



STAGES

The University of Massachusetts Amherst Department of Theater Alumni Newsletter

Fall 2008

Getting creative: A letter from the chair

There is no way around it—the spending cuts announced by Massachusetts governor Deval Patrick in mid-October will affect the Department of Theater. At press time, we hadn't gotten the details yet, but it appears we are in for a round of belt-tightening this year. It will be a challenge, no doubt about it.

Good thing we're artists—thinking creatively is what we do.

Even before the latest news, we were working with other organizations to augment our mainstage season with unique projects. For example, a collaboration with the history, creative writing, women's studies and legal studies departments, as well as Special Archives, will bear fruit in the form of *A Menace to Society*, a new play being staged at the end of this



Gilbert McCauley

semester. (Read more about it online at umass.edu/theater) In addition, we are currently hammering out the details with the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies on a partnership that could bring us new curricular and artistic opportunities *and* expand the annual Shakespeare Festival our students created beyond its already impressive bounds.

The face of the department is changing literally, too: talented playwright Marcus Gardley (profiled below) has joined us, department mainstay Julian Olf is leaving, and a new chair search is underway.

As ever, we value the support of our friends and alumni in words and deeds. In an environment of lower public funding, we need and appreciate your help more than ever. We are proud of it, and we work hard to live up to the faith you have in us when you make those donations. Thank you.

Best regards,
Gilbert McCauley

New faces among the faculty this fall

by LIANA THOMPSON

The Department of Theater welcomes two new faculty members this fall: Associate Professor in Playwriting Marcus Gardley and Visiting Professor of Dramaturgy Chris Baker. Gardley is part of an African-American Studies cluster hire bringing new teachers and scholars with an African-American focus to various departments at UMass. Baker is a guest teacher and Artist who is here for the year to teach a variety of dramaturgy courses, in part replacing Paul Walsh, who has moved on to the Yale School of Drama.

MARCUS GARDLEY:

A focus on playwriting

Marcus Gardley's play *...and Jesus Moonwalks on the Mississippi* was first proposed as a possible mainstage show

a few years ago, but logistics interfered and the play did not wind up in the Department's season. We've admired his work from afar ever since, and some department members even got a chance to rub elbows with him when he participated in the 2005 Play-In-A-Day. Imagine our delight, then, when it turned out that he would be joining us this fall to teach playwriting.

The thrill of having Gardley join our faculty is augmented by the fact that *...and Jesus Moonwalks on the Mississippi* is now making it to the UMass Amherst stage as part of the 2008-2009 Department of Theater mainstage season. The play had been selected for production even before Gardley was hired, and the conjunction of these two events is creating a great amount of excitement within the department.

Gardley comes to UMass after living and working in New York



Marcus Gardley

City—including a stint teaching in the creative writing program at Columbia University. "I always wanted to teach, that was always my intention," Gardley said, although he added that until he finished his playwriting MFA at the Yale

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Alumni, students, faculty, and staff updates

We asked people to tell us what they did on their summer vacation, and as usual, you lovely theater folk did us proud. Let's get right to it, shall we? (As ever, send us updates at umasstheater@theater.umass.edu)

Alumni

■ Chester Theatre Company was fueled by a number of UMass Amherst alumni and students this summer. **Sheila Siragusa '01/'04G** directed *Blackbird*. **Lara Dubin '99G** designed the lighting for *Blackbird*, *The Dishwashers*, and *Almost, Maine*. Former undergrad and current MFA costume design student **Heather Crocker Aulenback '05** designed costumes for *Almost, Maine*, and current undergrad **Jeff Maynard** was the Production Electrician for the season.

■ **Alexander Nicosia '08** spent his summer at the Hackmatack Playhouse in Berwick, ME doing an internship and performing in *Rumors* (Officer Welch) and in the Ensembles of *Annie Get Your Gun*, *Pirates of Penzance*, and *All Shook Up*. Now he is living in NYC with **Stacy Schneiderman '08**, starting to audition.

