DEAR FRIENDS OF THE TUFTS PHD IN THEATRE AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES:

In September of 2018, Tufts hosted the 4th gathering of the Consortium of PhD Programs in Theatre and Performance Studies. The convening brought together thirty directors of PhD programs from across the United States and Canada in order to discuss the state of the academic job market within and beyond the academy as well as best practices for engaging in professionalization with graduate students. My colleagues and I were joined by career consultants from across the United States who spoke about their expertise helping PhD students navigate careers within and beyond the academy. During our two days together, we were able to join in a robust and dialogue about our own best practices in order to create a shared resource guide and other materials that may prove valuable to the field and our students.

I learned a lot from the time with my fellow PhD program heads, but one of the things I’m most proud of is the way that Tufts stands as a leader in preparing our graduate students to apply the skills that they learn in the PhD program to happy and successful careers in a variety of different sectors. Within our curriculum we’re increasingly embedding research projects that incorporate grant writing, podcasting, performance, and cura-

Yet our graduate program has not ceased to produce scholars who find careers in academia either. Last year two of our recent doctoral students found academic positions in the theatre departments at Vanderbilt University and the University of Pittsburgh, joining other recent graduates who have landed in positions at the University of Buffalo, Emerson College, Ramapo College of New Jersey, and the University of Florida. Tufts’ PhDs in Theatre and Performance Studies understand that the skills they have accumulated here are myriad and will serve them well in whatever careers that they take beyond the PhD program. This year my colleagues on the graduate faculty and I are working to ensure that our students seize their time in Medford and gain demonstrable evidence of their skills as scholars, teachers, creative artists and members of a community whose reach extends well beyond the academy.

In this newsletter, you’ll not only read updates about our current faculty, alumni, and students, but we’re publishing interviews with several individuals who directed major productions this year with our undergraduate organizations and in greater Boston. Additionally, you can read the projects of this year’s recently completed PhDs. Finally, we present a report and images from the retirement ceremony honoring our esteemed colleague Laurence Senelick.

Noe Montez
Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies

Attendees of the 4th gathering of the Consortium of PhD Programs in Theatre & Performance Studies hosted at Tufts.
Faculty Updates

Barbara Wallace Grossman

Interim Chair of the Department for the fall semester, Professor Barbara Wallace Grossman currently teaches a graduate seminar, Confronting Genocide on Stage and Screen, and is working on her upcoming winter production at Tufts: Kate Hamill’s spirited adaptation of Jane Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*. She directed a staged reading of Sholem Asch’s *God of Vengeance* at Boston’s Lyric Stage in April for the Jewish Arts Collaborative and hopes it will inaugurate a series of staged readings of noteworthy Yiddish plays, now largely forgotten, that deserve attention today. She recently completed a chapter on legendary director-producer Harold Prince for a book on North American theater directors, as well as her 12-year term of service as Vice Chair of the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Just appointed to the board of MassCreative, the state’s most effective arts advocacy organization, she continues to serve as a board member of the Anti-Defamation League’s New England Region, American Repertory Theater, and JAC’s TheaterWorks.

Kareem Khubchandani

Kareem Khuchandani taught a new graduate seminar in *Performance Ethnography* and curated a series of dance workshops called *Black, Brown, Queer Dance*. In Boston, he continues to collaborate with the *Dancing Queerly* festival at The Dance Complex, as well as co-curate the *Feminisms Unbound* symposium as part of the city-wide consortium in Women’s and Gender Studies. For the Dance Studies Association, Kareem served on the 2019 Conference Planning committee and was also a faculty member for the Mellon Dance Studies Summer Institute. Kareem has presented his research on queer nightlife and South Asian popular culture at several national conferences, as well as at Princeton and Boston Universities. As part of his research and pedagogy, he maintains an active performance practice, dancing at festivals in Delhi, Chicago, and the Bronx, and touring his solo show *Lessons in Drag* to Connecticut, California, West Virginia, Florida, and Wisconsin.

Lilian Mengesha

Lily Mengesha (Fletcher Foundation Assistant Professor of Dramatic Literature) is excited to embark on her second year at Tufts as a faculty fellow at the Center for Humanities for the 2019–20 academic year. Over the summer, she presented research on body artists Rebecca Belmore and Regina José Galindo in relation to histories of global indigenous tattooing at the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association conference in Aotearoa/New Zealand. While there, she conducted archival work on the history of ta moko, or Maori face tattoos, as forms of performative writing. Currently, Lily is teaching two new courses, “In the Flesh: Race, Performance, Sex and Skin” and a graduate seminar entitled “Colonial Unknowing,” as well as directing playwright Bryna Turner’s *Bull in a China Shop*. Finally, in October, Lily’s essay “Deceleration as Decolonial Intervention in Lara Kramer’s NGS: Native Girl Syndrome” will be published in the Association for the Study of the Arts of the Present (ASAP) Journal.
Noe Montez completed work on a collection of translated plays by Argentine playwright Santiago Loza. The collection, Nothing to Do with Love and Other Plays will be published by the University of Chicago Press in late 2020. Noe also saw the publication of his essay “The Heavy Lifting: Resisting the Obama Presidency’s Neoliberalist Conceptions of the American Dream” in Kristoffer Diaz’s The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity in Theatre History Studies. He is completing a monograph on race and sports. As acts of service Noe organized the 4th meeting of the Consortium of PhD Programs in Theatre and Performance Studies, was elected Vice President for Professional Development for ATHE, appointed chair of the New Paradigms in Graduate Education for ASTR and continues to serve as editor of Theatre Topics where he recently produced a special issue on Graduate Education. He remains Director of Graduate Studies for the PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies.

