The Department of Theater
Year In Review 2015-2016
Table of Contents

2015-2016

Our Season Page 3
Our Programs Page 14
People: Faculty News and Achievements and Guest Artists Page 20
Outreach Page 26
Grants, Professional Development and Scholarship Awards Page 28
Development Page 30
Student and Alumni News and Achievements Page 33

Appendices:
1. Departmental Events — a full listing of mainstage and student productions, guest workshops, special events, department guest appearances for the 2015-2016 school year Page 38
2. Audience Survey — an analysis of demographic, advertising, and art consumer questions asked of audience members via program insert during the 2015-2016 season Page 46
3. In Memoriam — remembering Kaz Reed and Doug Kraner Page 61
2015-2016
Our Season

Box Office
This year’s season saw the Department of Theater double down on its commitment to present new works from fresh voices and underrepresented populations. The lack of productions with high name recognition means we did not draw blockbuster audiences, but the strong response from those that did attend confirmed for us that reaching out to new or under-served audiences is worth the effort. We further demonstrated our commitment to this idea by making our school matinee of Collidescope 2.0, a powerful work that engaged important questions about our country’s troubled racial history, free to all students. In the sell-out crowd were students from traditionally-underserved communities who reacted powerfully to the play’s important message.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>THE SHOW</th>
<th>SPACE</th>
<th>EST #</th>
<th>ACTUAL</th>
<th>+/-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marie Antoinette</td>
<td>Rand</td>
<td>$4,000.00</td>
<td>$4,400.12</td>
<td>$400.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donny Johns</td>
<td>Curtain</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
<td>$2,444.40</td>
<td>$(55.60)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love and Information</td>
<td>Curtain</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
<td>$2,752.70</td>
<td>$(247.30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Lab</td>
<td>Curtain</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td>$509.87</td>
<td>$9.87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collidescope 2.0</td>
<td>Rand</td>
<td>$6,500.00</td>
<td>$5,579.53</td>
<td>$(920.47)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBTOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$16,500.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$15,686.62</strong></td>
<td><strong>$813.38</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Less 7.9%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$1,303.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,239.24</strong></td>
<td><strong>$64.26</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$15,196.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>$14,447.38</strong></td>
<td><strong>$(749.12)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Audience Survey
This year, as we did for two years previous, we included a survey in each program we handed out. Our aim was to learn about who our audience is, where people learn about us, and what their priorities are in the arts. This year’s results were in large part confirmations of the patterns that have begun to emerge in the two previous years’ results. We found that our audience members are split between college students and seniors, are enthusiastic arts consumers, and are strongly affiliated with the Five Colleges and most especially UMass.

We also saw, again, that our top audience-getter is word of mouth, whether from friends and relatives in productions, fellow arts consumers, or faculty recommendations/assignments. Expense and schedule were cited as the top barriers to attendance last year and continue to be this year. As regards the former, reaching out to Residential Life on campus has been a challenge because of high turnover in that area, but efforts seemed to pay off this year with several groups taking advantage of our dorm discounts, our biggest price-break initiative toward students.

Our audience members generally think our works are of high caliber. When asked to give the words they would use to describe our productions, descriptors such as: thought-provoking, interesting, entertaining, and powerful are used, with a small but vocal group praising the professionalism of the productions.

Full survey results are included in the appendix.
Notes about our productions

As stated, our commitment this year was to engaging audiences with new works, works that made powerful statements about how we interact with the world and those in it. Dramaturgs stepped up with an extensive series of opportunities for audiences to react to our shows, learn more about the underlying themes, and process what they saw. Also noteworthy this season was the department’s decision to make poster design part of the show production process. Dramaturgs worked with a photographer and each show’s creative team to design a striking image for each show, a process that led not only to a valuable educational experience for our dramaturgs, but a series of striking posters. They were mentioned by audience members who were asked what made them decide to see a show. See the images below.

Come imagine
Come enjoy
Come laugh
Come learn
Come think
Come connect
Come (to a) play
Theater is about connection.
We come together in a darkened room, united by the spectacle we see before us. We have a good time, we get inspired, we learn things we might’ve never known otherwise. We get a chance to think about what it must be like to live lives that are different from ours. We think about what it means to be creative, to be alive, to be citizens of the world together.

Come imagine, enjoy, laugh. Come CONNECT.
Come to a play at UMass Theater.

Marie Antoinette
By David Adjmi
Directed by Christina Pellegrini
Rand Theater
11/5/15 Half-price Preview at 7:30
11/14/15 at 2:00 & at 7:30

“I was built to be this thing; and now they’re killing me for it.” In Adjmi’s poetic modern text, Marie is imagined as a celebrity at once celebrated and scorned for her excesses, simultaneously a trapped girl and a vapid power-broker. She is watched at all moments, and we eat it up—and then we eat her up.
Marie Antoinette’s run opened our season. Graduate student Finn Lefèvre demonstrated the dramaturgy area’s commitment to increased audience engagement opportunities with a slate that included not just post-show conversations but a fashion show that linked style and political movements:

- Nov. 7: Revolutionary Fashion! How Clothes Make the Movement
- Nov. 11: Going Viral: Mass Media and Social Movements
- Nov. 12: Britney in ’07: Celebrity Culture and the Destruction of Idols with Dr. Anne Ciecko
- Nov. 13: Bad Mama: Motherhood and Leadership with Dr. Noa Milman

Donny Johns

Music by Aaron Jones
Story & words by Harley Erdman & Gina Kaufmann
Directed by Gina Kaufmann
Musical direction by Mark Swanson
Curtain Theater
11/19, 11/20, 11/21, 12/3/15, 12/4/15 at 7:30
12/5/15 at 2 pm

How does Don Juan’s notorious modus operandi fare when it’s deployed on a contemporary college campus? Darkly comic and set to a propulsive rock beat, the new musical Donny Johns explores the legend from the perspective of the women targeted for seduction. This story, developed here at UMass, digs irreverently into issues of consent, sex, love, and romance, examining the consequences, good and bad, of hook-up culture and shifting sexual mores.

Donny Johns was the result of a year’s worth of work by professors Gina Kaufman and Harley Erdman, who were joined by New York city composer Aaron Jones to create a new musical with an indie rock vibe that tackled issues many of our students and their peers confront as part of their college experience. The show’s run was one of active development. Rehearsals and performances yielded valuable insight about what worked and what didn’t, and audience feedback offered another perspective. All this information meant that elements changed through the last performance. The musical’s team now has its eyes on further development, perhaps in New York. The show was spectacularly popular, with a rehearsal opened up to an audience to accommodate demand.

Love and Information

By Caryl Churchill
Directed by Nikoo Mamdoohi
Curtain Theater
2/25/16 Half-Price Preview at 7:30
2/27/16, 3/1/16, 3/2/16, 3/3/16, 3/4/16 at 7:30
3/5/16 at 2:00 & at 7:30

In acquiring the gadgets we use to connect, have we lost the reason for our communication: how to share our feelings, care for others, and love? Love and Information prompts us to see ourselves, our lives, our concerns, and all our longings in surprising new ways. Churchill’s dazzling language draws
us into brief encounters with a series of characters, until the story that emerges is not about individuals, but about humanity and connection.

For Love and Information, dramaturg Claudia Nolan invited patrons to stay after for a moderated discussion examining various facets of the play. The work had an international team, as director Nikoo Mamdoohi worked with friends in Iran and locally. Additionally, one of the actor’s parents assisted with the sign language elements of the show, and for the first time ever we offered American Sign Language interpretation for one of our productions.

UMass New Play Lab
It isn’t every day you get to be so intimately a part of creating new work. In Play Lab, playwrights Kim Euell and Stephanie Swirsky work with a dedicated team to mount staged readings of two brand-new works, followed by a lively conversation between audience and artists. Those performances and discussions will transform not just how audiences see and experience the act of artistic creation, it will shape the future of the plays that are performed!

What Actually Happened Was
By Stephanie Swirsky
Directed by Mary Corinne Miller
3/24/16, 3/31/16 at 7:30
and 4/2 at 2:00
Curtain Theater
What Actually Happened Was is a hyper-naturalistic exploration of millennial college courtship in an age of dick pics and emojis. At the center of the story is a rape and its complicated fallout between two best friends: Olivia and Eric.

The Dance
By Kim Euell
Directed by Christina Pellegrini
3/25/16, 4/1/16, 4/2/16 at 7:30
Curtain Theater
Set in the San Francisco Bay Area in the nineties, against the backdrop of Nelson Mandela’s historic visit, The Dance explores the art and relationships of two young artists and an activist attorney as they struggle to define their identities, ideals and commitments in a rapidly changing world. Reflecting the zeitgeist of the times, The Dance merges movement, music, spoken word poetry and dialogue in this story of betrayal and forgiveness.

This year for Play Lab, we happily gave one of our two slots to Playwright-in-Residence Kim Euell. Kim shepherded Play Lab last year and served as an advisor to the student dramaturgs and directors involved. This is the third year of our Play Lab, and demand for the slots continues to be high — we again received hundreds of submissions from playwrights all over the country.
The biographies for this year’s playwrights:
Stephanie Swirsky writes about illness, death, grieving, and Jewish identity with humor, levity, and a sense of romantic adventure. Her plays have been developed or produced at The Brick Theater, The Flea Theater, INTAR, Luna Stage, Theatricum Botanicum, and WordBRIDGE, among others. Stephanie received her BA from New York Univer-
Kim Euell’s plays have been developed and performed in theaters around the nation including Portland’s Imago Theater, The LA Theater Center, Detroit’s Plowshares Theater, Center Theater Group’s Mark Taper Forum, Hartford Stage, San Francisco’s Lorraine Hansberry Theater, Actors Theater of Louisville, Seattle’s Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center and The Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Penumbra Theatre’s production of The Diva Daughters of Du-Pree was named Outstanding New Show of the Year by the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Kim has taught play writing workshops nationally and overseas. She is currently the UMASS Visiting Artist in Playwriting.

Collidescope 2.0: Adventures in Pre- and Post-Racial America
Created and directed by Ping Chong + Talvin Wilks
Produced in association with Ping Chong + Company
Rand Theater
4/14/16 Half-Price Preview at 7:30
4/16/16, 4/20/16, 4/21/16, 4/22/16 at 7:30
4/23/16 at 2:00 & at 7:30
Morning Matinee 4/15/16 at 10
What would visitors from another world think if they looked at the race history of the United States? In Collidescope 2.0: Adventures in Pre- and Post-Racial America, which runs at the UMass Amherst Department of Theater from April 14 to 23, an alien species attempts to make sense of a subject fraught with inherent misperceptions, ironies and contradictions. Taking an “alien” view of this aspect of human behavior, the gaze of Collidescope places these issues under a microscope. Traveling from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement, exploring the Pre-Revolutionary War era when freedmen and slaves contemplated their rights in a soon-to-be independent nation, then back to the present day, this work creates a cubistic frame, revealing different angles from which to observe America’s troubled “peculiar” history and its on-going, violent consequences.

Collidescope 2.0 is the culmination of the Art, Legacy, and Community project, a two-year investigation into local African-American history, and uses theater as a powerful means to interrogate where we have come from and where we are going as a society.
Art, Legacy & Community is made possible in part by the generous support of UMass Department of Theater, WEB DuBois Dept. of Afro American Studies, Commonwealth Honors College, President’s Creative Economy Fund, Public Service Endowment Grant, Arts at Amherst, MOSAIC (Five College Multicultural Theater Committee), Five College Theater Chairs, Jackie Pritzen Endowment of Five Colleges Inc., Five College Consortium, Institute for Teaching Excellence and Faculty Development, UMass Interdisciplinary Studies Institute, CMASS (Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success), Amherst College English Dept., UMass History Dept., UMass English Dept., UMass Communications Dept., Mt. Holyoke College History Dept. UMass College for Humanities and Fine Arts and the Office of UMass Chancellor Subbaswamy.

Collidescope 2.0 represented the product of 2 years of work by many of its collaborators and was the culmination of our season. We were proud to host Presidential Medal of Honor recipient Ping Chong as co-creator and director, MacArthur Fellow Mimi Lien to design sets, Kate Freer as projection designer, and long-time department friend Talvin Wilks as the piece’s other co-creator and director. It was all hands on deck on April 15 when we filled nearly every...
seat in our theater for a student matinee (preceded for one school with a workshop with the dramaturgy team), and
we drew an engaged audience on April 21 when the Chancellor himself attended the show and stayed for a post-show
collection. Those were far from the only events scheduled; we were extremely fortunate to have co-creators Ping
Chong and Talvin Wilks grace the department with their presence for an afternoon of conversation about art, the
courage to create, and other topics as part of the Rand Lecture.

