



~The Marquee~

The Newsletter of the Department of Performing Arts, Elon University

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Winter Term in Italy!

During Winter Term, Professors Kevin Otos and Elizabeth Patterson led a group of students to Italy where they studied the Italian Comedic tradition in Venice, Florence, and Rome. They also trained with Fabio Mangolini, an Italian master of the Commedia dell'Arte. The first nine days were spent in class for almost 60 hours with an Italian master of Commedia dell'Arte and physical theatre, the very gifted artist and teacher Fabio Mangolini (pictured left, with Elon students).



Professor Otos said that the classes were intensely physical and were centered on working with various expressive and commedia masks. This work was done in Arezzo, a small Tuscan city where the students and teachers lived and learned in a 17th century villa. They explored a brief overview of Italian comedy from classic theatre icons like Goldoni to modern day greats like Dario Fo. The group also traveled to Florence, Venice and Rome in order

to get a real feel and understanding for the history of Italy, the Renaissance, and how all of this manifests in these plays and in this tradition. Throughout the three weeks in Italy students were encouraged to experience the culture not by seeing it from a bus but from their feet: in piazzas, in eateries, in theatres, in stores, museums, and on public transportation.

For some students, this was their first time studying Commedia. But for others, like Senior BFA Acting Major Sarah Nutt, their interest in Commedia was sparked years ago. "In the spring of my freshman year here at Elon, I did a Commedia show with Kevin," said Nutt. "In the fall of my junior year, I took his class on Commedia. By then, I was sold and as soon as I heard that the trip was being developed, I told Kevin I was going and had enrolled in an Italian course." During the trip, Nutt says she learned that Commedia is not a stagnant form in any way. Rather, it is constantly changing. She describes being taught that Commedia is progressing in a more modern way. "The physicalities are more lenient than I had suspected and Fabio's approach lent much more individuality to the actor."

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(Tristan Bailey working in neutral mask)

(Cont'd from p. 1)

When asked why he was interested in starting this program, Professor Otos had this to say: "I've always believed that cross cultural exchange and international exposure was critical to intellectual and personal development. But my belief in the importance of this for artists greatly increased when I studied Commedia dell'Arte overseas with an international ensemble in 2007. Working with, and learning from, Italians, Spaniards, Koreans, French, Greeks, Norwegians, Brazilians, and people from all over the world was tremendously expansive for me as both an artist and a human being. When I started putting this class together I felt that it was CRITICAL to the success of the course that the students study with someone who was not American. Weaving this international, intercultural experience into their day-to-day learning was immensely rewarding for the students to experience and for me to witness. This was a fantastic kick-off for this class and it ranks as one of the most profoundly positive experiences I have ever had as a teacher."

Stay tuned for news about the New York Winter Term '12 Course!

Spring Performance Schedule

Don't Miss These Incredible Performances!

Location Guide: MCT=McCrary Theatre; YRH=Yeager Recital Hall; BBT=Black Box Theatre; DSA=Dance Studio A; WMA=Williamson Avenue Acting Studio

FEBRUARY

- 2, 3, 4, 5 – *Crimes of the Heart*, 7:30, BBT
- 5 – *Crimes of the Heart*, 2:00, BBT
- 10, 11, 12, 13 – *Rent*, 7:30, MCT
- 12, 13 – *Rent*, 2:00, MCT
- 18, 19 – Student-Directed One Act Plays, 7:30, BBT
- 19, 20 – Student-Directed One Act Plays, 2:00, BBT
- 24, 25, 26 – DAN. Senior Project, 6:30, BBT
- 26, 27 – DAN. Senior Project, 2:00, BBT

MARCH

- 26 – American College Dance Festival Perf., 7:30, MCT

APRIL

- 1, 2 – *Grand Night*, 7:00 & 8:30, YRH
- 3, 4, 5 – *DanceWorks*, 6:00 & 8:30, BBT
- 14, 15, 16 – *Ajax*, 7:30, MCT
- 17 – *Ajax*, 2:00, MCT
- 28, 29, 30 – *Closer*, 7:30, BBT
- 30 – *Closer*, 2:00, BBT

MAY

- 5, 6 – *On That Note*, 7:30, MCT
- 6 – *It's Only Life*, 7:30 – BBT
- 7 – *On That Note*, 2:00 & 7:30, MCT
- 7 – *It's Only Life*, 5:00 & 8:00, BBT
- 8 – *It's Only Life*, 2:00, BBT

Special Thank You and Farewell to Luke Lemanski!

Luke Lemanski has been the Assistant Technical Director at Elon for the past 4 years. After this year, Luke will be leaving Elon to begin a three-year MFA program in Technical Direction at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston Salem. We want to thank him for all that he has done for Elon over the past 4 years. "Luke has been an incredibly valuable member of our team and has been a key player in developing the Design and Production Program at Elon," said Fred Rubeck, Chair of the Performing Arts. "We wish him all the best."