Heather Nathans had the wonderful opportunity to participate in a NEH Summer Institute on Southern Jewish History in May-June, 2019. This fall’s sabbatical took her to Paris, Ghent, and Angers. In Ghent she presented as part of an international conference on “Staging Slavery,” and she had the pleasure of giving talks on Jewish theatre at the American Library in Paris and the American Library in Angers. Last fall (2018) she was honored to receive the Barnard Hewitt Award from the American Society for Theatre Research for her book Hideous Characters and Beautiful Pagans.

Tasha Oren’s co-edited collection (with Andrea Press), The Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Feminism, was published this summer. The collection brings together a broad set of issues and points of view that consider what feminism is today and what current forces shape its future development. It also includes an extended conversation among major feminist thinkers about the future of feminist scholarship and activism in the age of Trump and beyond. Oren, who serves on the editorial board of the feminist journal Signs, was also appointed as a book review editor earlier this year.
Laurence Senelick, Fletcher Professor Emeritus of Drama and Oratory, retired after 45 years in the department and 30 years as Director of Graduate Studies. He was awarded the Historic New England 2018 Prize for Collecting Works on Paper and ATHE’s 2019 Oscar Brockett Prize for Outstanding Teacher of Theatre in Higher Education. In addition to the faculty address at the Ph.D. Hooding Ceremony, he delivered the keynote address “The Ever-widening Contexts of Konstantin Stanislavsky,” Stanislavsky Symposium, Malta (Apr. 2019), “The Offenbach Century,” J. W. Goethe University, Frankfurt-am-Main, and “La Périchole rouge,” Offenbach-Colloque, Opéra Comique, Paris (both June 2019). His latest articles include “Signs of the Times: Outdoor Theatrical Advertisement in the Nineteenth Century,” Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film (Nov. 2018); “Émigré Cabaret and the Re-Invention of Russia,” New Theatre Quarterly (Feb. 2019), and “Cyrano’s Sodomitical Circle,” Gay & Lesbian Review (July-Aug 2019). He published translations of two plays of Ferdinand Bruckner (Northwestern University Press), Labiche’s Me, Me, Me, Dumas’s Antony and Yevgeny Shvarts’s The Shadow (all Broadway Play Publishing). In the realm of performance, he composed the narration for the Purcell Society’s staging of the Dryden/Davenant Tempest, and played George Washington Lazarus in a reading of Benefit Performance, or The Other Jew by Cary Mazer (Tufts Hillel, Mar. 2019). He also wrote the foreword to Performing the Progressive Era, ed. Max Shulman and J. Chris Westgate (U. of Iowa Press). His book Jacques Offenbach and the Making of Modern Culture was named an Outstanding Academic Title for 2018 by CHOICE.
On May 3, 2019, the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies held a day-long celebration of Professor Laurence Senelick prior to his retirement from the University at the semester’s end. Prof. Senelick, whose tenure as an educator at Tufts spans more than 40 years, is a renowned scholar, performer, director, and translator. In addition, he served as the Director of Graduate Studies for the graduate program in Drama for 30 years.

The day’s first festivities brought together friends and a selection of Prof. Senelick’s former dissertation mentees on a panel dedicated to his presence within the department, university, and field writ large. A scholar whose interests cover a variety of topics and methodologies, the presentations during the panel focused on Prof. Senelick’s contributions in the arenas of Russian theatre, popular entertainment, sexuality and gender, and theatre iconography. Graduates of the program including Dassia Posner, Matt McMahan, Sean Edgecomb, Noreen Barnes, and Kyna Hamill, as well as Laurence’s current mentee Hesam Sharifan and colleague Barbara Wallace-Grossman, reflected on Laurence’s pioneering efforts as author, pedagogue, and translator. Throughout the panel, the speakers cited Laurence’s award-winning text “The Changing Room: Sex, Drag, and Gender” and the many courses he conducted - such as (though by no means exclusive to) the history of directing, gay and lesbian theatre and film, and Soviet theatre and drama - as indelibly influential on their own paths as scholars, teachers, and editors. After the formal remarks concluded, attendees and panelists alike shared favorite anecdotes and memories of time spent in Laurence’s company.

Shortly after the panel discussion adjourned, attendees were invited to enjoy a champagne reception in Laurence’s honor. In addition to a warm welcome bid by current Department Chair, Heather S. Nathans, well wishes on behalf of the University were offered by James M. Glaser, Dean of Arts and Sciences. Prof. Nathans, Dean Glaser, and the many guests who extended public congratulations to Laurence throughout the day were quick to note, however, that his retirement from Tufts does not signal an end to Prof. Senelick’s voracious enthusiasm for writing and intellectual inquiry.

Following a sit-down dinner in the Tufts art gallery lobby, a Senelick-themed cabaret was presented in the Balch Arena. Solo and group performances were staged by numerous colleagues and former students. The guest of honor also graced the stage before inviting all who remained to enjoy a late reception at his Medford home. Those who have attended previous gatherings at Laurence’s house know that he enjoys his role as host and entertains with flair, a befitting end to his long and storied tenure at Tufts.

Written by Teri Incampo
Alumni Updates

Virginia (Ginny) Anderson, GSAS ’09, was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure at Connecticut College this year. There she directed a production of Life is a Dream in collaboration with the Hispanic Studies department and hosted a display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt in partnership with Alliance for Living of New London, CT. She presented “Nostalgia on Central Park West: The Assembled Parties, Mothers and Sons, and AIDS on the 21st Century Broadway Stage” at ATHE in Orlando and was elected to the board of the American Theatre and Drama Society (ATDS). Public speaking came to the forefront of her work with an invitation to launch Southeastern Connecticut’s One Book One Region programming for Jarrett J. Krosoczka’s graphic memoir, Hey Kiddo: How I Lost My Mother, Found My Father, and Dealt with Family Addiction. Krosoczka himself celebrated her keynote on social media. Ginny later gave the opening convocation address at Connecticut College, during which she demonstrated how easy (and important) it is to take meaningful action by placing a call to Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) on stage. Ginny and her spouse were recognized with the 2019 Outstanding Foster Parent Award by the Connecticut Alliance of Foster and Adoptive Families (CAFAF) and the Norwich Department of Children and Families.

