

The Journal of
The American Academy of Dramatic Arts

Fall/Winter 2008



**Inside: Catching
up with Emmy
Award Winner
Peter Bergman**

**Gil Bellows
discusses life
as an actor and
new role on 24**

From Roger Croucher AADA President & CEO



Dear Students, Alumni and Friends;

It has been a busy summer for all of us here at the Academy, and with much news to convey it is my particular pleasure to welcome you to this fall edition of our AADA Journal.

First, it is my privilege to announce an enhanced curriculum in our internationally recognized and highly regarded Professional Training Program for the Academic Year 2009-10. While retaining the core courses that have made us a leader in actor training since 1884, we have strengthened our existing program by adding new ones.

In New York and in Los Angeles, our talented and dedicated faculties have combined their wisdom and many years of experience to produce a curriculum that is both demanding and rewarding with the single goal of preparing our students for long and fulfilling acting careers in theatre, film and television.

Secondly, I am delighted to announce that, as of June 30, 2008 the Los Angeles campus of AADA is recognized as a branch campus of New York and is accredited by MSCHE (www.msche.org), a unit of the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges. Colleges accredited by MSCHE must meet or exceed rigorous standards and among the many colleges accredited by MSCHE are Princeton, Columbia and New York Universities. In addition, both campuses are also accredited by National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST).

On the technological side, you will see on the following pages that our own AADA Windows Live@Edu network is up and running. It is our plan to have the AADA site available to all students and alumni by the end of the current calendar year. It is my hope that when you are contacted by the alumni office that you embrace this opportunity to reconnect with friends, classmates and colleagues through these sites.

Regarding the AADA Board of Trustees, it is my very great pleasure to welcome Steve Sanders to the Academy as our newest trustee. Steve comes to AADA with an abundance of experience, and we all look forward to working with him.

To all our new students, returning students and Company members I say, "welcome back!" All of us are looking forward to an exciting and creative school year here at AADA.

ROGER CROUCHER

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roger Croucher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President and CEO

AADA Welcomes Steve Sanders to our Board of Directors



We are pleased to announce Steven A. Sanders as the newest member of our board. Mr. Sanders is a partner in the law firm of Sanders, Ortoli, Vaughn-Flam, and Rosenstadt, LLP and is a member of the American Bar Association, New York State Bar Association, and the Bar of the City of New York, where he serves on its European Affairs Committee. He holds degrees from City College of New York and Cornell Law School.

Mr. Sanders is the Honorary Consul for the Republic of Moldova to the United States and serves on numerous for-profit boards. Additionally, he is active in the not-for-profit arena and serves on the boards of the Roundabout Theatre Company, Town Hall and the New York Theatre Ballet.

Mr. Sanders brings 35 years of experience in corporate and international law and we are pleased to welcome him to our board.

Live@EDU

The Academy Launches Its Online Community: AADA on Live@EDU

New and returning students in New York and Los Angeles this fall received something never before included in the Academy's admissions packet: instructions for accessing their own email address and account on the new AADA online network. This fall the

Academy's email system and Internet community, based on Microsoft's Windows Live @ EDU program, was implemented Academy-wide. This marks the first time in its history that the Academy has had an official network that will enable students, faculty and alumni to connect and communicate online.

Student and staff test users from both campuses helped throughout the 2007-08 school year to test out this customized email and communication suite and offer feedback. After an exhaustive test period, we have founded an interactive community for all things AADA. Faculty can share resources and foster class discussions outside of classroom hours. Students can maintain a central rehearsal calendar accessible from anywhere in the world and alert their classmates about their upcoming exam plays and showcases. Perhaps most exciting: alumni will soon be able to reconnect and keep in touch with former classmates and teachers with a simple search of the network.

As members of the Academy's online community, students, and eventually alums, will have access to their own standardized email address on the **AADAnetwork.org**



domain, which they may continue to use even after leaving the Academy. In addition to email, the system provides an individual Live Space – a personal page to post original content and network with classmates and colleagues. Spaces also allow users to share calendars, publicize their events and save/share up to 5 GB of music, photo or document files online.

Currently accounts have been created for all current students and 2008 graduates, as well as faculty and staff members at both the Los Angeles and New York campuses. Alumni will be brought into the network gradually, and will be contacted individually via email when this occurs. To make sure they receive their invitation to join the network, alums should stop by www.aada.org/alumni to update their current email address.

We are all excited to see how this community grows and all the connections – and reconnections – we are bound to make. Anyone can visit the Academy Spaces main page at <http://aadaalumni.spaces.live.com> to check for updates and Academy news.

New Accreditation for LA Campus

AADA President and CEO, Roger Croucher, and LA Campus President, James Warwick, are pleased to announce that as of June 27, 2008, our Los Angeles campus, (prior separate accreditation by ACCJC-WASC) is officially included as a branch campus in our accreditation (since 1983) by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Both campuses are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST).



As Contestant Coordinator for Idol, I lived with the contestants. I worked seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. I kept my cell phone on all night in case someone needed me.”

Lisl Wright (far right) with Priscilla Presley and Louis van Amstel.

Lisl Wright

Interview by Kathleen Germann

Most people find it difficult to balance their professional and personal lives but for newlywed Lisl Wright (1996), a former Contestant Coordinator on *American Idol* and current Talent Coordinator on *Dancing with the Stars*, 'hectic' is an understatement. "Working on *American Idol* and *Dancing with the Stars* are completely different experiences, but both entail extremely long hours and very little personal time. As Contestant Coordinator for *Idol*, I lived with the contestants. I worked seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day. I kept my cell phone on all night in case someone needed me.

When asked about a typical week on *Dancing*, Lisl explained, "We camera block every Sunday which means that each couple has about thirty minutes on stage to dance to a track of their music. The director needs to see the choreography and where the couple will be on stage throughout their dance. With this, he can tell the camera crew which shots he wants during the live broadcast. After camera blocking, each couple goes to wardrobe for any last minute alterations and the ladies get spray-tanned."

"On Mondays, the day begins early with all the female celebrities and pro-dancers getting started in hair and makeup. When the men arrive, each couple spends about twenty minutes on stage for their orchestra rehearsal. Since this is the first time they dance to our live band, they want to make sure the tempo is right. At 1:00, there is a full dress rehearsal, and around 3:00, they have hair and makeup touch-ups and any wardrobe fixings. Between 4:15 and 4:30, everyone heads to stage to get mic'd up and we're live at 5! Tuesdays are much the same, except around 4:00 we pre-tape any musical and dance acts and feed the tape during the live show when we go live at 6:00."

"It wasn't easy," she replied, when asked how she made the transition from performing to production. "Trying to get a job in production was just as difficult as trying to find an acting job. What I was drawn to as an actor was that particular energy - that buzz. I can't explain it, but it was the entire environment that excited me, and I realized that there are so many other opportunities here in Los Angeles."

"I landed my first production job on *American Idol* while I was working at a camera rental shop in Hollywood. My manager knew that the executive in charge was looking for a receptionist. I was called in for an interview and was offered the job. Three months later I was promoted to Contestant Coordinator."

Discipline and professionalism, as well as acting itself, are some of the skills she honed at the Academy. "If the day is going badly, the last thing you want is for the celebrities to know about it. I just run around acting as though everything is perfect. I remember in Harvey Solin's class at the Academy that if you were even one second late you weren't allowed in. That scared me and I was always on time. One person's tardiness can hold up an entire production. I've seen it happen and it's so frustrating!"

"On *Dancing* I'm working with celebrities who come into the show with an understanding of production. On *Idol*, there's a lot of hand-holding of the contestants (and their parents). One day they're a bartender and the next they're on the number one television show in America. Some have never even been on an airplane and many think it will be one big party. What they soon realize is that this is now their job. They end up working seven days a week and they have to develop a professional attitude."

"When I moved to Los Angeles, I had a one-way ticket into Burbank Airport and I had never been so scared in my life. Everything seemed so foreign to me. I know many of the contestants on *Idol* felt the same way having left friends, family and security. Granted, performing live in front of 28 million people is different from performing an exam play at the Academy, but nerves are nerves. You just want to do your best."

