

# NEW SCHOOL DRAMA NEWS

THE NEW SCHOOL FOR DRAMA

Fall 2010



woken'glacier theatre company in a development workshop of **Matthew Paul Olmos** '04 *the nature of captivity* Photo: A. Sayeeda Clarke

## Drama Graduates' Theater Companies: It's All About Collaboration

Collaboration is an essential part of the MFA program at The New School for Drama. Playwrights work on their scripts in rehearsal and benefit from hearing and seeing their work performed, while directing and acting students work closely

together to bring plays to the stage. All three disciplines are represented in rehearsals or in the CoLab classes at Drama, giving students a glimpse of what it takes to develop a new play. This crossover enables students to learn from their peers as

well as from the instructors at Drama, and allows them to develop important and long-lasting relationships.

Collaboration is basic to the curriculum at The New School for Drama—and is also key in starting a theater company, as many Drama alums have discovered. “The New School’s program prepped us in that we learned—as writers, directors, or actors—that theater is a collaborative art form,” explains **Matthew Paul Olmos** '04, co-founder and artistic director of woken'glacier theatre company ([www.wokenglacier.org](http://www.wokenglacier.org)). “When we started our company, we approached it as a group of theater artists. We learned

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## ALUMNI NEWS

Send news about your latest achievements to [alumni@newschool.edu](mailto:alumni@newschool.edu). Read more news about your fellow alumni on the Class Notes page at [www.newschool.edu/alumni](http://www.newschool.edu/alumni).

### 1998

**John Gazzale** appeared in John Pollono's *Illuminati* as part of The Network One-Act Festival in New York City.

### 1999

**Leslie Maslow's** short story "Mum" won the 2009 *Open City* Short Fiction Contest and was published in issue 28 of the magazine.

### 2000

*Behold*, a new play by **Tom Cavanaugh**, was selected for development by the Utah Shakespearean Festival's New Playwrights Development Program.

**Coy Middlebrook** directed the musical *Nobody's Perfect*, which toured under the auspices of the Kennedy Center's Theater for Young Audiences on Tour series.

### 2001

**Polly (Mildred) Lee** appeared off-Broadway in *Graceland* with Lincoln Center's LCT3 at The Duke in New York City.

**Jason Odell Williams** appeared in Steven Dietz's *Yankee Tavern* with the New Jersey Repertory Company.

### 2002

*The Encounter* by **Jorshinelle Taleon-Sonza** was performed as part of Diverse City Theater Company's Pearl Project Theater Festival.

### 2003

**John Patrick Bray's** play *Hound* has been published by Next Stage Press.

**Elizabeth June (Sewer)** wrote, produced, and performed in *Jitters*, a film short that was named an Official Selection in the 2010 Texas Black Film Festival in Dallas.

## Message from the Director **ROBERT LUPONE**

Since I arrived at The New School for Drama, one of our goals has been to promote new, original plays. To that end, we've supported emerging playwrights and their writing with full-length productions, which we successfully instituted in last year's New Voices Playwrights Festival. The large number of Drama graduates who have become artistic directors and producers, establishing their own theaters and developing work in New York City and around the country, bodes well for playwrights and other theater professionals who create and develop new works. Our students and graduates have championed new projects in programs such as the New York International Fringe Festival, the Midtown International Theatre Festival, the Strawberry One-Act Festival, and the Old Vic/UK Exchange, which we told you about in the last alumni newsletter.

The New School for Drama scored another success this past year at the annual Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Short Play Festival. Once again, you couldn't throw a *Playbill* without hitting Drama students and alumni! Twelve members of our community participated as playwrights, directors, or actors. Of the 40 plays selected for presentation as semifinalists, five were by Drama students and alumni. *The Bear (A Tragedy)*, written by **E.J.C. Calvert '10** and directed by **Mason Beggs '10**, was chosen as one of the six winners for publication. For more information on the festival, see the feature on page 6.

