



SETC NEWS

January / February 2009

SETC 2009 Keynote Presenters Are Major Players in Theatre, Film, TV

Where can you get tips from a Tony Award-winning actress who got her start at SETC's auditions? Advice from a top talent agent who found Angelina Jolie some of her first film roles? Words of wisdom from a three-time Tony Award-winning scene designer who also is the production designer behind *Saturday Night Live*?

The answer to all of the above is... the SETC Convention in Birmingham, AL, on March 4-8, 2009. In addition to hosting a myriad of workshops, auditions, festivals and social events, SETC will welcome three leaders in the fields of theatre, film and television. Register online for the convention at www.setc.org by January 28 to save money!

DISTINGUISHED CAREER AWARD & SATURDAY KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Eugene Lee
Scenic Designer
Winner of three Tony Awards
Production Designer for *Saturday Night Live* since 1974



What path takes a scenic designer through a career that intersects regional theatre, Broadway, film and television?

To hear the adventures of one designer who paved his own way through all of these venues, plan to attend Saturday's Keynote Address by SETC's 2009 Distinguished Career Award winner Eugene Lee. He is a three-time Tony Award winner for scenic design and has served for more than three decades as production designer for the popular late-night TV show, *Saturday Night Live*.

In addition to delivering a keynote address, Lee also will accept SETC's Distinguished Career Award during Saturday night's Awards Banquet.

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THURSDAY KEYNOTE TALK-BACK

Mark Redanty

Talent Agent
President, Bauman, Redanty Shaul
Talent Agency

Who should have an agent? How do you get an agent? Once you have an agent, what's next?

If you want answers to these questions, don't miss Thursday's Keynote Talk-Back with Mark Redanty.



Mark Redanty's passion is finding talented performers and getting them started in the field. Case in point: Angelina Jolie. He helped the star land some of her first films, before she was a household name.

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FRIDAY KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Beth Leavel

Actress
2006 Tony Award for Best Actress
On Broadway in *Young Frankenstein*, 2008

How do you land a role on Broadway? What does it take to win a Tony Award for best actress?

If you're looking for advice on making it in the Big Apple, be sure to attend Friday's Keynote Address by Beth Leavel.



Leavel is a Raleigh, NC native who trained for the stage in the Southeast. She earned her undergraduate degree at Meredith College and her master of fine arts

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You Belong at SETC's 60th Anniversary Bash

You are officially invited to the 60th anniversary party of the Southeastern Theatre Conference. In honor of our 60th anniversary, we are planning an event you do not want to miss.

Themed as a Masque Gala, this celebration will provide attendees with an opportunity to don their finest (as the program says, "mask and costume optional").

As we know from personal experience, we "theatre folk" know how to throw a party. And when we are given the opportunity of wearing costumes and masks, we can

turn an ordinary party into an occasion that would be the envy of any party planner on any reality TV show in America.

You don't even have to bring your own mask to get into the spirit of this event. You can make your mask on Saturday morning in *(Continued on Page 8)*

From the President

Glen Gourley



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CELEBRATE SETC'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY AT A MASQUE GALA!

When: 8 p.m., Saturday, March 7, 2009

Where: Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex

Organized by Beth Harvey, Program Chair; Freddy Clements; Betsy Baun, Executive Director; and University of South Alabama's Becky Britton and Connie Smith

ask SETC about

Q What opportunities are there at the convention to get theatre jobs, and must I pre-register for these?

A There are three official ways to find theatre jobs at the SETC Convention:

1) Job Contact Service (JCS)

JCS is the place to find academic, administrative, backstage, design, front-of-house and technical jobs, as well as intern and apprentice positions in those areas.

When: Thursday, 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-Noon. **Location:** Convention Complex/Medical Forum 3rd Floor.

NOTE: You must apply for this event (with application and resume) in addition to registering for the convention. To pre-register, you must apply ONLINE and bring your resume with you to the Job Contact Service room at the convention. Please note: There is a NEW requirement this year for a reference. You need to supply one reference at the

time you apply. If you decide to wait and register on-site, you will need to bring an application form signed by your reference with you or get a reference there. This requirement could pose a big problem if you are not prepared. Be wise and pre-register! If you pre-register by January 28, you will also save yourself some money. It costs a lot more to register on-site!