Although her schedule on *Dancing* is frenetic, Lisl doesn't waste any time between shows. "I'm currently working on *Hulk Hogan's Celebrity Championship Wrestling* as their Key Makeup Artist. It's actually a very simple job. The women come in camera-ready, so the hair and makeup department only provide touch-ups. As for the men, some prefer no hair and makeup, while others indulge in it."

In August Lisl headed back to *Dancing with the Stars* for her fifth season as Talent Coordinator, but beyond that, "Honestly, I don't know. I've never really put the pressure on myself to have a 'plan.' I would like to continue working in makeup, but I have found that my priorities have shifted. I just got married in April and my marriage is the most important thing to me. I have a wonderful husband, and we're already thinking about starting a family of our own. I just don't know how I would balance my life as a wife and a mother while working such long hours. In the meantime, I'll just wait and see."

New York



The Lady From Dubuque

by Edward Albee
Director Barry Snider



Wildest Dreams

by Alan Ayckbourn
Director Jonathan Bolt

Never in My Lifetime

by Shirley Gee,
Director Zenon Kruzelnicki



A Sample of Graduation Plays 2008



Pride and Prejudice

by Jon Jory, adapted from the novel by Jane Austen
Director James Warwick

Expecting Isabel

by Lisa Loomer,
Director Ben Martin



Los Angeles

The Heiress

by Augustus and Ruth Goetz,
Director Jules Aaron



“Choosing to be an actor is choosing to be more involved in life.”



Peter Bergman Interview by Kathleen Germann

When the Academy was reviewing the list of alumni who had received Emmy Award nominations we realized that one alumnus was responsible for 17 of our 249 nominations. Peter Bergman (1975), who plays Jack Abbott on daytime's *The Young and the Restless*, has been nominated for Outstanding Actor in a Drama Series 16 times for this role and once for his role as Dr. Cliff Warner on *All My Children*. His accolades include three wins and a special Fan Award in 2004.

“I thought the number was fifteen or sixteen [nominations] but it may be more. I had one at *All My Children*, and there were two years that I didn't submit myself. Maybe you guys are right,” Bergman said in a telephone interview from his dressing room. “The Emmys are great fun for me. I've been doing this for 29 years now; I'm part of an industry and I have a nice place in it.”

“I never met anyone who got into this business to be on a soap,” he replied, when asked if he had any idea that he would end up on a daytime drama. “First and foremost, people want to be actors to use themselves and the characters they play to express their artistic need. The best actors are prepared for anything; the worst have only one thing they want to do. People tend to make a lot of assumptions about daytime television but the best shows and the best actors on them are very good, they are actors who could work anywhere else, they just happen to land in daytime television and I get to be among them.”

“The day I auditioned for *All My Children*,” Bergman reminisced, “I had had two earlier auditions. When I got there, they were pairing off actors to read together. The casting director asked me to come back the next day and the producers wanted to put me on tape. After several

callbacks, I got the role of nice guy, Dr. Cliff Warner. At the time, I had no idea at all that I was about to hit the crest of the wave of soap operas. Daytime dramas were through the roof and I went on to be on the cover of *People* magazine twice."

"Right out of the gate, it was clear to me that what I had done at AADA fed what I was doing on the soap. I was cast at the same time as several other actors but I had a distinct advantage because I had a theatre background. I knew how to break down a scene, I knew the value of the scene was greater than the value of the character and I knew it wasn't enough to be honest but that I had to tell a story. I knew how to keep my instrument open and how to breathe. I learned all this at the Academy."

"I remember, one of our instructors, George Guidall, told us, 'If you can't tell me what your process is then you don't have a process.' He taught an entire class on animalization which at the time I thought was nonsense and boring, but this man turned it into something interesting. He directed me in the play *The Royal Family* and I played Tony Cavendish who was a young stallion. His movements were swift and sharp, his head held high all the time. It became such a fun exercise and it taught me to try new things. When opportunities came, on the soap, to make bigger choices, I was less scared than most of the other actors."

"When my time at *All My Children* came to an end, ten years into my contract, I was thrown back into the world of auditioning regularly, but now I had a family to feed. *The Young and the Restless* was the number one program in daytime and they were looking to replace someone who was leaving after ten years. I wasn't sure I wanted to do another soap, I didn't want to replace another actor and I definitely didn't want to move to California, but the reality was that my wife was pregnant with our second child and this was an opportunity I had to at least explore."

"It's a horrible job replacing someone. It's pretty thankless work for the first six months, because everyone

knows the character better than you. Y&R fans resented me at first and it was hard to bring my fans over from *All My Children* but I came on with a great story and eventually people came around. The soap magazines all noted that they had cast nice guy Cliff Warner to play the nasty Jack Abbott, but again, I had played parts like this many times... at the Academy."

"Breaking down a character and finding out what is unique about that character are things that I learned at AADA and became skills that helped me to understand and create this new role. I came out to audition for this part and it's lasted nineteen years." When asked how he manages to keep this role fresh he replied, "You're only playing one character, but you also have the giant advantage of having played this character day after day. Your inner life is so rich, and it's not stuff you're making up; you've lived it, you've played those scenes. The relationship you have with this character has developed over years and you were there. You are free to explore all kinds of emotional depths and you can make your character as complex and as interesting as you want him to be."

"My schedule is hard to anticipate," he responded when asked about a typical workday. "I work more than most actors on soap operas. A typical actor works a couple of days a week; I work closer to four, as I am a central character. We shoot an episode each day and today we will finish 78 pages. It's a bizarre schedule and you have to be prepared the moment you come out."

When asked what advice he would give to young actors he replied, "If acting is something you need to do then nothing I have to say will talk you out of it. Choosing to be an actor is choosing to be more involved in life, to be part of the world, to embrace more aspects of life. There is nothing sadder to me than meeting an actor who has put the rest of his or her life on hold until they got what they wanted as an actor. They had less and less to play because they had less and less experience in the world. Actors are bright, evolved, informed people who know what's going on in the world because they know they will have to play these roles in the future. They're sensitive, smart sophisticated people at their best."



On the set of the *Young and the Restless*

Peter Bergman as Jack Abbott



Peter Bergman in *The Royal Family*
at the Academy



New York Class of 2008



President and CEO Roger Croucher applauds the new graduates during his address



Lonnie Quinn (1987) addresses the new graduates



Four-time Tony Award-winner and guest speaker, Boyd Gaines



President and CEO Roger Croucher and guest speaker Boyd Gaines with award recipients



Trustee and acclaimed screenwriter, William Blinn, was honored at the LA graduation

LA Campus grads celebrate their accomplishments



Lauren Bengel (left) is congratulated by a friend



Kamel Dickinson (far right) celebrates with family

LA Campus President James Warwick and guest speaker, Beth Broderick (1977) congratulate the new graduates



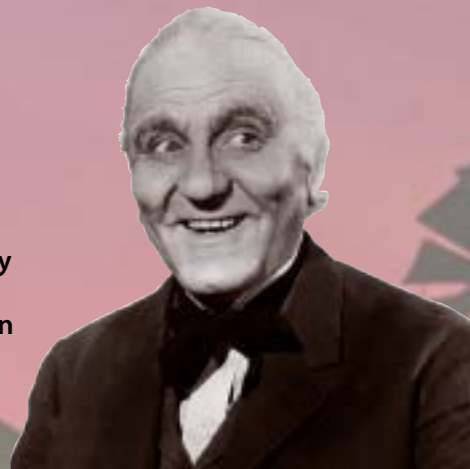
Los Angeles Class of 2008



Witches &



Elizabeth Montgomery (1953) as Samantha on *Bewitched*



Frank Morgan (1914) as *The Wizard of Oz*

Wizards at the Academy



Agnes Moorehead (1929) as Endora on *Bewitched*



Lisa Brescia (1991) as Elphaba in Broadway's *Wicked*



Ruth Gordon (right) (1915) and John Cassavetes (1950) in *Rosemary's Baby*

Beth Broderick (1977) as Aunt Zelda in *Sabrina: The Teenage Witch*



Marion Lorne (1904) played Aunt Clara on *Bewitched*

Are you a good witch or a bad witch?

The Academy has trained actors who have performed magic and cast spells for both good and evil...here are some legendary witches and wizards, who with the stroke of a wand, have created magic of their own and enchanted audiences with their charms.

