premiered in Lafayette, Louisiana, in April and is in negotiations for an off-off-Broadway production this season. His play *As We Speak* was commissioned by the (re:)Directions Theatre Company and will premiere off-off-Broadway in October. John's play *Liner Notes* (which had a staged reading with the Drama Alumni Play Development Project last year) is being developed for production this season with the 3 States Theatre Company. Bray is a second-year PhD in theater candidate at Louisiana State University.

KERRY FLANAGAN (see 2001).

VIJAY MATHEW is the National Endowment for the Arts' New Play Development Program coordinator for Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and the recipient of the Theatre Communications Group's New Generations Future Leaders grant. In his position, created to implement a nationwide initiative in play development, he'll be mentored by David Dower, associate artistic director of Arena Stage.

2004

MATTHEW PAUL OLMOS was named a finalist in the 2008 Samuel French Short Play Festival for his play *wild follows the queen*. The production was directed by **BRIAN CICHOCKI**.

ROBERT WEDIG is living in London and performing in the British premiere of the play *Hannah and Martin* at the Courtyard Theatre at Old Street. The production is directed by Pat Garrett.

2005

BERNARDO BADILLO appeared in an episode of Showtime's *Weeds* this summer opposite Justin Kirk and Kevin Nealon. He also frequently performs a one-man show about immigration in the Los Angeles area.

NIKETA CALAME finished a workshop version of *Junk: A Rock Opera* at the Steve Allen Theater this past May. The show was extended and performed at the Lyric Theater (Los Angeles), and a live recording of the musical was made at the Ecoplex (Los Angeles). Calame was cast in a feature film starring Anthony Anderson and John Voight, which began shooting in mid-2008.

PHILLIP GUTTMANN has been named director of marketing for The New Group in New York City.

THAI-HOA LE was featured in *Smile*, a short film directed by Julia Kwan and shown at Sundance. He also completed filming an episode of the Sci-Fi Channel's *Sanctuary* in Vancouver. For his role as a Sherpa, he worked with a Tibetan dialect coach to perfect his lines.

FATIMA QUANDER performed in *Kite on the Wind: A Tale of Pakistan* at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. She also read the title role in a new play called *Katrina: The Girl Who Wanted Her Name Back*, presented at the Kennedy Center in affiliation with Adventure Theatre of Chicago. She is a teaching artist with Young Playwrights' Theater and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company (both in D.C.). This summer, she completed an independent feature, *The Talented*.

TATIANA SUAREZ-PICO appeared in the feature film *Accidents at Home and How They Happen*, written and directed by Jennifer Reeder. She was recently cast in a lead role in the independent feature film *The Children of Hip Hop*. Her online cartoon, *Bodega Ave.*, which she created with **AURIN SQUIRE**, is now regularly featured in *Ambiente* magazine, a Latino LGBT publication.

PERNELL WALKER has a supporting role in the film *Pariah*, which was screened at Sundance.

KEISHA ZOLLAR is directing, producing, and performing in *GLTC's Confessional*, a regular improvisation show at Theatre Under St. Marks in New York City.

2006

RICH KASS appeared in Jack Karp's *Sex+Money+Money+Sex* in the 2008 Samuel French Short Play Festival.

AMY MILLER will be playing Ariel in the musical *Footloose* opening in March at Actors' Playhouse in Coral Gables, Florida.

2007

JENNIE BERMAN ENG gave birth to a baby girl, Lily Eudora, in January.

BEKAH BRUNSTETTER was named a winner in the 2008 Samuel French Short Play Festival for her play *F**king Art*. The play will be licensed and published by Samuel French Inc. A staged reading of her play *OOHRAH!*, directed by Leigh Silverman, was presented at Ars Nova in New York City this past September.

ADAM KEE appeared as Tom in *The Glass Menagerie* and in the play *Almost, Maine* this summer with the Winnepesaukee Playhouse in New Hampshire.