Professional Master Classes

We are very fortunate and grateful to be visited each semester by a variety of working industry professionals for master classes and seminars. This semester's guests include:

Dave Clemmons will be with us on February 27th-28th. He is a NYC casting director who will be returning for his annual master class. A former Broadway performer in such shows as *Les Miserables* (Valjean), *Jekyll and Hyde*, and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, he is now the founder/owner of Dave Clemmons Casting.

Craig Anton, a professional actor, stand-up comedian and original cast-member of the sketch comedy TV show *MADtv*, will be with us on April 1st and 2nd. He will be offering sessions on working professionally in LA and on stand-up comedy.

Along with helping Elon produce his show *It's Only Life*, **John Bucchino** will be offering a Master Class on May 8th. Mr. Bucchino's songs have been performed and recorded by many renowned pop, theatre, cabaret and classical artists including Liza Minnelli, Barbara Cook, Judy Collins, Yo Yo Ma, Art Garfunkel, and Patti LuPone, as well as on Broadway.

On April 20-21, **Jeff Stephens, PhD**, will be coming to us from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. He earned his

PhD in theater history, and will be offering sessions on eastern European theatre and the role of research in theater for higher education.

We also have many other auditions and master class opportunities coming up this semester including:

- Flatrock Playhouse Auditions
- Q & A and Auditions with Ron LaRosa (Disney Cruises)
- ArtPark Auditions
- Hangar Theatre Auditions
- Eric Woodall (Tara Rubin)
- Nikole Vallins (Jay Binder)
- Rachel Hoffman (Telsey & Co.)
- Q & A with Casting Director Carrie Gardner (Roundabout/Jim Carnahan)
- Michael Kirsten (Harden/Curtis)

Faculty and Staff News

Kevin Otos will direct the North American premiere of British playwright Simon Stephen's new play *Pornography*. The play opens at the Burning Coal Theatre in Raleigh in April.

Richard Gang will be portraying the role of Don Quixote in *Man of La Mancha* at the Open Space Café Theatre in Greensboro, May 12-14 and 20-22.

Cathy McNeela will be doing a partial staged reading of *On Golden Pond* at the Alamance Country Club on March 9 with fellow faculty member **Richard Gang**.

Chip Johnson was recently cast as Doc Porter in *Crimes of the Heart* at the Broach Theatre in Greensboro, NC. The show runs March 2nd through the 21st.

Alumni News & Notes

Dan Gibson recently joined the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop in NYC. Dan is the co-writer of *i.d.*, the new musical that was performed at Elon last year, and will be writing another full-length musical next year.

Chad Edwards and Mount Tabor High School's production of *Rabbit Hole* received state runner-up in the NCTC State High School Theatre Festival. Chad also won the award for Excellence in Direction at the same festival, as well as Teacher of the Year at Mount Tabor High School in Winston-Salem, NC.

Ghenet Pinderhughes was Assistant Director for the world premiere of *Monroe, Illinois: Over Here/Townie* in NYC at the Flea Theater. She is also interning at the New World Stages in NYC.

Maurice Whitfield filmed a spot for NBC's *CHUCK* last November. He is also the drummer for the Nickelodeon band/TV series *Big Time Rush*.

Stuart Richie is the Stage Manager for the *Cirque de Soleil* Canadian/US Tour of *Alegria*.

Marissa Pepple recently played Niebelung in *Das Rheingold* at the Metropolitan Opera.

Daniel Watts is currently in *In the Heights* on Broadway.

Lindsay Northern is currently in *Wicked* on Broadway. She is also playing the role of newlywed in her real life as she was married last September.

Laura Baker, **Lynnae Vana**, and **Annie Duckett** are interning at the B Street Theatre in Sacramento, CA, as a directing, stage management, and acting intern respectively.

Jay Briggs and **Amanda Sox** announced their engagement and are planning for a Summer 2011 wedding.

Caitlin Winter is playing the part of Armina in the national tour of *Oklahoma!* that will travel throughout the US and Canada.

Matt Shingledecker is currently playing Tony in *West Side Story* on Broadway.

Grant Gustin is currently playing Baby John in the Broadway National Tour of *West Side Story*.

Christopher Wood, **Courtney Markowitz**, **Jeff Ostermueller**, and **Erin Burniston** are in the National Tour of *Spring Awakening* as “Melchior”, “Ilse”, and in the ensemble, respectively.

Matt Emig is a costume intern at the Florida Stage in Florida.

Julianne Katz is playing Hodel in the National Tour of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Evan Rose Lipman is enrolled at the Neighborhood Playhouse Conservatory in NYC.