Noreen C. Barnes (MA 1977/Ph.D 1986) continued her service on the John Frick Book Award Committee for ATDS. With husband David A. McLain (who mentored lighting designers), Noreen did some pre-production script consulting with the Acton-Boxborough High school’s drama club, Proscenium Circus. Noreen was the recipient of the 2018-19 Legacy Award from the Richmond Theatre Critics Circle, for her directing, dramaturgy and board work with Richmond, Virginia theatre companies, and for placing students in internship and other positions while she was director of graduate studies in the Theatre program at Virginia Commonwealth University (1999-2017). She continues to volunteer with the Friends of the Library in Acton, MA.

Natka Bianchini (Ph.D. ’07) completed her 10th year at Loyola University Maryland where she is an Associate Professor of Theatre in the Department of Fine Arts. Last year she directed two productions: Sarah DeLappe’s The Wolves (at Loyola, October 2018) and Bathsheba Doran’s The Mystery of Love and Sex (Iron Crow Theatre, Baltimore, January-February 2019). In the spring, she taught a new senior seminar titled Urban Dramas. The course used plays set in urban environments to explore political, cultural, economic, and social issues endemic to cities, including labor, housing, immigration, and poverty. She also concluded her term as class dean for the class of 2019.
Daniel Ciba continues his second year as a Temporary Assistant Professor of Theater History and Criticism at Ramapo College, where he mentored student dramaturgs for their past production season. He continues his work as the Conference Planner for ATHE’s Theory and Criticism Focus Group and the Assistant Series Editor for the University of Iowa Press’s Studies in Theatre History and Culture. This past summer, he was awarded the Leonard and Louise Fellowship to research the Esther Merle Jackson papers at the Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

Ibby Cizmar is an Assistant Professor of Theatre specializing in acting and directing at Vanderbilt University. In 2018-2019 she was a Visiting Assistant Professor at Franklin & Marshall College where she taught a Black Arts Movement seminar, World Theatre, Acting, and the Senior Capstone: Professional Development & Production. She also served as a faculty advisor on two capstone productions, Kingdom City and Urinetown. At ATHE, she presented with fellow Jumbo, Hesam Sharifian, on a panel about reconstructing history. Her book project, Explicit Images and Inclusive Practices: Reviving the Legacy of Ernie McClintock, focuses on Ernie McClintock’s Afro-American Studio for Acting & Speech (est. 1966) and the Jazz Actors Theatre (est. 1991). McClintock developed a technique known as Jazz Acting inviting actors to explore, research, and respond in the context of an improvisational conversation, an identifying aspect of a jazz ensemble. Her research works to excavate McClintock’s legacy and aims to include Afrocentric methods in actor training.

Mark Cosdon is Professor of Theatre at Allegheny College where this past year he taught courses in theatre history, acting, and the contemporary American musical. In April 2019 Cosdon directed Urinetown the Musical at the Allegheny Playshop Theatre. This past June, Cosdon was a visiting faculty member at the University of Palermo in Sicily. Across May/June Cosdon led a month-long student travel course in Italy--his eighth--on language, culture, and theatricality. At the August 2019 Association for Theatre in Higher Education conference, Cosdon gave several papers and was delighted to see Laurence Senelick honored by the organization with its Career Achievement in Higher Education Award. A celebratory dinner with Laurence and a number of other Jumbos was an added treat.

(Rev.) Albert J. DeGiacomo, Ph.D., ’93, had a reading of his new play in two acts about Flannery O’Connor, No Surer Sign of Grace, at The Raged Edge Community Theatre, Harrodsburg, Kentucky, on August 3, 2019 as part of a New Works Festival. He continues as pastor of Saint Andrew Catholic Church, Harrodsburg. He is a member of The Dramatists Guild.

Matt DiCintio is the Graduate Program Coordinator for Boston University’s Department of Earth & Environment, where he also teaches pedagogy. He appeared on the Theatre History Podcast (https://howlround.com/tracing-origins-freak-show-dr-matt-dicintio) to discuss freak shows, race, and disability studies, and his essay “Get Real: Thoughts on Theatre History and Realism; Also Aristotle, Corneille, and Boxes” appears in Monologues for Headspace Theatre: Radical Thinking Inside a Box (Smith & Kraus). He was a guest dramaturg at Franklin & Marshall College (Kingdom City) and served as a new play evaluator for The Playwright’s Center, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, and Kitchen Dog Theater. Matt was reelected to the executive board of the Theatre Library Association.
Sean F. Edgecomb is in his sixth year as Assistant Professor of theatre at CUNY, with a joint appointment between The Graduate Center and CSI. This past academic year he published the chapter, “Queer Politics/ Nostalgia: Performing the UpStairs Lounge Fire,” in the The Routledge Companion to Theatre and Politics, three reviews in Theatre Journal, PAJ and Theatre Survey and the commissioned program essay for Taylor Mac’s New England tour. He was interviewed about his expertise on Charles Ludlam, the Stonewall Riots and camp by various publications including, Condé Nast’s Them, Toronto’s Globe and Mail and was the featured guest on Radio Free Brooklyn’s Troubadurs and Raconteurs. He was awarded a PSC CUNY research grant for his second book, A Queer Bestiary. He gave invited talks at Colorado, Brown and Wesleyan. Sean continues to serve on many committees, including the Admissions Committee for the Ph.D. program in Theatre.

Anne Fletcher received the following research fellowships last year, for work on a longer project on Eugene O’Neill and for a forthcoming chapter on Orson Welles’s Caesar!: the Travis Bogard Artist-in-Residence at Tao House; the Donald Gallup Fellowship from the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library; a Visiting Scholar Fellowship from the New York Public Library; and the Everett Helms Fellowship from the Lilly Library at the University of Indiana.