The press release for the event read in part:

Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks make cutting-edge theater that asks incisive questions about the society we live in, and on April 4 at 4 p.m., these two artists will offer a look at their artistic process when they deliver the Rand Lecture at the University of Massachusetts Department of Theater. The event will take place in the Rand Theater, in the UMass Fine Arts Center, and it is FREE and OPEN to all local students and community members. UMass Theater invites everyone with an interest in theater or social justice to come listen and bring questions.

The Rand Lecture is presented by the Department of Theater thanks to Margarita Hopkins Rand, the wife of Professor Frank Prentice Rand, who died in 1971 and for whom the Rand Theater is named. Mrs. Rand supported the arts as much as her husband did and created a sort of salon in her home where faculty and students gathered to share ideas and socialize. In her will, she left the department funds to support scholarships for theater students and to provide “entertaining and articulate lectures of interest to students in the Humanities.” We are proud to use Mrs. Rand’s bequest to fund this year’s event.

For this year’s Rand Lecture, Dramaturgy faculty Priscilla Page will facilitate a conversation with UMass Theater artists-in-residence Ping and Talvin, who will discuss their long-standing collaborative relationship and provide insights on their creative process for Collidescope 2.0: Adventures in Pre and Post Racial America, a UMass Theater production later this spring. Ping and Talvin’s credentials are impressive: Ping is a recipient of the 2015 National Medal of the Arts and Talvin is an acclaimed director, dramaturg, and playwright who has worked on Bessie award-winning productions with Bebe Miller. Ping and Talvin have a twenty-year history of making meaningful and provocative work together, the latest of which is Collidescope 2.0.

The Rand Lecture is held April 4 at 4 p.m. in the Rand Theater in the Fine Arts Center and is FREE and OPEN to all.

Dramaturg Priscilla arranged a number of pre- and post-show talks to further engage audiences with the many issues raised in the play, as outlined in the schedule of events below:

Saturday, April 16 at 5 PM: Ping Chong, Talvin Wilks, and Judyie Al-Bilali will share thoughts about this process and Art, Legacy, & Community.

Wednesday, April 20 at 5 PM: Gilbert McCauley and Oscar Collins (CMASS): Mentoring and Leadership with students of color.

Thursday, April 21, post-show: Chancellor Subbaswamy and the Cast will discuss social justice on our campus. Saturday, April 23 at 5 PM: Megan Lewis and Tom Schiff will discuss white ally-ship.
Photos of Love and Information, Donny Johns and Marie Antoinette by Jon Crispin, photo of Collidescope 2.0 by John Solem
Preview: What’s Coming Up In Our 2016-2017 Season

The First Stop for Game-Changing Artists

*Hamilton*’s Tony-nominated set designer David Korins created some of his first sets for an evening of one-act plays at UMass Theater. *Welcome to Night Vale* podcast actor and New York Neo-Futurist Meg Bashwiner cut her acting teeth playing a kitchen maid in one of our productions. Ben Stanton (*Fun Home, Spring Awakening*) and Justin Townsend (*American Psycho, The Humans*), both Tony-nominated lighting designers, once spent a semester rounding out their understanding of the craft of theater by working in our scene shop together.

Our current students share their work ethic, dedication to the craft, and intelligence as artists, and we expect that in just a few short years, they, too, will be re-shaping the national theater community. The performers, artists and technicians running the show now at UMass will be the ones who tell the stories that reflect on our changing world and its connections to the past and future. Come to a performance and be part of the crowd as they begin their artistic journey.

*Misanthrope*
Written by Molière, adapted by Constance Congdon ’82G
Directed by Mary Corinne Miller
Rand Theater
Wednesday, October 19, 2016 Half-Price Preview 7:30 pm
Friday, October 21, 2016 Opening Night 7:30 pm
Saturday, October 22, 2016 Performance 7:30 pm
Wednesday, October 26, 2016 Student Matinee 10:00 am
Thursday, October 27, 2016 Performance 7:30 pm
Friday, October 28, 2016 Performance 7:30 pm
Saturday, October 29, 2016 Performance 2:00 pm
Saturday, October 29, 2016 Performance 7:30 pm

Why put on a comedy written 350 years ago? Because these characters are still funny today — we see them on our TV screens in many contemporary sitcoms. Alceste is the neurotic introvert who simultaneously craves isolation and connection. His object of desire is Célimène, a social butterfly who carefully curates her image in a way any Instagram star would envy. She’s got Alceste and the painfully hip Oronte on the hook, along with countless others, while her best frenemy, Arsinoé, attempts to manipulate the situation so she can win Alceste for herself. Come enjoy a backstage pass to a live studio taping of the sitcom “The Misanthrope” and see how pointedly Molière’s snarky observations about love and friendship translate to relationships played out in the context of our screen-obsessed modern-day world.

*Refugee*
Written by Milan Dragicevich
With music by Tim Eriksen
Directed by Nikita Milivojević
Curtain Theater
Wednesday, November 30, 2016 Half-Price Preview 7:30 pm
Friday, December 2, 2016 Opening Night 7:30 pm
Saturday, December 3, 2016 Performance 7:30 pm
Wednesday, December 7, 2016 Performance 7:30 pm
Thursday, December 8, 2016 Performance 7:30 pm

Two sisters gaze across an endless stretch of barren desert at the El Shatt refugee camp, while a war rages across Europe. In the hollows of southern Appalachia, an idealistic guitar-strumming activist fights to preserve a way of life. On the streets of embattled Belgrade, a hustler struggles to survive in the underground markets of a desperate people. What binds them together? Where is home? When we cross borders, what do we become? This new play with music jumps across time and place, with a multigenerational story of displacement, capricious destiny, and the search for identity.

*Hedda Gabler*

Written by Henrik Ibsen, adapted by Christina Pellegrini
Director Christina Pellegrini
Rand Theater

Wednesday, February 22, 2017 Half-Price Preview
7:30 pm
Friday, February 24, 2017 Opening Night
7:30 pm
Saturday, February 25, 2017 Performance
7:30 pm
Wednesday, March 1, 2017 Performance
7:30 pm
Thursday, March 2, 2017 Performance
7:30 pm
Friday, March 3, 2017 Performance
7:30 pm
Saturday, March 4, 2017 Performance
2:00 pm
Saturday, March 4, 2017 Performance
7:30 pm

Ground-breaking at the time of its premiere, yet condemned for its portrayal of a “vicious, heartless, cowardly, unmoral, mischief-making vixen,” Ibsen’s *Hedda Gabler* has since come to be regarded as one of the most dimensional character portraits in theatrical history. Set within the 24 hours after Hedda and her husband return from their honeymoon, the play’s desperate, thrilling momentum puts us face-to-face with Hedda the woman: in all her biting wit, ironic humor, violent desperation and simmering rage.

*UMass New Play Lab*
produced by Claudia Nolan and Ifa Bayeza
Directed by Ifa Bayeza
Curtain Theater

Wednesday, March 30, 2017 Opening Night
7:30 pm
Friday, April 1, 2017 Performance
7:30 pm
Thursday, April 6, 2017 Performance
7:30 pm
Saturday, April 8, 2017 Performance
2:00 pm

New works are the lifeblood of the American theatre. As a part of UMass’ long tradition of fostering and presenting new works to central Massachusetts, the theatre department sponsors a Play Lab every year. Play Lab’s mission is to help develop plays with bold and fresh forms that give voice to underrepresented communities and stories. Through an intensive selection process, we pick one new script that speaks to our campus community, and offer the playwright the thing they need most: a roomful of talented artists who dedicate a fortnight to helping them polish their rough gem into a diamond. Audience members are vital to this endeavor because their feedback helps shape the future of these new plays. Come be part of a community that fosters new work.

*The Happiest Song Plays Last*

Written by Quiara Alegría Hudes
Director Jennifer Onopa
There's power in traditions, in the songs sung and the food served at gatherings and the way they can bind families and communities together across time and distance. Iraq war veteran Elliott is in Jordan to film a war movie and finds himself connecting with his costar Shar, against the backdrop of the Arab Spring. When he calls home, he speaks to his cousin Yaz, a music professor, who has opened her new home in Philadelphia to feed neighbors in need and struggles against a system that neglects the poor and the sick. Hudes's play is a complex mixture, balancing epic historical events with intimate life moments, all of them connected through the wonders of modern technology and the richness of Puerto Rican cuatro music.

*Ta’zieh ... between two rivers*
Conceived by Nikoo Mamdoohi and Q-Mars Haeri
Written by Q-Mars Haeri and Ifa Bayeza
Directed by Nikoo Mamdoohi
Off Site Location to be announced
Thursday, April 27, 2017 Opening Night 7:30 pm
Friday, April 28, 2017 Performance 7:30 pm
Saturday, April 29, 2017 Performance 2 pm

A Ta’zieh starts with a procession: live music, costumes, bystanders drawn into the celebration. This Iranian tradition has evolved into a worldwide event that brings people together to work through community struggles and clashes through music, drama and spectacle. Iranian theater artist Nikoo Mamdoohi recognized that Ta’zieh’s core elements resonate with our own complicated racial history, and she and writers Q-mars Haeri and Ifa Bayeza are collaborating on a new cross-pollination of Iranian and African-American words, music and rituals, using this ancient mythic practice to address tragedy and conflict in our own time.

**Tickets!**
Seating for all mainstage shows is general admission.

Tickets are $16 regular admission, $8 for Five-College and high school students/seniors for all shows except the UMass New Play Lab, which are $4 and $8.

Subscribe to the UMass Theater and receive a 20% discount on tickets and a guaranteed spot in the audience; never worry about shows selling out again!

Group pricing is available for on and off-campus organizations.

Box office: 1-800-999-UMAS or 413-545-2511

**Talk about our shows!**
Inspired, thrilled, confused, or even angry about what’s happening on stage?
Our scholars want to talk with you about what you’re about to see, to offer you a chance to reflect on what you experienced, and to let us know what you thought. Pre- or post-show events are offered on most nights of each production's run. Share your emotional reaction with the artists, hear from community experts, or learn little-known facts about theater-making; each night will offer something for audiences.

Please see our website and facebook for the schedule of events as each production nears. Free and open to all.

More than the mainstage!

Creativity isn’t limited to our mainstage. Our students also learn by collaborating across disciplines to produce ground-breaking pieces that explode conventions about theater, perform cutting-edge works they create from scratch, and mount brand new takes on old works.

Most of these works are free and open to the public, so if you’ve got an appetite for the new, visit our facebook page for announcements of independent student work.

(Text and performance schedule are still subject to change; please check our website as the season approaches for updates.)
Our Programs

The Department of Theater’s three programs — Undergraduate, Graduate, and the Multicultural Theater Certificate — enjoyed a banner year as did our study abroad course for South Africa’s Grahamstown Festival. Undergraduate Program Director Gina Kaufmann, who is moving on to chair the department, is passionate about increasing recruitment and outreach to students of color, and took important steps in that direction for the undergraduate program this year. She is also pleased to note that the major is in a time of growth, up to 152 students from 111 in the spring last year. Graduate Program Director Megan Lewis is looking ahead to recruiting a new class next year and working on a graduate program strategic plan. And Priscilla Page, the coordinator of the Multicultural Theater Certificate, proudly gave certificates to the first two students to complete the certificate requirements. Reports from the individual programs follow.

The Undergraduate Program

Undergraduate Program Director Gina Kaufmann adopted a strategy of “every student counts” that will guide recruitment efforts to increase student enrollment overall, and specifically of students of color and other under-represented groups going forward. The strategy, a mix of new efforts and commitment to ongoing opportunities to interact with potential majors, began this year with Gina, members of the Undergraduate Advisory Council, and graduate student Jen Onopa, with others involved ad hoc. Gina and members of the Undergraduate Advisory Council were ubiquitous at on-campus recruitment events, open houses, and fairs; offered tours to anyone who asked; and invited students and parents to our shows. Adding majors through Theater 140 and other courses, advising, and production experiences, our number of undergraduate majors is now 152, a 41-person increase over last year. Gina and graduate student Jen Onopa also began to look at new models of reaching out to potential students, not just in high school but in lower grades as well. They piloted both an in-school workshop and a field trip model that we will be build on next academic year through a combination of performance and student involvement (see further details in the Outreach section).

