**DRAMA AND DANCE ALUMNI NEWS**

Vol 4 No. 2 Winter, 2000

**From the Editor:** Here it is: our first entry for the year 2000. Many thanks for your continued support, and please, keep the news flowing. If you haven't seen your name here in a few issues, give me an update. Tell your friends. While we gathered a great deal of new addresses with the recent Directory, I'm sure we're missing many alumni from Drama and Dance, Torn Ticket, and other performance endeavors at Tufts. Tell them about us. We rely on alumni gatherings in NY and LA for news, but the meat of the newsletter always comes from those of you who fire off a letter or e-mail to tell us what is going on. Keep doing it! I'm always available at croman034@aol.com

**From the Chair:** Hope you are off to a great start in Y2K! Here, we have much to celebrate: (1) 3P's threw a gala party for its 90th anniversary. (2) Hank Azaria received the student body's Light on the Hill Award, and he and Helen Hunt fielded questions about acting careers from drama students for two hours. (3) Our season features *Love for Love* (Anthony Cornish's tribute to Restoration comedy), *The Skin of Our Teeth* (my honoring of the millennium), and *Hayavadana* (a contemporary Indian play directed by our fine new faculty member, Sudipto Chatterjee)—plus the Dance Program's "Mix: A Millennial Project," *3Ps' Rumors and Angels in America,* and Torn Ticket's *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum.* Out there in the "real" world, you continue to dazzle us with the range and richness of your accomplishments reported in our newsletters. As we head into the 21st century and the 3rd millennium, I look forward to more newsletters, alumni gatherings, and contact with you. And, a big thanks to those of you who contributed in response to my request in the last newsletter, but I urge the rest of you to remember that there is still plenty of time AND need for donations!--Downing Cless

Ari David Ackerman ('97) is an Account Manager for a Broadway marketing and promotions company. Currently he is responsible for Amadeus, Fosse, and Jekyll & Hyde. He says it is a nice change (but not too nice) to be on the business end of things for a while.

Henry Akina ('77) is the General and Artistic Director of the Hawaii Opera Theatre. He returned to Hawaii in 1996 after 15 years as the Artistic Director and co-founder of the Berlin Chamber Opera. He works closely with fellow alum Mary Lewis Ranney ('75).

Audrey Appleby ('75) is to appear on Valentine's Day at Steinway Hall, 109 West 57th St. NY, NY 10019 in an evening of her "Original poetry turned into songs, with a Parisian Jazz musician and magic," titled *La Vie En Red.*

Deirdre Pulgram Arthen ('78) Since 1983, Deirdre has been the director of EarthSpirit, a non-profit organization offering programs centered around ancient and timeless connections between the earth and the sacred. Her theater background comes into play as she creates rituals for individuals or groups of up to 10,000 people. Her children, Donovan, 12 and Isobel, 8, attend an arts-centered charter school in Massachusetts.

Hank Azaria ('87) received critical and popular praise for his leading roles as Marc Blitzstein in the Tim Robbins film "Cradle Will Rock" and as Mitch Albom in the television movie "Tuesdays with Morrie." In July, he married Helen Hunt, and he earlier received an Emmy for "The Simpsons," on which he has played multiple parts for many years. He returned to Tufts to receive a Light on the Hill award and addressed members of 3P's and the University at large in the Balch Arena Theatre.

Bethany Berg ('98) is a casting associate at Bernard Telsey Casting in New York, and a is graduate student in the MFA program at NYU.

Donald Byrd ('76) will bring his dance company to Tufts in April for a lecture-demonstration and workshop, under the joint sponsorship of the Dance Program and the African American Center.

John Caldwell ('71) is actor Jesse Caldwell, currently playing Davies in Harold Pinter's *The Caretaker* at the Exit Theatre, 156 Eddy St. San Francisco, CA 94102

Charles Cermele ('80) won glowing reviews in the *New York Times* for his cabaret performance at Eighty-eight's in New York City. He also issued a new CD and brought his cabaret to Cambridge.

Susan Clark ('89) won a NEH research grant for her book on productions of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*
Rob Dean ('76) played Petruchio in *The Taming of the Shrew* for the Noises Off Theatre Company in Los Angeles. He was also in an episode of "Frasier" as a Russian art expert.