David Krasner is currently the Chair of Theatre at Five Towns College in New York. He directed A Midsummer Night’s Dream and The Laramie Project this year. David also published “Expectation, Melancholy, and Loss: Funnyhouse of a Negro and Dutchman in the Year 1964,” Theatre Journal 71. He extends his thanks to the Tufts African American Theatre graduate class of Fall 2017, which inspired this essay. He also published a theatre review of The Boys in the Band in the same issue of Theatre Journal. He has a forthcoming review of The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Philosophy: Nietzsche and the Modern Drama, by David Kornhaber to appear in Theatre Journal. He is serving on the Editorial Advisory Board of Theatre Journal, Stanislavsky Studies, and African American Review, and continues to be the Co-Editor of the University of Michigan Press’s series Theater: Theory/Text/Performance.

Wen-ling Lin, promoted to full professor in February of 2019, continues her second term chairing the Department of Drama Creation and Application at the National University of Tainan, Taiwan. Last October, her department won the university’s Teaching Excellence Prize for the second time during her term, and Prof. Lin herself was named a Distinguished Researcher and won the Creative Teaching Bronze Prize. Recent visiting scholars at her department include Tony Award winner Mary Zimmerman (December, 2018). Prof. Lin’s publications in 2018-2019 include “A Queer Fantasy World of The New Member: the Phenomenon of the First Boys’ Love Musical in Taiwan” in the Asian Theatre Journal and “Reading Hogarth’s Painting ‘Garrick as Richard the Third’ as a Theatrical Document and Social Text” in Taiwan’s Journal of Arts Studies. The Ministry of Science recently announced a second year of funding for Prof. Lin’s research on seventeenth century Formosa in Taiwanese theatre.

Meron Langsner (PhD 2011) continued as a Core Faculty Member at Tom Todoroff Conservatory in NYC, and taught workshops at Manhattanville College, the Male Dance Conference, and SAFD Summer Sling. His plays were performed around the country & overseas, and he fight directed at Theatre Row, the National Black Theatre, and for independent film. He published articles with The Theatre Times and served as an ad hoc reviewer for Theatre Topics. Meron continues as a Senior Associate at Cooper & Cooper Real Estate, where he is involved in several million dollars of transactions annually. Meron conducting fight direction for theatre.
earned a Certificate in Software Development at Columbia Engineering, and is in the process of co-founding a social logistics startup based on his work there. Giving back to Tufts, he was an Alumni Mentor for the Tisch College Summer Fellows. Meron is currently in the NYC Cohort of the Southampton Arts Audio Podcast Fellows, where he is developing a podcast that will be hosted by an NPR affiliate.

**Mike Lueger** has been teaching sections of World Drama I and II at Emerson College and sections of Intro to Theatre at Boston College. In addition to his ongoing work on the Theatre History Podcast, he is part of a working group on labor and American theatre at the 2019 American Society for Theatre Research conference. He is a member of ASTR and the Association for Theatre in Higher Education. For more information on the podcast, visit [theatrehistorypodcast.net](http://theatrehistorypodcast.net), and connect with the show on its social media feeds: @theaterhistory on Twitter and [facebook.com/theatrehistory](http://facebook.com/theatrehistory).

**Rae Mansfield** continues as Honors Faculty-in-Residence at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and is now the faculty advisor for student theatre. Rae presented at the National Collegiate Honors Council in Boston in November 2018, ran an improv workshop at the National Association of Fellowship Advisors biennial conference in Minneapolis in July 2019, served on the UML Gender Studies steering committee, and hosted the Free Soil Arts Collective’s premiere reading of *Hair Tales* at UML. Rae Mansfield and Linda Lau’s play, *The Retreat* (about collaborators who murder each other at a writing retreat) had its first staged reading. Their co-authored article, “Waves of Opportunity”, appeared in the March 2019 issue of *Theatre Topics*. A few of the productions Rae worked in the past year include Sarah Porkalob’s *Dragon Cycle*, *Cirque of the Dead*, and the Slaughterhouse Society’s *Dracula* and *Magic Dyke* at Oberon, and the eleventh season of *The Slutcracker* at the Somerville Theatre.

**Matt McMahan** is in his second year as the Assistant Director for the Center for Comedic Arts at Emerson College, where he has initiated an annual comedy festival called ComEx!. He continues to perform at ImprovBoston and has led many workshops in applied improvisation at places like the Harvard University Chan School of Public Health, the Tufts University Gordon Institute, and Brandeis University. He was also invited to deliver a speech on the importance of comedy to conveners at the HowlRound Theatre Commons, portions of which were published in an article entitled “Laughing Matters: How Comedy Tells Us Who We Are.” He presented a paper on two Parisian clowns, Frottat and Chocolat, at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education conference and at the Mid-America Theatre Conference, where it was awarded an honorable mention for the Robert A. Schanke Research Award.

**Dr. Tiffany Pounds-Williams** is teaching Theatre History I at Merrimack College, three sections of Introduction to Theatre at Boston College, and both Theatre into Film and World Theatre at Emerson College. Her review of Graham Ley’s *Acting Greek Theatre* appeared in the Spring 2019 issue of the Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism. She presented on two panels at ATHE this year. The first was on Theatre in the Boardroom and the second, which she led, was on forms of Quiet Resistance. She is a member of ATHE, where she was elected TASC conference panel planner, ASTR, and ATINER, where she is a member of the reviewers board. Dr. Williams also volunteers at MCI Framingham, teaching drama to the inmates, and has been working on producing a night of musical medleys with them. She also adopted a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel named Doodle who is still not potty trained.
Cindy Rosenthal, is Professor of Drama and Dance and Codirector of Women’s Studies at Hofstra University. In fall 2018 she directed Actually for Hofstra’s “It’s On Us” campaign and the premiere of 100 Years in 500 Days for the Artistic Expressions and the Great War Conference at Hofstra. She received the 2018 George Freedley Memorial Award for Ellen Stewart Presents: Fifty Years of La MaMa Experimental Theatre (University of Michigan Press). In Winter 2018, she published a review of The Scene of Foreplay in TDR. In Spring 2019 she directed Grounded for the On Women Festival at Irondale (Brooklyn), and published the essay “Judith Malina’s Voracious Body, Mind and Spirit” in Performing Research. In Summer 2019 she played the Countess in All’s Well That Ends Well (Bread Loaf, VT) and in Fall 2019 (on sabbatical!) she played Margaret in Remembrance, an immersive dance-theatre work on Governor’s Island.

