

## Upcoming Productions

### PUMP BOYS AND DINETTES

SEPTEMBER 26-29, 7:30PM & SEPTEMBER 29, 3 P.M. (MATINEE)

BY: John Foley, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, Cass Morgan, John Schimmel and Jim Wann

DIRECTED BY: Brenda Lilly

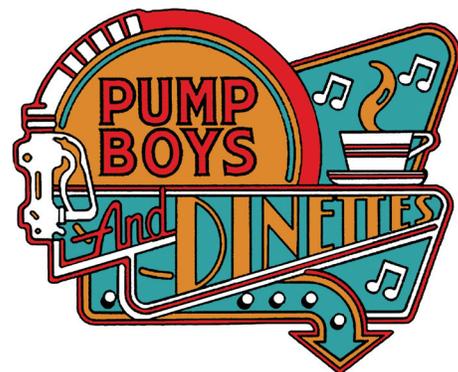
MUSIC DIRECTOR: Jan Powell

CHOREOGRAPHER: Karyn Tomczak

PRESENTED BY: The School of Stage & Screen's Musical Theatre Program

VENUE: Hoey Auditorium

TICKETS: \$20 Adults; \$15 Faculty/Staff/Seniors; \$10 Student (\$7 in advance)



*High-octane fun, this down-home revue is a solid mix of country-western, rock and blues that has garnered Tony and Drama Desk nominations for best musical. The fun takes place on Highway 57 between Frog Level and Smyrna, N.C., where you can make just one stop to "eat food and get gas." The service station is owned by good ol' boys Jim and L.M. and they run it with a little help from their buddies, Jackson and Eddie. When they get hungry, they hop next door to the Double Cupp Diner, where sisters Prudie and Rhetta Cupp are happy to serve up a steaming cup of coffee and a big ol' piece of pie. Whatever you do, don't forget to leave a tip!*

*"The foot-stomping songs and charming tales of friendship, romance and heartbreak will have you walking out of the theatre wanting more...and wishing you had a Moon Pie and a RC Cola." – Brenda Lilly, Director*

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Upcoming Productions	1
Upcoming Events	1
Faculty/Staff News	3
Student News	3
Announcements	3
Alumni News	4
Alumni Advice	5

SCHOOL OF STAGE & SCREEN  
246 Central Drive, Suite 233  
Cullowhee, NC 28723  
828.227.7491  
stageandscreen.wcu.edu

### ONCE IN A LIFETIME

NOVEMBER 8-10, 7:30 P.M.

BOOK BY: Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman

DIRECTED BY: Claire Eye

PRESENTED BY: The School of Stage & Screen's Theatre Program

VENUE: John W. Bardo Fine & Performing Arts Center Theatre

TICKETS: \$15 Adults; \$10 Faculty/Staff/Seniors;  
\$10 Students (\$7 in advance)

*Inspired by the rise of "the talkies," "Once in a Lifetime" launched the first collaboration between Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman, who went on to write 80 projects together. "Once in a Lifetime" follows three members of a failing vaudeville act who head to the bright lights of Hollywood to cash in on the conversion to sound by posing as elocutionists. There they attempt to teach silent stars to speak on camera, and a series of blunders plunges them into the excesses of the madcap, glittering world of inflated film stars, megalomaniacal producers and neurotic screenwriters. Can they convince them all that they are the "next big thing"? "Once in a Lifetime" is a romping, satirical love letter to the golden age of movies.*

*"Adding sound to movies would be like putting lipstick on the Venus de Milo." – silent screen star Mary Pickford*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Upright Citizens Brigade (Improv Comedy Show)  
**October 11**
- Savion Glover (Tap Dancer/Performer)  
**January 24**
- Rashomon  
**February 20-23**
- The Drowsy Chaperone  
**April 11-13**
- Controlled Chaos Film Festival  
**May 3**



The School of Stage & Screen has completed its fifth year as part of the College of Fine and Performing Arts. To quote the Grateful Dead, "What a long strange trip it has been."

The integration of theatre and film has come together and merged in ways we predicted and in ways that we never imagined. As I write this, we are already three weeks into classes and are prepping and rehearsing this year's productions.

We have an exciting year in front of us, including two musicals and two plays plus the increasingly popular *Controlled Chaos* Film Festival. The Festival started with 150 people attending in the Niggli Theatre. It grew so much that we had to move it to the Bardo Arts Center to accommodate the more than 500 people who attended last year. This event has become the highlight of the season, celebrating the best of our students' work.

Our students continue to get work around the country. Last summer we had students working in 17 different states. Our current student body comes from not only North Carolina but from 12 additional states. Twenty-five percent of our current students are from out of state. This is a mark of quality for our programs, as they are choosing us instead of their other state or private schools. We also are grateful that we have had alumni return to help mentor the next generation of film and theatre professionals and to give back to the programs that gave them a solid foundation for their current success. In five short years we have grown from a small department into a vibrant school that is producing the next generation of artists.