Eric Mann and **Emily Rice** are in the National Tour of *A Chorus Line* as “Mike”, and part of the ensemble, respectively.

Michelle Micca is an Artist Service Intern at Jacob’s Pillow Dance Festival in Massachusetts.

Rachel Perlman is a performer on the Holland America Cruise Line.

Sarah Linn Reedy is a stage management intern at the Florida Stage in Florida.

Jim Reynolds is a performer at the North Carolina Dance Theatre.

Christopher Staskel is attending the MFA Music Theatre Writing Program at NYU.

Alexa Wildish is in the ensemble of Stiletto Entertainment Cruises.

Autumn Welt is attending Smith College on a full scholarship to work on her MFA in Dance.

Christina Caravella is in the ensemble of the National Tour of *The Wedding Singer*.

Bree Sherry is the new resident Production Stage Manager at the Triad Stage in Greensboro after graduating with an MFA in Stage Management from Yale last spring. She just finished stage managing an Opera called *Scipione Affricano*, as well as assistant stage managing The Festival of New Arts there which included 3 musicals: *Room 16*, *Hello, My Baby*, and *Nobody Loves You*.

Meredith Wood is performing in *The Dinner Detective*, a murder mystery in downtown Chicago. She is also portraying a patient at the Northwestern Hospital in Chicago for the training of first/second year med students.

Julius John is now a tenured Associate Professor of Speech and Theatre/Director of Theatre at Bethune-Cookman University in Daytona Beach, FL.

Kevin Hoffman finished grad school in the fall at the Old Globe in San Diego, CA. He has since moved to LA to pursue film and TV, shot a number of short films including an episode of the web series “Taps”, and joined SAG.

Mark Duncan is one of the Resident Directors for the Flea Theatre in NYC.

Sarah Pace is a Producing/Casting intern at the McCarter Theatre in Princeton, NJ, where she has recently gotten the opportunity to work with one of her favorite writers, Christopher Durang.

Caitlin Graham will be an Artistic Direction Intern at the La Jolla Playhouse in La Jolla, California.

Susan Slotoroff just finished playing “Tootle” in the world premiere of *Tootle the Train* at the NY Botanical Gardens, and is now in rehearsals to play Joanna in the new show *6 Silences in 3 Movements* opening in March at Manhattan Repertory Theatre. Her picture can also be seen in *Backstage* in the “Haymarket Annex” advertisement.

Ben Seay is finishing up a political drama indie film and has just started development on a web series.

Daniel Marin is the lead in the Spanish version of the new Verizon Wireless commercial campaign.

Ginny Nagel is teaching pre-school children with special needs at the non-profit Childcare Resources Education in Vero Beach, FL. She also works with a support staff for teenage mothers.

Corey (Roberts) Exline is directing pre-school aged to 8th grade children at Broadway Bound Kids. She has also just helped start the first adult community theater in Brooklyn. Their first show is *Urinetown* and she is playing “Hope”.

Kelly Schmidt just played “Schwarzy” in *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at the Georgia Ensemble Theatre in Roswell, GA, and in the spring she will be appearing in “A Grand Night for Singing” and the Dunwoody Stage Door Players in Dunwoody, GA.

Maggie Henry recurred on the ABC show *Greek* this year, shot a feature film called *Munger Road* with Bruce Davison in Chicago, and starred in the music video for the band Delta Spirit’s song “Bushwick Blues”. She will produce and perform in *Matt and Ben* at the Hollywood Fringe Festival in June.

Shanna Sperry-Dickinson is working in the education department at Sacramento Theatre Company teaching theatre classes to kids from 1st to 9th grade.

Phil Hill is a production stage manager in Bridgeport, CT.

Andrew Frace is still performing as a Swing with *Jersey Boys – Vegas*. Recently, he appeared on *Live! With Regis & Kelly* with the company. Also, he has been cast in an Indie feature film with Somnium Productions shooting this spring.

Braden and Karen Weeks have just moved to New York. Braden is taking meetings with agents and casting directors, and Karen has a job as an HR Business Partner and will finish her master’s degree this spring.

Katie Padgett is the co-director of *MetroTAP* in Washington, DC, which opened at the Chicago Human Rhythm Project last summer. She is also the Director of the Musical Theatre Performance Company at another studio where she teaches in DC.

Rob Marnell is playing Alex the Lion in DreamWorks Theatricals’ first ever live touring show, *Madagascar Live!*.

Kiira Schmidt will be in the Kennedy Center production of *Follies* starring Bernadette Peters.

Turn Yourself In!

Please send your alumni news and notes to Fred Rubeck – rubeck@elon.edu and we will include you in the next edition of *The Marquee*. You may also send items via USPS: Fred Rubeck, *The Marquee*, 2800 Campus Box, Elon, NC 27244