Danielle Rosvally, Ph.D.: Clinical Assistant Professor, University at Buffalo. In Spring 2018, Danielle pioneered the first Stage Combat class taught at UB in over a decade. She Directed and Fight Directed UB’s production of Julius Caesar on the UB mainstage (the first time in history a department show used that space). In November, Danielle gave a talk to New York City park rangers regarding her work on the Central Park statue of Shakespeare and nineteenth-century social economies. Danielle is part of the team which produced “What Comes Next? Graduate Education and Contingent Labor in Theatre and Performance Studies” for the July 2019 issue of Theatre Topics, and serves as data consultant for Noe Montez’s Theatre and Performance Studies Ph.D. Placement Project. She has been asked to serve a second term as the Associate Editor of Electronic Publications for ASTR. In the 2018-2019 season, Danielle ran two marathons and completed an Ironman.

Max Shulman continues his work at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. This year, his co-edited collection, Performing the Progressive Era: Immigration, Urban Life, and Nationalism on Stage was published by the University of Iowa Press. His article “Anatomy of an Addict: Junie McCree and the Vaudeville Dope Fien” appeared in Theatre Survey in May. He has received a number of grants recently including funding for his HomeFront Theatre Project (aimed at creating theatre connected to veteran’s issues) and the funding to bring a Kathakali performer from Kerala, India to campus. He has also continued his professional work, directing Clifford Odets’ Awake and Sing at Philadelphia’s Quintessence Theatre, which received an extended run and two Barrymore nominations.

Arnold Wengrow, G’67, professor emeritus of drama at the University of North Carolina at Asheville, is preparing for publication the memoirs of the Broadway costume designer Patricia Zipprodt. He writes theatre reviews and arts features for Mountain Xpress, Asheville’s independent weekly. He served as past president of the Retired Faculty and Administrators Association at UNC Asheville and spoke on the history of the university at the April installation of Nancy G. Cable as its eighth chancellor.
**New Ph.D. Graduates**

This year, five candidates earned their Ph.Ds from the Theatre & Performance Studies program and began working in both academic and alt-ac industry positions across the country. Three of these graduates, Reza Mirsajadi, Irem Seçil Reel Sen, and Irina Yakubovskaya were interviewed about their dissertation projects and experiences after Tufts.

**Timothy Wutrich** is in his thirteenth year at Case Western Reserve University in the Department of Classics where he is Senior Instructor of Classics. Last year, he taught a first-year seminar called “The Greek and Roman Humanities,” “Gods and Heroes in Greek Literature,” “Elementary Latin 101,” “Vergil” (in Latin), “Heroes and Hustlers in Latin Literature,” and “Elementary Latin 102.” He continues to be a member of the Society for Classical Studies, the Modern Language Association, the Classical Association of the Middle West and South, the Vergilian Society, the American Institute of Archaeology, and the Ohio Classical Conference. In 2019 Dr. Wutrich concluded a seven-year term of service as a member of the Committee on Ancient and Modern Performance (CAMP), a group that produces an annual staged reading of a Greek, Roman or Classical Tradition play. Wutrich also chaired the committee for the last three years of his term. At the January 2019 SCS meeting in San Diego, Wutrich was a member of the chorus in a production of Aristophanes’s *The Assemblywomen*.

**Michael Zampelli, SJ (PhD 1998)** - Michael continues as the Paul L. Locatelli Chair in the Department of Theatre and Dance at Santa Clara University. In 2018-19 he taught the following courses: Cultures and Ideas I and II: All the World’s a Stage, Critical Perspectives in Performance A and B, Performing Identities: Staging Gender, Race and Sexuality, and Incarnating the Word: Theology and Theatre. Michael presented two papers over the course of the academic year: including “The Red and the Black: Performing Race in Jesuit Education” at the Comparative Drama Conference and “Problematic Performances: Staging Race in US Jesuit Education” at the ATINER Visual and Performing Arts Conference. He began a second term on the College of Arts and Sciences Rank and Tenure Committee for the Arts and Humanities. Michael is a member of ASTR, ATHE, and RSA. He became an academic member of the Athens Institute for Education and Research in July 2019. He continues his pastoral work with LGBTQ+ Catholics (Dignity/SF) and the incarcerated of Santa Clara County.

**Reza Mirsajadi**

My dissertation was titled “Directing Between the Lines: Contemporary Iranian Theatre and the Aesthetics of Ambiguity.” I specifically look at the work of Iran’s more political stage directors and their innovative productions and adaptations of material from the Western canon. I explore the tensions between East and West, censorship and reactions to power, and identity and the power of performance to create and communicate these. In my case study productions, I argued that the directors engaged with a rhetorical aesthetic called ihām (which is a style of ambiguity woven throughout centuries of Persian literature, poetry, art, and discourse) in order to evade censorship and speak politically to audiences.

**Irem Seçil Reel Sen**

My dissertation finds the different ways the Turkish American diaspora creates national belongings, the ways in which it creates homelike spaces with volunteer activities, such as cooking, dancing, and philanthropy.
I designate this phenomenon as homing, which explains both the gendered nature of diaspora's cultural heritage work and how home refers to both private and public spaces as well as one's own body and community. I was always intrigued with performance theory and the question of performative and theatrical aspects of one's identity. So questions such as: what is performance and how it comes to play in daily life, how does performative and theatrical manifest itself in one's behavior, how does a nation introduce and reenforce identity through performance guided my research. For instance, I have encountered theatrical spaces in the most unexpected venues, such as during my ethnographic field visits to my interviewee’s homes. Finding performance in everyday life as well as tracing mundane activities shift into performance fascinates me.