This year, I'm excited to welcome a wonderful artist to The New School for Drama: award-winning director **Joe Mantello**. A consummate professional, he will serve as the 2010–2011 artist-in-residence at Drama, where he has graciously consented to lead master classes as well as conduct a town hall during the school year. I'm thrilled to have him not only because of his accomplishments but also because of his unshakable commitment to the art and beauty of theater.

Drama continues to refine the curriculum and provide our students with the highest-quality training, which is reflected on stage by our productions. I can think of no other



Robert LuPone Photo: Matthew Sussman

institution in New York City that has such a committed and professional faculty. I also take great pride in our students, who exhibit talent and skill and professionalism every single day. As alumni, you remain an invaluable part of our community. I welcome you to explore the latest news about your alma mater: The New School for Drama.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob LuPone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bob LuPone  
Director, The New School for Drama



Joe Mantello Photo: Matthew Sussman

## Joe Mantello Is Drama's 2010-2011 Artist-in-Residence

Award-winning director **Joe Mantello** is Drama's distinguished artist-in-residence for the 2010–2011 academic year. For Drama students, this is a remarkable opportunity to work closely with a theater professional in an educational setting outside of the classroom. Mantello will address the entire student body in a town hall meeting this semester. He will also conduct master classes and seminars specifically for directing students.

"We're excited that Joe has made his incredible talent, critical insight, and elegance available to The New School for Drama," said Drama director **Robert LuPone**. "His devotion to the theater and professional experience make him a superb mentor and priceless addition not only to the Directing Department but to the entire school."

Mantello's directing experience includes *Wicked*, *Assassins*, and *Take Me Out*, the last two of which earned him a Tony Award. He also directed the Broadway production of *Three Days of Rain*, starring Drama alum **Bradley Cooper '00**, Julia Roberts, and Paul Rudd. As an actor, Mantello earned a Tony nomination for his performance in *Angels in America*, which also starred faculty member **Ron Liebman**. Mantello has received Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, Helen Hayes, Clarence Derwent, Obie, and Joe A. Callaway awards. Mantello is a member of Naked Angels theater company and an associate artist at Roundabout Theatre Company.

Mantello is the fifth artist-in-residence at the school. Drama's earlier artists-in-residence were Jon Robin Baitz, John Turturro, Doug Hughes, and John Patrick Shanley. ↻

... Continued from cover

enough about one another's craft while in school to allow us to look at our work from multiple points of view." Olmos, co-founder **Nichol Alexander**, and founding members **Beth Manspeizer**, **Michael Billingsley**, **Eriko Ogawa**, **Ronit Muszkatbilt**, and **chantel cherisse lucier** (all class of 2004) began working together while in school and went on to establish their company. The group has presented more than 15 original productions and has been nominated twice for a New York Innovative Theatre Award. The group recently collaborated with Theatre Arts Japan on the U.S. premiere of Hideo Tsuchida's *it is said the men are over in The Steel Tower* and worked with Olmos on his play *the nature of captivity* during his residency with Mabou Mines theater company.

While working on her thesis production, **Jake Lipman '04** got her first taste of production. "My thesis partner, **Kristen Rogers '04**, and I agonized over every detail: casting, scenic design and props, script analysis, and dramaturgy," recalls Lipman. "It lit a fire in me to make my own opportunities." Her enthusiasm led her to create tongue in cheek theater productions ([www.tictheater.com](http://www.tictheater.com)), for which she serves as artistic director and producer and **Brian W. Siebert '04** serves as associate producer. Lipman has utilized Drama's talents over the years, casting **Sarah Michelle Bickwheat '06**, **Aaron Black '06**, **Brynne Kraynak '09**, and **Joel Peterson '05** in tongue in cheek productions.

Speranza Theatre Company ([www.speranzatheatrecompany.com](http://www.speranzatheatrecompany.com)), is lead by artistic directors **Heather Wahl** and **Rachel Cornish** (both class of 2008), who wanted to continue working together after graduation. Speranza produced *The Awesome Dance* by **Nick Starr '08** at The Cherry Pit in New York City this past September. The play starred Cornish, **Julie Cavaliere '08**, **Dileep Rao (Avatar, Inception)**, and **Caitlin Talbot**. It was directed by **Malinda Sorci '08**, who founded the NEST theater ([www.thenestnyc.org](http://www.thenestnyc.org)) along with 2008 graduates **Mark Cajigao**, **Samantha Shechtman**, and **Andreas Tselepos**. "Drama graduates, students, and faculty have been a continuing part of our daily operations," Cornish adds. "Their support and generosity keep us afloat. Our Drama relationships are our lifeline."