The Undergraduate Program also embraced the request from students for increased career preparation. The two-year-old Fridays at Four series, which brings speakers to the department to address students on a variety of career-related topics, consisted of 4 programs this year. Most successful among them was Yale and Juilliard lecturer Brian O’Neill’s Acting As A Business: Strategies for Success workshop, which was attended by 35 students. Others speakers included Michael Graziano, producer of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS; Stephen Driscoll, who spoke about the BADA summer acting program; and Career Services’ Caroline Gould and Theater’s publicity director Anna-Maria Goossens, who spoke to various aspects of job seeking and marketing oneself. These events were partly funded by the $2035 raised through UMass’s Minute-Fund.

Further conversations with students re-
revealed that students are hungry for even more opportunities to engage with career preparation, and so Professors Chris Baker and Julie Nelson will teach a new course on the subject in spring 2017.

That new class came in part out of the department’s efforts to garner feedback from students directly. The department now conducts junior year surveys as well as senior exit interviews to learn what students praise about the department and to find out what needs work.

The graduating class of 2016 poses with alumni lifetime passes. Photo by Carolyn Brown
The Multicultural Theater Certificate

This was a momentous year for the Multicultural Theater Certificate: MTC coordinator Priscilla Page personally awarded certificates to the first two students to complete the requirements for the program, Kiara Wynn and Annabeth Kelly, at our year-end celebration. The two women successfully completed three required courses, four electives, and an internship focused around interrogating various aspects of multicultural theater practice. Even students who aren’t pursuing the certificate are benefitting, taking courses that focus on theater artists of color and learning through our study-abroad program in South Africa at the Grahamstown Festival.

This year, 9 students pursued the certificate, seven of them theater majors. An important component of the certificate is interning with a multicultural arts organization, and five of the nine were out in the field, putting their learning to the test in a variety of settings. This is on track with the eventual goal to have 12–15 students enrolled in the MTC program.

Beyond continuing to increase the numbers in the current program, future plans include the development of a certificate for graduate students.
The Graduate Program

Graduate Students

We welcomed a new class of graduate students to our department in Fall 2015: directors Jen Onopa and Corinne Miller, dramaturgs Gaven Trinidad and Claudia Nolan, costumer Christina Beam, lighting designer Tamara Harris, and playwright Ifa Bayeza, who is pursuing a joint degree in directing and dramaturgy. They joined second year MFAs Bethany Eddy (Costume), Webster Marsh (Lighting), Christina Pellegrini and Nikoo Mamdoohi (Directing) and Finn Lefevre (Dramaturgy). Our graduate students created some very powerful work this year:

- Bethany Eddy, Finn Lefevre, and Christina Pellegrini opened our season by collaborating on a work they jointly proposed: David Adjmi’s Marie Antoinette, about the potentials and pitfalls of democracy and the world of fame and celebrity.

- Onopa’s first year directing project, a production of Jackie Sibblies Drury’s play about contemporary race relations called We Are Proud to Present A Presentation about the Herero of Namibia, formerly South West Africa, from the German Südwestafrika, between the years 1884-1915 had a successful first run in December, was re-mounted as part of Prof Judyie Al-Bilali’s Arts Legacy & Community effort in February, and will be performing in Grahamstown, South Africa this summer as a part of Prof Megan Lewis’ Arts and Culture in South Africa study abroad course. Tamara Harris designed the lights in our 204 space and will be adapting them for the National Arts Festival.

- Nikoo Mamdoohi brought Caryl Churchill’s open form play about communication and humanity in the digital age, Love & Information, expertly to life on the Curtain stage.

- Part II of Bayeza’s Emmett Till Trilogy—called Benevolence—was the Department’s inaugural performance at NYPOP in Chelsea in February. The production had a second run on campus in April. Bayeza also facilitated a week-long residency with playwright Ntozake Shange in our department in April.

- Corinne Miller staged an immersive theatre adaptation of Midsummer’s, A Dream Reconstructed, in the hallways and lobby of the Rand Theater in March.

- Dramaturgs Finn Lefevre and Claudia Nolan and directors Christina Pellegrini and Corinne Miller shepherded PlayLab into its third year in our department, featuring plays by Stephanie Swirsky and Visiting Professor
Kim Euell.
• Webster Marsh was the Lighting Designer and Gaven Trinidad was Assistant Dramaturg to Prof Priscilla Page on *Collidescope 2.0: Adventures in Pre- and Post-Racial America*, our collaboration with world-renowned visiting artists Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks.

**Graduate Committee**
The Graduate Committee, chaired by new Graduate Program Director Prof Megan Lewis, spent this off-year from recruitment reviewing our current graduate curriculum to ensure that it reflects recent shifts in our staffing as a department, ties into and supports the Graduate Strategic Plan (GSP), and is consistent across programs. We updated verbiage on the website (http://www.umass.edu/theater/graduate.php), and revised and clarified graduate benchmarks in our four areas: Directing, Dramaturgy, Costume and Lighting Design (as well as Scenic Design for future). We also dedicated four faculty meetings to discussing the Graduate Strategic Plan we wrote last year, it's big vision as well as its tactical implementation.

We remain committed to the five visionary parts of the GSP:
   A. Expanding our Community
   B. Expanding our Space
   C. Development of New Work
   D. Entrepreneurial Theater
   E. Professional Artist Support

A lot of discussion focused on future visions of the design programs, given our two upcoming searches in Costume and Scenic Design. As a faculty, we decided to think aspirationally, and reimagined the design programs as Costume and Scenic Design and Technology, to reflect the changes in the industry, to ensure that graduates of our MFA programs are well prepared to enter today’s job market.

We also discussed innovative ways to provide more collaborative experiences for our graduate students across their disciplines, and to better integrate design into all MFA training in our department.

As we continue to nurture the Multicultural Theater Certificate, which is currently aimed at undergraduates, we have plans in place to create a future graduate certificate, which will help recruit a more diverse cohort of graduate students and will further distinguish UMass Amherst’s niche amongst peer institutions.

We look forward to next year’s recruitment cycle and are excited to bring in a new cohort of graduate students in Directing, Dramaturgy, Costume, Lighting and Scenic Design & Technology.
The Grahamstown Festival Course

Now going into its THIRD summer, our study abroad program takes students to South Africa to experience the National Arts Festival that takes place over ten days in Grahamstown, South Africa. With Prof Megan Lewis at the helm and another faculty member or graduate student as assistant, students are exposed to the second largest theatre festival in the world (outside Edinburgh in Scotland) and the largest in the southern hemisphere. They see new plays and cutting edge international performances; meet playwrights, actors, artists and other students interested in performance; and theatre and engage with, and reflect upon, the historic, sociopolitical, and creative contexts of the work we see.

Reflecting on year two, Megan wrote the following in our Stages newsletter:

With the Grahamstown Festival course, I wanted to take students beyond the familiar, into a new culture that asks them to reflect deeply on who they are, what they stand for, and how they can be active, ethical citizens of the global world.

The 6-credit course, which includes a 10-unit online preparatory component and two weeks in-country travel, is focused around the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa. This is the second largest arts festival in the world (Edinburgh is first) and the largest in Africa. The course is aimed at immersing students in a new culture through the performing arts, which offer a lens through which to examine questions of social justice, race, class and gender politics, history, language, memory, and the role of the arts.

Building on the success of the last year’s pilot course — 14 graduate and undergraduate students joined me and Prof Al-Bilali in summer 2014 — this year 21 students from UMass, Tufts University and Illinois State participated in this once-in-a-lifetime learning experience. Prof Gibson Cima brought a cast of talented and dedicated performers from Tufts to perform their innovative Richard III at the festival.

This summer, the course breaks new ground: a group of students who are taking the course are also performing at the festival. This past year the department saw a very successful production of Jackie Sibblies Drury’s We Are Proud to Present... directed by graduate student Jen Onopa. She and the theater students who are involved in the piece will travel to South Africa for three performances.

The cast of We Are Proud to Present... Photo courtesy of Jen Onopa
**People**

Faculty and Staff News and Achievements

**Penny Remsen steps down as department chair**

After seven years as Chair of the Department, Lighting Design Professor Penny Remsen steps down in August. During her tenure, Penny was a voice for the department to the administration, advocating tirelessly for a number of physical plant improvements in our spaces and speaking powerfully on the department’s behalf in development circles.

The Department’s Curtain Theater received a new tension wire grid and a host of other technical upgrades on her watch, and the Rand Theater house and lobby are now a stylish purple and gray, rather than being clad tired orange shag carpeting. (Penny received a seat of her own in the Rand in recognition of her tireless efforts.) Those two projects represent over $1.3 million in work done to the Department’s spaces. Smaller in price tag but also representing a significant commitment is the $25,000 that went into various upgrades to classrooms and converting the Upper Rand Studio into one that can better and more safely accommodate performance classes.

Penny also forged connections with a number of alumni who are eager to give back. Thanks to those relationships, the department is two scholarships richer.

Stephen Driscoll ’73, a longtime friend of the department, returned to our stage to perform in *The Merchant of Venice*. At the opening celebration/fundraiser of that event, we were able to announce that he had generously created the BADA fund to pay airfare and half of the tuition to send a UMass Theater student to the British American Drama Academy’s Midsummer in Oxford program. The second recipient of the scholarship is attending this summer, and a host of other students were also admitted to the program.

Larry ’67 and Susan ’69 Benedict, meanwhile, created the Benedict Scholarship to honor talented design and production students. The language for the scholarship reads as follows:

Established to provide support for students within the Department of Theater who are studying theater design, production, and management. The Chair of the Department or designee, in consultation with key faculty and staff, will select each year’s recipient(s).

Special consideration will be given to sophomores and juniors who have demonstrated technical proficiency and a commitment to professionalism.

In academic news, Penny oversaw the implementation of the Multicultural Theater Certificate, which has enrolled a number of theater and non-theater major students. Two students recently completed the certificate requirements. Penny also supported funding for the Grahamstown Festival Course.

In terms of personnel, the position now held by Judyie Al-Bilali holds is a newly-created position, a joint appoint-
ment with Commonwealth College. Often those appointments have gone to the sciences, so we were proud to secure the position for the arts. We regained a tenure track position that had been lost in area of dramaturgy. And we switched a playwriting position that had gone empty to a guest artist position that specifically hires African-American playwrights to come work with and mentor our students.

**Faculty Achievements**

**Judyie Al-Bilali**’s multi-year Arts, Legacy, and Community project came to a conclusion this year with the season-ending production of *Collidescope 2.0: Adventures in Pre- and Post-Racial America*. The project was much broader than just this production, as impressive as it was. Over the past two years, Art, Legacy, and Community hosted conversations, and workshops around race and activism, as well as readings and smaller-scale productions looking at these and related issues. Students worked with *Collidescope 2.0* creators Talvin Wilks and Ping Chong to research and write new sections of the play that brought in local history. Wilks and Chong also participated in the Rand Lecture, which was moderated by Priscilla Page. Besides Priscilla, who also served as *Collidescope 2.0* dramaturg and organized a number of pre- and post-show conversations during the run, fellow faculty members Megan Lewis and Gilbert McCauley were instrumental in various elements of the Art, Legacy, and Community and *Collidescope 2.0* events, and adjunct faculty member Glenn Proud was an associate producer of the play.

Sound design professor Amy Altadonna opened a show in May called *Cal in Camo*, at Rattlestick. She collaborated with her artistic team at Colt Coeur. Over the summer, her plans include time at Shakespeare & Co. to design *Or*, by erstwhile Play Lab resident playwright Liz Duffy Adams; *Ugly Lies the Bone*; and *The Taming*. She will also design *Dear Elizabeth* at Dorset Theater Festival, and *Peter and the Starcatcher* at Perseverance Theater in Juneau, Alaska.

**Chris Baker** wrote a new play which was workshopped at Center Stage. An excerpt from *Stages*:

Experiencing important historical figures and the worlds they inhabited through ingenious media and genre mash-ups has proven fertile theatrical ground lately — see recent iterations of a multicultural Alexander Hamilton, emo Andrew Jackson, and even a dance/art-rock Imelda Marcos.

UMass's very own Chris Baker has submitted a noteworthy addition to the genre with *Lincoln: An American Vaudeville*. The piece uses the conventions of vaudeville — a mix of music, comedy, and vignettes — to take a not-strictly-factual look at the milieu of the 16th president and get at some hard truths about our current political situation. Several years in creation, the piece was workshopped at Baltimore's prestigious Center Stage this April. Baker plans to edit the piece based on feedback from the Center Stage workshop and hopes to see a future production.