While his name may not be as familiar as Michael Keaton's, Val Kilmer's, George Clooney's or Christian Bale's, AADA Alum Rino Romano (1990) has played Batman more times than all those famous faces combined. In fact, Rino has been the voice of Batman for the animated series *The Batman* since 2004.

"Absolutely," he responded, when asked if there was any pressure involved in playing such a legendary character. "But it's also a huge thrill, an honor, and a source of pride. People will hate you. They will complain that you were a bad choice, but some will also be very supportive. In the end you do your thing and give them your interpretation. In time they get used to you, and usually come around."

"I had always been a big cartoon fan. Even when I was in New York, I secretly dreamed of being both an actor and doing cartoons. I was told by an agent that to even get a shot at voicing cartoons, I would have to be a 'voice guy.' I didn't even know what she meant, nor what I was getting into, but like any eager actor I said, 'Oh sure, of course, absolutely!' Eventually, I began noticing some of my actor friends going on commercial voiceover auditions. It was all new and foreign to me, but I saw it as another way to find work as an actor. I finally managed to get an audition, got good feedback on my first, booked the next three or four, and immediately had my agent's full attention."

"I'm not sure how or why it happened," he said, referring to the transition from acting to voiceover work, "but I happened to be the right guy, at the right time, in the right place. It was the early nineties and things were transitioning from the old school, big, deep, 'voice of God' announcer sound, to the real, younger, normal guy sound. I was very glad and exceedingly fortunate that my years at AADA had purged me of my Canadian accent. I just started working like gangbusters and couldn't believe anyone could make money just talking."

"Having steady work gave me a newfound confidence, and oddly it led to my booking a ton more on-camera acting work. The transition to exclusively doing voiceover work came when I got so busy with the voice acting that it got in the way of the regular acting. I felt I had to make a choice. It was a question of being fully committed and not the proverbial 'servant of two masters.' It was a very difficult choice to make, but I'm glad it turned out well."

"There are a lot of benefits to being a voiceover actor. The greatest of which is that you are employed steadily as a performer. Another is that you're paid to mess around and make funny voices. The stuff that got you in trouble in school is now paying the bills, and considered a professional skill."

"Other perks include the ability to work from home. I have a full home studio set up and I work from there most of the time now. Just to clarify though, almost all animation is done at the studio with the entire cast present. This is the most fun part of the job, and is also most like on-camera acting in that there is a company of actors playing off one another. The best voiceover artists are good actors."

In addition to his animation work in *Spaceballs* with Mel Brooks which will be coming out this fall and as the narrator for *Curious George*, Rino is currently the voice of Lifetime, the LMN network and CW. In Canada he has been the voice of

Rino Romano



"The stuff that got you in trouble in school is now paying the bills and considered a professional skill."

Interview by Kathleen Germann

Mazda for many years and if that doesn't keep him busy enough, Rino also gives voice to characters in video games such as *Tomb Raider: Legend* and *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*.

"Working in games is fun. You get to be part of something that people actually love or have an emotional attachment to, it's also more of a chance to use your acting skills. However, unlike animation, you are usually working and recording alone. Because of time and budget constraints you're often reading a script the size of a telephone book and getting it done in a day or two; not to mention that with most games you're routinely called upon to fight and 'die' in a mind-boggling variety of ways. This calls for you to scream at the top of your lungs for hours at a time, which is not only unpleasant but often ruins your voice for the rest of the day, or even days. This and the common cold are the two natural enemies of the voiceover actor. Finally, the pay's not so great in video games. They can be a lot of fun to do, but they're not without their downside."

When asked how innovative he is allowed to be when creating a voice for a character, he explained, "Often, you will see sketches of the character. In some cases, you might even see some storyboards. This is a great clue and can trigger your imagination. Either the look of the character will tell you something obvious and steer you towards a certain sound or character trait, or it will lead you to something completely crazy and incongruous. For example, a huge, tough looking monster might end up having a teeny high pitched voice for no reason other than it would be weird and fun. Sometimes they go for it and it gets you the job; sometimes they smile and say, 'thanks.' Either way it's always fun to be creative and to take a chance. If you're lucky, you may end up creating something that children will remember for the rest of their lives. It's really powerful and exciting."

"Listen to how people speak; their accents, cadence, lilt. Be a great listener and observer, use your imagination, and be free to be whatever character you want to be," is the advice he would give to students considering a career in voiceovers. "It takes commitment and serious effort. But boy oh boy, it can be fun. Make sure you have a great demo that reflects who you are, what your vocal strengths are and then go for it! Remember, there is no other you. Over the years I have come to realize that you are always what will get you work."

I subscribe to the Walter Matthau philosophy of careers ... 'All you need are 50 big breaks.'

Gil Bellows

Interview by Christine Arnold-Schroeder

Gil Bellows played a pivotal role in *The Shawshank Redemption*, Calista Flockhart's love interest in *Ally McBeal* and now reprises his role as a government agent as he returns to television in the two-hour *24* prequel. The Journal caught up with him as he was getting ready to open the Toronto Film Festival with the film *Passchendaele*.

You're one of those rare actors who move back and forth between film and television roles with ease; do you prefer one medium over another?

First, I have to say that, and I don't believe that my reaction is unique, I gravitate to work that is interesting and challenging; when you find work that excites you, you do it. I love to travel and films often mean working on location in a place you wouldn't ordinarily be, with people you might not otherwise ever meet. Working on a film is a little like being a gypsy or outlaw; there's a period of intense collaboration and then you move on. It's challenging, magical and allows you to focus completely on the material.

Television is amazing when you get to work on a character over a long period of time. *Ally McBeal* was the longest job I've ever had. The cast and crew became like family and there was a sense of semi-permanence. That's unusual for the acting profession. It was almost like having a traditional job where you get to go home to your family every night.

When you're working on a series for a long time how do you help a character to grow and keep your performance fresh?

That's the big challenge in television. Each show has its own hierarchy and working dynamic. It's really up to you to make changes that are occurring with your character work. If you have a difference in opinion with the people running the show then you have to articulate it in a way that's collaborative, not combative. As actors we are always talking in terms of the stakes; what are the stakes for the scene, what are the stakes for the character, etc. In television you need to know the stakes for everyone. Then you can create a dialogue with the writers so that they know that you're on their side and working towards the same goal.

If you can do that you're on your way to creating and sustaining an arc that you can feel good about.

To keep a performance fresh you have to look at every scene as a new experience and a new challenge, you can't just respond from muscle memory.

What about working with directors in television?

Freelance television directors have one of the hardest jobs I've seen, especially if they are giving notes and direction to actors who have been playing characters on a successful series for a long time. I've seen the look actors give directors who are trying to impress producers. If I could read the subtext of the look it would be something like, "I know what I'm doing here. Why don't you just set up this shot so we can all go home early?"

What's it like on a series when the actors direct episodes?

If that person has a good relationship with other actors and crew, and if he or she is a generous actor, then it's ideal.

You recently worked on the two-hour prequel to the hit series *24* that will air later this year. What's it like to work on a series that's already well established?

24 was unique because it was a location shoot for a series that normally shoots in L.A. We were in Cape Town, South Africa. *24* has been on the air for seven years and Kiefer [Sutherland], the directors and crew have all been together for at least eight if you count the pilot year so they all know each other very well. What is terrific is that once you



Gil Bellows (second from left) with producer/director Jon Cassar, and actors Kiefer Sutherland and Robert Carlyle

get hired by the show you become a member of the 24 family of really talented people. It's a tight-knit group and they still go out and eat together at the end of the work day. I know that the 24 family can't wait for people to see this episode because it not only honors the spirit of the show, but elevates it as well.



Gill Bellows (center) with Morgan Freeman and Brian Libby in *The Shawshank Redemption*

What was it like for you when you first got out of the Academy?

When I graduated, I graduated with a plan. I had won the immigration lottery while I was in school and got my green card. I was going to go home to Vancouver and get all my paperwork processed. Then, a buddy and I were going to produce a play we had the rights to that was originally done by Steppenwolf Theatre. We planned to do it up in Canada as a way to get our careers off the ground and get a little professional experience. The production fell through and I went into a six-month depression. I would sleep to 3:00 every day until a buddy would come over and drag me out of bed and give me a cup of tea, then I would watch *Magnum P.I.* reruns. I really had no clue what to do until my family made me focus on the next step and I decided to go back to Los Angeles. I got a job working with a high-end catering company that did Hollywood parties. It paid really well and I saw the world that I wanted to be a part of but knew that I had a long way to go.