For more information on Drama graduates' theater companies and industry affiliations, visit [www.newschool.edu/drama](http://www.newschool.edu/drama) and select "Alumni & Friends." ↻

### 2004

**Richard Hollman** appeared in *Complete Works of Shakespeare (Abridged)* in Hartford, Connecticut, with alums **Sean Harris** and **David Salsa**.

**Moti Margolin** performed the title role of *Macbeth* with The Frog and Peach Theatre Company in New York City.

**Kari Morris'** short film, *Two*, which she executive produced, wrote, and appeared in with **Moti Margolin**, was selected for both the Rhode Island International Film Festival and the DC Shorts Film Festival.

**Seth Rabinowitz** (see 2010)

### 2005

**Niketa Calame** appeared in the musical *Women of Brewster Place* with Celebration Theatre in Los Angeles.

### 2006

*Draw the Circle*, a solo piece by **Deen** (formerly Shireen Deen), was performed at Dixon Place in New York City.

**Eileen Reardon** is directing *Finding Mabel*, a documentary about the Dirty War in Argentina and a woman's search for one of the 30,000 that disappeared.

### 2007

**Isabel Aerenlund** appeared in *Euridice* by Sara Ruhl at the Teatro Helénico in Mexico City.

**Xanthe Elbrick** appeared as Miss Proserpine Garnett in Irish Repertory Theater's production of George Bernard Shaw's *Candida*.

**Robin LeMon** appeared in a principal role on CBS Television's *The Good Wife*.

**Adam Kee** appeared as Mr. Endicott in the world premiere of Godlight Theatre Company's *In the Heat of the Night* at 59East59 Theatres in New York City.

**Detra Payne** appeared as Martha Pentecost in August Wilson's *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* at Hattiloo Theatre in Memphis.

**Layne Racowsky** directed *The Immigrant* for the Arizona Jewish Theatre Company in Phoenix.

**Michelle Robinson** appeared in *Dance of the Scarlet Honeyeater* and *It's In His Kiss* at Where Eagles Dare in New York City. She performed the title role in *Nikki G: A Portrait of Nikki Giovanni in Her Own Words* at the Dwyer Cultural Center, also in New York.

**Brian Schlanger** is appearing in a national commercial for Golden Corral Restaurants.

**Kristyl Dawn Tift** will appear in the feature film *Hall Pass*, opposite Owen Wilson and Stephen Merchant. The film will be directed by the Farrelly Brothers and released in 2011.

## 2008

**Eleanor Handley** appeared as Cressida in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* with the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival.

**David Marshall** appeared as the Scarecrow in Cape Rep Theater's production of *The Wizard of Oz* in Brewster, Massachusetts.

**Danielle Treuberg** performed in *Conspiracy: A Love Story*, a new musical by **Victor Lesniewski '10**, at the Midtown International Theatre Festival. The play was directed by **Elizabeth Carlson '10**.

**Tai Verley** appeared in *Evolutionism, or Dammit! We Took the Shortcut* with Manhattan Repertory Theatre in New York City. She also participated in LAByrnth Theatre's Summer Intensive Ensemble at Bard College.

## 2009

**Sherri Eden Barber** directed a reading of *The Bandaged Place* featuring **Brittany Bellizeare** for New York Theatre Workshop.

**David Bly** is appearing in a national commercial for Denny's Restaurants.

**Sara Gozalo** (See 2010)

**Tara Herweg** (See 2010)

**Valerie Lonigro** is playing Mindy in the independent feature film *Peace After Marriage*.

**Gabe McKinley's** new play, *Floodplains*, had a reading with Naked Angels at The Cherry Pit in New York City. The reading was directed by Playwriting chair **Pippin Parker**.

