

The 2002-2003 Theatre Awards

Students, faculty and patrons gathered this year at Bilotti's Italian Café in May for our annual Theatre awards banquet. Four major acting awards, four major Technical Awards and five Special Awards were presented along with Special Thanks and other fun and humorous awards.

David Mims received the Best Actor Award for his creative and imaginative portrayal of Estragon in *Waiting for Godot*.

Jenifer Borntrager received the Best Actress Award for her performance of Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*.

The Best Supporting Actor Award went to Paul Thomas for his portrayal of the Master of Ceremonies in *Cabaret*.

Best Supporting Actress went to Margarette Joyner for Fraulein Schneider in *Cabaret*.

Bonnie Woolley received the Best design Award for her set design for *Waiting for Godot*.

April Ortiz received the Best Stage Manager Award for *Cabaret*. April's leadership and organizational skills helped to make this very complicated show run smoothly.

The Best Crew Person Award was awarded to Natasha Tucker. Natasha has spent many hours in our box office selling tickets.

Jamie Englehart's and Bonnie Woolley's outstanding devotion, skills and work in the costume and scene shops respectively was acknowledged by the Best Costume Shop and Best Scene Shop Awards. Both spent many hours working in their shops on all the productions this past year.

With a 4.0 overall GPA, Graduating Senior Keone Fuqua was the recipient of the much coveted Best Academic Award.

The Danny Conway Award is given each year in memory of former student Danny Conway.

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Recipients of 2003-2004 Scholarships and Assistantships Announced

Twelve performance students have received Laidlaw Acting Scholarships ranging from \$500-\$1,000 annually. This year's recipients are Jessica Allison, Jenifer Borntrager, Leah deButts, Melissa Campbell, Camryn Duff, Jamie Englehart, Jameel Lewis, David Mims, Jean Parker, Jared Peregoy, Paul Thomas and Crystal Williams. Receiving the Laidlaw Theatre Management Scholarship is Jamie Barbour. These scholarships are made possible by an endowment donated by Mrs. Sally Green in memory of her father Mr. John W. Laidlaw.

Fall Technical Assistantships went to Kenneth Kudulis, Jameel Lewis, David Mims, April Ortiz, and Bonnie

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Jenifer Borntrager: *Icky*, Jamie Barbour: *Eager Beaver*, Sleazy: Robert Tucker, and John Wright: *Slick in Eager Beaver Builds a Dam*

Welcome Dr. Lee Van Dyke

Starting August 1, Dr. Van Dyke will join the Department of Dramatic Arts from Radford University, where he has served as chair of the Theatre Department since 2000. A native of Michigan, he received his Masters in Theatre from Western Michigan University and his Ph.D in Theatre from Wayne State University.

A distinguished scholar, actor and director with more than 35 years experience, Dr. Van Dyke has held both academic and administrative positions at Radford University, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, San Francisco State University, Northwestern University, Wayne State University and Albion College.

He has held university administrative positions for more than 18 years, serving as department chair at three universities. He has been

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Students Working for Top Theatre Companies in the Country

Ten students from the Department of Dramatic Arts are performing theatre internships regionally and nationally this summer. Senior Margarette Joyner has returned to The Lost Colony in Manteo, NC, where she is the cutter draper in the costume shop working with this year's Tony award-winning costume designer, William Ivey Long. This year the company is reoutfitting Queen Elizabeth of England as well as her court dancers, a project costing around \$30,000.

Another senior, Bonnie Woolley, has returned to Santa Fe Opera in Santa Fe, NM, as a member of the properties stage crew. This year the company is producing five operas, includ-

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End of an Era

This summer, Theatre USA will say good bye to one of the most familiar faces of the Drama Department. After 32 years of contributing to the fine arts education of thousands of students, Dr. R. Eugene Jackson will be launching into the many new adventures that come with retirement.