2) Actor/Tech Walk-Thru

Actor/Tech Walk-Thru is where you can find opportunities to work as a technician and perhaps also "fill in" onstage in minor roles or group scenes. **When:** Saturday, 8:30 a.m. Callbacks follow.

NOTE: You must be pre-registered for the convention and JCS to apply for this service. In addition, you must complete the application process on-site at the SETC Convention by presenting your technical resume to the Job Contact On-site Manager in the Job Contact Service room.

3) Auditions (see below)

Q When and where will auditions be held at the SETC Convention in Birmingham? Where are callbacks?

A The answer depends on the type of auditions in which you are participating. (All auditions require pre-registration.) Here's a rundown by audition type:

Professional Auditions

When: Thursday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m., followed by dance call and company callbacks.

Acting Auditions Location: Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex, CC/East Ballroom A.

Dance Call Location: Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex, CC/East Ballroom B.

Callback Locations: Sheraton Birmingham (adjacent to Convention Complex) and specified Convention Center meeting rooms (during and after the day's workshops).

Undergraduate School Auditions for High School Juniors

When: Saturday, 7 a.m.-5 p.m. **Auditions Location:** Medical Forum Conference Center, which is connected to the Sheraton Hotel. **Callback Location:** Education Expo and Interview Lounge at Exhibit Hall 3.

Undergraduate School Interviews for Transfer Students, High School Seniors and Design/Tech Students

When: Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Professors receive student applicant packets at registration upon arrival.

Interview Request Location: Bulletin Boards in the Interview Lounge at Front of Exhibit Hall A in Convention Center. **Interview Location:** Education Expo and Interview Lounge at Exhibition Hall 3 at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex.

NOTE: Student applicants will be asked to walk on stage at 9 a.m. Saturday during the Undergraduate School Auditions. They will state their names and interest areas. (i.e., "My name is Mary Smith and I want to study scenic design.")

Graduate School Auditions

When: Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Auditions Location: Medical Forum Conference Center Auditorium.

Callback Location: Shared space TBA.

Graduate School Interviews for Design, Technical and Directing

When: Friday, 1:30-4:30 p.m. **Portfolio Review Location:** Medical Forum Conference Center Room C.

Students: Not sure where you fit? For more information, see the chart online at www.setc.org/auditions/undergraduate.php

Apply NOW to Participate in Grad/Undergrad Auditions

The application deadline is January 28 for those wishing to participate in Undergraduate Auditions and Interviews or the Graduate Auditions and Interviews. Visit www.setc.org/auditions/ for more information.

Preliminary School List

Listed below are schools that had registered to participate in the 2009 auditions as of November 13. We expect to **double** the number participating by the time of the convention.

Undergraduate Auditions and College Interviews:

American Musical and Dramatic Academy
Anderson University
Carnegie Mellon University
Catawba College
Cleveland State University
Converse College
Davis and Elkins College
Elon University
Gainesville Theatre Alliance (Brenau University/Gainesville State College)
Illinois State University
Illinois Wesleyan University
Louisiana State University
Loyola University New Orleans
Lyon College
Mars Hill College
Marshall University
Murray State University
Ohio Northern University
Point Park University
Radford University
Rollins College
Rutgers University
Savannah College of Art and Design
Seton Hill University
Shenandoah University
Stella Adler Studio
University of Alabama Birmingham
University of Central Florida
University of Houston
University of Miami
University of South Florida
University of West Georgia
University of Tennessee Chattanooga
Virginia Tech
Wake Forest University
West Virginia Wesleyan College
Western Carolina University
Winthrop University

Graduate Auditions, Design/Tech Interviews and Directing Interviews:

Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre
New Actors Workshop/Antioch University
McGregor
Regent University
Rutgers University
Savannah College of Art and Design
Stella Adler Studio
University of Central Florida
University of Houston
University of Louisville
University of Maryland
University of Memphis
University of Nevada Las Vegas
University of North Carolina Greensboro
University of Southern Mississippi

2009 Design Competition Offers BIG Opportunities

Heads up, emerging designers. This is the year to submit your designs to the SETC Design Competition. Why?