If you have an update for us, please e-mail us at umasstheater@theater.umass.edu or amgoossens@verizon.net. You can also call 413.545.3490 or 413.545.6808.

If that doesn't work for you, send your carrier pigeon to:

Stages
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151 Presidents Drive
UMass Amherst
Amherst, MA 01003

Please include contact information and the year you graduated.

We'll post your news online at www.umass.edu/theater/ or run it in the next issue of *Stages*.

■ **Kathe DeVault '97G** went to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival with The Wellington School, a high school from Columbus, OH. She was the lighting designer for their show *Lunch Lady: Tater Tots of Love*, which performed at the Fringe Festival as part of the American High School Theatre Festival. She's still at Ohio Northern University, where she did the lighting design for their summer show, *South Pacific*.

■ **Joe Salvatore '98G** wrote with the exciting news that his play *III* received the Overall Excellence Award for Outstanding Play in the 2008 New York International Fringe Festival! **Harley Erdman** saw Joe's production and had all positive things to say, "I saw the show on Saturday night (Joe wrote, directed, AND acted a leading role!) and was really impressed." Harley noted that other UMass alums were also involved in *III*: **Jenny Werner '00G** (Dramaturgy), **Emily Stork '98G** (Lighting Design), **Troy Hourie '97G** (Scenic Design) and **Ben Johnson '99** (Sound Design).

■ **Ben Johnson '99** and **Maura Henry '02** got married this summer in New York where they live and work. Maura is a fourth grade ESL teacher, and Ben is the Master Electrician of the Drama Theater at The Juilliard School.

■ *Schooled Again*, a TV sitcom that **Jason Czernich '00** wrote and produced, was an official selection of the 2008 Chicago Comedy TV Pilot Competition and kicked off the festival, being the first pilot screened. As an official selection, Jason's pilot was viewed by execs from Comedy Central, ABC Entertainment, Universal Media Studios, Fox Broadcasting and other industry representatives.

■ **Timothy Carlo Matos '00** had a staged reading of his full-length play *Enormous Weight* by the Buran Theatre Company in Lawrence, KS in June. He was an artist-in-residence at the La MaMa Umbria Playwright's Retreat in Umbria, Italy for the second summer in a row. His full-length play *The Eye of a Little God* will have a staged reading at La Mama E.T.C. in late October. He has

an article on Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* coming out in *Modern Drama* this Fall. He defended his dissertation in May (with Harley on his committee.) Last but not least, Tim and his wife Nicole are expecting their first baby in early November. It is a boy. His name is Alexander Owen Matos.

■ **Naomi Bennett '01** ran a free Arts in the Park program for the City of Cambridge this summer—and got about 100 people a day! In August she designed and taught a two week Circus Camp for the Cambridge Montessori School with a friend. "We taught Trapeze, Rope & Harness, Juggling, Diabolo, Hula Hooping, Clowning, and Circus Acrobatics, and performed a packed show for friends and family at the end of the two weeks!" This fall she'll be teaching Circus Skills Classes for the Cambridge After Schools and kids yoga for My First Yoga.

■ **Robin Reed '04** reports that she recently booked a national campaign for Campbell's Soup, which means she is now the Voice of Campbell's. She recently recorded spots for Bounty Paper Towels, TiVo and for pop-star Duffy's new album. Robin also directed (and acted in) her first short film, which she co-wrote with fellow alumna **Bryn Manion**. The film, a thriller called *Thursday*, was part of "Bride of Sinister 6"—six short horror flicks by six women directors screened at the Anthology Film Archives and the Millennium Film Workshop in New York City.

■ **Meghan Wolf '97**, **Toks Olagundoye** and **Deirdre O'Keefe '97** started a theatre company, Three Chick Theatre, in 2005 and recently acquired not-for-profit status. Their theatre opened its latest show, *One Nation Under*, at the end of August.

■ **Sean Sullivan '05** competed in the 2008 Boston Comedy Festival, advancing to the Semi-Finals.