Throughout his career, Jackson has been a dedicated theatre educator, director and a disciplined playwright. He received his B.S. degree from Memphis State. From there got his M.A. from Kent State. After receiving his Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale in 1971, a very bright-eyed young man walked onto the campus of the University of South Alabama to begin his career as a college professor. Jackson served as an Assistant Professor until 1975, at which point he was promoted to Associate Professor. In 1981, his status changed to Professor. In the meantime, he became Chair of the Department of Drama in 1978, and has maintained that position until now. During his service to this university, he has seen many changes in the Drama Department. During his first year, Theatre USA began performing for the first time at the Saenger Theatre. For many years, the department was housed in the very small Bethel Theatre on campus. Since 1998, the Department of Drama has continued to flourish in the very spacious Laidlaw Performing Arts Center. Theatre USA has certainly come a long way since that young man stepped on this campus, and due to his utmost dedication to the students who have passed through this program, it will continue to thrive.

Outside of the confines of his university responsibilities, he has served as a consultant for many local schools, churches and community theatres. He has been a judge for many local and state talent and playwriting competitions. He was a panelist for many organizations locally, as well as the Southeastern Theatre Conference and the American Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) Convention. Additionally, he has served as Chairman for the Children's Division of the Southeastern Theatre Conference, the American Theatre Association Region IV and the Alabama Theatre League.

What is truly amazing about Jackson is, with all of the duties he faithfully fulfilled for the University of South Alabama, his local community, his professional community (both locally and nationally) and to his family, he never let his true passion fall by the wayside.

And that passion is writing. Anyone who knows him can attest to the fact that he is always "working on something." He published his first play, *Ferdinand and the Dirty Knight*, in 1968. Since then, he has written and published well over 100 plays. The majority are for children and have been produced by Theatre USA. He has won numerous awards for his work, most recently the Sara Spencer Child Drama Award at the 2002 Southeastern Theatre Convention and was inducted into the Alabama State Theatre Hall of Fame last Fall. This summer, his latest play, *Eager Beaver Builds a Dam*, which was produced last season by Theatre USA, was also added to his very long list of publications.

So what will Dr. Jackson do now? If you ask him, he will just smile mischievously, with that same bright spark in his eyes that he had 32 years ago, and say "I have plenty to do!" His days will most likely be filled lending a hand to local and regional organizations as he has always done. However, there will still be plenty of time to embark on new adventures and most importantly to write about them.

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Woolley in the Scene Shop, and Jessica Allison, Camryn Duff, Jamie Englehart, Maura Odom and Jean Parker in the Costume Shop. Students on Assistantship receive \$1,000 per semester toward tuition. The students assist in scenery and costume construction in addition to crewing or performing in department productions.

In today's world of escalating expenses in higher education, Scholarships make it possible for many talented students to achieve their goals. If you are interested in making a donation to our scholarship



During the past 25 years, over 200,000 young students like these from Allentown Elementary School, seen here posing with cast members from *Eager Beaver Builds A Dam*, have attended Theatre USA's Children's Productions.



David Mims: Estragon and Paul Thomas: Vladimir in *Waiting for Godot*

program or if you know a talented incoming student who may need financial aid, please contact our office at 460-6305.

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This award goes to an upper level student who exhibits the same kind of acting talent and dedication to theatre that Danny had before his untimely death in a car accident in 1984. This year David Mims was the recipient of the award. Along with a plaque, David received a check for \$600.00 to assist him in his future endeavors.

The Gerrells-Jackson Award is a cash award of \$800.00

given to the student who has at least 2 semesters of studies at USA, is in the top 10 drama students by GPA, and has an outstanding list of achievements with the department. Receiving the Award this year was Jean Parker. A Junior, Jean has worked on and off stage and was active in the Jesters and Alpha Psi student organizations.

Several other highly contested awards were presented at the banquet: the Bent Nail, the Silver Needle, the Foot in the Mouth and the Best Costume Shop Quote, but the winners refused to have their names published.