In addition to all the of the reasons that the Design Competition is a great showcase every year, there are two special reasons that it will be a "don't miss" event for student designers this year:

• **Student designers' entries will be displayed at a private showing for professional companies.**

Prior to opening the Design Competition display to the entire convention audience, there will be a private showing in which the professional company representatives can view the designs. Both undergraduate and graduate school designers are invited to participate in this event.

• **Graduate designers have a chance to win one of three READY-FOR WORK DESIGN AWARDS as part of SETC's 60th Anniversary celebration.**

One lucky student in the Graduate Costume Design Competition will win the opportunity to intern for a major costume shop in New York City.

Mark Redanty

(Continued from Page 1)

The list of others he has represented or continues to represent include Bobby Morse, winner of an Emmy Award as well as Tony Awards for best actor in a play and in a musical; Broadway (*Wicked*) and TV (*Pushing Daisies*) star Kristin Chenoweth; Sada Thompson, whose career was recognized by the American Theatre Hall of Fame; Tony, Emmy and Golden Globe-nominated actor Patrick Wilson, and SETC's Friday keynote speaker, Beth Leavel. An agent for over 30 years, Redanty prefers working with artists who approach their acting seriously, valuing training and the intricacies of performance.

Apply Now for Mark Redanty's Musical Theatre Master Class Thursday, March 5, 5:30 p.m.

Would you like to have the opportunity to work with talent agent Mark Redanty at the SETC Convention? He will conduct a master class with 12 musical theatre actors at the SETC Convention as other convention attendees observe. Through his work with the participants, Redanty will demonstrate what current stage and screen producers and agencies are looking for in actors.

Want to be one of the 12 participants? Interested applicants must be nominated by their professors. E-mail Beth Harvey, program chair, at bharvey@fccj.edu for more information. Nomination deadline is January 28. Resumes will be requested, and full convention registration is mandatory.

Want to observe? Arrive early! The room will hold 250 individuals.

One lucky student in the Graduate Lighting Design Competition will win a training opportunity with Vari*Lite.

One lucky student in the Graduate Scenic Design Competition will win the opportunity to intern with a company still to be announced.

Each award comes with \$600 spending money from SETC. Visit SETC's website for details.

Light Lab:

A Special Opportunity for Lighting Designers

Sponsored by Kenton Yeager and University of Tennessee, Knoxville

What better way to learn about and to explore the creative uses of light than to actually TURN ON the lights? This year we will be setting up a 1 to 6 scale lighting lab and offering creative and skill building projects to all those interested. Please come by to participate in the projects and learn how to create your own scale lighting lab. Look for more details in your convention newspaper.

Eugene Lee

(Continued from Page 1)

Awards he has received include:

- Three Tony Awards – for *Candide*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Wicked*.
- the American Theatre Wing's Design Award.
- the Outer Critics' Circle Award.
- the Drama Desk Award.
- the Lucille Lortel Award.
- the Pell Award.
- the Elliot Norton Award for Sustained Achievement.

A resident of Providence, RI, Lee holds bachelor of fine arts (BFA) degrees from the Art Institute of Chicago and Carnegie Mellon, a master of fine arts (MFA) degree from Yale Drama School and three honorary doctorates.

Please join us
for SETC's second annual

DESIGN-TECH MIXER

Sponsored by Selecon and Vari*Lite

WHO'S INVITED:

All techies and designers who work or study in any aspect of technical theatre or theatre design. Come start the 60th Anniversary SETC Convention celebration at the annual Design-Tech Mixer. Last year it was the event of the convention! Over 300 techies mingled and networked while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, drinks (cash bar) and prizes. Don't miss this year's event!

WHEN:

8-9:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 4, 2009

WHERE:

Convention Complex Room N

Hors d'oeuvres Cash Bar

Beth Leavel

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(MFA) in acting at UNC-Greensboro. At the SETC auditions in 1980, Leavel landed a job as an intern at Pennsylvania Stage in Allentown. By 1981, she was pursuing her acting career in New York.

Leavel won the 2006 Tony Award, Drama Desk Award, New York Outer Critics Circle Award and L.A. Drama Critics Award for her performance as the Drowsy Chaperone in *The Drowsy Chaperone*.

From July through the end of November 2008, she portrayed Frau Blucher in *Young Frankenstein* on Broadway. She left that role to star in *Minsky's*, which will premiere at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles and is expected to move after that to Broadway.