Professor Harley Erdman let us know that the book he's been working on, an anthology of plays by 17th century Spanish women, was on schedule to be published this year. It includes 10 plays in first-ever translations (by Erd-
man), and has critical introductions by Lisa Vollendorf and Nieves Romero-Diaz.

“On a bouncier note,” he added, “I taught in the Edinburgh program again, and saw alum Linda McInerney ‘98G there, as well as her production, *Frankenstein*, which was very well-received, including a 4-star review from the prestigious Scotsman.” Also worth noting is that Harley was on sabbatical teaching theater in Sri Lanka as a Fulbright Scholar this spring.

**Gina Kaufman** will direct Steven Dietz’s *Yankee Tavern* at Sam Rush ‘97G’s New Century Theatre this summer. Grad student **Corinne Miller** will be her assistant and undergrad alumna **Adrienne Paquin** will be in the cast. Earlier in the year, Kaufmann and **Harley Erdman** collaborated on a huge undertaking in the Department of Theater, the writing and mounting of a new musical, *Donny Johns*. An excerpt from *Stages* is included here:

“As a process it’s totally exceeded my expectations by about a thousand-fold,” said Erdman. “On a level of just personal joy, just being in a room with Gina and Aaron, our graduate student assistants, the musicians, (music director) Mark Swanson and especially the performers has made me need to be there and want to be there every single night.”

“The word joy feels really right to me,” Kaufmann agreed, “because I found myself so excited outside of rehearsal as well as in rehearsal about the idea that we were in the moment, processing, figuring out, exploring with this group of people.”

The collaboration that led to *Donny Johns* was spurred by Kaufmann. She had enjoyed directing Marta the Divine, translated and adapted by Erdman, and suggested they work together again. In conversation, they realized that Tirso de Molina’s *Trickster of Seville*, aka the original Don Juan story, could make a great starting point for a musical. (Many people know *Don Giovanni*, Mozart’s operatic take on the same tale.)

“Don Juan is the only complex character,” Kaufmann said of Tirso’s piece in a pre-show interview. “And Harley and I were really interested in the three women.” They set out to rewrite Isabel, Ann, and Teresa as fully-dimensional people, and also took on the challenge of writing the privileged Donny Johns as an anti-hero. Originally slated to compose the piece was Kaufmann’s friend Marc Hollmann (*Urinetown*), but he had to drop out, and a call for composers connected them with New Yorker Aaron Jones. One long conversation in a coffee shop later, he was aboard, and the three quickly formed a tight-knit group. “Being in a room with Aaron is very inspiring,” said Kaufmann, who loved the modern rock sound he brought to the team. “He loved the way that his impulses could be part of the process,” she said, adding that the freedom to follow those impulses “made me feel like new parts of me came out as an artist.”

**Julie Nelson** was promoted to full Professor. She was on sabbatical this year.
Guest Artists and Instructors

The department's talented and dedicated faculty and staff happily carry most of the weight when it comes to teaching, mentoring, and inspiring students. However, we are fortunate to have a wide-ranging network of artists and scholars who join us to augment our curriculum. In several cases, we brought artists to campus to work with us on a mainstage production and then were able to schedule classroom or workshop time with them so that students not in the production also had the benefit of their professional experience. Below is a list of the individuals, some of them alumni, others friends or associates of our faculty and staff, who joined us over the past year. All of them boast impressive credentials and talent that improved the academic and artistic experiences of our students. Some guests joined us for the entire year or semester as instructors, while others worked with students on a short-term basis.

Lisa Abend, Equity actor — Cast member in Donny Johns

Larry Benedict ’67, founder, Department of Theater Larry and Susan Benedict Scholarship — Awarded the Benedict Scholarship

Jamison Burnside, ASL interpreter — ASL interpretation for Love and Information

Margo Caddell ’06G, lighting designer and instructor — Taught lighting design and advised student lighting designers on mainstage projects

Mitch Chakour, guitarist — Orchestra member for Donny Johns

Ed Check, set designer — Set designer for Marie Antoinette and Love and Information

Ping Chong, founder, Ping Chong + Co. — Co-creator and director of Collidescope 2.0; co-Rand Lecturer

Dr. Anne Ciecko, Associate Professor, Department of Communication — Guest speaker, Marie Antoinette post-show conversation

Oscar Collins, Interim Co-Director of CMASS — Guest speaker about Mentoring and Leadership with students of color

Double Edge Theatre — Guest lecturers, Theater 100

Stephen Driscoll ‘73, actor, BADA Alumnus and Scholarship — Guest speaker for Fridays at Four

Ben Durfee, pianist — Donny Johns accompanist

Kim Euell, playwright, new play development professional, multi-cultural theater scholar — Playwright-in-Residence; taught and advised playwriting, development and multi-cultural theater classes at graduate and undergraduate levels, advised the New Play Lab and produced her play, The Dance, as part of Play Lab

Douglas Ewart, composer, improviser, sculptor and maker of masks and instruments — Leader of an improvisation and collaboration workshop

Luke Flood, musician — Rehearsal pianist for Donny Johns
Kate Freer, projection artist — Projections for Collidescope 2.0

Jack Gladstone, singer, songwriter and storyteller and co-founder of the Native America Speaks program — Guest lecturer

Caroline Gould, Assistant Director for Career Planning HFA — Guest Speaker for Fridays at Four

Michael Graziano, producer, founder Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS — Guest speaker for Fridays at Four

Q-Mars Haeri, theater artist, projection artist — Projections, Love and Information

Arielle Herold ‘14, stage and production manager — Assistant production manager

Prof. David Jensen, Computer Science Department — Moderator, Love and Information post-show Q&A

Aaron Jones, composer — Composer of Donny Johns, also gave a guest concert and participated in post-show feedback sessions

Mimi Lien, set designer, McArthur Fellow — Set designs for Collidescope 2.0

James Lowe, musician — Orchestra member for Donny Johns

Dr. Noa Milman, Visiting Assistant Professor in Sociology — Guest speaker, Marie Antoinette post-show conversation

Barbara Neulinger, artist — Props master and scenic charge for mainstage productions

Brian O’Neil, talent agent and lecturer, author of Acting As a Business — Master class for Fridays at Four

Glenn Proud ‘15G, director and educator — Guest lecturer and associate producer, Collidescope 2.0

Uriah Rodriguez, community actor — Cast member in Donny Johns

Sam Samuels, Equity actor — Cast member in Donny Johns

Tom Schiff, UMass Amherst Men and Masculinities Center and serves as an Adjunct Professor for both the Social Justice Education, Public Health, and Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies programs at UMass — Guest speaker on white allyship

Ntozake Shange, playwright — Guest speaker in Black Theater class

Sheila Siragusa ’00, ’03G, director, performer, Shakespeare scholar — Taught performance and Shakespeare First Folio classes

Split Knuckle Theatre — Guest lecturers in stage movement

Chancellor Kumble Subbaswamy, UMass — Guest speaker, post-show conversation for Collidescope 2.0

Mark Swanson, Senior Lecturer in Music and Director of Instrumental Music, Amherst College — Music director for Donny Johns
Stephanie Swirsky, playwright — In residence to work on her play, *What Actually Happened Was*, as part of Play Lab

Jean-Claude Van Itallie, playwright — Workshop leader

Denise Wagner, retired Department of Theater secretary — Awarded the Denise Lessard Wagner Community Spirit Award

Ni’ja Whitson, interdisciplinary artist and writer — Leader of an improvisation and collaboration workshop

David Wiggall, Smith College lighting and sound supervisor — *Marie Antoinette* projection consultant

Talvin Wilks, director, playwright and theater educator — Co-creator and director of *Collidescope 2.0*; co-Rand Lecturer

**Looking Ahead to Next Year**

Gina Kaufmann will move from her current post as Undergraduate Program Director to Chair of the Department.

Gil McCauley will step into the vacancy and take over as Undergraduate Program Director.

A costume design search and a scenic design search will be conducted concurrently, giving the design area the chance to boldly re-imagine its future direction. As we await the appointment of the new department members, two New York City costume designer will join us next year: Oana Botez and Ciera Wells.

Among Milan Dragicevich's plans for *Refugee* is to bring in a Serbian director, Nikita Milivojević. Milivojević has extensive directing experience in Europe and the Middle East and so brings a personal experience and expertise to bear on the themes explored in the piece. In addition to his work as a director, he is expected to interact extensively with department students. Dean Julie Hayes has approved the funds to make Milivojević the department's Rand Lecturer next year, so that he will speak to the community as well.
Outreach

Community Student Engagement

As stated in the undergraduate program update, the department’s leitmotif in years to come is “every student counts” and an integral part of that is the work to reach out to prospective students.

We have long had a matinee performance, and this year, we made the show free, something we have only done once before, because we wanted to make sure it reached the students we want to bring into our department in increasing numbers. The matinee played to about 350 students, a near sell-out crowd, and the students enjoyed the benefit of a study guide before the show. Additionally, one class came early for a pre-show workshop with us.

New this year was a pilot program started by Gina Kaufmann and Jen Onopa in which schools have a workshop with theater that’s intended to get students familiar with theater regardless of their comfort and previous experience, and to get them to think about all the different facets of theater we teach in the department. The idea is, one of more will appeal to students and they will start to picture themselves in our space.

We held two of these workshops, one at a local Springfield school, another on site in the Curtain Theater, and in each, students played theater games and saw a short performance, with discussion of the performance, the games, and the many things theater has to offer.

The hope is to turn the program into one students sign up for each semester — we would like to eventually be able to offer credit to UMass Theater participants.

Community Engagement

Last year, the dramaturgs began a move away from our old First Friday talk-back format by organizing not just one but several post-show Q&As. This year, they reached out to audiences even more by scheduling events on most nights. These conversations, which were planned for pre- and post-show slots on performance nights, were a mixture of formats that changed with each production. For Donny Johns and the Play Lab, dramaturgs focused on the new-work aspect and elicited responses to the text. For Love and Information, the conversations were moderated dialogues that helped audience members tease personal meaning out of the playlets that made up the work. Marie Antoinette engaged with rebellion, fashion, and celebrity with the help of some community experts, and a host of activists and artists engaged with the questions of racism and activism posed by Collidescope 2.0. This type of intense, repeated opportunity to consider theater from multiple angles will be the model going forward.

Fridays at Four

Fridays at Four, our career preparation series, continued this year, with several events in the fall and one in the spring.

Yale and Juilliard lecturer Brian O’Neill’s Acting As A Business: Strategies for Success workshop in the spring was attended by 35 students. Michael Graziano, producer of Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS spoke about producing; Stephen Driscoll spoke about the BADA summer acting program; and Career Services’ Caroline Gould and Theater’s publicity director Anna-Maria Goossens spoke to various aspects of job seeking and marketing oneself. These events were partly funded by the $2035 raised through UMass’s MinuteFund.
NYPOP
The Department of Theater worked with Afro-American Studies to bring graduate student Ifa Bayeza’s *Benevolence* to the College of Humanities and Fine Arts’ NYPOP space. This space, located in New York City, is a base for making connections in the city with working artists and alumni, and over a weekend this winter, a team of students mounted a low-tech performance followed by discussions on the play and the history it tracks.