So for those who are looking for an exciting program, come check us out. For those who have graduated, let us know what you are doing so we can collectively celebrate your success.

I can't wait to see what the next five years will bring...

Thomas Salzman  
Director, School of Stage & Screen

## I Know What You Did Last THIS Summer...

Our students are always encouraged to work in the industry during the summer months. Many of our students found jobs in the industry this past summer. Here are some examples of what they did.

- Adrina Wilson | Technical Director | Highlands Playhouse | Highlands, N.C.
- Allison Dixon | Student | Stella Adler Program | New York City, N.Y.
- Amanda Wilson | Company Manager | Highlands Playhouse | Highlands, N.C.
- Anastasia Teel | Actor | Texas Outdoor Drama | Canyon, Texas
- Andrew Drake | Performer | Snow Camp Outdoor Theatre | Snowcamp, N.C.
- Brian Moore | Lighting Designer/Season M.E./Light board | Highlands Playhouse | Highlands, N.C.
- Brock Baird | General Tech/Run Crew | Highlands Playhouse | Highlands, N.C.
- Casey Weems | Actor | Bigfork Summer Playhouse | Bigfork, Mont.
- Charity Ruth Haskins | Actor | Central Piedmont Summer Theatre | Charlotte, N.C.
- David Haines | Front House Assistant | Georgia Shakespeare | Atlanta, Ga.
- Deanna Braine | Season Stage Manager | Highlands Playhouse | Highlands, N.C.
- Emily Lindeman | Instructor | Gaston School of the Arts | Gastonia, N.C.
- James Hendley | Performer/Instructor | Newnan Theatre Company | Newnan, Ga.
- Jay Robert Raines | Sound Designer | Kate Theatre | Middletown, Conn.
- Jessica Humphrey | Actor | Connecticut Repertory Theatre | Storrs, Conn.
- Jessica Koons | Disney College Program | Orlando, Fla.
- Joe Callahan | Performer | Cedar Point | Sandusky, Ohio
- Joseph Watson | General Tech/Run Crew | Highlands Playhouse | Highlands, N.C.
- Josh Jones | Performer | Snow Camp Outdoor Theatre | Snowcamp, N.C.
- Lindsey Cline - Student | Stella Adler Program | New York City, N.Y.
- Liz Wiltcher | Performer | Lost Colony | Roanoke, N.C.
- Madeline Seagle | Performer | Tweetsie Railroad | Blowing Rock, N.C.
- Marissa Mello | Technical Position | Montford Park Players | Asheville, N.C.
- Paul Thiemann | Performer | Cedar Point | Sandusky, Ohio
- Peter O'Neal | Actor | Dollywood | Pigeon Forge, Tenn.
- Tierney Cody | Actor | The Prizery | South Boston, Va.
- Tina Henderson | Company Manager | New Harmony Theatre | Evansville, Ind.



## MEET THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF STAGE & SCREEN



Nathan Thomas

**Nathan Thomas** is Stage & Screen's newest Musical Theatre faculty member. Thomas holds a B.A. in Musical Theater Production from Indiana University and an M.F.A. in Directing from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. He is a professional musician (conductor/pianist/arranger), theatre practitioner (director/music director/actor), and teacher of both music and theatre (with prior appointments at the University of Cincinnati and Western Illinois University). Thomas has toured as music director and/or keyboard player all over the U.S. and Canada, as well as to Brazil, China, Japan and Russia, on shows including the Hal Prince "Show Boat," "Fiddler on the Roof," "Fosse," "42nd Street," "The Sound of Music," and "Cats"; among his New York credits are the Broadway productions of "Fosse" and "Annie." As a stage director, some of his favorite productions have been "Betrayal," "Cabaret," "Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris," and "The Real Thing." He is very happy to be part of the school.



Brenda Lilly

**Brenda Lilly** is our newest Stage & Screen Theatre Professor. After graduating from the University of North Carolina, Brenda moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in acting, appearing in television and films. She is also a playwright, screenwriter and the co-creator/executive producer of the series "State of Grace," starring Frances McDormand, Alia Shawkat, Mae Whitman and Dinah Manoff. She is a member of the Dramatists Guild; Academy of Television Arts & Sciences; Writers Guild of America, West; Writers Guild of Canada; NCTC; as well as the Screen Actors Guild-AFTRA. She served eight years on the board of directors of the Writers Guild of America, West, and was a trustee of the Writers Guild Foundation. She is a frequent judge for the Emmy and Writers Guild of America awards. Lilly is delighted to be directing the first play of the season at WCU, "Pump Boys and Dinettes."