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## Alumni Join Young Patrons Society

The New School Young Patrons Society is a network of young professionals under 45 who share a desire to help emerging artists. Through its work, the society supports the gifted students at the performing arts divisions of The New School—Mannes College The New School for Music, The New School for Drama, and The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music.

Alumni members include **Mark Cajigao (Drama '08)**, **Sherri Eden Barber (Drama '09)**, **Cody Franchetti (Mannes '99)**, **Steven Ganz (Jazz '93)**, and **Geoffrey McDonald (Mannes '09)**.

For more information, contact Lane Peace at [peacelr@newschool.edu](mailto:peacelr@newschool.edu) or visit [www.newschool.edu/giving/youngpatronssociety](http://www.newschool.edu/giving/youngpatronssociety).

## 2010

**Nina Burns, Chaelon Costello, Sara Gozalo '09, Ema Lakovic, and Benjamin Thys** appeared in Poliglot Theater's *Neither Heaven Nor Earth*, presented at The New School for Drama.

**Elizabeth Carlson** (See 2008)

**Angela Hanks'** play *\*high five\** was performed in this year's FringeNYC. It was produced by **Garlia Jones'** Blackboard Reading Series and featured **LaChrisha Brown** and **Kiel Perry**.

*Why They Came* by **Jessica Hinds** was presented in the Strawberry One-Act Play Festival. The production was directed by **Lucia A. Peters** and featured **John Hurley** and **Bruce A. Lemon**. **Joan Kane** directed a performance of Natalie Meena's *HIROSHI—ME, ME, ME* as part of the festival.

**Victor Lesniewski** (See 2008)

**Donaldo Prescod** and **Sue White** appeared in *Patrick's Story* by Kyle Bradstreet, in a production directed by **John Hurley** at The Payan Theatre at Roy Arias Studios and Theatres in New York City.

**Julia Taylor Ross** made her primetime television debut with a featured role on ABC's *Rookie Blue*.

**Corey Triplett, Seth Rabinowitz '04,** and **Tara Herweg '09** joined Alabama Shakespeare Festival's Intern Company for the 2010–2011 season.

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# Drama Playwrights Win Big in Samuel French Festival

Five students from The New School for Drama were among 40 playwrights named as semifinalists in the 35th Annual Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Short Play Festival this July. The 40 semifinalists were chosen from 880 submissions, a record number for the festival; entries came from participants in playwriting workshops, university theater programs, and professional companies from around the world. The plays were presented in the weeklong festival at the Lion Theatre on New York City's Theatre Row. A full program of plays was presented each night, at which a panel of judges selected plays to move to the finals.

The five New School playwrights are **E.J.C. Calvert '10**, *The Bear (A Tragedy)*; **Paul David Young '09**, *Christians Having Sex in Silence*; Josh Beerman '11, *A History of Kites*; **J. Julian Christopher '05**, *Schwarz! (Hansel und Gretel)*; and **Jessica Hinds '10**, *What Dies Inside Us While We Live*. In addition, **Sherri Eden Barber '09** directed *Dance Lessons* by Josh Koenigsberg; Paul Takacs '11 directed Beerman's play, which featured Drama students Tristan Morris, Tanis Parenteau, and Erin Hart; **Mason Beggs '10** directed Calvert's play; and **Diana Basmajian '08** directed Young's play, which featured **Bryne Kraynak '09**.

Six plays were selected in the final round for publication and licensing by Samuel French, Inc. Koenigsberg's *Dance Lessons*, directed by Barber, and Calvert's *The Bear (A Tragedy)*, moved to the finals and were selected as two of this year's six winners.

New School for Drama playwrights have been well represented in past Samuel French festivals, and many Drama entrants have participated as semifinalists and finalists. Past winners include two-time winner **Bekah Brunstetter '07**, Drama's associate director, **Matthew Kelty '02**, **Kitt Lavoie '01**, **Gabe McKinley '09**, **Janine Nabers '08**, and **Ted Nusbaum '06**. ↻

## Faculty News

**Casey Biggs** (Directing) directed the new musical *O'Sullivan Stew*, with a book written by **Laura Maria Censabella** (Playwriting), for the Greene Arts Foundation. Biggs will direct a new adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* at the Morgan Library in December and is collaborating with **Robert Hoyt** (director of Professional Development) on a re-imagining of several Chekhov plays for Drama's First Look series.