States Report on Annual Conventions;

FLORIDA Theatre Association

Number in attendance: 1467.

Winners of Community Theatre Festival: *Nine*, Theatre A La Carte, Tallahassee, FL; and *The School for Wives*, Venice Theatre, Venice, FL.

Winners of Secondary Theatre Festival: *John Lennon and Me*, Booker High School, Sarasota, FL; Runner-up: *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, Gulf Breeze High School, Gulf Breeze, FL.

Idea to Share: Florida Theatre Idol. Sixteen participants performed on Thursday evening and a panel of three judges (including SETC Executive Director Betsey Baun) selected four contestants as semifinalists. These four semifinalists performed throughout the next two days between the one-act plays. Conference attendees could vote for their favorite performer by contributing \$1 per vote. The four semifinalists performed during the Saturday evening Awards Show, where the winner and a runner-up were announced. The winner received a \$200 prize and the runner-up received a \$100 prize. The remainder of the funds raised through the Florida Theatre Idol competition will go toward FTC's scholarship funds.



Stephen Bayless

Stephen Bayless, State Representative
Robert Ankrom, State Executive Director

GEORGIA Theatre Association

Number attending: 1246.

Winner of Community Theatre Festival: *Controlling Interest*, Lionheart Theatre Company, Norcross, GA.

Winner of High School Theatre Festival: *Mandy Dear*, South Forsyth High School, Cumming, GA.

Idea to Share #1: One-Act Playwriting Festival. GTC hosts an annual one-act playwriting festival. This year over 50 plays were submitted. Overall winner: *Weavers*, by Evan Guilford Blake of Atlanta, GA, Winner of the 18 or under category: *A Pretense of Plans*, by Louisa Hill of Decatur, GA.

Idea to Share #2: High School/

College and University Interaction.

We hold an overlapping College/University and Secondary School Division meeting, hosted by a vendor, enabling folks from the divisions to interact.

Idea to Share #3: More Performance Opportunities.

We hold two Secondary School Festivals, one for SETC consideration, and the other following the general guidelines of the Georgia High School Association.

Duke Guthrie
State Representative



Duke Guthrie

KENTUCKY Theatre Association

Number attending: Just over 500.

Winner of Community Theatre Festival: *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged*, Glema Mahr Center for the Arts, Madisonville, KY.

Winner of High School Theatre Festival: *Feeding the Moonfish*, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, Lexington, KY.

Idea to share: On-site Conference Survey. This year, KTA introduced an on-site conference survey, which was inserted into the all-conference program. To increase participation in the survey, KTA held a drawing of completed surveys and gave away prizes, including gift packs and tickets to KTA-member shows. The survey asked members to provide demographic information, feedback to improve the conference, and potential future programming ideas. It was disseminated to high school students, college students, teachers, directors and audience members. This survey will assist KTA in better serving its members in organization, new programming and potential new grant proposals.

To see a copy of the KTA survey, e-mail me at doug.Schutte@theatreky.org

Doug Schutte
Executive Director



Doug Schutte

MISSISSIPPI Theatre Association

Mississippi Theatre Association's annual convention and festivals will be in Natchez on January 15-18, 2009.

Idea to Share # 1: Town Hall Meetings. We have been doing "Town Hall" meetings all across Mississippi for the last two years to give people input on MTA activities and information about our theatre organization.

Idea to Share #2: New Contest. We are adding a High School Playwriting Competition for the first time this year.

Tom Booth
State Representative

SOUTH CAROLINA Theatre Association

Number attending: 300.

Winner of Community Theatre Festival: *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, Greenwood Community Theatre, Greenwood, SC.

Winner of High School Theatre Festival: *Scooter Thomas Makes It To The Top of the World*, Lexington High School, Lexington, SC.

Award Recipients:

Founder's Award: Glen Gourley, Francis Marion University. Lifetime Service Award: Christine Fisher, ABC Project, Winthrop University. Outstanding Educator Award: Mark Charney, Clemson University. Deborah Smith Hoffman Mentor Educator Award: Leslie Dellinger, Lexington High School.

Idea to share: Eliminate Luncheon Banquet, Combine Other Events.

A couple of years ago, we eliminated our Sunday luncheon banquet, which we found many did not attend, partly because they did not want to pay for it. We started having our all-convention business meeting, keynote speaker and awards on Saturday night instead. We have had much better attendance with this schedule.