When did you start to get work?

A friend was driving back east and I decided it was time to try New York. When I got to New York I had an interview with an agent at William Morris and she took me on. I must have gone on 1,000 auditions but then I started to get work. I think part of the reason I started getting work was because I did three things; I continued studying — I kept looking until I found teachers that were right for me; I got involved with a theater group and then I started my own theater company.

What advice do you have for young actors?

If you graduated from high school and announced that you were going to become a doctor no one would expect you to actually start practicing until you were 28 or older, so give yourself time. Everyone knows the old line about it taking ten years to become an overnight sensation, but no one ever thinks it applies to them. It takes a long time to make inroads in the industry for people just to consider you, let alone hire you. You have to do what you can in the meantime to keep the dream alive. Create your own work. Find a group of people that you enjoy, trust and can collaborate and grow with. There will always be ebbs and flows in your career, no matter who you are, and you have to figure out a constructive way of dealing with that. One of the best ways is surrounding yourself with people who you care about and who care about you.

Besides 24, what other projects do you have in the works right now?

I'm producing a project for HBO on Dr. Temple Grandin, perhaps the most accomplished and well-known adult with autism in the world. Claire Danes will play the lead. I'm almost finished writing a project that's fascinated me for 20 years about the life of Gene Roberts, who was Malcolm X's bodyguard. In terms of acting I have a film opening the Toronto Film Festival in September. It's a Paul Goss film set during World War I called *Passchendaele*. I play a character very different than any I've ever played before. I can't reveal anything, but it was a lot of fun to do and I can't wait to see people's reactions.

Welcome ACADEMY COMPANY 2009

New York Academy Company

Justin Anselmi, Paola, KS

Amy Bohaker, Victoria, BC, Canada

Karen Brelsford, Victoria, BC, Canada

Jan DiPietro, Melbourne, Australia

Collen Doyle, Bridgewater, VT

Melody Federer, St. Louis, MO

Michael Henrici, Cooperstown, NY

John Holloway, Philadelphia, PA

Victoria Humpert,

Colorado Springs, CO

Mara Lileas, Canfield, OH

Jermaine McClure, Little Rock, AR

David Nash, New York, NY

Dana Pelevine, London, England

Andrew Philpot, Paris, TX

Skyler Pinkerton, Trotwood, OH

Mia Romero, San Francisco, CA

Cat Rubenis-Stevens, Willenhall, England

Aaron Sholomenko, Vernon, BC, Canada

Elspeth Turner, Dunfermline, Scotland

Nate Washburn, Clinton, CT



Los Angeles Academy Company

Lindsey Ahern, Sacramento, CA

Megan Amos, Austin, TX

Robert Beddal, Wychbold, Worstershire, UK

Kaitlin Bennett, Long Island, NY

M. Christina Benthall, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Dragos Berghia, Chişinău, Moldova

Brandice Brenning, McArthur, OH

Teryl Brouillette, Toronto, ON, Canada

Leigh Bush, Toronto, ON, Canada

Edward Coram-James Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, UK

Marisol de Jesus, Redlands, CA

Kamel Dickinson, Hamilton, Bermuda

Oscar Gubelman, Seattle, WA

Carson Higgins, Malibu, CA

Courtney Hucke, Portland, OR

Charity Johnson, Frazier Park, CA

Megan McKenzie, San Pedro, CA

Stephen Milligan, Evergreen, CO

Ben Montague, Woodinville, WA

Ashwin Nair, London, England

J'aime Spezzano, Kaneohe, HI

Abigail Walla, Minneapolis, MN

Jessie Withers, Brandon,

MB, Canada

Andrew Wolfe, Romsey, Hampshire, England

Robert Young, Antioch, CA



Around the World: Spotlight on Finland



It's been only two years since Ulla Virtanen (2006), graduated from AADA, but in that short time she has studied improv, worked as a performer on a cruise ship, and developed a two person music and comedy show. Originally from Finland, Ulla spent her OPT (Optional Practical Training Year) studying improv at the Upright Citizen's Brigade in New York. "I wanted to keep learning, so I took improv classes in New York and then in Los Angeles for a summer. I fell in love with improv and I found it an important tool. The technique we learned went hand-in-hand with the training I got at the Academy, 'being truthful, and living in the moment.'"

After her visa ran out in July 2007 Ulla moved home to Finland and began performing as part of the Action Group on a cruise ship that traveled between Finland and Sweden. "The purpose of the group was to bring entertainment to random places on the ship. We would suddenly appear in the restaurant dressed up as Hollywood stars and sing songs or we would do a magic illusion at the night club. It was an opportunity to do improv, invisible theatre, dance, etc. It was a lot of fun."

Not one to wait for opportunities, Ulla creates her own, "Last December, my friend and I put together a two



woman music and comedy show, 'Lahtinen & Virtanen.' Some friends and I also started an improv group, 'Improvisaatioryhmä VSOP' and we placed second at a competition, which gave us confidence. This summer I'll be coming back to New York, to perform at the 10th annual Del Close Improv Marathon at the UCB."

Currently Ulla has a role in a Michael Cooney farce, *Puhtaana Käteen* (Cash on Delivery) in the Riihimäki Theatre. The play, which opened in April, runs through December and this fall she will host an event, as the character, Miss Marple. "Now I have to find my notes on phonetics from Jim DeMonic's class and start working on the British accent."

"Eventually I hope that I will be able to work in both Finland and in the US. Until then, I keep working on my craft, building up my resume and constantly try to better myself as an actor, by learning new skills and trying new things."



Lauren Bacall
(1942)



Robert Redford
(1974)



Anne Hathaway
(Sat)

Caroline Lagerfelt
(1969)



Alumni SPOTLIGHT

AWARDS AND HONORS

Tony Awards

Douglas Carter Beane (1980) was nominated for Best Book of a Musical for *Xanadu*. **Michael Gardner** (Trustee) was nominated as a Producer for *The Homecoming* in the category of Best Revival of a Play.

Primetime Emmy Awards

Charles Durning (1948) was nominated for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Drama Series for his role on *Rescue Me*. **Mary Jo Slater** (1967) received a nomination for Outstanding Casting in a Drama Series for *The Tudors* and **Rick Polizzi** (1983), a Producer on *The Simpsons* was nominated for Outstanding Animated Program.

Daytime Emmy Awards

Peter Bergman (1975) was nominated as Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series for his role as Jack Abbott on *The Young and the Restless*. This is his 17th nomination for a daytime Emmy Award, which he has won three times.

Nicole Forester (1993) was nominated as Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series for her role as Cassie Layne Winslow on *Guiding Light*.

Susan Haskell (1991) of *One Life to Live* was a presenter at the awards ceremony which was held in June.

Drama Desk Awards

The Drama Desk honors excellence in all areas of New York theatre: Broadway, Off-Broadway, Off-Off-Broadway and not-for-profit. This year **Douglas Carter Beane** (1980) received the award for Outstanding Book of a Musical for *Xanadu* and **Johanna Day** (1984) was nominated as Outstanding Featured Actress in a play for her role in *Peter and Jerry* at Second Stage Theater.

Lucille Lortel Awards

The Lucille Lortel Awards recognize excellence in New York Off-Broadway theatre. The Awards are named for **Lucille Lortel** (1921) an actress, theater producer, and Academy graduate.

Elizabeth Franz (1962) received this year's Award for Outstanding Lead Actress for *The Piano Teacher* and **Jonathan Pollard** (Trustee) received the award for producing the Outstanding Solo Show, DAI.

Other Awards and Honors

Dennis Haysbert (1977) received an NAACP Image Award nomination for Outstanding Actor in a Drama Series for his work on *The Unit*.

Anne Hathaway (Sat) and **Robert Redford** (1959) were honored at ShoWest; Anne Hathaway received the Star of the Year Award and Mr. Redford received the Visionary Award.

Lauren Bacall (1942) was honored at First Readings: A benefit for Studio Dante in NYC.