**Irina Yakubovskaya**

My dissertation traces the history of the Ilkhom Theatre of Mark Weil during the four eras of its existence as well as its queer and counterculture aesthetics and multicultural collaborations. I explore how the company fits within the contexts of Russian and post-Soviet theatre and investigate the ways in which it engaged in international education collaborations with American universities. My research focuses on primary sources and I utilized interviews. This is the first academic work about this topic.

**Seçil**

Definitely my dissertation advisor Ka-reem Khubchandani has influenced and assisted me in shaping my project. He has been a supportive, encouraging advisor, giving direct, thoughtful feedback both on the project and the dissertation. The formation of this idea, of course, owes to two other faculty members: Heather Nathans and Noe Montez. Heather’s first intro to graduate studies class allowed me to explore this idea in the very first semester and to see which direction I could push the project. Because I formulated my project during those early days, thereafter I was able to attend the Mellon School of Theatre and Performance Studies at Harvard University to further explore my research questions. Noe Montez’s Performance Studies lecture also gave me a chance to both deepen my understanding of performance and apply the theory into my research. In addition to these faculty members, the department supported me when I directed a reading of Obstacle Course in collaboration with Jamil Khoury when he came to Tufts as an artist in residence. Of course, this theoretical and practical support helped me better understand my subject.

**Irina**

Laurence Senelick provided me with multicultural and transtemporal support as well as an understanding of the uniquely complex dichotomies of post-Soviet cultural studies. I appreciated his honesty - to not view the professorate or the realities of the job market with rose-colored glasses.

**Reza**

I think I gained a lot from coursework and each of my professors, and I found ways of applying their material to my research questions. For instance, Monica Ndounou’s courses on Adaptation and African American Theatre gave me a lot of the tools with which I could frame the particular interventions of Iranian directors and the intersections of identity and performance. Laurence Senelick’s classes on the History of Directing and Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekhov also gave me a reference point for thinking about how Iranian directors were creating work inspired by and also departing from European traditions of directing and framing the work of the Western canon. And Natalya Balygga’s classes encouraged me to question historical metanarratives and push against the flow of the field and assert my own work as a scholar and historiographer, which was a really revolutionary shift in my frame of thinking. Barbara, Kareem, Lily, and Heather have also always been there to help me piece through particular questions that I’ve had and help push my dissertation research further along. Am I missing anyone? Oh, right, Noe. All jokes aside, my dissertation project wouldn’t have been anything without Noe’s insight and encouragement, his support through moments of anxiety and trauma, his incredible ability at helping me locate the core of my argument and articulate it cogently, and his general patience and mentorship.
types of teaching or research is most sought after, and how to position myself as a candidate in such a way that people will want to hire me (or at least invite me to campus). Hopefully I’ll land a tenure-track gig next year, but who knows?

Seçil

During my graduate studies, I interned as a UX Researcher. I assumed my skills as a researcher and understanding of human behavior would help me go into the tech industry. However, I have equipped myself in technical ways in the meantime and instead started working as a Frontend Engineer. Currently, I develop a web application for Catch, a software company that builds personal benefits platforms.

Irina

I am currently an affiliated faculty member in the Emerson College Department of Performing Arts. This semester I am teaching two courses, “Perspectives in World Theatre,” and “World Drama in its Contexts I.”

Reza

I’m lucky in that I’m only teaching a 2-2 load, and the class in script analysis takes little prep time, but I often find myself working 7 days a week. Being a contingent faculty member also means that I’m in a particularly precarious position with no job security come September 2020, so I feel that I need to try to produce as much published material and network as much as I can on top of my teaching load in order to land a job the coming year. My contingent status also means that I don’t have research funding or support, so going to conferences has to be on my own dime, doing fieldwork is out of pocket, and the expenses keep piling up, preventing me from paying off a mountain of student loans. It’s not a great life, y’all. But I’d say I’m pretty active within the field. Last year I founded the Middle Eastern Theatre focus group through ATHE, and I’ll be the Focus Group Representative/Chair until 2022, so I’m always doing some sort of advocacy or scholarly work or supporting graduate students and junior faculty in the field as they dip their toes into the water of Middle Eastern studies. I also have some articles and reviews coming out.

Seçil

Currently, I’m looking into publishing articles. I follow ATHE and ASTR closely to be involved in the scholarship. Working full time of course limits your ability to give yourself to scholarship but also allows you to see other places where you can find interesting research questions.

Irina

I do my best to inform my scholarship with my pedagogy. I see it as a symbiotic relationship. I am also the Editor of Applied Theatre and a writer for The Theatre Times. I mostly write about circus, physical theatre, and multidisciplinary performing arts in addition to interviews with artists.

Reza

I have no idea, really. At one point, I was convinced that I wanted to work at a liberal arts school where I could balance teaching with directing and do research as a hobby, but I’m finding that I love being at an institution with Theatre Ph.D. candidates. There’s so much exciting inquiry and research happening, and I am really enjoying being able to support that. I definitely plan to stay in academia, that’s all I know for sure. I also hope to start doing more community-engaged work once I find a bit of stability in my living situation. I’ve always been inspired by nonprofit organizations like Philly Young Playwrights or the Albany Park Theatre Project, and I hope to do that kind of work moving forward, using theatre and art within underprivileged youth communities of color and creating something that puts good out into the world.

Seçil

Currently, I work at a company where my knowledge of performance comes into play everyday as I think about how people use the app. Personally, I don’t see myself separately as an engineer or a performance scholar. I trust that they work together just like how performance and everyday life interrelates with one another. My next ideal step might be building pleasant experiences, small digital performances, for web applications; and/or, writing about the performative and theatrical aspects of the tech industry.