Leslie Dellinger
State Representative



Leslie Dellinger

Look for reports from Alabama and North Carolina and details on winners from Mississippi in the March/April SETC News.

Share Innovative Ideas

TENNESSEE Theatre Association

Number attending: 375.

Winner of Community Theatre Festival: *Escanaba in Love*, Cookeville Drama Center, Cookeville, TN.

Winner of High School Theatre Festival: *The Insanity of Mary Girard*, Montgomery Bell Academy and the Harpeth Hall School, Nashville, TN.

Idea to share #1: Two-Day Screening Auditions.

This year the SETC screening auditions were expanded to cover two days. The first day was devoted to in-state auditionees, and the second day was primarily for out-of-state auditionees with some overflow from the in-state actors. This occurred due to the unprecedented increase in audition applications last year, when many actors were turned away. The expansion made for a smooth and equitable audition.

Idea to Share #2: Networking for New Position. We invited the executive director for the Tennessee Association of Dance, Karen Wilson, to be our guest at the conference. Wilson then met with our board of directors to share her ideas for how TTA might initiate an executive director position.

Idea to Share #3: High School/College and University Interaction. We continued an event that was started at the 2007 conference. College and University representatives were invited to attend the Secondary School Festival's lunch break (with pizza provided by TTA) to meet and talk with students about their college plans.

*Melissa Shafer
State Representative*



Melissa Shafer

VIRGINIA Theatre Association

VTA holds three events each year: Virginia Theatre Association (VTA) Annual Conference; VTA Community Theatre Festival; and VTA Young People's Theatre Festival

Number Attending: 1400; 45; and 300; for a total attendance of 1745.

Awards: 2008 VTA Lifetime Achievement Award; LaVahn Hoh, professor and associ-

ate chair, Department of Drama, University of Virginia.

Winner of Community Theatre Festival: *Open Meeting*, Castaways Repertory Theatre, Woodbridge, VA.

Winner of High School Theatre Festival: *Ellis Island, The Dream of America*, E. C. Glass High School, Lynchburg, VA.

Idea to Share: High School/College and University Interaction. Collaborating with the College and University Division, VTA offered a workshop for high school students that featured a panel of college students and professors from different state colleges. They discussed what each of their programs had to offer undergraduates, what their strengths were and what the differences were between an MFA, MA, BA, BFA and other degrees. The college students talked about their lives as theatre students. The high school students and teachers really enjoyed it. They were able to ask questions about the programs and degrees offered and how being a theatre student would impact their college studies. The discussion was so worthwhile that the college and university representatives are planning to do it again next year and requested a longer block of time.

*Mary K. Molineu, Executive Director
Kimberly Kemp, State Representative*



Mary K. Molineu

Richard Finkelstein

WEST VIRGINIA Theatre Conference

Number attending: Over 400.

Winner of Community Theatre Festival: *Catch and Release*, Independent Theatre Collective, Wheeling, WV.

Winner of High School Theatre Festival: *Deliver Us Not!*, Oak Glen High School, New Cumberland, WV.

Idea to share: WVTC is developing an entry for the website Wikipedia.

*April Daras
State Representative*

Commercial Exhibitors Commit to SETC 2009

Look for the following vendors in the Commercial Exhibits area at the 2009 SETC Convention in Birmingham. This list, current as of November 14, is expected to grow even more by the time of the convention.

Anchorage Press Plays
Apollo Design Technology
Atlanta Workshop Players
Barbizon Lighting Company
Community Shakespeare
Costume Holiday House, Inc.
Custom Stage Services, Inc
Drama Education Network
Dramatic Publishing
Dramatist Play Service
Envision Group
Field Template
Fisher Theatrical LLC
Focus Publishing
Interactive Educational Video
Mainstage Theatrical Supply
Manhattan Tour and Travel
Miller and Campbell Costume Service
New Plays
Norcostco-Atlanta Costume
Parlights
Rosco Labs
Samuel French Inc
Sculptural Arts Coating
Selecon
Shure Inc.
Stage Directions/Timeless Communication
Strand Lighting
Texas Scenic Company, Inc.
(The) Magnum Companies
Theatrical Lighting Systems Inc (TLS)
Theatrical Rights Worldwide
Vectorworks by Nemetschek North America

ARTS opportunities

Fellowships are available for theatre professionals interested in exploring links between theatre and psychoanalysis. Details: Visit www.apsa.org, and click on "Fellowship Program."