■ **Steve Henderson** now owns Comedy for the Ages and Steve Henderson Entertainment, making a living by

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More theater updates

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living his dream as a writer, comedian and actor for audiences nationwide. His new show *Sandwich* hit the stage on August 30th in Springfield.

■ **Maryann Lombardi '07G** was part of the force behind bringing Sankofa, directed by the Tony Award-Winning George Faison, to UMass Amherst this summer for a three-night celebration of music and dance.

■ **Melissa Fendell '03** is the artistic director of the ensemble theater company The Anthropologists. This summer, the company kept a busy schedule including jam sessions (an artist training forum), salon sessions (creating performances inspired by solicited 6-word stories), a 2-week residency to begin to develop their next full-length piece, and a workshop performance.

■ After twelve years in NYC, **Daniel Todd Miller '92** has just moved to Princeton, where he works at Dow Jones & Company in their HR group. He is finding his way around suburbia and farmers markets, and trying to understand what New Jersey has against making a left turn. With the move to suburbia he reports, “still single, no mortgage, no kids. Theater, unfortunately, has receded into the background of my life; my greatest

Julian Olf prepares to take his leave

One of the mainstays of our department is departing: dramaturgy faculty member Julian Olf retires at the end of this fall semester.

Olf joined the Department of Theater in 1983 as Chair and eventually served in a variety of posts including that of Graduate Program Director. He has taught a range of courses and has directed notable productions, including most recently Eugene Ionesco's *The Chairs*. In recent years Olf has branched out into (award-winning) screenwriting and playwriting. He made his UMass Amherst acting debut last spring as part of a pair of benefit performances for the department and the *Massachusetts Review*. We'd like to celebrate Olf's career in the spring issue of *Stages*, and so we invite alumni, students and colleagues to send us favorite stories and appreciations of his work. We'll include as many as possible in the issue and post the rest online.

Please email your items to amgoossens@verizon.net or send them to Anna-Maria Goossens, 112 Fine Arts Center, UMass Amherst, Amherst, MA 01003.

recent dramatic accomplishment being the successful download of The Complete Works of Shakespeare into my iPhone. Happily reconnecting with UMass Theater alum on Facebook, feel free to get in touch anytime.”

■ **Lisa Donovan**, our former Business Manager and Educational Services Coordinator here at UMass Theater, had a show that performed at the Augusta Savage Gallery here at UMass in July, directed by **Celia Hilson**.

■ For the past three years **Peter Galipeau '90** has been the Technical Director at SUNY/Orange in New York, where he lights all of the shows as well as building them. He also teaches Audio Engineering and Design. Before landing at SUNY/Orange, Peter was TD and resident lighting designer at the Tri-State Actors Theatre in NJ for two years, working on more than 15 shows. After a hiatus, Peter has recently returned to voice-overs work, and is currently voicing textbook for Aventa, an internet long distance learning company.

■ **Mariana Fernandez '05** was well-reviewed for her set design for *Agustín Lara: Boleros & Blues*, book by Gabriel García; music by Agustín Lara at GALA Hispanic Theatre in Washington DC in June.

■ **Jennifer Deanne Hawkins** was nominated for best actress for her role in *God, Man and Stan*—part of the Strawberry One Act Festival on Theater

Row in Hollywood last spring. She is still working as an attorney.

■ **Denise Wagner** always keeps an eye out for alumni in the news; this summer she spotted several: Retired faculty member **Edward Golden** was profiled in the September 12-18 issue of *Hampshire Life*. Among the trivia recounted in the profile were his strangest job (selling green hot dogs at a hot dog stand) and the little-known fact that Golden was a Soldier of the Month while in basic training in the Army and was top marksman in pistol firing. Wagner also saw a preview of USA Network's show *Burn Notice* in the June 6 issue of *Entertainment Weekly*. *Burn Notice*, starring **Jeffrey Donovan '91** as the show's hero—CIA-agent-turned-private eye, Michael Westen—began its second season in July (Donovan also has a role in Clint Eastwood's upcoming *Changeling*). Lastly, Wagner noticed that UMass Amherst and *Daily Show* alum **Rob Corddry '93** was spotlighted in the May 23 issue of *Entertainment Weekly*. The article focused on his life post-*Daily Show*, which has included films *What Happens in Vegas* and *Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay*. Corddry has roles in the Ben Stiller-produced comedy *Project A*, in which he'll play a man trained by the US government to become the world's biggest jerk, and in Oliver Stone's upcoming movie *W*, in