Irina

I am continuing to apply for job openings to teach in the field.

Editor’s note:
Responses have been copyedited.

Interviews conducted by Teri Incampo
Stephanie Engel is a third-year Ph.D. student. Her research interests include disability studies, race and performance, gender power dynamics, and the purveyance of U.S./Latin America relations in performative cultural outlets. Her recent master’s thesis focused on the presence of female Afro-LatinX celebrities in U.S. pop culture. Before Tufts, Stephanie studied at the University of Warwick in the United Kingdom and received a BA from Allegheny College, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa and Summa Cum Laude with a dual degree in Theatre and History. Stephanie has also previously worked in dramaturgy and community outreach for the likes of A.R.T., Company One, the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, the Guthrie Theater, and Mixed Blood Theatre. This year, Stephanie is workshopping her next project on disability and the erasure of women’s pain at conferences like ASTR.

In the 2018-2019 academic year, Emma Futhey co-taught Modern and Postmodern Drama with Prof. Noe Montez and solo-taught Early Modern Drama at Tufts University. She served as dramaturg and assistant director for Jihad Jones and the Kalashnikov Babes, directed by Prof. Heather Nathans. She completed three years as the Assistant Producer for Educational and Arts Programming for the Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies. In March of 2019, she started a full-time position as an Academic Advisor in the Honors Program at Northeastern University, where in addition to advising Honors undergraduate students, she runs all communications for the program and assists in student event programming. She continues work on her dissertation under the guidance of Prof. Heather Nathans, and looks forward to graduating in May 2020.

Over the summer, third-year Ph.D. student Javier Hurtado taught a playwriting workshop for Teatro Alebrijes in San Jose, California. While in California, he also directed the premiere of his short play Lechuzza at El Teatro Campesino. In the Spring of 2019, Hurtado’s play Housewarming received a workshop reading directed by Fletcher Foundation Assistant Professor, Lilian Mengesha. In the fall, he directed an excerpt of Sangre Mia by Andrew Sianez-De La O for Company One’s Playlab. Hurtado also directed a reading of blu by Virginia Grise for Palabras Poderosas, a celebration of Latina playwrights which took place in the Jackson Dance Lab. His paper titled, “Walking the Tightrope: Performing Latinx Identity in Early 20th Century Circus” was presented at the 2019 Circus Historical Society Annual Convention. Over the past year, he taught Playwriting and Intro to Theatre for the Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies at Tufts.

Teri Incampo is a fourth-year PhD student investigating depictions of the black maid on the 20th century stage and screen. Last Spring, she also appeared in a staged reading of Benefit Performance, or The Other Jew by Cary Mazer and directed by Heather Nathans. During the 2018/19 academic year at Tufts, she taught two sections of Introduction to Theatre. For the Tufts summer II session, she taught Introduction to Acting. In August 2019, she was awarded the Motherboard Writing Prize by The Consortium for Graduate Studies in Gender, Culture, Women, and Sexuality (GCWS) at MIT for her paper “To Take a Knee: ‘Hands Up, Don’t Shoot,’ Kneeling, and Other Gestures of Submission in Black Lives Matter Protest Performance,” which emerged from her master’s thesis project.

Mia Levenson is a second-year M.A./Ph.D. student whose research explores the intersections of biomedical science and theatre. This semester, she directed a staged reading of Collective Rage: A Play in
The graduate program in Theatre and Performance Studies is launching several new initiatives designed to increase students’ professionalization and prepare them for careers within and beyond the academy. In recent years, students have pursued internship projects with American Repertory Theatre, Step Up Chicago Playwrights, Double Edge Theatre Company, Queer Appalachia, Beam Interactive, the South Shore School of Theatre in Quincy, and the Labrynth Theatre Summer Intensive Ensemble.

Additionally, doctoral students seek additional funds to support research, production work, and other workshops or conferences that will foster their professional development. The Laurence Senelick Fund is the graduate program’s discretionary fund that supports the work that students do. If you are interested in honoring Laurence’s legacy and supporting Theatre and Performance Studies graduate students, you may donate to the Laurence Senelick Fund at Tufts University. Gifts of all sizes are combined to support current students. Your gift will help us fulfill our vision to this program and to honor a legacy of excellence.

If you’d like to contribute to the Senelick fund, you may do so at the following link: https://tuftsgiving.org/giving-form.html?id=1&showarea=CR002330&areaid=487. You may also make checks payable to “Trustees of Tufts College” and write “SENELICK FUND” in the memo line. We encourage people to consider becoming monthly donors by signing up online for credit card gifts that automatically renew.

Five Betties by Jen Silverman. She is also currently dramaturging and assistant directing Bull in a China Shop by Bryna Turner, directed by Prof. Lily Mengesha as well as directing What Happened at the Dolphin Show by Miranda Rose Hall for the Tufts course, First Year Showcase. She will also be attending ASTR in November to participate in the working group, Worlds of Knowledge: Science, Performance, and the Public. At the same time, she is writing her master’s thesis on the figure of the doctor in 19th century American theatre. Her book review of The Nervous Stage: Nineteenth-century Neuroscience and the Birth of Modern Theatre by Matthew Wilson Smith will be published in an upcoming issue of Theatre Journal.

Amy Meyer is a PhD candidate investigating the history of acrobatic acts in the western circus. Last fall marked the beginning of her third year teaching courses in Theatre Studies at Boston College. At Tufts, she continued teaching Writing and Public Speaking for the Academic Resource Center. For ASTR 2018 she co-convoked the Transfeminisms working group for the third consecutive year, and with her colleagues began to work towards creating a publicly available Transfeminist Theatre and Performance Studies Pedagogy Resource. As a member of Boston-based theatre company, imaginary beasts, she performed in Paul Bunyan and the Winter of the Blue Snow at the Charlestown Working Theater. In May 2019 Amy directed Dmitri in the Dark at the Boston University Dance Theater; the production featured a live string quartet playing Dmitri Shostakovich’s String Quartet No. 6 alongside actors and circus artists.