Kim Cattrall (1974) received the NBC Universal Award of Distinction at the 29th Banff World Television Festival.

Will Gartshore (1996) was nominated for the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Resident Musical for his work in *Merrily We Roll Along* at the Signature Theatre.

Faculty/Staff

Hope Alexander (Guest Director) directed the West Coast premiere of *The Immigrant* at The Colony Theater in Burbank. **Joe Garcia** (1984) was in the cast and **Leesa Freed** (1979), was the stage manager.

Jamie Nichols (Faculty) received the Lester Horton Award for Production of a Festival or Series for his work, "Celebrate Dance 2007".

1940's

Charles Durning (1948) will play a sleazy Hollywood agent in the feature film, *A Bunch of Amateurs* and will also star in *Chatham* opposite David Carradine. Currently, he can be seen as Charlie Adler in the feature film *Deal*.

1950's

Neville Mur's (1958) play *Brooklyn Bagatelle* was a finalist in the Great Plains Theatre Conference and a finalist in the Writer's Digest 76th Annual Writing Competition in the Stage Play Script Category.

Gary Poole (1951) is a writer and illustrator residing in Spartanburg, SC. He performs regularly with the Merrimont Players doing satires of old-time radio shows.

Frank Wick's (1959) play *Soldier, Come Home*, based on his great-grandparents' Civil War letters, was selected for the New Play Festival at the Penobscot Theatre in Maine.

1960's

Armand Assante (1969) will star in the feature film *The Bleeding*, a horror film about vampires.

Charles Cyphers (1964) has made numerous television and film appearances and this year appears in the feature films *Krampus* and *Sin-Jin Smyth*.

Craig Dudley (1966) played the role of Valere in *The Miser* at the Bank Street Theatre in NYC.

Eileen Koch (1964) acts and competes in dressage shows throughout New England. She has been an instructor with the Vermont Special Arts program for advocacy through theatre and serves as the Artistic Director of the Rutland Figure Skating Program, a position she has held for 30 years. She is currently a member of the Vermont Repertory Theatre.

Caroline Lagerfelt (1969) played the role of Bettina in South Coast Rep's presentation of *The Injured Party*, a one act play by Richard Greenberg.

Bob Levis (1965) produced, directed and co-wrote the film *Gold*, which premiered at the Pioneer Theatre in NYC earlier this year.

Les McDonough (1968) is currently working as an assistant director on *Split Ends*, a film directed by Dorothy Lyman.

Sandy (Burstein) Rochelle's (1963) documentary *Silent Journey* was the official selection of both the Sacramento International Film Festival and the Bergenfield Film Festival.

Joseph Rose (1969) recently played Robert in *Proof* at Bergen Community College.

Richard Zavaglia (1968) is currently teaching a master class in acting at Burt Reynolds' Film and Theatre Institute in Jupiter, Florida, producing the cable movie *Eye to Eye* and putting together a playreading series.

1970's

Robert Anderson (1979) appeared in a production of Neil Simon's *California Suite* at Tamarac Theatre of Performing Arts in South Florida.

Saul Clark-Braverman (1977) is very active in theatre in the Baltimore area.

Gabriel Barre (1977) directed and choreographed *Little Shop of Horrors* for the American Musical Theatre of San Jose earlier this year. Later this year he will direct the world premiere of the new Frank Wildhorn musical, *Carmen*, which will open in Prague.

Graham Beckel (1972) will star in the feature film, *Peacock*, with Cillian Murphy and Ellen Page. He recently appeared on television's *Heroes* and the film, *The Astronaut Farmer*.

Melanie Bishop (1977) teaches middle school English in Lodi, CA.

Gary Ray Bugarcic (1979) is a consultant on and has a cameo role as Detective Pluzinski in the IFC feature *Anamorph*.

B. J. Chandler (1978) is currently working in Real Estate.

Steve Cochran (1977) is the Associate Marketing Director for TheatreworksUSA, providing live theater nationwide for young audiences.

Paul DeBoy (1977) appeared on *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. On stage he appeared in Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice* at Second Stage in NYC.

Christine Ebersole (1975) starred in *Pamela's First Musical*, a benefit for Broadway Cares/Equity Fights Aids with Donna Murphy, Tommy Tune and Sandy Duncan at Town Hall in NYC. The musical was written by Wendy Wasserstein. She also played the role of Helen Hobart in a reading of the musical *Going Hollywood*, was a presenter at the Drama League Awards, and appeared at the opening night gala celebrating Carnegie Hall's 118th season. Earlier this year, Ms. Ebersole received the MAC Award for Female Celebrity Artist. The MAC Awards honor excellence in NYC Cabaret, Comedy and Jazz.

Cristina Fontanelli (1977) appeared at the Miss Italia USA Beauty Pageant and at the National Organization of Italian American Women.

Jane Glick (1976) is currently performing in cabaret and earlier this year performed "Wanna Sing a Show Tune" at the Duplex in NYC.

Jody Hoelle (1970) uses her theatre background as a professional storyteller which she teaches to lawyers, Jungian analysts and parents, among others.

Barbara (Michalak) Kite (1977) is an acting and speech coach in Portland, Oregon. She recently finished directing *Tangoing with Tornados*, which was performed at Self Enhancement Inc. in Portland Oregon for which she was nominated of Best Director for a Musical by the Portland Area Musical Theatre Awards.



Catherine Russell
(1980)

Dennis Haysbert
(1977)



Scott Ramp
(1983)
with his creation

Karen Abercrombie
(1981)



Alumni SPOTLIGHT

Jeffrey Markle (1979) co-starred in an episode of *Boston Legal* and wrapped the feature film, *My Sister's Keeper*, directed by **Nick Cassavetes (1980)**. Look for Jeffrey in a national commercial for Dunkin' Donuts.

DeeBye (Goodman) Meyers (1975) lives in Los Angeles, where she has appeared in numerous community theatre productions. She spent June 2007 at the original Gesundheit! Institute and is the proud mom of two grown children, Beka and Ben.

Ken Mulrone (1978) is an acting coach and teacher in Orange County, California.

Billy Pollina (1979) works in film and television as a writer, producer and director. He is the creator and Executive Producer of the upcoming CW series *Sunset Terrace* and the writer and producer of the indie feature *Fresh*.

Erica Sarzin-Borrillo (1971) was honored by the *Denver Post* with an Ovation Award nomination for Best Actress in a Comedy for her work in *What the Butler Saw* at the Germinal Stage in Denver.

Hester Schell (1974) plays the role of Dr. Schreiber in the short film, *Julie, Julie*, which is making the festival rounds.

Jane Shepard's (1978) book of short plays, *Kickass Plays for Women*, will be published by Samuel French. Earlier this year Jane appeared in a workshop of the new play, *Pony*, at Portland Center Stage in Oregon.

Gayle Turner (1976) performed in *Smokey Joe's Cafe* at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre and the Riverside Theatre in Vero Beach Florida in early 2008.

1980's

Karen Abercrombie (1981) played Aunt Ester in *Gem of the Ocean* for the Actors Theatre of Charlotte in North Carolina.

Phil Addis (1980) is a full time network administrator and part time graphics instructor and actor /playwright.

Peter Ambrose (1985) appeared in *The Wizard of Oz* and *The Goodbye Girl* at The Cabaret Dinner Theatre in Grand Junction, CO.

Jim W. Anderson (1987) played the title role in the musical *Sweeney Todd* earlier this year at the Aiken Community Playhouse in Aiken, NC.

Holly Martin Baker (1986) is the drama teacher at Hualalai Academy in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii.

Julie Bauer (1981) is a jazz vocalist living in Baltimore. She formed Opus V, a jazz vocal quintet, which performed cabaret in NYC and toured throughout Europe and Central America.

Allison Cahill (1981) played Golde in *Fiddler on the Roof* at Pittsburgh Musical Theatre Company and Rivke Brown in the original musical, *Eastburn Avenue*, at Pittsburgh Playhouse Repertory Company.

Hélène Cardona (1989) received her Master's in American Literature from the Sorbonne, Paris. She is fluent in several languages and has worked as a transla-

tor/interpreter for the Canadian Embassy, the French Chamber of Commerce, and as a translator and language coach for the film industry. She recently read from her translations of contemporary poetry and discussed the process of translation at Golden West College in Huntington Beach, CA.