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ing Offenbach's *La Belle Helene*, Mozart's Profound comedy *Cosi Fan Tutte*, Leos Janacek's *Katya Kabanova*, Richard Strauss' *Intermezza* and ending with the World Premiere of *Madame Mao* by Bright Sheng.

Senior Jamie Englehart has also returned as the Wardrobe mistress for the Unicorn Theatre at the Berkshire Theatre Festival in Stockbridge, MA. This summer the equity theatre, which is one of the oldest in the United States, is producing a diverse season, starting with *American Primitive* (John and Abigail) The Words of John and Abigail Adams, by William Gibson; *Nijinskys Last Dance* By Norman Allen with Jeremy Davidson as Nijinsky; The Who's *Tommy*, Music & Lyrics by Pete Townshend; and Stephen Sondheim's *Assassins*.

Utah Musical Theatre in Ogden, Utah, finds seniors Kenny Kudulis and Robert Tucker working as a Scenic Painter and Stage Manager respectively. Their season includes *Annie Get Your Gun*, *The Fantasticks*, and *Honk!* the children's Musical about the ugly duckling. Celebrating 20 years of fine theatre, the



Andrea Crumb, Ashley Verneuille, Camryn Duff, Melissa Campbell, Jamie Barbour, Jamie Englehart: *Kit Kat Girls* With Paul Thomas: *Master of Ceremonies in Cabaret*

company was opened in 1980 by a determined group of theatre artists and has been graced with stage performances by Paul Nakauchi, David L. Lander, Erin Moran, Aileen Quinn and Adrian Zmed.

April Ortiz finds herself in Cooperstown, NY, working on the production crew at Glimmerglass Opera. This company came into being through the efforts of local Cooperstown residents – musicians, artists, educators, and amateur lovers of the art form — who hoped to bring opera to their community. The company presented its first

season in the summer of 1975. In the years since, Glimmerglass has grown to international stature and now offers 43 performances of four operas, all in new productions, each season. This season includes Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Offenbach's *Bluebeard* and Handel's *Orlando*, all three co-produced with New York City Opera. The season finale is Kurka's *The Good Soldier Schweik*.

Junior Camryn Duff is working as a stitcher at Lee's McRae Summer Theatre in the mountains of Banner Elk, NC. She is building costumes for a main season including Cy Coleman's *Barnum*, Tommy Oaks' *Star Queen* and *South Pacific* by Rodgers & Hammerstein. LMST also has a 2nd season which this year is made up of Southern Voices II: *Appalachian Sounds*, *Aesop's Fables*, a play for children, and *Foxfire* by Susan Cooper and Hume Cronyn.

Closer to home is senior Jameel Lewis who is in Huntsville, AL, working as an Actor/Director with Face 2 Face, an Improv company. Jameel, who was responsible for organizing a very successful Improv group at USA is working not only as an actor/director, but is also tackling some management responsibilities. Jenifer Borntreger can be found at The

Alabama Shakespeare Festival as a public relations intern working on PR for this season's round of plays, including *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard, *Noises Off* by Michael Frayn, *Iago*, *Idols of the King*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *Othello*. Daniel Garvin, is working locally with Showbiz Theatrical where he was a member of the crew for the America's Junior Miss Finals.

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active on the state, regional, and national levels with the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival, the American Theatre in Higher Education, the Southeastern Theatre Conference, and many state organizations.

Dr. Van Dyke's professional credits include acting and directing for theatre, television, and commercials. He has received many awards for his directing and acting including a Chicago Emmy Nomination for the NBC Pilot Episode, *Chicago Backstage*. He is a member of the American Federation of Television & Radio Artists and the Society of American Fight Directors.

Joining Dr. Van Dyke in Mobile is his wife, Melissa, daughter, their dog, Jack, and two cats, Biscuit & Billy.



Kenneth Kudulis: *Capt. Absolute*, Ashley Verneuille: *Lydia Languish* and Amanda Murdick: *Mrs. Malaprop* in *The Rivals*



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