Actor's Theatre of Charlotte is accepting submissions through March 1 for its **MFA Playwriting Award**. Details: Visit www.actorstheatrechlotte.org.



Buy a Shirt, Send a Kid to School!

Want a cool SETC shirt? Want to help students go to theatre school? Your purchase of an SETC T-shirt helps fund the SETC Endowment, which will pay out more than \$20,000 in scholarships this year. Look for SETC shirt displays throughout the convention site in March.

PEOPLE
on the move

Steven R. Chicurel, chair of theatre at the University of Central Florida, and **John Bell**, chair of theatre at DeSales University (PA) are the authors of a new book, *Music Theory for Musical Theatre*. Published by Scarecrow Press with a lay-flat binding for easy use in the classroom and concluding with a glossary that reinforces important terminology, this textbook is designed to demystify music theory and analysis. Visit www.scarecrowpress.com for more information.

In Memoriam

Robin R. Farquhar, who had served since 1983 as artistic and executive director of Flat Rock Playhouse, the State Theatre of North Carolina, passed away Monday, November 3. He was 59.

He was the son of Robroy and Leona Farquhar, founders of Flat Rock Playhouse, located in the North Carolina mountains. Both Robin and his father were former chairs of SETC's Professional Theatre Division.

During Robin's tenure at Flat Rock, he created a new vision for the Playhouse. The organization grew from a 10-week summer stock company to a year-round professional regional theatre and school advancing the dual mission of quality performance and arts education. The performing series now spans nine months and entertains over 95,000 theatergoers while the educational component, YouTheatre, instructs up to 1,000 students each year. Seasonal artists and college students number more than 100.

The day before his death, the Playhouse dedicated the Robin R. Farquhar Education Center. Constructed in 2007 at the Playhouse site, the state-of-the-art facility is the centerpiece of an educational mission fulfilling both his and his father's long-term goals for the Vagabond School of the Drama, Inc.



Rosemary Ingham, one of the nation's foremost costume designers and the author of several widely-used books on costume design and technology, died follow-



**Looking for Broadway news, talk and tickets?
Explore This 'Facebook' for Theatre Lovers**

Have you found BroadwaySpace.com on the Internet yet? This jolly site is chock-full of activities to entice and engage anyone "mad for theatre" among us.

Ken Davenport, one of the site's founders declares, "And then one day I thought... what if there was a place where all of the people just like me hung out all the time? What if there was a place where it always felt like you were doing a show, and it never closed? What if there was a place that made you feel like you were living in the heart of Times Square, even though you might be living in Worcester, Massachusetts? So, I got together with my great friend and my tech guru, Cedric Yau (who got a masters in computer science at 20), and we created BroadwaySpace.com."

BroadwaySpace.com is very similar to Facebook and MySpace with one big difference: It's geared to theatre people. You have to join to really explore its myriad blogs, links and groups, all related to Broadway. The site has an unmistakable teen-young adult atmosphere; you can imagine my hesitance in admitting my age in my profile. Surprise, surprise, I found two inquiries in the morning e-mail. Maybe I'll install a photo and let people see exactly what they're dealing with.

Go see this energetic website for yourself. You can buy tickets, compete for ticket prizes, read news about show business in New York, and join groups who like to Q&A about individual Broadway shows. I also noticed a good deal of fan mail to current popular Broadway singers.

At the bottom of the home page, there are links to three more sites of potential interest to SETC members:

<http://theproducersperspective.com>. "A theatre producer (Ken Davenport) in NYC gives his opinions on everything related to Broadway and beyond." (quoted from the website)

www.didhelikeit.com. "Welcome to DidHeLikelt.com, your official guide to theatre reviews by me, Ben Brantley. If you want to know what other reviewers thought and read their reviews, just click on a show's link on the left." (quoted from the website)

www.bestsoffbroadway.com/ "Welcome to The Best of Off-Broadway, the most comprehensive source for Off-Broadway news, tickets, theater discounts, and Off-Broadway show information. Sign up today to receive exclusive information on Off-Broadway and have access to our 'Members Only' discounts!" (quoted from the website)

Don Wolfe can be reached at wolfe@wakeforest.edu.



ing a stroke on July 13. She was 71.