Elizabeth Cava (1981) went to Dublin, Ireland with the production of *Corpus Christi* for the International Dublin Gay Theater Festival where she was nominated for Best Actress. In October, the production is headed to New York.

Randie Clark (1988) played Charlotte in the Canadian premier of *Life Without Parole* and Helen MacAfee in the comedy *Salt Spring Blues* on Salt Spring Island, B.C. Canada.

Enrico Colantoni (1985) stars in the television drama *Flashpoint*; **Michael T. Burgess (1999)** is part of the assistant directing team.

Jennifer Coolidge (1982) will star in the indie dramedy *Ex-terminators*, a film about three women who meet in an anger-management therapy group.

Misty Cotton (1989) recently appeared in *Miss Saigon* at the Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities in Redondo Beach, CA.

Valeria Cornu (1988) is a writer living in Atizapan, Mexico.

Jennifer Delora's (1984) busy career includes work with the LA Bridges Theatre Company of the Deaf which produces plays in sign language, integrating hearing and deaf actors.

Brad DePlanche (1983) recently completed a workshop of Deborah Brevoort's *Blue Sky Boys* for PlayFest! with the Orlando Shakespeare Theater. This fall he will be reprising his many roles in *A Tuna Christmas* for the Actors Theatre of Louisville.

Alexandra (Mourgas) Donovan (1988) is the proud mother of Renee and Jacqueline.

Ellen Dunning-Baxter (1987) is a police officer with the Los Angeles Police Department, currently working at Van Nuys Division as a Training Officer.

Helene Frisch (1980) is a psychic who appears in commercials and on talk radio.

Deborra-Lee Furness (1981) co-stars in the feature film *Sleepwalking* with Charlize Theron and Dennis Hopper.

Beth Glover (1989) recently played Alexa in *As Bees in Honey Drown* at the Mason Street Warehouse in Saugatuck, MI.

Cynthia Green (1989) is currently an instructor of Broadway dance, tap, jazz & acting at the Arts Caravan Performing Arts Studio in Katonah, New York.

Dennis Hall (1982) teaches high school drama and passes on all that he learned at AADA. He has directed *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Miracle Worker* and *12 Angry Men* in a 10-million dollar performing arts center in Florida.

Liz Boyer Hunnicut (1985) has been the resident director for the Children's Playhouse of Maryland since 2001 as well as a drama teacher at Calvert School in Baltimore for the last twelve years. She recently appeared in *Nunsense* and *Urinetown* at the Cockpit in Court Summer Theatre.

Elias Koteas (1983) co-stars in the feature film *Two Lovers* which premiered at Cannes this spring. Elias plays the married love interest for Gwyneth Paltrow's character.

Johnetta Alston Lake (1982) is a licensed makeup artist, hair stylist and image consultant outside of Atlanta, GA where she owns a salon and image studio.

Rosie Malek-Yonan (1982) currently plays Farah Mir on *General Hospital* and played Nuru Il-Ebrahimi in the film *Rendition*. Rosemarie is a published author and is politically active. She has addressed the topics of Assyrian genocide in statements presented at the House of Commons, London.

Cherylynn McNeal (1987) is a teacher and serves on the board of directors at the dA Center for the Arts in Southern California. She can regularly be seen as the host of "Six Hot Hunks and One Ugly Dude," at the Improv Comedy Club.

Carrie-Anne Moss (1988) stars in the feature film *Fireflies in the Garden* with Julia Roberts.

J.C. Murray-Goldenberg (1988) is married and raising her children Hannah and Josh while attending college for Early Childhood Development.

Nathalie (Dorval) Peccoux (1989) lives in Paris and coaches people in public speaking. She played the role of Mireille, a cabaret singer, in the film *La Vie en Rose*. On stage Nathalie appeared in *Les Carnets de la Comtesse Livia* at La Maison Molière of Bordeaux.

Karen Leigh (Petersen) (1988) played Sister Aloysius in Ironweed Productions of Santa Fe's production of *Doubt*.

Rick Polizzi (1983) is a Producer on Fox Television's *The Simpsons*. He has been honored with two primetime Emmy Awards.

Christopher Poole (1988) was promoted to Producer on the ABC reality series *Wipeout*.

Scott Ramp (1983) is a make-up artist and instructor whose work was featured at the International Make-up Artists Trade Show in Los Angeles.

Guy Reed (1983) was a featured poet at the meeting of "Poetry at the Hudson" in Catskill, NY.

Dan Roldan (1980) played the role of Max Detweiler in *The Sound of Music* at the Theatre Arts of 3 Crosses/ Neighborhood Church in Castro Valley California.

Catherine Russell (1980), an accomplished jazz vocalist, recently performed in the 13th Annual Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Festival at John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Her new CD is entitled *Sentimental Streak*.



Timothy Stickney (1985)

Misty Cotton (1989)



Rosie Malek-Yonan (1982)

Nicole Forester (1993) with actor Robert Newman



Timothy Stickney (1985) is playing Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet* at the Stratford Shakespeare Theater.

Scott Striegel (1986) played Henry Bowers in *Terra Nova* at the 6th@ Penn Theatre in San Diego, and appeared in a staged reading of the musical *Venus Hottentot's Extreme Makeover*.

Medea Temonia (1981) is a speech language pathologist in Mobile, AL.

Jason Troy (1980) directed and produced a DVD memorial video honoring Canadians who have died of AIDS. He is currently producing a video dealing with hunger and homelessness.

Romi Simmons Vasquez (1982) works as a tour manager while pursuing acting opportunities.

Richard Welch (1983) is a New York City schoolteacher.

Robert Zachar (1982) is playing a lead role in the feature film *The Platform*.

Stewart J. Zully (1980) appeared in the feature films *Chilled in Miami* and *The Year of Getting to Know Us*. He recently directed a play for the City Theatre's Summer Shorts Series in Miami and is slated to direct *In the Middle of Nowhere* at the Sands Theatre in Deland, Florida next year.

1990's

Gene Alexander (Eugene Alexandrovsky) (1999) lives in Wellington, New Zealand and recently directed *Dostoyevsky Trip* for the New Zealand Fringe Festival. He also performed in a production at *Toi Whakaari*, the New Zealand Drama School.

Enrique Arce-Temple (1996) is living in Madrid and has worked on the feature films *Guerilla*, *Arte de Roubar* and *King of Conquerors*.

Fernando Arze (1996) lives in Rio de Janeiro where he directed the short film *Um Dia de Maria*, and the play *Aos Peixes* which was invited to be part of the Festival de Teatro Rio de Janeiro.

Gillian Brashear (1993) appeared in *Hedda Gabler* at The Odyssey Theatre in Los Angeles. She can also be seen in the Rascal Flatts music video *Everyday* and is the lead in the film *Chekhov and Maria* which is playing in film festivals.

Lisa Brescia (1991) is playing Elphaba in the Chicago production of *Wicked* at the Ford Center for the Performing Arts.

Robert Regan Burns (1992) is the host of AMC's Cinemania. Each week, he talks with filmmakers, experts, and fans about a movie and what makes it classic.

Phil Paul Call (1995) recently served as supervising producer on the Fox Sports Network series *Stars on Stars*.

Victoria Charters' (1997) short film *I Heard the Mermaids Singing* was the official selection of several film festivals.

Geeta Citygirl (Eve) appeared in NYC in Signature Theatre Company's premiere of *Queens Boulevard* (the musical) by Charles Mee.

Louie Cowan (1990) acted in several indie films this year including *Wicked Business*, *Eternal* and *Johnny Appleweed*.

Robert Creighton (1992) played Smokey in the Encores production of *Damn Yankees* at City Center in NYC. In January he will be at Florida Stage starring in *Cagney*, an original musical for which he wrote the music and lyrics.

Valerie David (1996) participated in the Fifteen Minute Play Festival for the American Globe Theatre in NYC, and can also be seen in a Honda commercial.

Brian Ferrari (1991) hosts the internet radio show *60 Degrees*, which focuses on music from '60's chicks and girl groups' on East Village Radio. Earlier this year he played the Judge in the original rock musical, *Attorney for the Damned*, at the Kraine Theatre in NYC.