J.C. Devore ('97), Amy Rhodes ('97), and Eric Pliner ('97) took their Scooby Doo show *Jinkies* to the New York Fringe Festival, where it won Best Ensemble Cast.

Patrick Diamond ('91) has assistant directed or stage managed 14 opera productions in the last two years at the Baltimore Opera Company, the Dallas Opera, the Aspen Music Festival, and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He has his home in New York at 150 W. 55th Street #6D, NYC, NY 10019.

Isabel Edgell ('81) "recently entered the depths of the inferno by becoming a local politician. I have successfully campaigned for a contentious spot on our local Public Schools Board of Education by running on a platform of reducing class size and supporting arts in education. Otherwise, still teaching ballet and raising three children with my husband of fourteen years. Our newest addition... replacing all of us in his heart... a 26-foot sailboat named 'Luverboat.'"

Dottie Marshall Englis ('74) designed *The Taming of the Shrew* in March for the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, *Carousel* for the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts in July, and returned to St. Louis for a production of *The Music Man*.

Molly Erdman ('96) co-wrote and acted in the sketch-comedy show *The Joneses: Too Close to Home*, last summer. She is currently performing at Chicago's ImprovOlympic with the group Valhalla. She also is a member of the all female Sirens, who will host a 24 hour comedy-a-thon in February to support Gilda's Club, a free support community for people with cancer and their families and friends.

Susan Fiore ('83) continues as an Assistant Director in film and television. "I was on location for four long months last year decapitating, burning and spearing people in 'Carrie II'." She also worked on the recent HBO movie "Witness Protection," starring Tom Sizemore and Mary Elizabeth Mastroantonio, and she got married on October 10 to Tony Mark.

Jason Gingold ('96) is a third year student at the University of Washington. He understudied the role of Marion in *Game of Love and Chance*, translated and adapted by Stephen Wadsworth, and found himself taking over the part. He played for the entire run receiving good reviews and his Equity membership.

Betsy Gregory ('73) lives in London, having never returned from her senior year abroad. Following a 12-year career as a dancer, she was Associate Director of The Place Theatre, a leading London dance venue, for eight years and, in 1997, joined the Dance Umbrella Festival as Programme Manager. She lives in Clapham with her partner, stage designer Craig Givens, and their two cats.

Adam Grosswirth ('97) worked as the PSM on off-Broadway's *Taxicab Chronicles*, and as a production assistant on Elton John and Tim Rice's *Aida*.

Alex Hawkins (M.A. '71, Ph.D. '78) teaches theatre history at the Department of Drama at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. He has been married to Joan Heys Hawkins for 26 years. They met at Tufts when she was working as a designer for the Magic Circle. Contact Alex at jhawkins@ualberta.ca.

Dan Hedaya ('62) has had many substantial roles in films since his days on "Cheers" as Nick Tortelli (Carla's ex), which led to a spinoff series "The Tortellis." Recently, he starred as Richard Nixon in "Dick" and played major characters in "Civil Action" and "Alien: The Resurrection."

Susan Heitz (Engelmann) ('80) is now Susan Palmer, married September 3, 1999. Her new address is 843 NE 80th Ave., Portland, OR 97213.

Stephen Jencks ('80) is married to Molly Fulghum and has three daughters aged 12, 10 and 9. He runs a brokerage company in Seattle and a cordage company in Romania. Contact him at sjencks@jencks.com

Kristen Lee Kelly ('89) played the Red-Haired Secretary in the Off-Broadway production of a new comedy, *After the Rain* by Sergi Belbel. Of late, as a member of the Via Theater Company, she's appeared in staged readings of new plays and was under-studying the role of Yitzahl in *Hedwig And the Angry Inch*, Off-Broadway.

Aaron Kleven ('99) played Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* for the Boston Theatre Works and is now rehearsing *Anne of Green Gables* for the Wheelock Family Theatre in Boston.

Ethan Krasnoo ('96) just back from *Wizard of Oz* at Gateway Playhouse, Bellport, LI, is off to play The Bellhop in *Lend Me A Tenor* in Florida.

Marianne Kubik ('89, M.A.'91) joined the faculty at the University of Kansas as an assistant professor after receiving her M.F.A. in Theater Education at Boston University's School for the Arts. You can reach her at markubik@ukans.edu.