Symposium of Feminist Poetics: Legacies of June Jordan
The department also gave money to enable the departments of Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies (WGSS) and Afro-American Studies at UMass to host a one-day symposium, “Feminist Poetics: Legacies of June Jordan,” on Friday, March 25th, 2016 in the Student Union Ballroom at UMass. The symposium brought together an inter-generational group of prominent feminist scholars, artists, and activists whose work extended June Jordan’s rich legacy of socially-engaged art and scholarship. Speakers included foundational black feminist writers Cheryl Clarke, Barbara Smith, Paula Giddings, Sonia Sanchez, Sharon Page Ritchie, and Akasha Gloria Hull; contemporary poets and scholars Evie Shockley, Kevin Quashie, Samiya Bashir, and Alexis Pauline Gumbs; award-winning filmmakers Aishah Shahidah Simmons and Kai M. Green, and noted artists/activists including trans* activist Che Gosset, feminist publisher Lisa C. Moore, UMass alum Nadia Alahmed, and Alicia Garza, co-founder of the Black Lives Matter movement. The event also featured talks and performances by Five College students and faculty. Five-College faculty moderators included Aneeka Henderson (Amherst College), Paula Giddings (Smith College), Mecca Jamilah Sullivan (UMass), and Arlene Avian (emerita, UMass).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACULTY</th>
<th>AWARD NAME</th>
<th>AWARD $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amy Altadonna</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christopher Baker</td>
<td>Faculty Research Grant</td>
<td>$12,620.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina Kaufmann</td>
<td>CHFA Research Award - Donny Johns production</td>
<td>$2,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina Kaufmann</td>
<td>Faculty Research Grant - Donny Johns production</td>
<td>$12,850.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina Kaufmann</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harley Erdman</td>
<td>Flex Grant for Faculty</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harley Erdman</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$850.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harley Erdman</td>
<td>Subvention Grant</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harley Erdman</td>
<td>Cornell Award - Donny Johns production</td>
<td>$12,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judyie Al-Bilali</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Nelson</td>
<td>Flex Grant for Faculty</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Nelson</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$995.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julie Nelson</td>
<td>PMYR Grant</td>
<td>$1,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Euell</td>
<td>Flex Grant for Faculty</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena Cuomo</td>
<td>Career Services Award</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena Cuomo</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lena Cuomo</td>
<td>Flex Grant for Faculty</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>TIDE Ambassador Fellowship</td>
<td>$750.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>Subvention Grant</td>
<td>$2,900.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>Flex Grant for Faculty</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>Research Presentation Funds</td>
<td>$1,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>Faculty Research Grant</td>
<td>$12,151.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>CHFA Scholarship Funding</td>
<td>$10,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>Commonwealth Honors College Funding for students traveling to S. Africa</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>UMASS Department of Theater Funding for students traveling to S. Africa</td>
<td>$2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>IPO Airmile Scholarship</td>
<td>$2,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>SCTL Fellowship</td>
<td>$1,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Cottom</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Cottom</td>
<td>Flex Grant for Faculty</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan Dragicevich</td>
<td>MSP Research Funds</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan Dragicevich</td>
<td>Flex Grant for Faculty</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan Dragicevich</td>
<td>Faculty Research Grant: Funding for REFUGEE production</td>
<td>$14,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milan Dragicevich</td>
<td>CHFA Project Funds: Funding for REFUGEE production</td>
<td>$3,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Milan Dragicevich  CHFA Budget Funding:  
Funding for REFUGEE production  $3,500.00

Milan Dragicevich  CHFA Rand Lecture Funding:  
Funding for REFUGEE production  $6,000.00

Priscilla Page  MSP Research Funds  $1,000.00

Priscilla Page  Flex Grant for Faculty  $500.00

Priscilla Page  Association of Performing Arts Presenters Grant  $3,000.00

ART, LECACY and COMMUNITY/COLLIDESCOPE 2.0
Judyie Al-Bilali, Priscilla Page, Megan Lewis, Gilbert McCauley
Total Funds Raised  $81,800.00

Donors: Art, Legacy & Community is made possible in part by the generous support of UMass Department of Theater, WEB DuBois Dept. of Afro American Studies, Commonwealth Honors College, President's Creative Economy Fund, Public Service Endowment Grant, Arts at Amherst, MOSAIC (Five College Multicultural Theater Committee), Five College Theater Chairs, Jackie Pritzen Endowment of Five Colleges Inc., Five College Consortium, Institute for Teaching Excellence and Faculty Development, UMass Interdisciplinary Studies Institute, CMASS (Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success), Amherst College English Dept., UMass History Dept., UMass English Dept., UMass Communications Dept., Mt. Holyoke College History Dept. UMass College for Humanities and Fine Arts and the Office of UMass Chancellor Subbaswamy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT</th>
<th>AWARD NAME</th>
<th>AWARD $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conor Dennin</td>
<td>Arts Council - <em>Wings of a Butterfly</em> production</td>
<td>$165.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Arts Council - <em>We Are Proud To Present</em> production</td>
<td>$1,250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Hartmann</td>
<td>Arts Council - <em>Othello</em> production</td>
<td>$850.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Finn</td>
<td>Arts Council - <em>Glass Menagerie</em> production</td>
<td>$675.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kylee Denesha/Alison Kerr</td>
<td>Arts Council - <em>The Body Project</em> production</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ifa Bayeza</td>
<td>Arts Council - <em>Benevolence</em> production</td>
<td>$695.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Development

Development in the Department of Theater focused smaller tasks as well as finishing up certain projects to coincide with Penny Remsen stepping down as chair after 7 years in the position.

During Penny’s chairship, we were proud to rack up a series of impressive accomplishments in the area of development. The Department’s Curtain Theater received a new tension wire grid and a host of other technical upgrades on her watch, and the Rand Theater house is now a stylish purple and gray, rather than tired orange shag carpeting.

Penny also forged connections with a number of alumni who are eager to give back. Thanks to those relationships, the department is two scholarships richer: Stephen Driscoll ’73 generously created the BADA fund to help send a UMass Theater student to the British American Drama Academy’s Midsummer in Oxford program. Larry ’67 and Susan ’69 Benedict, meanwhile, created the Benedict Scholarship to honor talented design and production students.

The amount raised over Penny’s tenure (final numbers pending):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY09-FY17 - REMSEN CHAIRSHIP</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theater Gift</td>
<td>$120,670.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rand Theater Gift Fund</td>
<td>$130,353.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benedict Scholarship</td>
<td>$17,775.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RECENTLY ESTABLISHED SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

- Stephen Driscoll Scholarship
- Benedict Endowment

Minutely Efforts

- BADA Support $6,225.00
- Fridays At Four $2,035.00
- We Are Proud To Present $4,185.00

After several years of our Mark Your Spot campaign, we had a solid group of supporters, including alumni, officials, and parents of students who had purchased seats. This fall, we installed all the plaques on the seats they’d bought, and they look beautiful. The opportunity to buy seats, while no longer an active campaign, remains open on our site and we hope to install more seat plaques in coming years.

The Department of Theater undertook two MinuteFund campaigns. Run very much like a Kickstarter or GoFundMe, this UMass-administered crowd-funding campaign operates without the other groups’ overhead and allows organizations to keep the money pledged even if they don’t meet the final goal. We raised money to bring speakers to the department for our Fridays at Four events some speakers require travel money or speaker fees, and the funds raised will enable us to do that. We also had a group of students who plan to travel to South African to present We Are Proud to Present a Presentation... at the Grahamstown Festival, one of the world’s premiere arts festivals. They raised money through MinuteFund, also, to help defray the travel costs of bringing an entire company across the ocean.

To help our prospective donors become actual donors, we continued our series of donor profiles. Featured this year were two women who attended UMass Theater and went on to leave their own marks in the arts: Lisa Kornetsky ’86 and Susan Holmes ’71, whose profile posters are shown on the following pages.
DONOR PROFILE

Graduating Year: 1971
Major: Theater

A favorite UMass Theater memory: Susan fondly recalls a production of Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill’s *Three-Penny Opera* by the Roister Doisters, a student theater group. She was on the technical crew for the show. “It really blew me away. I was so amazed by the talent of everybody who was involved.”

Why do you donate to the Department of Theater? Susan is inspired by the example of her mentor, the late Doris Abramson, who was among the department’s founding members and helped Susan get her start as an arts administrator. “Doris is my motivation. She just made me feel like an important human being and that life ahead would be wonderful and thrilling and fascinating, and she gave me the courage to say ‘Yes’ to everything I’ve ever said ‘Yes’ to. She made me see what a wonderful life a life in the arts could be. And if I can help anybody in any way see that for themselves, I’m thrilled to do it.”
Lisa Kornetsky

Graduating Year: 1986
Major: Theater

A favorite UMass Theater memory:
Kornetsky has many memories of pulling end-of-semester all-nighters in the Department of Theater. She fondly remembers being in the directing and dramaturgy graduate student office with her compatriots. “It was probably horrible at the time, but (I loved) the connection with students as we did our best to end the semester and get things done with no sleep.”

Why do you donate to the Department of Theater? I feel like I found myself at UMass. I found what I wanted to do and I learned who I was in a bunch of different ways. I could be my best and I could be my worst, and it was all OK because it was a learning experience. It was a great program… and it’s my responsibility to support it when I can and how I can.

DONOR PROFILE
Student and Alumni Achievements

A trio of Tony Award nominees, and 4 Drama Desk nominees!

This spring we were thrilled to learn that a trio of alumni (Justin Townsend ‘97, Ben Stanton ‘00, and David Korins ‘99) had received Tony Award nominations — and that one of them had scored two nominations, even. This news came on the heels that alumni and a faculty member had also received Drama Desk nominations. Justin Townsend ‘97 ultimately received two Drama Desk Awards, for The Humans and American Pyscho, and the trio’s achievement raised our profile locally and nationally. In addition to write-ups in UMass media (look for a story on Korins in the fall UMass Magazine), the news attracted quite a bit of buzz and attention to our program from local media, including Masslive/The Springfield Republican, the Westfield News, and the Daily Hampshire Gazette — see images below and on the following pages.
3 UMass Amherst graduates among Tony Award nominees for 'Hamilton,' 'American Psycho''

78 shares

By Ray Kelly | rrally@repub.com
Published on May 20, 2015 at 1:29 PM

And coverage in the Westfield news:
Other student and alumni new and achievements

We checked in with Leanne Fader Coronel ‘84, a manager in the LA branch of the entertainment business. Although Coronel loved theater and film and counted the late Harry Mahnken among her mentors, she wasn't a theater major during her time at UMass. Instead, she put together a BDIC in advertising. Her career in that field was short-lived. “I worked all of two days in advertising and got out,” she said, recalling her boss as a hard case who ripped up 12 pages she’s typed for him because he found a single typo. Reconsidering her options, she thought, “I didn't necessarily want to be an actor, but I loved to be around actors.” Coronel translated that insight into a successful career, and now has over two decades’ worth of experience supporting actors in their careers, first as an agent, and for seven years now as the head of her own management company, The Coronel Group. She views her work as a creative puzzle, trying to fit the right person into the right project.

One of Donny Johns’ cast members was theater major Meredith Wells. Her casting marked the first time a student who uses a wheelchair has appeared in a mainstage production. Daily Collegian editor Sarah Gamard interviewed Wells and wrote a profile of her that covered not only Donny Johns but her aspirations as a theater artist, her life as a student, and her campus profile as an activist campaigning for better accessibility to on-campus arts spaces. Gamard’s introduction to Wells read as follows:

Student makes UMass history as first to perform mainstage production in wheelchair
Meredith Wells’ room is neat and organized, with not a pillow or book on the shelf out of place. A Van Gogh poster hangs on the wall (matching the “Starry Night” pattern on the back of her custom-made wheelchair), framed pictures sit at her bedside of her and her friends, and a tapestry drapes over a cozy bed.
Wells, a junior pursuing a bachelor's degree with individual concentration in musical theater, is the kind of person with an inherently commanding and endearing presence that makes a good performer: she holds herself well, speaks clearly and calmly, and laughs the entire time we talk.
Wells is also the first-ever student to perform in a UMass mainstage production, the sexually charged Donny Johns, in a wheelchair.

News in brief

Toby Bercovici ‘11G has become part of Holyoke, MA’s burgeoning arts scene with her company Real Live Theatre. The group performed a piece called Queen Margaret, culled from text culled from Shakespeare’s works.

Nefertiti Burton ‘92 let us know that she is now full professor and chair of the Department of Theatre Arts at the University of Louisville in Louisville KY.

Rob Corddry ‘93 shares the screen with Dwayne Johnson for season 2 of HBO’s Ballers. Rob’s long-time Emmy-winning series, Childrens Hospital, ended its run this spring.

Alumna Jane Cox received the Ruth Morley Design Award from the League of Professional Theatre Women for this season’s The Color Purple and Noises Off on Broadway. She also lit what’s known colloquially as the Cumberbatch Hamlet. She was just appointed chair of the Princeton University theater program.