Ingham, who got her start sewing costumes for the theatre department at the University of Virginia, was an early leader of SETC.

"She saved the organization from disaster in October 1959 when James Helms of the University of Virginia was killed in a plane crash," notes Philip G. Hill, an SETC past president who has researched the organization's history. "Helms was the elected Executive Secretary-Treasurer, an officer who was responsible for managing SETC's office activities when we had about 160 members. Ingham was Helms' office assistant and agreed to take over his responsibilities on an emergency basis. She was then elected to a two-year term of her own in March 1960 and completed it from

her new home in Maryland in 1962."

More recently, Ingham had attended the 2002 SETC Convention in Mobile, serving as an adjudicator for the Design Competition.

BIRMINGHAM
MARCH 4-8, 2009

Planning your trip to SETC 2009?
Here are some links that provide information about Birmingham area restaurants and attractions:
<http://birminghamal.org/thingstodo.html>
www.inbirmingham.org

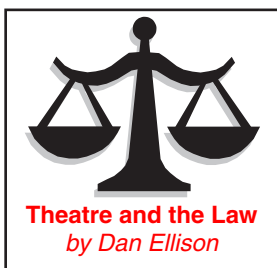
A Copy or Not a Copy? That is the Question...

Settlements in cases involving the copying of stage directions for *Urinetown* raise questions for theatres

The lawsuits alleging that theatres in Chicago and Akron copied stage directions (and other elements) from the original Broadway *Urinetown* production have both now been settled – without any court ruling actually deciding the underlying issues. (The Chicago settlement was announced in November 2007; the Akron settlement was posted in July 2008; see the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers (SSDC) website at www.ssdcc.org for the settlement statement.)

To briefly summarize the issues:

- When you at your local theatre license a play or musical, does that allow you to replicate original creative elements of the choreography, stage direction, lighting



Theatre and the Law
by Dan Ellison

design, scenic design and costume design? (Note: In this article, I will use the term “stage directions” to encompass all of these creative elements.)

- Do directors, set designers, choreographers and other creative team members have copyright in their work?

The settlements acknowledged similarities in production and included payments by the non-Broadway parties to the original creative team, but we are not privy to the specific details. The joint Akron settlement release by the SSDC and United Scenic Artists quotes Cecilia Friederichs of United Scenic Artists stating that the settlement recognizes “the unique contributions of directors, designers and choreographers to theatrical production, and that these contributions are original, creative works that may not be used without the appropriate consideration, compensation and credit...” However, these settlements do not provide the clarity that a court decision on the issues may ultimately provide.

Settlements notwithstanding, it remains unclear to what extent the various creative elements are copyrightable. There is also a question about whether particular stage directions will be considered derivative works of the play itself. It is likely that some elements are so clearly dictated by the script itself that your local production will present those elements in essentially the same way that the Broadway (or any other earlier) production presented them.

So, will you be accused of copying? Will the *Urinetown* police come to your theatre next? The joint release suggests that “through appropriate licensing mechanisms, local theatres can replicate the Broadway productions with greater ease, having the blessing and, often times, the assistance of the original creators.”

Here are some specific issues you should look at as a result of the settlement:

Find Out If Play's Staging Is Licensed

According to a representative of Music Theatre International (MTI), there are five musicals in the MTI catalogue that have the original staging available: *West Side Story*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *The Producers*, *The World Goes 'Round* and *The Fantastiks*. When you purchase rights to produce these musicals, you can create your own staging – or you can choose to license the Broadway staging. (For some of these plays, the

staging is automatically included when you purchase rights to produce it; for others, you need to pay a relatively small additional fee for rights to the staging.) With new musicals, it appears that this additional licensing for staging may become the rule.

Apply Pre-1978, Post-1978 Guideline

For plays that were staged prior to 1978 (at a time when formalities of copyright registration were required), it is likely that stage directions (other than those contained in the copyrighted script) are simply not protected by copyright. After 1978, however, the copyright laws no longer required registration for copyright to exist. Therefore, for plays that were staged after 1978, copyrights on stage directions may arguably be in effect even without a copyright registration. *Urinetown* isn't the first production to be involved in this type of controversy. *The Most Happy Fella* (1992) and *Love! Valour! Compassion!* (1995) are the two other most notable cases – but both of those also had their copyright issues settled out of court.