Maren Montalbano ('97) has toured the midwest in a swing band show, performed at Busch Gardens and the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire, sang with the Dickens Carolers in Delaware and the Coventry Carolers in New York since her graduation from Tufts and the New England Conservatory. She has also performed in New York in productions of *Measure for Measure* and *La Pucelle*. She is currently writing a pirate show which she hopes to workshop this summer and eventually perform on cruise ships in the near future.

Victor Medina ('97) has entered law school at Northeastern University.

Robert Miller ('65) has worked as an actor, director and teacher, including six years with fellow Tufts alum John Peakes at the Bearsehead Theater in Michigan and for eleven years at the Asolo Theater in Florida. Currently, he runs the Mohonk Mountain Stage Company doing childrens' theater on tour, including several residencies at the Kennedy Center.

Heather Nathans (Ph.D.'99) published the fourth chapter of her doctoral dissertation on post-Revolutionary American theatre in the *Massachusetts Historical Review*.

Julie Nathanson ('95) played a lesbian worker in a Federal agency in Washington, DC on a double episode of "Law & Order" that concluded on "Homicide" last year.

Jesse Pennington ('96) was an ensemble member of *The Taming of the Shrew* in Shakespeare in the Park, and was in the Guthrie Theatre's production of *A Christmas Carol*.

Oliver Platt ('84) had a big year, becoming a father and being featured in several recent films, including "Lake Placid," "Bicentennial Man," and "Three Kings."

Andrew Polk ('84) was recently featured Off-Broadway in *Vick's Boy*, a new comedy "about love and blackmail in a prestigious law firm--what do you do when your boss wants to date you...before she downsizes you?" It was originally written for The Cape Cod Theatre Project for which Andrew is founder and artistic director.

Julie Portman (former faculty) remains in the Ki Theatre in Washington, VA. She received a fellowship to attend the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts and is working on a new play: *Three Roses*.

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Name:

Address:


News:


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Sendhil Ramamurthy ('96) will begin filming a remake of "Murder on the Orient Express" in Bulgaria at the end of February. He will be playing the role of Nikki opposite Luke Perry and Bryan Brown.

Paula Ramsdell ('81) left her job at the Four Seasons Hotel in Boston after 5 1/2 years to take another position that
ords her more time to work in the theater. She is on the Steering Committee of The Theater Cooperative, in residence at the Elizabeth Peabody House in Somerville. They are always looking for people to join in their efforts, so contact Paula at prams97@aol.com.

Braden Rhett's ('96) produced *Bullring*, an original work by Peter Blomquist, in Manhattan. Her "real job" is as an account executive at Digitas, a marketing agency. While no longer sharing an apartment with Jordana Sandler ('95), they are still hosting their world famous parties. She now shares an apartment with Mark Cafazzo ('96). E-mail her at brhetts@hotmail.com.

Nick Salamone ('77) is having a trilogy of plays produced in Los Angeles. The plays trace the same characters over the course of fifteen years. All characters are fictitious Tufts characters( ), and the first play takes place in a flat off Davis Square on Lovell Street.

Jordana Sandler ('95) is working as a manager at The Screening Room, a bar/restaurant/movie theater in Manhattan. She can be reached at danabana@aol.com.

Jason Schuchman ('99) has not travelled far from his brown and blue alma-mater. He is currently the administrative intern at Tufts' Experimental College. He continues to audition in the Boston area.

Greg Skura ('93) was recently part of an all-star reading of *You Can't Take it With You* to benefit the Friends of New York Theatre. He played "Harrison" in a cast featuring Sandy Duncan, Karen Ziemba and Randy Graff.

Lolly Susi ('72) has written her first play, *Gone to L.A.*, which is being produced at the Hampstead Theater in London. It is a dark comedy about breast cancer, based on her experience with the disease and treatment. Tufts grads Mickey Culver, Kris Van Dine, and Jeff Miliken will be there for the opening in February.

Stephanie Weiss ('97) sang Pamina in *The Magic Flute* at the Bay View Music Festival and won the concerto/aria competition singing with the orchestra at a special concert.

Lisa Weaver ('87) was married in St. Paul, MN in April. Peter Greenberg ('86) and Jenny Langsam ('86) were in attendance.

Philip White ('98) is playing in *The Abdication* by Ruth Wolf in Los Angeles.