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STAGES

*The University of Massachusetts Amherst
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Anna-Maria Goossens

Assistant Stages Editor

Liana Thompson

Contributors

Anna-Maria Goossens, Gil McCauley,
Liana Thompson

Stages welcomes articles from students, alumni, faculty and staff. If you have a story you'd like to suggest, call (413) 545-6808 or e-mail amgoossens@verizon.net.

More theater updates

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which he plays Ari Fleischer. Corddry was also seen in a reading of *True West* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival this summer, where he played opposite his brother, Nate Corddry.

Faculty

■ In addition to tending a beautiful garden, **Penny Remsen** kept busy in the theater this summer. She designed lights for New Century Theater's production of *Rabbit Hole*, and for the Minnesota Fringe Festival production of *Delirium for Two*. *Rabbit Hole* was directed by UMass friend and Professor Emeritus **Ed Golden**, and stage managed by our own **Julie Fife**. *Delirium...* was directed by former student **Lisa Channer**. "We had such a good time, and the show got great reviews." For more info on these productions: www.pennyremsen.com.

■ **Milan Dragicevich** played the leading role (Benedick) in the Northeast Shakespeare Ensemble's production of *Much Ado About Nothing* at the historic Lebanon Opera House in New Hampshire this summer. He also finished the first draft of his play *Milosevic at the Hague*. The play had a reading this summer by the Serious Play! Theatre Ensemble, which will produce the play at Northampton's APE-WINDOW, in February 2009. Milan also spoke at the Association of Theatre Movement Educators' national conference, "Dreaming and Imagining: Process of Creation," in Denver in July.

■ **Michael Cottom** spent his summer with his family—swimming in the Mill River, taking a classic family trip to Washington DC for the 4th of July (reminiscent of a National Lampoon movie), and several camping/fishing trips. On the work front, he and his partner, Peggy, spent some time in Italy researching a possible collaborative project there, and he started on a very large, year-long CAD project.

■ **June Gaeke** designed costumes for the premiere production of Gareth Scott's *Eagle Squadron Go!* which was part of the

New York International Fringe Festival.

■ **Harley Erdman** saw *The Captivation of Eunice Williams*, the opera for which he wrote the libretto, performed in Macedonia and at the National Museum of American Indian History. He also attended the LMDA (Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas) conference and worked on his project translating work by 17th-century Spanish women playwrights.

■ **Priscilla Page** spoke about her in-progress book project on Migdalia Cruz and Latina theater at the ATHE conference this summer.

■ **Gina Kauffman** assisted Tina Packer on *All's Well That Ends Well* at Shakespeare and Co. this summer.

Staff

■ **John Iverson** played Roger DeBris in *The Producers*, mounted by Ja'Duke Productions this fall.

Students

■ Incoming directing MFA student **Dawn Monique Williams** spent the summer on the fringe, directing a production of Lisa D'Amour's *Anna Bella Eema* for the Edinburgh Festival. In total she spent a month in the UK, and saw Dr. Who play Hamlet at the RSC. Dawn and her daughter Jordyn moved to Western Mass from Northern California where Dawn was a lecturer at CSU East Bay and Associate Artistic Director of Impact Theatre in Berkeley.

■ MFA costume design student **Heather Crocker Aulenback '05** designed costumes for a production of Lisa Kron's *Well* at New Century Theatre.

■ Directing MFA student **Shawn LaCount** directed a production of Sondheim's *Assassins* for Company One in Boston. "It was well reviewed and sold out 5 straight weeks." He also produced SLAMBoston—Boston's only theatre slam, as well as John Kuntz's *After School Special*. This fall he is producing *Voyeurs de Venus* by Huntington Playwriting

Fellow Lydia Diamond in Boston.