KRISTYL DAWN TIFT directed *On Dragonfly Wings* at Georgia Southern University.

DELORA WHITNEY was named a finalist in the 2008 Samuel French Short Play Festival for her play *The Visit*. The production was directed by **GRAEME GILLIS** ('01).

2008

ROSS BESHEAR appeared as Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Sonnet Repertory Theatre.

MARK CAJIGAO was selected to sing at the Rising Stars concert at Town Hall in New York City this past July. The concert featured talent from some of the nation's finest theatrical institutions. It was codirected by Tony nominee Emily Skinner and Nightlife Award-winning vocalist Scott Coulter.

MARLENE MORREIS appeared in *A New Shade of Red*, written by Drama playwriting student **JESSICA HIND** ('10), in the 2008 Samuel French Short Play Festival. A festival finalist, the play was directed by Drama directing student **MASON BEGGS** ('10).

JANINE NABERS was named a semifinalist of the Victory Gardens Theater IGNITION: Emerging Writers of Color Festival for her play *West of the Willow Tree*. Her play *Juniper; Jubilee* was a winner in the 2008 Samuel French Short Play Festival and will be licensed and published by Samuel French, Inc. The production starred Drama alumni **ANDREAS C. TSELEPOS**, **GRACE EVANS**, and **RENA KRUMHOLZ** and was directed by **ALEXANDRA HASTINGS**.

NICK STARR is an adjunct professor of screenwriting at SUNY-New Paltz.

FEDERICO TRIGO appeared off-Broadway as Joshua in *The Quarrel* at the DR2 Theater in New York City this past September. The play was directed by Drama faculty member Robert Walden.

What's New ALUMNI OFFICE

VOLUNTEERS WANTED! The Office of Alumni Relations is continuing to expand its resources for career networking, online outreach, and regional activities and finding ways for alumni to get involved. We are always looking for volunteers to help with regional events, reunions, student recruitment and mentoring, and professional networking activities. Visit www.newschool.edu/alumni/regionalnetworks.html to find out where we are developing regional events and how you can become a volunteer in your region. Contact us by email (alumni@newschool.edu), or phone (212.229.5662 x3784), or visit our website (www.newschool.edu/alumni) to become an alumni volunteer.

Drama Faculty Members Receive Back Stage Readers' Choice Awards

Two faculty members at The New School for Drama received Readers' Choice Awards in *Back Stage's* recent survey. Dialect teacher and voice coach **PATRICIA FLETCHER** was named Favorite Dialect Coach. A former actor, Fletcher believes that when it comes to dialects, less is



Patricia Fletcher

more. "What surprises people, really," she says, "is the variety within the dialect that depends on the particular character you're playing, what happens in the scene, and where that person is in the whole economic strata." Fletcher applies this philosophy in teaching MFA in Acting students at Drama. She is also known for customizing her approach to the students in her classes, making sure that everyone progresses at the same rate and no one feels left behind.

Drama music accompanist **EDDIE GUTTMAN** was surprised to be selected as Favorite Accompanist because, he says, "the less somebody has to say about you as an accompanist, the better. In a way, you don't want to be noticed. You just want the vocalist to shine and let him or her get the compliments." Guttman assists in Drama's voice classes and provides individual class and coaching sessions. He has also served as accompanist for Lincoln Center's Meet the Artist series for more than a decade.

"He takes an interest in his students and really cares about them," notes Drama alum **RACHEL DORFMAN** ('07). "He's available all the time to answer questions. [He] is a fantastic artist and a great teacher."

Each year, *Back Stage* surveys its readers and asks them to select their favorites in categories such as acting coaches, headshot photographers, and talent agencies.

Drama Theater Benefit Events Off to a Great Start

This past June, 100 supporters of The New School for Drama joined Drama Director Robert LuPone at a performance of Lincoln Center Theater's *South Pacific* to benefit New School Drama and its programming. In addition to seeing the production, the contributors were treated to a special talk-back with star Kelli O'Hara, Director Bart Sher, and other members of the production.