*Everlast*, a new musical by **Nicole Burdette** (Playwriting), is being developed for Broadway.

**Laura Maria Censabella** (Playwriting) completed a residency at the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts. Her play *Carla Cooks the War* was read by m2 productions and directed by **Valentina Fratti** (Directing) at the Bleecker Street Theatre, and her play *Interviewing Miss Davis* was presented in the 2010 Ensemble Studio Theatre Marathon of One Act Plays. Censabella also received a 2010 EST/Sloan Foundation Commission for a new science-based play. This past summer, she served as a mentor in the Early Stages Program of the Berkshire Fringe Festival.

**Jane Ann Crum** (Theater History) was the production dramaturg for Liz Duffy Adams' new play, *OR*, at the Magic Theatre in San Francisco. The play was directed by Magic's artistic director, Loretta Greco.

**Marcia Haufrecht** (Acting) spent the summer teaching acting workshops in Lisbon.

**Josh Hecht** (CoLab 3) directed workshops of new plays by Winter Miller at Voice and Vision, a musical by Miller and Lance Horne at The Public/Joe's Pub, plays by Megan Mostyn-Brown at New York Stage and Film and the LABYrith Summer Intensive, and plays by Harrison Rivers and Jordan Seavey at New York Theatre Workshop. His work with The Gay Agenda played at Ars Nova and Joe's Pub, and his work with Ping Chong and Company was remounted at The Kennedy Center.

In summer 2010, **Dr. Christopher Roselli** (Voice) performed in the Lincoln Center Festival with the New York Philharmonic, with

the International Contemporary Ensemble, and at the Bard Music Festival. This fall, he performed with Musica Sacra at Alice Tully Hall, the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, and Voices of Ascension.

*Dying City*, by **Christopher Shinn** (Playwriting), had its Melbourne premiere this past August. It was also produced recently in Edmonton, Canada; Billings, Montana; and Austin, Texas.

**Tom Vasiliades** (Movement) gave Alexander Technique lessons and physical character coaching to the cast of the Donmar Warehouse production of *Creditors* at BAM, directed by Alan Rickman. He will give lessons to the cast of the Abbey Theatre production of *John Gabriel Borkman*, to be performed at The Public in New York City with a cast including Lindsay Duncan, Alan Rickman, and Fiona Shaw. Vasiliades had a role in an independent feature with the working title *Red Square*, and will also perform in productions of Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* and Donald Margulies' *Sight Unseen*.

**Gary Vena** (Theater History) was invited to London to teach a literature course entitled From the Ancients to the Moderns. The course was sponsored by Manhattan College in Riverdale, New York.

**Shelley Wyant** (Movement) taught mask work as a Senior Specialist Fulbright Scholar at the National Institute for Theater and Film in Bucharest. She also directed an all-female version of *Glengarry Glen Ross* at the Rosendale Theater in Rosendale, New York.

## What's New

### NEW SCHOOL ALUMNI DIRECTORY: READY IN 2012

The next alumni directory will be ready in 2012. Harris Connect will start contacting alumni next year. If you have questions, email [alumni@newschool.edu](mailto:alumni@newschool.edu) or call 212.229.5662, x3784.

# First Cohort of Alumni Association Board Members Appointed

The New School Alumni Association is pleased to announce its first cohort of board members. Drawing from a strong pool of candidates, the university has appointed 11 alumni representing all aspects of the university. The new members began serving their two-year terms on July 1, 2010. With advisement from this new group, a full 40-member board will be in place by July 2012.

One of the group's first tasks is to help identify and recruit future board members. They will also develop board objectives and goals and help shape an alumni program that provides alumni with even more opportunities to network, socialize, and connect with and support the university.

The first group of board members come from a wide range of professional backgrounds and graduation years. Their expertise in various fields and their common desire to build a strong alumni presence within the New School community will be invaluable.