■ Dramaturgy MFA student **Liana Thompson** spent her summer working as the Literary Associate at the Williamstown Theatre Festival. While she was there she dramaturged productions of Durang's *Beyond Therapy* and Chekhov's *Three Sisters*; she interviewed Theresa Rebeck about her new play, *The Understudy*; and she oversaw the selection of finalists for the 2008 Weissberger Award for Playwriting. She also got engaged to her summer camp sweetheart.

■ For the first few weeks of the summer, **Jack O'Brien** worked at the SPOLETO Festival in Charleston, SC with **Jeff Maynard** and alumni **Steph Cook '92** and **Kenny Chu**. **O'Brien** was an apprentice electrician, working on special projects, and **Maynard** was a journeyman carpenter, also working on special projects. **O'Brien** spent the balance of the summer working as a sound intern on the off-Broadway production of *Fela*, covering deck sound and dealing with microphones. Professor **Rob Kaplowitz** was the sound designer for *Fela*, which opened to great reviews in September.

■ **Jacob Hellman** has been having much playwriting success. His one-woman monologue *Anchored* was produced as a part of BaMatMaBat's Teudat Zehut Festival in Jerusalem, Israel last January and February. His play *Unplugged* had a successful three-week run in May as part of the Variations on Power Festival in Baltimore, and it won Best Short Play in the Baltimore Citypaper's 2008 "Best of Baltimore" Awards. His play *Not Funny at All* received a staged reading at the Page-to-Stage Festival at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC over Labor Day weekend and was read at the Baltimore Book Festival in September.

■ **Cate McLaughlin** won the National Federation of State Poetry Societies' university contest—a national award! As the winner, NFSPS will be publishing a chapbook of ten or so of her poems.

— compiled and edited by Liana Thompson with Anna-Maria Goossens

Gardley, Baker join faculty

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School of Drama, he had always thought he would be teaching high schoolers.

The Columbia job convinced Gardley that he loved teaching at the university level, even though making ends meet while working as an adjunct faculty member in New York City all too often precluded writing. When Columbia shut down its creative writing program, "It was both a boon and a bane," Gardley said, "because I had to go back to writing plays and I loved that and my playwrighting career started taking off again."

Indeed, in recent years Gardley has been busy as a writer. He is working on a trilogy of plays about Black Seminoles that examine the relationships between Native Americans and Blacks in the South. In addition to his solo work, a growing interest in musical theater has led him to try his hand at writing musical librettos, and he now has four musical theater projects on his plate.

As far as subject matter, Gardley said that his work is based in historic events. However, what is interesting to Gardley is the "folklore or myth of an event," not straight-out history lessons. His plays contain a sense of magical realism wherein the historical facts provide a background or landscape against which the fantastical elements can play out.

Despite having his writing flourish over the past few years, Gardley found that living in one of the country's most expensive cities and writing plays wasn't financially viable for very long. So he jumped at the chance to apply for the cluster hire position in the UMass Department of Theater. "Teaching here is the perfect opportunity to teach and write and be able to survive," Gardley commented. So far, he finds life at UMass Amherst is living up to expectations. "It's the best job I've had," he said. "The theater community is very warm and open. It's the best case scenario."

The cluster hire is designed to build upon the College of Humanities and Fine Arts' strengths in African

American Studies, and to promote cross-disciplinary collaborations. When asked what it means to be part of a cluster hire, Gardley explained that he is part of the faculty of both the Theater and African-American Studies Departments, and he will mentor students from both departments. He resides and teaches, however, in the Department of Theater, and while some of his classes will have an African-American focus, some won't.

Either way, Gardley's teaching goals

involve working to help his students develop their voices, their craft, and their sense for and appreciation of theater. Drawing on student enthusiasm for contemporary work as a starting point, Gardley hopes to be able to motivate student interest in theater more broadly through his teaching. Many students are more aware of artistic movements in film than theater Gardley noted, adding "I want to inspire students to be excited about theater as a performance art."