Ask If You Aren't Sure

If you want to replicate the staging of a production and if you don't want to become a test case on the issue of stage direction copyrights, you need to ask the licensing agency for its input on these issues for the particular play/musical you are planning to produce. The licensing agency should be able to give you specific, practical advice for the particular work.

But what about productions of public domain material? If the stage directions are indeed copyrightable, then the issues are just as applicable to productions of public domain material – and yet there is not a licensing agency involved.

If you're staging a post-1978 work and you want to stay on the safe side, ask the director whose work you may be replicating and/or ask an attorney for some specific advice. Are you copying another director's *Hamlet*? Ah, there's the rub.

Dan Ellison is a Durham, NC-based attorney who has concentrated on arts-related law and nonprofit law for 15 years. He is a past president and the current executive director of the North Carolina Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Have a question? E-mail him at: artandmuseumlaw@aol.com.

Note: The contents of this column are intended for general information purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion on any specific facts or circumstances.

AROUND the region

Wiped out by a fire that destroyed its rented space, costumes, sets and much memorabilia in February 2007, **Rock Hill Community Theatre** has moved into a storefront in downtown Rock Hill, SC.

“The former mayor of Rock Hill, Betty Jo Rhea, and her family made this building available to us for a reasonable amount and we are thrilled,” says **Susan Smith**, president of the board.

The space includes a lobby with bar, bathrooms, space for a greenroom/dressing room area, a costume storage room, room for a small office, some storage, a paint sink and a blackbox/studio performance space.

“Sure, we can't do *The Sound of Music* in this space, but it is a start,” Smith says. “We are so optimistic about the future.”

Greensboro College is expanding its production and performance space, thanks to an anonymous donor's gift. The college plans to create a backstage technical theatre center for set design and production, two full-size rehearsal spaces and a patio theatre area on a 3.76-acre tract that formerly was the site of **Sculptural Arts Coating**, which has moved to a new location. (That company is owned by **John Saari**, who teaches at Greensboro, and his wife Lisa.) The donor who made the purchase possible has pledged to match dollars raised in “The Standing Ovation!” fundraising campaign.



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SETC NEWS

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Festivals SETC Connection Job Contact Service *Networking* AUDITIONS Workshops
EXPLORE . . . DISCOVER . . . EXPERIENCE SETC 2008 . . . IN BIRMINGHAM . . . MARCH 4-8
 Undergraduate Auditions **Fringe Festival** Speakers *10-Minute Play Festival* Graduate Auditions *Education Expo*

President's Column

(Continued from Page 1)

a workshop at the convention center.

You don't have a costume? You can rent one from a remarkable collection at the Playhouse, a few blocks away from the convention center by trolley. Just return your costume outside the ballroom after the gala between 10:30 p.m. and 12:30 a.m. Couldn't be easier!

The reasons for choosing the Masque Gala theme are more than just to create excitement around our 60th anniversary celebration. Masks also will be part of a silent auction fundraiser to enhance our Endowment Fund. Freddy Clements of Jacksonville State University has contacted designers from all over the country, who will be donating masks for you to bid on. It's a great way to add funds to our endowment – and thus, our scholarships – while also enhancing your costume or your "finest" with a one-of-a-kind mask.

Whether you bring a mask, make a mask, buy a mask or choose to go maskless, join us Saturday evening, March 7, in Birmingham for the party celebrating SETC's 60th!

**Where's SETC in 2010?
 It starts with an 'L'...**

In this issue of *SETC News* last year, I asked readers to contact me with location suggestions for SETC's 2010 convention. One of those that answered my call for ideas was Kentucky, which offered not one, but two fabulous options.

Several SETC members, as well as Kentucky's Executive Director Doug Schutte, connected us to the convention and visitors bureaus in Louisville and Lexington.

SETC's site selection team visited both locations last summer. It was a very difficult decision, but we have now made our selection for the 2010 convention location.

Drum roll... check the SETC website after January 1 for our announcement!

From the
 Executive Director
Betsey Baun



SETC 2009

Birmingham, AL March 4-8

Where to Send News

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