Robyn Growdon (1991) lives in Nashville where she is an actress/writer/director.

Anne Hathaway (Sat) will star in the romantic comedy *Bride Wars* with Kate Hudson and Candice Bergen.

Jewell Hines (1990) founded Kingdom Bound Productions Inc., in Baltimore, Maryland where she produced *David's Rock*, a musical, which premiered at The Lyric Opera House.

Storm Large's (1990) original one-woman musical, *Crazy Enough*, was workshopped at Portland Center Stage. She also played Sally Bowles in PCS's production of *Cabaret*.

CaroleAnn Leishman (1991) lives in British Columbia where she is involved with the Far Off Broadway Theatre Company.

Emily Lewis (1997) is a television and film writer whose recent credits include *The Shield* on the FX network.

Taylor Mac (Bowyer) (1996) performed two of his solo plays in repertory earlier this summer at the HERE Arts Center in NYC.

Nancy Mannes (1996) is living in Norway where she has directed *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* at Sekkefabrikken Kulturhus. She is currently directing a play about the Norwegian poet Henrik Wergeland. In addition to directing, Nancy works as an acting coach.

Racheal McCaig (1993) debuted her new show, *Nursery School Musical*, at the Factory Theatre in Toronto.

Michael McColl (1998) played Prologue in Circle X Theatre Company's production of Will Eno's *The Flu Season* earlier this year. Michael can be heard as the voice of EI, the NFL on FOX and CNN, and promoting hit-shows such as *Dancing With the Stars*, *Gossip Girl* and *Nip Tuck*.

Anastasia Morsucci (Eve) recently finished a production of *All Shook Up* at the Coeur D'Alene Summer Theatre in Idaho.

Jesse Michael Mothershed (1996) is finishing his third year of his MFA at UW-Madison. He recently made his debut at Madison Repertory Theatre as Mr. Kraler in *The Diary Of Anne Frank* and will appear in their production of *The Greeks*.

Kelly Overton (1999) stars in the romantic comedy, *Under New Management*, which also features **Jaime Tirelli-Roman (1975)**.

Nils Peterson (1993) is a registered nurse living in Iowa; he is proud father to seven year old Jack.

Karena (Ange) Piedmont (1990) is the lead instructor and owner of Real Estate University, which has two campuses in Connecticut and plans to franchise nationally.

Daniel Reece (Sat) received his Master of Business Administration degree in October of 2007 from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. He is currently living in New York City.

Blake Robbins (1993) can be seen in a commercial for Black & Decker and guest starring in the television series *Criminal Minds* and *Eli Stone*. Earlier this year, Blake played the role of Tesman in Freya Film LLC's production of *Hedda Gabler* at the Odyssey Theatre in LA.

Peter Pamela Rose (1991) is a life and career coach specializing in the entertainment industry.

Charlie Sara (1991) played Coach Joe Kuharich in the Fox Sports miniseries *Amazing Sports Stories*.

Jaret Sacrey (1993) appeared in NBC's *Life*. He is an award winning commercial director currently developing a webisode series.

Grace Shen (1993) lives in Southern California where she performed in *Miss Saigon* at The Rose Center Theatre, *The Full Monty* at the Morgan-Wixson Theatre, and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* at Theatre 68 where she is a company member.

Mark Shunock (1998) is currently playing Timon in the national tour of *The Lion King*.

Kevin Sussman (1991) is in the feature film *Made of Honor*. He recently guest-starred on television's *CSI* and *My Name is Earl* and is at work on the Coen Brothers' next film, *Burn After Reading*.

Jeff Torowski (1998) is living in Cleveland where he works for Xerox. He is at work on a screenplay.

Samantha Williams-Jetton (1994) is living in Nashville with her songwriter/artist husband and their daughters, aged three and five.

Jason Wolk (1990) has been producing broadcast commercials for nine years. This past year he produced spots for Academy Award nominated director Jason Reitman for General Motors. Other jobs include commercials for Sprint, Michelob, Nissan, Chrysler, and others. Jason has also worked with directors Spike Lee for Systema & Bill Condon for Visa.

Keri Zierler (1999) earned a BFA in advertising design from the Art Center College of Design and is working as a writer at Rethink Communications in Vancouver.

2000's

Stephanie Acevedo (2005) recently starred in the Children's musical, *Dolphin Up a Tree*, at the Daryl Roth Theatre in NYC. She also performs stand-up comedy throughout Manhattan.



Douglas Carter Beane
(1980)

Storm Large
1990



Harmon Walsh
(2004) at the
NY Graduation

Will Gartshore
(1996)



Alumni SPOTLIGHT

Derek Ahonen (2001) is a playwright and co-founder of The Amoralists Theatre Company in NYC.

Kelly Ainsworth (2007) and **Haley Zale (2007)** played cavewomen in Do What Now Media's production of *The Wild, Wild Women of Wakky Nunu!*

Ashley Anderson (2007) and **Joel Brady (2006)** were in the one act play *The Perfect Plan* directed by **Lisa Milinazzo (Faculty)** at the Workshop Theater Company in NYC.

Tom Bain (2000), **Paula Burton (2004)** and **Camilla Maxwell (2006)** performed in BritBits3, a festival of short plays by, for and about the British, for Mind the Gap Theatre Company in NYC.

Daniel Miguel Bak (2007) was selected for a summer internship at Broadway Dance Center in NYC.

Gloria Balding (2000) is currently producing *The World Series of Poker* for ESPN.

Joe Bartolotta (2004) played the lead role in the indie short, *Of Our Fathers*, which premiered at the New Filmmakers' Festival in NYC earlier this year.

Selene Beretta (2007) was in the chorus of *Henry V* for the Drilling Company's Shakespeare in the Parking Lot earlier this year in NYC. She was also seen on TV as Ruth Ann Steinhagen on Fox Sports *Amazing Sports Stories*.

Julian Brennan (2005) is a Lance Corporal Machine Gunner in the United States Marine Corps. He is currently stationed at Camp LeJeune in North Carolina, but will head to Iraq later this year.

Nicola Victoria Buck (2006) was in the cast of *Witness for the Prosecution* for the Actors Company Theatre's Salon Series in NYC. She was also in the film *Men in Suits*.

McKey Carpenter (2005) was on stage at the Producer's Club Theaters in NYC in *The Dead Guy*.

Vicky Connott (2004) performed in the play *Lather, Rinse, Repeat* at the John Thaw Theatre in Manchester, England.

Scott Cote (2001) appeared in *Cabaret* and *Moon Over Buffalo* at Northern Stage in Vermont. Later this year he will play the role of Goran in the First National Tour of *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*.

Ewa da Cruz (2004) was featured in the short film *I Think, I Thought* opposite Matthew Modine, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in NYC earlier this year.

Danny DeLillo (2005) created and performed in the London stage play *Unscripted* and starred in the short film *No Expectations*.

Sean Durrie (2003) just finished principal photography on the film *April Showers* about a high school shooting, written and directed by a survivor of Columbine.

Myia Elliott (2006) has completed work on the feature film *Triage*, which will be released in 2009.

Siho Ellsmore (2000) appeared in the Ensemble Studio Theatre's Marathon 2008 in the short play *Ideogram*.

Erica Miriam Fabri (2000) received her MFA from the New School and currently teaches creative writing at the School of Visual Arts and the City University of New York.

Adam Fujita (2006) was in the Drilling Company's original stage production of *Hero*; the original play *The Heart of Gravesend*; and played Feste in *Twelfth Night* for Shakespeare in the Parking Lot all in NYC.

Phyre Hawkins (2002) joined the First National Tour of *The Color Purple* as a swing and understudy for Celie. She appeared in the play *Black Nativity* that went up in November of last year at 42nd Street Studios in NYC, and was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for Best Musical Revival.

John Hemphill (2000) played Sam in a production of *Mamma Mia* at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium.

Greg Henits (2007) and **Elif Uncu (2007)** star in the Steve Winwood video *Dirty City*.

Sasha Higgins (2006) can be seen in the feature film *The Rain Chronicles*. Earlier this year she played Miranda in *The Tempest* at Barbican Hall, London, with the BBC Orchestra.