Larry Geddes ‘81 informed us he was appointed Assistant Director for Dance and Drama Admissions at The Juilliard School in April 2015. He’s responsible for recruiting qualified dance and drama students to the College Division, and for overseeing the application process for dancers, actors and playwrights.
Jay Herzog ’87 had a remarkable anniversary this year that had creative implications: “After one of the most difficult times in my life, I get to celebrate my 1 year anniversary of a liver transplant with a play that recognizes living donors. Michael Hollinger’s newest play (with 1st time rewrites) Under The Skin will be opening at the Everyman Theatre in Baltimore in January. It will mark my 50th play as the resident designer with the company and not only do I get to share my lighting design, but it fulfills my mission to share the importance of being an organ and tissue donor with the audience. I will serve on a panel and be able to share my story and thanks for making it to this opening. As well, I continue to teach at Towson University. (21 years)”

James Horban ’15G landed a great gig fresh from graduation: “I have accepted the position of Assistant Professor of Live Entertainment Technology at Lone Star College - Montgomery down in Houston! I’ll be teaching Lighting for Live Entertainment and Vectorworks, as well as doing some lighting and scenic design for the drama department...”

Undergraduate student Billy Luce Jr. was off to the Williamstown Theatre Festival to be an acting apprentice.

Alissa Mesibov ’13 emailed from New York: “It’s been a busy few months for me. I started my MFA in Performing Arts Management at Brooklyn College, and in January, I start a year-long development residency at the Public Theater, where I’ll be focusing on fundraising efforts for Shakespeare in the Park. To say I’m excited for this would be a massive understatement!”

Cory Missildine ’15 worked for New Repertory Theater’s Classic Repertory Company this year. “We are touring all over New England with two shows, Julius Caesar (in which I play Caesar) and 1984 (in which I play Parsons). The tour goes to April and it’s basically an educational tour, so we also conduct workshops and talkbacks at every venue!”

Kym Moore ’92G announced CoLAB, a collaborative arts program that’s a join effort of Brown University, where she teaches, and the nearby Rhode Island School of Design. She is the co-Creative Director for the interdisciplinary art program, which aims to engage artists and scholars in a variety of media in creating new work.

Our very favorite film president (Bill Pullman ’80G) is still in the fight in this summer’s upcoming blockbuster, Independence Day: Resurgence.

Undergraduate student Jasmeet Singh was a cast member in Shakespeare in Look Park’s Hamlet.

Emily Taradash ’14G has been working as the resident Costume Designer and Costume Shop Supervisor at Ocean State Theatre in Warwick, RI since September. This season, she had the pleasure of designing It’s a Wonderful Life, Breaking Legs, and 1776. She followed those with The Miracle Worker, and managed the build process for the final show of the season: Anything Goes.

Alumnus and UMass honorary degree recipient Peter Tolan is an executive producers on The Outsiders TV series on WGN America.
Appendices

1. Departmental Events —
a full listing of mainstage and student productions, guest workshops, special events, department guest appearances for the 2015-2016 school year

2. Audience Survey —
an analysis of demographic, advertising, and art consumer questions asked of audience members via program insert during the 2015-2016 season

3. In Memoriam —
remembering Kaz Reed and Doug Kraner
Departmental Events —  
a full listing of mainstage and student productions, guest workshops, special events, 
department guest appearances for the 2015-2016 school year

**FALL 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Event</th>
<th>Name of Event</th>
<th>Director/Leader</th>
<th>Dates and Times</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Meet &amp; Greet</td>
<td>Penny Remsen Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>Friday, September 11 4:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Fall Audition Workshop</td>
<td>Gina Kaufmann Lena Cuomo</td>
<td>Saturday, September 12 2:00 pm-4:00 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday’s at 4</td>
<td>Michael Graziano</td>
<td>Lena Cuomo</td>
<td>Friday, October 9 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Green Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday’s at 4</td>
<td>Caroline Gould Anna-Maria Goossens</td>
<td>Lena Cuomo</td>
<td>Friday, October 16 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Green Room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Preview Performance</td>
<td><em>Marie Antoinette</em></td>
<td>DIR: Christina Pellegrini SM: Jessica Gill</td>
<td>Thursday, November 5 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Opening Performance</td>
<td><em>Marie Antoinette</em></td>
<td>DIR: Christina Pellegrini SM: Jessica Gill</td>
<td>Saturday, November 7 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #2</td>
<td><em>Marie Antoinette</em></td>
<td>DIR: Christina Pellegrini SM: Jessica Gill</td>
<td>Wednesday, November 11 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Finn Lefevre</td>
<td>Wednesday, November 11 9:45 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #3</td>
<td><em>Marie Antoinette</em></td>
<td>DIR: Christina Pellegrini SM: Jessica Gill</td>
<td>Thursday, November 12 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Finn Lefevre</td>
<td>Thursday, November 12 9:45 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #4</td>
<td><em>Marie Antoinette</em></td>
<td>DIR: Christina Pellegrini SM: Jessica Gill</td>
<td>Friday, November 13 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Finn Lefevre</td>
<td>Friday, November 13 9:45 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #5</td>
<td><em>Marie Antoinette</em></td>
<td>DIR: Christina Pellegrini SM: Jessica Gill</td>
<td>Saturday, November 14 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #6</td>
<td><em>Marie Antoinette</em></td>
<td>DIR: Christina Pellegrini SM: Jessica Gill</td>
<td>Saturday, November 14 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Closing Toast</td>
<td>Megan Lewis</td>
<td>Saturday, November 14, 9:45 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Opening Performance</td>
<td><em>Donny Johns</em></td>
<td>DIR: Gina Kaufmann SM: Michael Smith</td>
<td>Thursday, November 19 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #2</td>
<td><em>Donny Johns</em></td>
<td>DIR: Gina Kaufmann SM: Michael Smith</td>
<td>Friday, November 20 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Type</td>
<td>Event Details</td>
<td>Date/Time</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion Gaven Trinidad</td>
<td>Saturday, November 21</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Mainstage Performance #3 | *Donny Johns*  
                     | DIR: Gina Kaufmann  
                     | SM: Michael Smith   | Saturday, November 21 |
| Post Show Event     | Post Show Discussion Gaven Trinidad                                           | Saturday, November 21 | Curtain Theater   |
| Independent Project | We Are Proud To Present... Jennifer Onopa                                     | Thursday, December 3  | FAC 204           |
| Mainstage Performance #4 | *Donny Johns*  
                     | DIR: Gina Kaufmann  
                     | SM: Michael Smith   | Curtain Theater   |
| Post Show Event     | Post Show Discussion Gaven Trinidad                                           | Thursday, December 3  | Curtain Theater   |
| Independent Project | We Are Proud To Present... Jennifer Onopa                                     | Friday, December 4    | FAC 204           |
| Mainstage Performance #5 | *Donny Johns*  
                     | DIR: Gina Kaufmann  
                     | SM: Michael Smith   | Curtain Theater   |
| Post Show Event     | Post Show Discussion Gaven Trinidad                                           | Friday, December 4    | Curtain Theater   |
| Post Show Event     | Late Night Concert with Aaron Jones                                          | Friday, December 4    | Curtain Theater   |
| Mainstage Performance #6 | *Donny Johns*  
                     | DIR: Gina Kaufmann  
<pre><code>                 | SM: Michael Smith   | Curtain Theater   |
</code></pre>
<p>| Post Show Event     | Post Show Discussion Gaven Trinidad                                           | Saturday, December 5  | Curtain Theater   |
| Reception           | Closing Toast Chris Baker                                                    | Saturday, December 5  | Curtain Theater Lobby |
| Class Presentation  | TH342 Milan Dragicevich                                                       | Monday, December 7    | Curtain Theater   |
| Class Presentation  | TH440 Milan Dragicevich                                                       | Wednesday, December 9 | Curtain Theater   |
| Class Presentation  | TH140 Jen Onopa                                                               | Thursday, December 10 | FAC 204           |
| Class Presentation  | Actor/Director Collaboration Gina Kaufmann Nikoo Mamdoohi Christina Pellegri | Friday, December 11   | Upper Rand Studio  |
| Class Presentation  | TH494BI Harley Erdman                                                        | Friday, December 11   | Curtain Theater   |
| Class Presentation  | TH140 Nikoo Mamdoohi                                                         | Friday, December 11   | FAC 204           |
| Class Presentation  | TH494BI Harley Erdman                                                        | Saturday, December 12 | Curtain Theater   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Event</th>
<th>Name of Event</th>
<th>Director/Leader</th>
<th>Dates and Times</th>
<th>Venue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>We Are Proud To Present… (A Remounting)</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Thursday, February 11 7:00 pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>We Are Proud To Present… (A Remounting)</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Friday, February 12 7:00 pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>We Are Proud To Present… (A Remounting)</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Saturday, February 13 7:00 pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>We Are Proud To Present… (A Remounting)</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Thursday, February 18 7:00 pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>We Are Proud To Present… (A Remounting)</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Friday, February 19 7:00 pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>We Are Proud To Present… (A Remounting)</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Saturday, February 20 7:00 pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>We Are Proud To Present… (A Remounting)</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Thursday, February 25 7:00 pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Preview</td>
<td>Love and Information</td>
<td>DIR: Nikoo Mamoodehi SM: Matthew Morin</td>
<td>Thursday, February 25 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Opening</td>
<td>Love and Information</td>
<td>DIR: Nikoo Mamoodehi SM: Matthew Morin</td>
<td>Saturday, February 26 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Guest</td>
<td>Admission Open House</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Sunday, February 28 8:00 am</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #2</td>
<td>Love and Information</td>
<td>DIR: Nikoo Mamoodehi SM: Matthew Morin</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 1 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Claudia Nolan</td>
<td>Tuesday, March 1 9:00 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Type</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Directors</td>
<td>Performers</td>
<td>Date/Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #3</td>
<td><em>Love and Information</em></td>
<td>Nikoo Mamdoohi</td>
<td>Matthew Morin</td>
<td>Wednesday, March 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Claudia Nolan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday, March 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #4</td>
<td><em>Love and Information</em></td>
<td>Nikoo Mamdoohi</td>
<td>Matthew Morin</td>
<td>Thursday, March 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Claudia Nolan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday, March 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td><em>A DREAM DECONSTRUCTED</em></td>
<td>Corinne Miller</td>
<td></td>
<td>Friday, March 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #5</td>
<td><em>Love and Information</em></td>
<td>Nikoo Mamdoohi</td>
<td>Matthew Morin</td>
<td>Friday, March 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Claudia Nolan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Friday, March 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td><em>A DREAM DECONSTRUCTED</em></td>
<td>Corinne Miller</td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday, March 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #6</td>
<td><em>Love and Information</em></td>
<td>Nikoo Mamdoohi</td>
<td>Matthew Morin</td>
<td>Saturday, March 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Claudia Nolan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday, March 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #7</td>
<td><em>Love and Information</em></td>
<td>Nikoo Mamdoohi</td>
<td>Matthew Morin</td>
<td>Saturday, March 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Closing Toast</td>
<td>Gina Kaufmann</td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday, March 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td><em>A DREAM DECONSTRUCTED</em></td>
<td>Corinne Miller</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday, March 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #1</td>
<td>PLAYLAB Show #1</td>
<td>Christy Pellegrini and Corrine</td>
<td>Carrie Radigan and Bailey Lathrop</td>
<td>Thursday, March 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miller</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #2</td>
<td>PLAYLAB Show #2</td>
<td>Christy Pellegrini and Corrine</td>
<td>Carrie Radigan and Bailey Lathrop</td>
<td>Friday, March 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miller</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #3</td>
<td>PLAYLAB Show #1</td>
<td>Christy Pellegrini and Corrine</td>
<td>Carrie Radigan and Bailey Lathrop</td>
<td>Thursday, March 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miller</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Type</td>
<td>Event Name</td>
<td>Associate Directors</td>
<td>Date/Time</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #4</td>
<td>PLAYLAB Show #2</td>
<td>DIR: Christy Pellegrini and Corrine Miller SM: Carrie Radigan and Bailey Lathrop</td>
<td>Friday, April 1 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #5</td>
<td>PLAYLAB Show #2</td>
<td>DIR: Christy Pellegrini and Corrine Miller SM: Carrie Radigan and Bailey Lathrop</td>
<td>Saturday, April 2 2:00 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Closing Toast</td>
<td>Gilbert McCauley</td>
<td>Saturday, April 2 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater Lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #6</td>
<td>PLAYLAB Show #1</td>
<td>DIR: Christy Pellegrini and Corrine Miller SM: Carrie Radigan and Bailey Lathrop</td>
<td>Saturday, April 2 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Curtain Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Event</td>
<td>Rand Lecture</td>
<td>Department Faculty/Staff</td>
<td>Monday, April 4 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Benevolence</td>
<td>Ifa Bayeza</td>
<td>Thursday, April 7, 8:00pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Benevolence</td>
<td>Ifa Bayeza</td>
<td>Friday, April 8 8:00pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Benevolence</td>
<td>Ifa Bayeza</td>
<td>Saturday, April 9 8:00pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Guest</td>
<td>Admission Open House</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Sunday, April 10 8:00 am</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Preview Performance</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>DIR: Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks PSM: Arielle Herold SM: Daryl Laurenza</td>
<td>Thursday, April 14 7:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Show Event</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Priscilla Page, Gaven Trinidad, Annabeth Kelly</td>
<td>Friday, April 15 9:00 am</td>
<td>Upper Rand Studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage School Matinee</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>DIR: Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks PSM: Arielle Herold SM: Daryl Laurenza</td>
<td>Friday, April 15 10:00 am</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Priscilla Page, Gaven Trinidad, Annabeth Kelly</td>
<td>Friday, April 15 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Rand Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Benevolence</td>
<td>Ifa Bayeza</td>
<td>Friday, April 15 8:00pm</td>
<td>FAC 204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Show Event</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Priscilla Page, Gaven Trinidad, Annabeth Kelly</td>
<td>Saturday, April 16 5:00 pm</td>
<td>Upper Rand Studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Type</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>Main Performance Date and Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Opening Performance</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks</td>
<td>Arielle Herold</td>
<td>Saturday, April 16 7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Priscilla Page</td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday, April 16 10:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Venus Hottentot</td>
<td>Ayshia Stephenson</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday, April 17 2:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Venus Hottentot</td>
<td>Ayshia Stephenson</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sunday, April 17 7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Finn Lefevre</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monday, April 18 7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>The Glass Menagerie</td>
<td>Ben Finn</td>
<td>Kathryn McNall</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 19 7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Show Event</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Priscilla Page, Gaven Trinidad,</td>
<td>Sophia Lalli</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 20 5:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #2</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks</td>
<td>Arielle Herold</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 20 7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>The Glass Menagerie</td>
<td>Ben Finn</td>
<td>Kathryn McNall</td>
<td>Wednesday, April 20 7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #3</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks</td>
<td>Arielle Herold</td>
<td>Thursday, April 21 7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>The Glass Menagerie</td>
<td>Ben Finn</td>
<td>Kathryn McNall</td>
<td>Thursday, April 21 7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Show Event</td>
<td>Post Show Discussion</td>
<td>Priscilla Page with cast special</td>
<td>Chancellor Subbaswamy</td>
<td>Thursday, April 21 10:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #4</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks</td>
<td>Arielle Herold</td>
<td>Friday, April 22 7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Type</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Show Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #5</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks</td>
<td>Arielle Herold</td>
<td>Daryl Laurenza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstage Performance #6</td>
<td>COLLIDESCOPE 2.0</td>
<td>Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks</td>
<td>Arielle Herold</td>
<td>Daryl Laurenza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Closing Toast</td>
<td>Chris Baker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>Milan Dragicevich</td>
<td>Milan Dragicevich</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>Lena Cuomo</td>
<td>Lena Cuomo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>Shelia Siragusa</td>
<td>Shelia Siragusa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td>Jennifer Onopa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Graduation Reception</td>
<td>Penny Remsen Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>COLLABORATION CLASS : Constellation</td>
<td>Gilbert McCauley Julie Fife Amy Altadonna Kristin Jensen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>COLLABORATION CLASS : Silence=Death, The Body Project</td>
<td>Gilbert McCauley Julie Fife Amy Altadonna Kristin Jensen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>COLLABORATION CLASS : Silence=Death, The Body Project</td>
<td>Gilbert McCauley Julie Fife Amy Altadonna Kristin Jensen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>The Body Project</td>
<td>Alison Kerr and Kylee Denesha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>DIR: Sierra Grabowska SM: Jordan Hass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>DIR: Sierra Grabowska SM: Jordan Hass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Dysfunctioning Just Fine</td>
<td>Meredith Wells</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>Othello</td>
<td>DIR: Sierra Grabowska SM: Jordan Hass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Presentation</td>
<td>Spring Awakening: A Final Presentation</td>
<td>Billy Luce, Jr.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Type</td>
<td>Presenter</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>ROOM</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>NO EXIT</td>
<td>Sophie Harrington</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tuesday, May 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SM: Victoria Montagna</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>Gina Kaufmann</td>
<td>Gina Kaufmann</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday, May 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>NO EXIT</td>
<td>Sophie Harrington</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday, May 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SM: Victoria Montagna</td>
<td></td>
<td>8:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Project</td>
<td>NO EXIT</td>
<td>Sophie Harrington</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday, May 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SM: Victoria Montagna</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
UMass Theater Audience Survey Results and Analysis 2015-2016