## The New School Alumni Association Board of Directors

**Martha Alexander '79** (Parsons, BFA, Communication Design)

**Mark Cajigao '08** (The New School for Drama, MFA, Acting)

**Colin Dean '06** (New School Jazz, BFA, Jazz Performance)

**Angela Gadeliya '05** (Mannes, PDPL, Performance)

**Chasson Gracie '03** (Milano, MS, Urban Policy)

**Michelle Hartman '06** (The New School for Social Research, PhD, Political Science)

**Jahmila Joseph '06** (Eugene Lang College, BA, Liberal Arts)

**Dee MacDonald-Miller '75** (Parsons, BFA, Environmental Design)

**Michael McKinnon '05** (Parsons, Cert., Interior Design)

**James Stenerson '80** (The New School, MA, Media Studies)

**Morris Yankell '86** (Milano, MA, Human Resources)

For updated information, visit [www.newschool.edu/alumni/about](http://www.newschool.edu/alumni/about).



Faculty member Paul Ryan Rudd Photo: Don Hamerman

## In Memoriam Paul Ryan Rudd

The New School for Drama community mourns the passing of Drama faculty member Paul Ryan Rudd. Paul, 70, passed away on August 12 at his home in Greenwich, Connecticut of pancreatic cancer. He faced that battle with the clear-eyed intelligence, wry sense of humor, and hunger for experience that he brought to every aspect of his life. Paul taught for as long as his health would allow and continued to check in with his students when he could no longer teach on a regular basis. Drama director Robert LuPone knew Paul before the two came to The New School and was pleased to be a member of the faculty with Paul his first year. When he became director of the program, he asked Paul to assume the role of associate director. Paul's creative ideas and forthright feedback played a large role in shaping the program as it exists today. He inspired many students in his years at The New School for Drama. As an artist and a mentor, Paul will be sorely missed by the theater industry and The New School.

### THE PAUL RYAN RUDD SCHOLARSHIP FUND

To honor Paul's lifetime commitment to theater and education, The New School for Drama and Paul's family have established The Paul Ryan Rudd Scholarship Fund. The fund will provide financial support for deserving students enrolled at The New School for Drama. If you are interested in giving to the fund or would like more information, contact Gift Accounting at 212.229.5662 x3991 or at [giftaccounting@newschool.edu](mailto:giftaccounting@newschool.edu).

## In Memoriam Herbert Robinson

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of Herbert Robinson. Mr. Robinson died on June 14, 2010, at the age of 94. A bibliophile and philanthropist, he was a generous supporter of education and the humanities, as evidenced by the Herbert Robinson Drama Book & Script Collection, which was named after him. His generous contributions of books and plays is the reason that the library is as extensive as it is, with many of the volumes identified with his bookplate. Robert Hoyt, director of Professional Development at Drama, described him as a modern-day de Medici. Staunch supporters like Mr. Robinson are why Drama has opportunities to grow and thrive, and for that support we are truly grateful. He will be sincerely missed.



Herbert Robinson Photo: Michael DiVito

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## Stay Connected



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Extend your professional network with your classmates and other alumni by joining the official alumni group on LinkedIn at [www.linkedin.com/in/newschoolalumni](http://www.linkedin.com/in/newschoolalumni).

## New Visions 2010

**December 8–11, 2010**

### **New Visions**

The New School for Drama Directing Festival

The festival features three plays in repertory, highlighting the work of Drama's graduating directors and actors.

#### ***Don Juan Comes Back from the War***

by Ödön von Horváth, translated by Christopher Hampton, directed by Tim Butterfield

#### ***Medea***

by Euripides, translated by Michael Collier and Georgia Macheimer, directed by Kathryn McHugh

#### ***The Country***

by Martin Crimp, directed by Paul Takacs

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

Free general admission. Reservations recommended; for reservations, call Ticket Central at 212.279.4200 or visit [www.ticketcentral.com](http://www.ticketcentral.com).

For more information and a complete schedule of performances, visit [www.newschool.edu/drama](http://www.newschool.edu/drama).