Peter Spearman’s article “The Man Within: Blackness and Simulation in Injustice: Gods Among Us” was published in the theatre and performance studies journal, Etudes Online. In the fall of 2018, he taught a writing lab for incarcerated students at MCI concord through Petey Greene and the Tufts University Prison Initiative at Tufts College (TUPIT). Additionally, he has been teaching Intro to Acting at Tufts. In March, his family welcomed their first baby, Irwin “Win” Spearman.

Yizhou Huang was a dissertation fellow at the Center for the Humanities at Tufts in 2018-2019. As a Gittleman teaching fellow at the Tufts Experimental College, she designed and taught “Performing China on the American Stage and Screen” in Fall 2018. Her review and article appeared in Asian Theatre Journal and Stage and Screen Review (in Chinese).
Grad Student Artists

Practice and creation remain an integral part of the Tufts graduate program. In addition to opportunities to assist direct and dramaturg for departmental productions, many MA/Ph.D. students act, write, and direct for student-led projects and professional companies. Playwright Javier Hurtado, director Jessica Pearson, and actor Jo Rezes recently sat down with fellow graduate students to describe their respective artistic praxes.

Javier Hurtado

Mia Levenson
Can you tell me what projects you’ve been working on this year?

Javier Hurtado

In the spring, I had a reading of my play, Housewarming, produced by STAGE, that was held in the Balch Arena and it was directed by Lily Mengesha. Over the summer, I had a production of my short play, Luchza, produced at El Teatro Campesino in San Juan Bautista California. I’m also trying to put together a collection of my plays for publication. But that’s a really slow-going thing. I’m hoping to have it done by June.

Mia

How were these experiences meaningful to you?

Javier

So the staged reading was important because one of the things I was able to do as part of the reading was hire and work with professional actors in the community, which helped me build a more robust Boston-based network. It was also meaningful to me because I kind of cold asked Lily, “Do you want to direct this project?” This reading allowed me to work with her in an outside-of-the-classroom capacity.

The summer production is important because I’m trying to publish all of those plays in an anthology so it was good to be able to workshop it in a professional space with professional actors and the full support of a theater company to fully realize what I was trying to make happen on the page. And so that is what was important to me because I teach playwriting here. And I think it’s important that I continue producing even in small ways so that when I’m talking to students about what goes on the page, I can also have conversations with them about how these things transfer.

Mia

How did these projects influence your pedagogy, your scholarship and your experience as a grad student?

Javier

These plays are all really important to me, but not because of my scholarship. I think as a grad student, it’s important for me to maintain the professional networks that I’ve built outside of the area, so it was important to get that production this summer.

Jessica Pearson

Javier, you directed for a student-group production last year. Tell me more about it!

Jessica Pearson

I directed the musical Blood Brothers for the Torn Ticket Fall 2018 major production. The show is a small British 80s musical. Our department and the student groups tend to do modern musical – such as Sondheim – but Blood Brothers has many small vignettes and scenes. The songs are rock inspired. It does not feel like an old school Rogers and Hammerstein musical nor what we are seeing on Broadway now where the audience knows to expect that there will be a big dance number or ballad.

Teri

What was your approach to the material?

Jessica

I approached the project with the mindset of “what is the minimum amount we can do to support the text?” Young designers tend towards realism and I wanted to push this production away from realism and towards something more representational. I wanted to play with the moments in the show where reality shifts and for the aesthetics to be driven by the sensation of not knowing what is real and where the concreteness of time is in question.

Teri

What was the experience of working with the student artists in the Torn Ticket ensemble?
Mia Levenson
What projects have you been working on lately?

Jo Rezes
I have been working on multiple projects, all with the lovely people at Boston’s newest—probably not anymore but it was at the time—fringe theatre company, Entropy Theatre, founded by many students from the University of New Hampshire. I worked on their inaugural show *a grimm thing*, which was a devised piece. And I also then worked on their second show, *The Rocky Horror Show*, which toured New England. And now I’m currently the dramaturg on their third show, Jen Silverman’s *The Moors*. I also assistant directed *Cloud Nine* at Nora Theatre Company.

Mia
How were these experiences meaningful to you?

Jo
Oh, they were meaningful in so many ways. They were meaningful in the sense that one of my biggest desires coming into this graduate program was making sure that while studying art at Tufts, I was focused on the art that was actually being made in Boston and focusing on smaller companies and smaller groups in their efforts of trying to change the world of theatre in Boston. Because I didn’t want to just infiltrate—I wanted to exist within.

Mia
How have these experiences informed your pedagogy, your scholarship, and your experiences as a graduate student?

Jo
Well, in fact, all of these experiences have actually taken shape as field sites for my ethnographical master’s thesis regarding white middle-brow camp. And then in terms of pedagogy, I think that these experiences have helped me teach Intro to Acting more so than any of the other shows that I’ve ever worked on. Because of Tufts’ location in Boston, and working with fringe companies in Boston, I kind of know what students need to know about the professional scene and the amateur scene in Boston and I have a better handle on the goings on. My time as a graduate student, because of these, I feel like I got to—I don’t want to say kill two birds with one stone—I will say I was multitasking in the sense that I was fulfilling my artistic needs, while simultaneously able to pursue my research questions in a very tangible way.

Jessica
It was a really positive experience. The Torn Ticket group is well organized and it was nice to engage in mentorship on every level—not just with the actors I was directing but also with the technical designers. It felt like being the captain of a ship on a different level than when I have worked in professional settings. I want to eventually teach at a school where I work with undergraduate actors and designers. Many of my conversations with the crew was about the details of what a props master does or what a stage manager does, etc. This was an exploration between my experiences with students in the classroom and an artistic relationship—it required more mentorship which I enjoyed.