Sten Jacobs (2005) (Stephan Rumphorst) just directed the play *The Forgotten Book* in Berlin with 20 actors and 1,500 books on stage. He is on the committee of the Theatre Days of European Cultures 2009, which will be held in Paderborn, Germany.

Debra Jans (2003) works full-time as an actress and model.

Claude Keller (2000) co-produced a documentary about Lotti Latrous, who is running a hospice for AIDS victims in the slums of Abidjan on the Ivory Coast. The movie was shown at the Montreal World Film Festival and the Zurich film Festival.

Maud Laedermann (2007) is working in industrials.

Leena Lambert (2006) performed in South Coast Repertory's educational touring show *You're Getting Warmer*, which was also staged at the Orange County Fair.

Derek Larthey (2005) is living in Philadelphia, where he is pursuing performing opportunities.

Amanda Lippert (2004) is a host on *Iggy* for MTV WorldPop. She can also be seen in the film *Sisters*, which will be distributed in Europe.

Judy Merrick (2007) will star in *Knuckleball* in both the New York and San Francisco Fringe Festivals.

Angela Milton (2006) made her directorial debut with Brian Friel's *Living Quarters* at the New York Irish Center. She also directed a new short play, *Room 211*, at Manhattan Rep and acted in *On the Way to Shangri-La*, which was in Scenes from Staten Island and repeated for an artist's festival also on Staten Island.

Perry Mucci (2002) plays the young photographer in the feature film *Grey Gardens*.

Puy Navarro (2001) performed in *Doña Flor y Sus Dos Maridos* for Repertorio Español in NYC. Recently Puy played the lead role in *Life is a Dream* by Calderon de la Barca at the Classical Theater Festival in Almagro, Spain.

Madeleine Pramik (2007) played the role of Death in *Everyman* for the Looking Glass Theatre Company in NYC.

Cristina Rosato (2006) played supporting roles in two upcoming features: *Let the Game Begin* and *Son of Mourning*. Cristina can also be seen in two episodes of Quebec's hit TV show *Les Invincibles*.

Sam Rowley (2004) recently appeared in *Three-headed Dog*, directed by Tiffani Thiessen, as part of the Young Playwrights Festival for The Blank Theatre Company in Hollywood.

Oren Schrijver (2000) is living in Amsterdam, where he recently finished playing the Role of Berger in the Holland National Tour of *Hair*. Oren is involved in setting up the Equity Union in Holland.

Arsen Serobian (2005) is the founder and president of DanceChannelTV.com, an online television station devoted completely to dance. Arsen also teaches ballet at the Colburn School in downtown LA.

Gwenevere Sisco (2008) directed *The Threadbare Sex* by **Mia Romero (2008)** at the Strawberry One-Act Festival in NYC. The play also featured **Naomi McDougall-Jones (2008)** and **Mara Lileas (2008)**.

David Sharp (2006) received an Honorable Mention at the 2008 Accolade Film Awards for his short film, *Fun With Leslie*.

John H. Smith (2008) created the film production company La Mancha Films, Inc. He wrote, cast, produced, directed, and co-starred in the indie film, *Indigo*, which is due for release in September.

Frank Soto (2007) has been performing stand-up comedy and will participate in the New York Comedy Festival and the Boston Comedy Festival later this year.

Katharina Stenbeck (2007) played Taylor in the film *Phoebe, 2:13 AM* and starred as Angela in the short film *The Last Son of Saddam*. She was also a featured dancer in the music video for Cyndi Lauper's new single "Into the Nightlife."

Tegan Summer (2000) appeared on the television series *On the Bench* and *Days of Our Lives*.

Justine Valdez (2005) played Candi McCallister in *Zanna Don't!* at West Coast Ensemble. The show received three nominations at the 2007 Ovation Awards and won Best Ensemble and Direction at the 2007 LA Drama Critics' Circle Awards.

Harmon Walsh (2004) played the guest lead role of Lieutenant Ulysses Grant Davies in *The Border* on CBS in Canada.

Ashley Williams (2005) is a co-founder of Mind the Art Theater Company. Ashley recently returned from Sofia, Bulgaria, where she co-facilitated a theater education program for the UN Peer Group. She also works with Nitestar, an educational touring company based in NYC.



Jim DeMonic (1983) with Jackie Bartone (Faculty) and Lonnie Quinn (1987) at the NY Graduation



Paul Rudd (1991) (center) with Roger Croucher and James Warwick, visited the LA campus

Ayana Wylie (2002) is the proud mother of Shilen Ahmadi Wylie. Ayana will graduate from Howard University this year with a BFA in acting and a minor in film.

Chris Wylie (2005) plays Darrell, a self-destructive heroin addict in the film *Holding Trevor*.

Darcie Young (2003) has acted in numerous independent films. She currently manages the production office for Leftfield Pictures in NYC and is starting her own production company based in Montreal.

Haley Zale (2007) and **Tim Douglas (Eve)** starred in *I Hate Hamlet* at The Chenango River Theatre, an equity repertory theatre in Greene, NY.

Celebrating

Art Hahn (1965) and **Nan (Henson) Hahn (1966)** celebrated their 11th wedding anniversary on May 10. Having lost touch after their Academy days, they reconnected upon receipt of the Alumni Directory in 1989. They were married in Charleston, SC in 1997 and are still acting like newlyweds.

Carole Florman (1982) married Ron Capps in Big Sur, CA on April 23, 2008. They will be relocating from Washington, DC to N'Djamena, Chad, where Mr. Capps will serve as Deputy Chief of Mission for U.S. Embassy in Chad.

Grace Shen (1993) was married on September 1, 2007 to Charles Turner.

Betsy Gonzalez (2003) became a first time mom to a beautiful baby boy, Jorrin Matias Fullinck, born November 11, 2007.

Remembering

Beverly (Theetge) Barton (1953) (June 13, 2008) Beverly taught high school English for the Sayre, PA, area school district. She was very active in local organizations and had been the organist and choir director for the Altar Guild for twenty-five years.

Carla-Anne (Hall) Burks (1992) (January 26, 2008) Carla was awarded the Lawrence Langner Speech Award at her graduation in 1992 and went on to teach voice and speech at the Academy in NY for several years.

Augusta Dabney (1938) (Feb 4, 2008) was an actress best known for playing the role of Isabelle Alden on the daytime drama *Loving*. Augusta acted in ten Broadway plays, but opted for the daytime drama in order to raise her family. She was a regular on the dramatic anthology *Robert Montgomery Presents* and made her final television appearance in 2001 on *100 Centre Street*.

Kate Phillips (Kay Linaker) (1934) (April 18, 2008) had supporting roles in more than 50 films during the 1930's and 40's and co-wrote the 1958 cult movie *The Blob*. She had small roles in the films *Drums Along the Mohawk* and *Laura*. Until two years ago, she taught at Keene State College in the film studies department in New Hampshire. She was 94.

Message from the Alumni Office

Many thanks to all our alums who sent us Spotlight updates for this issue. We received an overwhelming number of submissions this summer, and it was terrific to hear about your myriad career paths and accomplishments. We hope you will all continue to keep in touch.

If you would like to be included in the next AADA Journal, please send your updates to Hope Ewing at news@aada.org. If you would like to update your personal or contact information, please fill out an alumni update form on www.aada.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

Steinbeck's *The Pearl*/Workshopped at AADA

AADA alumni recently had the opportunity to audition for a workshop of a new play with music entitled *The Pearl*. Based on the John Steinbeck classic, the adaptation was the creation of composer Edgar Grana and playwright Pat Trese. The writers approached the Academy with the hope that AADA could give *The Pearl* a home.

CEO/President Roger Croucher saw *The Pearl* as an excellent opportunity for alumni to gain valuable experience working with professionals such as Grana, Trese and director Robert McQueen — currently the Associate Director of the Broadway show *Mamma Mia*. As President Croucher put it, "considering the Academy's long, rich history we've never had a playwright bring a new play to the Academy, audition and cast our students, and workshop it. This is an exciting and unprecedented event for AADA."

Rehearsals ran for two weeks and culminated in a forty minute performance of the first act in AADA's MG Theatre. The



performance was well received and the cast, writers and director were clearly energized and excited. The successful collaboration was best summed up by director Robert McQueen, "the Academy alumni were a joy to share the stage with."

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