"Overall, it was a truly wonderful evening," noted Mary Hastings, Drama's director of Development. "Not only were we treated to a remarkable performance and private talk-back, we were touched by the generosity and support of our donors. For that we are truly grateful."

Another benefit is planned for the end of this semester. This time, contributors will have the opportunity to attend *Billy Elliot*, the acclaimed new musical coming to Broadway from London's West End. The benefit performance takes place Tuesday, December 16, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at the Imperial Theatre. Tickets are \$250 (\$125 per ticket is tax deductible). To reserve tickets or for more information, call Mary Hastings at 212.229.5662 x4579.

Michael DiVito



Roberto Marinas

Drama Playwright Receives Disney Screenwriting Fellowship

Drama alumnus **ROBERTO MARINAS** ('03) was awarded the 2008 Disney Screenwriting Fellowship, one of the industry's most prestigious writing fellowships. Marinas was one of only four writers selected from more than 1,200 entrants. After learning the good news earlier this year, he remarked, "It was very cool.

Everything's happened very quickly since the announcement. My head is still swimming. I have to be in LA at the end of the month!" By accepting the fellowship, Marinas had to leave New York as well as his position as coordinator of Special Programs at The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music.

Marinas has every right to be excited. The fellowship will help him establish himself as a writer in the industry and give him the encouragement and tools he needs to practice and hone his craft. He will also be in good company. Drama playwriting alum **LIZ BARTUCCI** ('97) is a former recipient of the fellowship.

The Disney Screenwriting Fellowship was established in 1990 in partnership with the Writers Guild of America West. Many of the program's 200 alumni have become elite screenwriters, directors, and television show runners in Hollywood. An extremely limited number of full-time fellowships are available each year for both feature film and television projects. Fellows receive a weekly salary for a one-year period amounting to \$50,000 plus benefits. The program is an intensive, hands-on experience that involves workshops, seminars, and mentorships with creative executives from ABC, ABC Television Studio, Disney Channel, ABC Family, Lifetime, and Buena Vista Motion Pictures Group.

Directing Alumnus Awarded New Generations Future Leaders Grant by Theatre Communications Group

Directing alum **VIJAY MATHEW** ('03) was awarded a New Generations Future Leaders grant by the Theatre Communications Group (TCG). The grant provides paid mentorships with accomplished theater professionals for emerging leaders in theater. While serving as a directing fellow at Arena Stage, Mathew applied for the grant with Associate Artistic Director David Dower. "We wanted to continue the mentoring relationship we had started when I was a fellow, which was about producing and artistic directing—specifically in the realm of new plays," he said.

As part of the mentorship, Mathew will serve as the New Play Development Program coordinator at the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). "This is a new nationwide new play initiative by the NEA and is part of Arena Stage's mission to be a center for the development and study of American theater," Mathew explained. In addition to supporting five plays in development, the program supports two plays as they are prepared for world premieres.

"My participation in the NEA New Play Development Program as its coordinator gives me a privileged perspective of the current state of new work, playwrights, and theaters in the United States," Mathew says. So far the program has received nearly 200 applications and nearly 300 intents to apply. "This mentorship is exactly geared toward my path to becoming an artistic director who wants to produce and develop new plays."

Acting Alum Takes 'Stock' of Her Summer

MFA in Acting alum **ELEANOR HANDLEY** ('08) went from graduation directly into rehearsals with the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. There she played various roles in *Cymbeline* and Maria in *Twelfth Night*. Handley auditioned three times for the company. She prepared Shakespearean monologues and material from the plays and did

improvisational exercises. Robert Hoyt, director of Professional Development at Drama, helped coordinate the first auditions.