**Scope of the Survey**
During the 2015-2016 theater season, the Department of Theater included a survey in its original production programs. This is the third year in a row an audience survey has been conducted.

The purpose of the survey is to gather data on several fronts, as well as to capture emails of patrons
1. Who attends our events, including demographic data and art-consumption habits
2. Where audience members heard about our events
3. Their reactions to theater events, both ours and generally
4. To compare answers from this year to last year and determine what patterns may emerge.

**Objective**
The objective in gathering this information is to find populations where we have a strong following and continue to grow them, and to identify populations where we don’t and work on reaching them. Information about how audience members learn about us will help us target our advertising more efficiently, and by having a better understanding of what experiences they seek, we will be better able to encourage them to attend more of our events. The bulk of our questions were the same as in last year’s survey, but we added several new questions and expanded possible responses in several areas to allow greater detail.

**Method**
Questionnaires were included in programs for all shows. We received 263 responses. Audiences were asked to fill out the survey in a speech and there was a note that they could be entered to win tickets in a raffle if they gave us their email. The response rate
was somewhat lower this year until we hit on the idea of having our ushers hand out golf pencils with the surveys, thereby providing a tool to make the survey easier to do, as well as a personal prompt. We plan to do this going forward.

We conducted this effort across the entire season both to capture the largest possible number, and to capture the potential variations in audience from show to show. The biggest variation to note is that our audience for *Collidescope* included a significantly higher percentage of people of color than our overall audience. That information is broken down in more detail in the demographics section.

In many questions the total percentage adds up to more than 100% because multiple answers were allowed. Some respondents also did not answer every question, so totals may be less than 100%.
Overall observations
This year’s results were in large part confirmations of the patterns that have begun to emerge in the two previous years’ results. We found that our audience members are split between college-age and senior age groups, are enthusiastic arts consumers, and are strongly affiliated with the Five Colleges and most especially UMass.

We also saw, again, that our top audience-getter is word of mouth, whether from friends and relatives in productions, fellow arts consumers, or faculty recommendations/assignments. It must be noted that in losing Lively Arts AND Theater 100 over the past half decade, we have lost two incredibly valuable audience drivers — not only have we lost the students in those classes, but, as most of them were non-majors, we have lost critical word-of-mouth access to their non-major peers. Theater’s declining attendance reflects this loss.

Expense and schedule were cited as the top barriers to attendance last year and continue to be this year. As regards the former, reaching out to Residential Life on campus has been a challenge because of turnover in that area, but efforts seemed to start to pay off this year with several groups taking advantage of our dorm discounts, our biggest price-break initiative toward students.

Our audience members generally think our works are of high caliber. When asked to give the words they would use to describe our productions, descriptors such as: thought-provoking, interesting, entertaining, and powerful are used, with a small but vocal group praising the professionalism of the productions.

The department’s increasing tack toward new work is generally well received, although there was, again, a small but vocal minority who complained about a lack of “name” plays.

Abandoning TV after last year’s poor showing, we choose to focus on advertising in print, online, and on the radio. We also increased our investment in physical collateral, with T-shirts and car magnets. Results show they appear to be getting noticed, and we are thinking about similar collateral for the coming year.

Looking ahead, we hope to find an opportunity to work with a researcher to learn more about those who are not currently attending our shows — we must find how to speak to them, and what their conduits for word-of-mouth are, so that we can diversify our audience.
Detailed results

Audience by Age Group

- under 18: 3%
- 19-25: 21%
- 26-39: 15%
- 40-59: 8%
- 60 or older: 53%

Audience by Gender

- Male: 4%
- Female: 62%
- Other: 34%
28.6% of audience survey respondents self-identified as people of color; this is slightly better than UMass (22.4%) and Amherst (20.7%) demographic figures and represents an uptick over previous years. However, it is a number we achieved largely on the basis of Collidescope. 42.4% of respondents for that show identified as persons of color, with African-Americans at 14.1%, and Latinos, Asian-Americans, and those identifying themselves in another way comings in at 9.4% each.

We are hopeful that the connections made with the individuals and organizations in these groups will continue to bring them to our shows, but it is clear that productions which specifically address the concerns of people of color are the best means of letting people of color know that we want to have them in our audiences.
Five College Affiliation

- Umass: 74%
- Amherst: 13%
- Smith: 7%
- Mt. Holyoke: 3%
- Hampshire: 3%
This year's percentage of undergraduate respondents was significantly higher than last year's, which is also reflected in the fact that the age group that encompasses the college years is bigger this year. Possible theories: younger audiences might be more attracted to new works; giving a mostly electronic-using generation pencils has increased their ability to fill out a paper form.
Involvement in the Arts

- 66% audience
- 24% amateur
- 10% professional
NEA survey data shows that more educated a person, the more likely s/he is to participate in the arts. In an area with such a premium on higher education, we expected that our audiences would be strongly inclined toward arts participation, and that is in fact the case.
Please note that the number of responses in this chart add up to more than 263 because some respondents checked more than 1 box.

Although the internet, whether our own site or ads and listings elsewhere, do very well at disseminating our information, in the aggregate, a personal connection such as a friend, colleague or teacher talking about the show still is the most effective means for informing people of our event. We compiled a list of past ticket buyers who received an email before each show’s run; this seems to have caused a small uptick in people hearing about us from email. The car magnet and t-shirt made good showings; possible collateral for next year includes a drinking cup or “red carpet” banner.
Please note that the number of responses in this chart add up to more than 263 because some respondents checked more than 1 box.

As expected from the previous question, a personal connection to a member of the production or a class assignment ranks high in terms of prompting people to attend. It is worth noting that our new poster format, with theater artists collaborating on the piece rather than using an outside artist or stock art, has significantly increased the number of people citing imagery on posters as a reason for attending.
Please note that the number of responses in this chart add up to more than 263 because some respondents checked more than 1 box.

As they did past years, people indicated what they seek to have a positive emotional experience. A significant uptick was seen this year that people seek food for thought and artistic inspiration. We had many “issue” plays this year — this could be response from people attracted to and happy with this focus in our season.
Would you recommend this production?

- yes 81%
- maybe 14%
- no 5%

Please use three words to describe the production
What would discourage you from attending?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running time</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not relevant</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that the number of responses in this chart add up to more than 263 because some respondents checked more than 1 box.

What are the tipping points for all of these potential issues. Where is cost too high and how does it mesh with perceived value? How do we make the case for relevance?

Unclear is whether the concern about scheduling applies to our performance run. There is some question about the preview, day off, opening pattern; this must be explored in next year's survey, if that pattern remains going forward, to see if it is a help or harm to us in terms of audience building.
Please note that the number of responses in this chart add up to more than 263 because some respondents checked more than 1 box.

When asked what “extras” we might offer to incentivize people to attend our shows, safe and free parking tied with dinner and drink discounts. It is a relief, therefore, that Parking Services did not proceed with plans to charge for evening and weekend parking.
In Memoriam —
remembering Kaz Reed and Doug Kraner

We were saddened, this year, to lose two members of our extended theater community: first former production manager Kaz Reed in November, and then alumnus Doug Kraner ’79G in April.

Both were remembered in Stages upon their passing; we include excerpts of those remembrances here.

Kaz Reed

A tribute from Chair Penny Remsen:
On a sad note, we lost a dear department member, former production manager Kaz Reed, on Nov. 8. I have such great memories of working with Kaz. She was on the search committee that hired me and was the second person I met when I arrived on campus (The late Doris Abramson was the first). Touring the building with Kaz, I immediately felt like we had been working together for years. We clicked right away and as we toured the building, the conversation we had about production and teaching made me feel that I would be in good hands here, an impression later years confirmed. She was thoughtful and kind, yet a perfectionist professional who was so good at negotiating logistics, managing, and teaching stage managers.
I was really sad when Kaz had to leave the department due to health problems, and I was sad that she had to live with those health problems up until the time of her death. Our condolences go to her spouse, Anne Marie DiGiacomo, who took such good care of Kaz during their time together.