CHRISTOPHER BAKER:

Regional theater and academia in dialogue

Dramaturgy graduate students have the professional world at their fingertips this semester as Christopher Baker, the Senior Dramaturg at Hartford Stage, draws on examples of his current work as the basis for in-class training. Baker, who has worn a variety of dramaturgical hats at Hartford Stage since 1998, is teaching the graduate Dramaturgy Workshop this fall and will teach more broadly in the department next spring.

Baker began his theater career as an actor but eventually found dramaturgy to be a better fit. "I was seeking to meld my literary and intellectual interests with theatrical production," Baker said. He thus pursued his MFA in dramaturgy at the American Repertory Theatre's Institute for Advanced Theatre Training; in fact, he was the program's first dramaturgy MFA graduate.

From the A.R.T. Institute, Baker took a job at the Alley Theatre in Houston, TX, where he developed a close working relationship with Michael Wilson, now the Artistic Director at Hartford Stage. When Wilson took over the artistic directorship at Hartford Stage, he asked Baker to come to Hartford to be the dramaturg there.

At the time he moved to Hartford, Baker had been working at PlayMakers Repertory Company in North Carolina for three years. There, he was able to split



his time between being in production and being in the classroom at UNC-Chapel Hill, where he was a Visiting Assistant Professor of Dramaturgy. That experience demonstrated to him that he really liked the way in which classroom teaching and production dramaturgy fed each other.

Working in professional theater, "it's easy to get lost in day-to-day details," Baker noted. "Coming to a university offers the opportunity to spend time talking about fundamental things and provides a forum in which it is important to discuss and argue. It's great to come here and have conversations about what we are doing and why we are doing it."

Baker believes that engaging in these fundamental conversations makes him a better dramaturg in the fast-paced professional world, and he also hopes that he is able to bring to his students examples of how what they are learning in the classroom plays out in a real-world situation. "Issues of play reading, structure, etc. *do* play out and have real-life counterparts," he commented.

Amy Davis: The benefits of local involvement

By Anna-Maria Goossens

If you live in the Pioneer Valley, you will come across Amy Davis '06G or her work sooner rather than later.

She's designed sets for productions at The Majestic and New Century Theatre. She's responsible for the look of the new bar area at the Apollo Grill, one of the area's best restaurants. She teaches up-and-coming designers at Western New England College. She is the president and co-founder of New City Scenic & Display, Inc., a business she shares with partner Andy Stuart (co-founder and principal designer). Their business has two additional employees and operates out of a spacious basement workshop at Eastworks in Easthampton. And when they are not doing any of that or parenting their 2-year-old daughter Ava, Davis and Stuart serve as members of the Easthampton City Arts Committee, a group that's helping foster the development of a vibrant arts scene in Easthampton.

"After I [was] done with graduate school, I had a baby and a business and I



Davis welding steel stairs for The Boston Conservatory's production of *Follies* in Boston.



Set of *Trying* at the Theater Project at the Majestic Theater in W. Springfield. Set built by New City Scenic & Display Inc.

was 3000 miles from where I was from. I was kind of lonely and I realized, I need to make this my own home," Davis said, explaining some of the impetus behind her community involvement.

Davis came to the city of Easthampton as a student before she became a business owner. While she was still a student at UMass, Davis often worked for Seismic Scenic, a design and display shop set up in Greenfield, at which Stuart also worked.

"We saw they were not doing very well—but not for lack of clients," she explained, and when it became apparent the shop would be closing, she and Stuart bought up much of Seismic's equipment. Seismic was originally based in Boston, and Davis and Stuart still have Boston contacts—they design for the Boston Conservatory on a regular basis—but they have extended into the local market, as well as retail design and display.

It's clear Davis loves her job.

"I get to spend my time doing something I enjoy and am good at," she said—and being in business with

her partner enables them to juggle parenthood as well.

While the link from UMass Theater to New Century Theatre is obvious, Davis also traced her fire for this community work back to embers fanned in her Theater in Society class.