Handley and the company rehearsed in New York City before moving upstate to Garrison, where they performed in a specially designed tent on the breathtaking Boscobel Estate. "When I arrive for the show, I have to remind myself that this is where I come to work. I feel very lucky," she says. The tent does present challenges. It seats 500 and shows are typically sold out. Handley explains, "You need to be able to truly 'fill' the space. I will say that [Drama voice teacher] Nova Thomas' vocal warm-up came in very handy!" The tent also serves as a character in the show.

Audience members put their feet on the stage, creating a feeling of intimacy. "External things—the sunset, the rain, how much the audience has had to drink ... affect the performance," Handley explains.

Handley's experience has been the perfect transition from graduate school to professional performances. "I've been lucky to be surrounded by so many seasoned actors who have served as mentors," she says. "The focus on professionalism, [Actors' Equity Association] standards, career development, and intensive scheduling at The New School really helped me to deal with and enjoy the demands of the business of theater."

Drama Hosts Filmmakers from France

The New School for Drama and Ecole Supérieure de Réalisation Audiovisuelle (ESRA), a division of the famed French television and film school, ESRA Group, will once again combine forces. In the fall 2008 semester, ESRA will bring graduates to Drama to audit the third-year Scene Study and Co-Lab 3 classes and observe American actor training.

"This will be a unique opportunity for all the students involved," remarked Robert Hoyt, Drama's director of Professional Development. "The ESRA students will gain experience working with an extremely talented group of actors, making them better at their craft, while the Drama students are afforded the opportunity to work with some of the brightest emerging film directors. The training and networking prospects are limitless."

At the conclusion of their audit in December, the ESRA students will shoot short films here in New York City. The third-year acting students and Drama alumni will have the opportunity to audition for these films. Third-year directors will also have the opportunity to work with the ESRA graduates and assist with their filmmaking. **ZAY AMSBURY** ('09) and **DAVID LITTLE** ('08) have begun work on a musical that will be adapted and shot by the ESRA students.

ESRA offers a three-year program in Paris, Nice, and Rennes, France, for students studying to be directors, directors of photography, editors, screenwriters, and producers. ESRA Paris enrolls more than 450 students, who produce 70 short films each year. ESRA graduates are internationally known and have worked on films including *March of the Penguins*, *Hostage* (with Bruce Willis), and *Little Jerusalem*.

Melissa Horn



Eleanor Handley

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THE NEW SCHOOL FOR DRAMA

NEWS | FALL 2008

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FIRST LOOK 2008

The New School for Drama's Workshop Performance Series

Classical and contemporary works staged in a final rehearsal atmosphere, with minimal sets, lights, costumes, and props.

October 15-18

THE PILLARS OF SOCIETY

by **Henrik Ibsen** | *translated by Michael Meyer* | *directed by Johanna McKeon*

Karsten Bernick is a wealthy, successful businessman, a leading citizen of the small seaside town where he lives. But a scandal from his past resurfaces, threatening his status as a "pillar of the community."

November 5-8

STAGE DOOR

by **Edna Ferber and George S. Kaufman** | *directed by Hal Brooks*

The dreams and ambitions of 16 young women living in a boardinghouse for aspiring actresses are revealed as they fall hopelessly in love with the theater.

December 10-13

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

by **William Shakespeare** | *directed by Stephen Fried*

Love doesn't come easy in this bittersweet romantic comedy. As her reward for restoring the king of France to health, Helena claims the hand of the young lord Bertram. He refuses the arrangement, but the passionate Helena won't take no for an answer. She must now find another remedy—this time for the contempt that prevents Bertram from accepting her love.

The New School for Drama Theater
151 Bank Street, 3rd floor
New York, NY 10014

All performances take place
Wednesday through Saturday at 8:00 p.m.,
with a Saturday matinee at 3:00 p.m.

General admission is free.
Reservations are recommended.
For reservations, call
Ticket Central at 212.279.4200.

For more information, visit
www.newschool.edu/drama.