Emeritus Faculty
Kaz Reed: A commanding presence with a gentle voice. As extraordinarily competent as she was deeply caring. A woman who gave tirelessly and often at great personal expense to make others feel valued. Kaz brought out the best in us. I have always felt that Kaz was in the top tier of the many wonderful people with whom I was privileged to work at UMass. A prized colleague and a dear friend.
— Julian Olf, professor emeritus

Kaz Reed was the ideal Production Manager: cool under fire, warm and funny in a pinch. She was like justice in action, balanced, truthful, fair. But she was also this amazing person who kept a larger human perspective going no matter what. She never lost sight of people and what they might be feeling or caring about. Did that gift come from her own quiet struggle with severe physical pain, something she kept mostly to herself? Or out of the hard fight she had fought to be who she was? I think so. Kaz was a very big person, and so talented. It was our privilege to know and work with her.
— Dick Trousdell, professor emeritus

Kaz was the very best: A tough no-nonsense professional, a meticulous, demanding yet endlessly patient teacher of stage management, and above all, a warm human being with a superb sense of humor. When a serious health problem forced her to leave us, we were heartbroken. All of us who knew and loved her can only feel the same at the news of her death. Requiescat in pace, dear Kaz.
— Ed Golden, professor emeritus

From Kaz’s artistic collaborators at Sleeveless Theatre, who were UMass alumnæ
Kaz Reed also left her mark on the group of alumnæ who worked locally and nationally as Sleeveless Theater for many years: Kate Nugent, Lisa Channer, KD Halpin and Maureen Futtner. Two Sleeveless alumnæ shared the following.
For Kaz

I first encountered Kaz Reed in the hallway at 112 FAC in 1985, when I was a freshman Theater major and she was teaching Stage Management. I would pass her and Penny Remsen between classes nearly every day; Penny would always call out a booming greeting to me and Kaz would give me a warm, serious nod. I was insanely intimidated by both of them, but moreso by Kaz — she had such a quiet, graceful gravitas as she walked by, balancing her thick stage manager binder and a People's Market coffee effortlessly.

Fast-forward four years - KD Halpin, Lisa Channer, Maureen Futtner and I had formed Sleeveless Theater after graduation and needed a stage manager to work on our first touring gig at SUNY/New Paltz. Lisa and Maureen actually had the chutzpah to ask Kaz and she said yes. We couldn't believe she wanted to work with us. When it came time to pick roommates for the B & B rooms that SUNY had booked for us, I got paired with Kaz and my pre-show nerves were not about the show but about sharing a room with such a serious grown-up.

As we turned out the lights in our sleeping room, we heard the settling noises of the old house, including rattling windows and creaking floors. At one point, the door to our room shifted in the door jam and it sounded like someone was trying to get in. Kaz Reed, the serious, intimidating uber-professional stage manager, let out a cartoon-squirrel squeal like nothing I had ever heard. After a shocked pause, we both dissolved into giggles. We whispered and giggled well into the night.

Over the next eight years, Kaz and I were roomies on several national tours and I am so grateful I got to learn from her by day and laugh with her at night.

— Kate Nugent

Kaz Reed. “Kaz Reed Upon Her Steed.” That’s what we used to call her. She came to our rescue like a gallant knight, performance after performance. She was a consummate professional, and I used to brag to peers that we had “the best stage manager in all the land.” Professional acumen aside, my biggest impression of Kaz goes much deeper. Her warmth, her personal generosity, far wiser than her years dictated, and one of those rare friends where I could truthfully say, “she knows me better than I know myself.” Perhaps those qualities made her so excellent at her career. Or was it that she was the kindest person this side of the Mississippi? Or that she had the greatest laugh in the universe?

— K.D. Halpin

Alumnus Joe Salvatore wrote about Kaz in his blog as part of a regular feature he calls Artists I Admire and kindly gave us permission to rerun the piece here.

Artists I admire: Kaz Reed, originator of “skit in the skit house”

In 1999, I made my first interview theatre play with my friend and performance partner Kate Nugent. The play was called fag/hag, and over the next 15 months, we performed that show in Massachusetts, Connecticut, St. Louis, New York, and Philadelphia.

At every step of the way, we were held and guided by our stage manager, Kaz Reed. Kate had worked with Kaz on a number of projects, so they already had a great relationship. Yet they welcomed me as a collaborator with open arms. Little did I know that Kaz would become a real mentor for me as I re-learned how to be a performer in a show and as I transitioned to a new life in New York City. Kaz always had our backs in rehearsal and performance (even when I managed to fall off the stage in St. Louis in a black out), and often times that meant just the right amount of humor to lighten the mood. The three of us sometimes found ourselves crying with laughter, and Kaz rocked back and forth behind her stage manager's table, her incredibly organized space within the chaotic space of creation.

Kaz originated one of the most important sentiments of my career that I use on every project I work on now. I was really nervous about doing the show. I was playing eight people, I hadn't acted in a long time, and it was the first time I was really touring with something as a co-writer and performer. Whenever I started to feel overwhelmed with anxiety, Kaz simply reminded me that it was “just another skit in the skit house.” That simple recognition that we were not curing cancer, solving world problems, or running for President reminded me that I needed to relax.
I always laughed when she said it, and I’ve used it countless times since to lift myself out of anxiety in a creative process. I remember standing in the concert hall at the Kennedy Center, frantically working through the tech for the show that I made with the U. S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts, and I managed to calm myself down with “it’s just a skit in a skit house.” Albeit a skit in a big-ass and important skit house, but a skit house nonetheless. Thank you, Kaz.

There are a number of other memorable Kaz-isms that make their way into my everyday vernacular or memory, but one of her other important contributions to my life came when she introduced me to the work of Pema Chodron. My transition to living in NYC had its ups and downs, and some of the downs were particularly low. When I was really struggling, Kaz recommended one of Chodron’s books called When Things Fall Apart, and it gave me a lot of solace in that moment and many moments that followed.

Kaz found and practiced Shambhala Buddhism and eventually moved to Boulder, Colorado to be closer to the center there. One day Kaz explained to me the belief that death was more of a transition than an ending, and that how one lived one's life would directly affect how smooth or rough that transition would be. I don't remember all of the particulars of the conversation, but I remember that Kaz talked about working through difficult things in this part of life and that this would hopefully make for a smoother transition. Those things that we haven't worked through we have to face at the end, and those are the moments that make for a bumpy ride to the next stage. I've never forgotten that sentiment, although there are times when I've been better at practicing it than others.

Kaz moved on to the next stage on November 8 after a long illness. I had lost contact with her after that intensive 15 months, although I never forgot the lessons I learned from her, both about being an artist and being a human being. Thankfully, I got a message to her and her partner Anne Marie before she moved on, and my friend Kate was able to see her as well. I learned of Kaz's passing while I was working on a new project in Ireland, and I had the pleasure of sitting with my collaborator Jenny Macdonald and telling her stories about Kaz, realizing just how grateful I am that she entered my life and changed so many things about it. For all of those reasons, Kaz Reed is the artist I admire for this week. I hope her transition to the next stage has been smooth and filled with grace and peace.

Originally published Nov. 13, 2015.

Doug Kraner

Excerpted from a Stages note from Chair Penny Remsen:

Unfortunately, the end of the year also brought with it sad news. Doug Kraner ‘79G passed away in April. Doug studied design while he was here, and he had a long and successful career as a production designer in television and film.

He worked on projects from Dominick and Eugene to Sleeping With the Enemy to Mr. Wrong (that film featured fellow UMass graduate program alumnus and friend Bill Pullman ‘80G). He is best known recently for his work on Gotham, the Batman prequel series which netted him an Emmy nomination for his work on the pilot. (We interviewed him in 2014 as he prepared for the premiere of Gotham; you can read it here.)

What distinguished Doug in a competitive field wasn’t just his talent for the work, it was his kindness and professionalism, as alumnus Tim Joliat ’87 attests in his tribute below. No matter how busy he was and how successful he became, Doug always stayed in touch with his mentors and friends here, including June Gaeke. He was a generous supporter of the department. When we undertook the renovation of our lobby he graciously donated his talents to design the box office, the fixtures, ticket boxes, and benches that grace our lobby. It was a project he completed for us at no charge and the final product, constructed by Michael Cottom and Brandon Hall, was stunning and a testament to Doug’s design skills.

Doug left a mark on the department as an artist, a friend, and a supporter, and we will miss him.

June Gaeke, Professor Emerita

From the beginning it was clear Doug Kraner was a stand out! He came to UMass with a strong work ethic, unrelenting dedication to quality, a continuing quest for knowledge and skills, abundant creativity, a highly developed sense of responsibility as well as diplomatic skills all housed within a quiet presence infused with a generous spirit and great humanity. He also brought a dash of useful Midwest humor, and I remember having many a good laugh while we worked together in the costume shop.

Doug joined the graduate program in design not long after the department became the newly minted Department of Theater, having recently separated from the Department of Speech. (Now the Department of Communication). Even though Doug’s concentration was scenic design, he was initially assigned to me as a teaching assistant in the Costume Shop. I have vivid memories of Doug’s great energy and his unstinting dedication up to the very last second as we all dashed to complete the costumes for The Cradle Will Rock.

Doug came to us with a vast store of both talent and well developed skills in many areas. Among his varied assignments during the first year, he did the costume accessories for Tartuffe. He later designed costumes for Hot L Baltimore, one of the few MFA scene designers ever to take on a costume design assignment. I have often stumbled across the bright pink, cropped, leather jacket in costume stock that Doug designed for Suzy, and many fond memories of Doug would come flooding back.

I collaborated and worked with Doug on many shows. He designed the scenery for the premier of The Executioner’s Tragedy by Mike Milton (Bill Pullman ‘80G was the stage manager,) The Hollow Crown, and the first of our many productions of Romeo and Juliet. Other production assignments included scenic decorator for Anastasia, scenic painter for Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf (Commonwealth Stage, LTD.) and crew chief for the set construction of Antigone.

To fulfill a department requirement for his MFA degree, Doug performed the role of the Detective in the production of The Sign in Sidney Brustein’s Window, directed by Professor Doris Abramson. This was not something that Doug did with any abundance of comfort or ease, but like all his endeavors, he dug down deep within his person to give his very best.

Doug was a generous colleague. He gave back in so many ways. I had an MFA costume student who left to freelance in NYC before finishing his three-year degree; his studies at UMass overlapped slightly with Doug’s. Tragically a few years later that student was an early victim of AIDS, and I was not surprised that Doug was part of his support system.
Doug came back to the department on numerous occasions over the last 37 years, and it is likely that he contributed in many more ways than the ones I have listed. He generously taught a multi-day symposium on film design, designed a lobby for the Rand renovation, celebrated the department’s landmark anniversaries, and graced my retirement party with his unique presence and time.

After all these years, I can still say that Doug was among my most talented students. I feel incredibly privileged to have been his teacher/mentor as well as his friend and am deeply proud of the designer he became.

Tim Joliat ‘87

We received the following remembrance from Tim Joliat ‘87, who worked with Doug on *Gotham*, the Batman prequel for which he received an Emmy nomination for production design:

It was such sad news. I had only recently met Doug, while working on the Pilot for the TV show *Gotham*, which was like no pilot we had worked on. Its scale was much more like that of a major feature film — rich and grand. The incredible look of the show was due directly to Doug’s vision. He was a truly gifted artist, a visionary.

Again — I can’t stress this enough — the show was huge, with a short time frame to get it ready to shoot. As the Set Dressing Foreman, I was charged with overseeing the sets being built on the soundstage at Steiner Studios in The Brooklyn Navy Yard. My main responsibility was the Gotham City PD precinct. With sets of this scale, due in such a short time frame, it’s usually daunting, and easy to feel a bit overwhelmed by all the stress.

But not so while working with Doug — he was a rock — unshakable. And his unique dry wit lightened the mood on many occasions. Despite the rigors of such a huge project, he remained a consummate professional and teacher. The moment we figured out that we had both gotten our degrees from UMass (though about eight or ten years apart), our professional interactions grew into more of a friendship. I felt so fortunate to have met him and worked with him, even for such a short time. I was so proud to have shared the stage with him, and even prouder that we were both UMass theater alumni.

Rest in peace Doug, you are greatly missed.

Tim Joliat ‘87