"One of the things I felt I was hypothetically interested in was the relationship between the performing arts and the audience," she said. Some theater artists, she worried, "are not very good at taking their audience into account." Wrestling with those questions in the context of Easthampton, a mill town with a fledgling arts community, has been fascinating, Davis said. "There have been some shocks of reality."

Davis and Stuart didn't set out to be in Easthampton, but it's not surprising that Davis ended up there.

"When I was at UMass, I specifically did not live in Amherst," she said. "It's very easy, when you're surrounded by people who all think the same way, not to question things. ... Who are all those people who are voting differently than me?" In Easthampton, she meets people

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Amy Davis: Local involvement

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across the spectrum, which is something she values.

“There’s a nice mix here, and I think that’s important,” she said.

Davis and Stuart’s involvement with the Easthampton City Arts Committee came through their landlord, Will Bundy, who invited them to join the board of CitySpace Inc., an organization looking at turning the old Town Hall into an arts space, with Flywheel Arts Collective as a flagship tenant. After witnessing a bureaucratic tangle that threatened to get in the way of the renovations of that space, New City Scenic & Display (read, Davis and Stuart) donated demolition services. That work eventually led to Flywheel asking the business to design the new space, and it segued them into membership on the Board of the Easthampton City Arts Committee.

Make no mistake, Davis is passionate about this involvement. Still, she sounded amused as she said, “Here I am, not having been here that long, ... on a board with all the people who own Easthampton sitting next to me.”



Tom Stuart (Andy’s brother and our Master Carpenter), Amy Davis (co-owner), Ava Stuart (Andy and Amy’s daughter), and Andrew Stuart (co-owner), pose with their new business truck in front of Eastworks, where New City Scenic & Display, Inc. is located.

A Place Where Lives Are Changed

We’re proud of the role we play in our students’ lives. The opportunity to introduce them to all aspects of theater is something we find thrilling and rewarding. Whether they forge a career in professional theater or go into another line of work, we are proud of the way they represent us.

We also feel a sense of responsibility. Our students trust us to provide them with the best education possible, and we do our level best to live up to that expectation. Your gift to the Department of Theater can help us do that. When you donate, you can help us fund improvements to our facilities. You can help us offer them educational opportunities: guest artists to inspire new creative leaps, support for internships and other special experiences that serve as valuable adjuncts to their learning here in classroom and theater.

Please consider making a contribution to the Department of Theater. You can find more details about what we hope to accomplish on our website’s “donate” page at <http://www.umass.edu/theater/donate.php>

- ◆ You can download a gift form to fill out and send to the department in the sidebar on this “donate” page.
- ◆ You can also donate online with a credit card at <https://www.umass.edu/development/give/>
- ◆ When donating online, please allocate your gift to **theater**.

Thank you for your support.

A new look for UMass Theater online

We have a suggestion for a site to bookmark:

⇒ www.umass.edu/theater

If it looks familiar, it should: it's the address of the UMass Amherst Department of Theater website. What won't be familiar is what it looks like. Over the spring and summer, we undertook a soup-to-nuts web redesign with local design firm cdeVision. The site's look has been updated and new features such as slideshows, video footage and photo albums have been introduced. Pages have been organized in a way that, we hope, makes the information easier to find, with additional pages created to supply information unavailable on the old site.

Our alumni and friends, page, for example, allows us to



Photo galleries, such as one of alumni Michael Haley and Bill Pullman being feted at the 2008 Commencement, will be among the featured Stages extras posted on our revamped site.

you just want to tell us we did a great job — by using our Contact Us page, where you can also request to be added to the department's alumni and friends email list.

post more images and links and will become a one-stop spot for old issues of Stages, as well as offering expanded versions of stories in the current issue of the newsletter.

We are still tweaking details and updating information on some pages. Look for expanded program area pages in the weeks and months to come, as we add photos, video and other elements to help tell our story online.

Let us know if there's something you're looking for that you can't find — or if

Also in this issue: New faculty member Marcus Gardley and adjunct faculty member Chris Baker, making an impact on the arts beyond theater, updates from faculty, staff, alumni and students

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