## FACULTY HIGHLIGHTS

**Arledge Armenaki** and his company Our Town Video hired former MPTP graduates Jay Barber '12 and Daniel Burch '11, to improve the William and Garland Motel in Salter Path, NC online presence. Here is the link to read about the story in the Reporter: <http://thereporter.wcu.edu/2012/08/armenaki-enlists-former-students-to-improve-motels-online-presence/>.

**D. V. Caitlyn** brings to a close in October his second year as Producing Artistic Director of Highlands Playhouse, completing season number 74 for the organization. Also coming to a close recently was D. V.'s work again this season as Consulting Director with the Cherokee Historical Association's production of "Unto These Hills." In January 2012, D. V. completed his latest full-length stage play, "Capture," which is currently under

consideration with New York's LABrynth Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and the Yale Drama Series, among other entities.

**Thomas Salzman** launched his new design portfolio website; check it out at <http://www.salzmanbydesign.com/>.

**Tony Sirk** worked over the summer as the Costume Shop Manager at Creede Repertory Theatre, Creede, Colo.

**Karyn Tomczak** spent the first part of her summer in New York City taking ballroom classes and seeing Broadway shows. Then, she came back to N.C. to choreograph "Dames at Sea" at Highlands Playhouse. Following that, she was back in New York City with colleague Amy Dowling at the Dance Teacher Summit and completed her Floor Barre certification, which she hopes she can pass on to WCU students in the years to come.



## Student Projects: 1st Senior Thesis Film

During this year's fall break, Producers Drew Duncan and Jeff McElmurray; Director Tim Rudisill; Writer Abigail Taylor; 1st Assistant Director Lexi Ruffy; Director of Photography David Elder; and Editor David Bennet will film their senior thesis, "Emeralds of the East." The following is from their press release: "Emeralds of the East" is a student film written, directed and produced by the senior class of the Motion Picture and Television Production Program at Western Carolina University. This film is essentially about fatherhood, taking place within the Appalachian region circa 1940. It is a story of a young mother struggling to make a decent life for her son, despite the lack of a father figure in a patriarchal society. Intertwining the culture of the Appalachian region, this film will incorporate not only locations within this region but also music that encompasses how unique this region is as a whole. This dramatic film questions the traditional family structure of the time and leaves you with a surprising emotional outcome. The film will be shot Oct. 13 through Oct. 18 and will continue in the post-production phase for a completion deadline of April 2013. The film will be shown at the *Controlled Chaos* Film Festival on May 3, 2013. We look forward to making this production and we hope everyone will enjoy it."

## FEATURED ALUMNI

Within every newsletter we would like to introduce to you one of our recent alumni. Our current featured alumna is Motion Picture Television Production graduate: Kelli Walker '12 BFA-MPTP.

From a young age, Kelli Walker was a movie lover. If she wasn't watching a movie she was pretending that she was a character from one of her many favorite films. Once she got into high school she discovered the art of video production, creating stories, filming them and editing. She loved video production so much she entered a video production contest and won third place and also received a scholarship from her high school, which helped her come to college at Western Carolina University. At WCU she had many ups and downs, but with hard work and dedication she prevailed. Kelli was chosen as Assistant Director for both senior thesis films in her senior year. She has some advice for current students: "My one piece of advice to any current students in the Motion Picture Production Program is, don't let your talent go to your head. We are all talented in some aspect of film and we should all respect one another for the different talents that we each have. Sadly, this is something that is hard to see when you are in the moment and once you get out of school, you will realize how stupid you were. Today, I am working at a company in Greenville, S.C., as a Production Assistant for American Builder Productions. The company produces its own TV show called "Great American Builder" that is aired on NBC, FOX and CBS nationwide. Currently, I am given commercials to edit. Once I am "trained up," I will then be promoted to an Associate Producer, and my job will then be to get in touch with the client and work out all the details, fly out to film the material needed for the show and commercials, and edit the show and commercials to be aired at a later date. Some of my work has already been aired and it is mind-blowing to see the things that I have edited on TV and online for anyone to see. This may not be that perfect Hollywood job that we all dream of but most of us won't get fresh out of school, but it is certainly a start. I have gained so much more experience through this job already and I am looking forward to all of the opportunities that are going to come my way."



## ALUMNI NEWS

**Amanda Pisano '10 BA-STSC:** Amanda is currently finishing her third year working at Parkway Playhouse in Burnsville, N.C. Her duties include scheduling the theatre, running the staff and production meetings, training the interns, layouts of the programs, and making sure that all productions are executed to the best of the staff's ability. She also is currently playing the nurse in their adaption of "Romeo and Juliet." She says it has been one of the most interesting and challenging roles she has performed.

**Casey Weems '12 BFA-THEA-MT:** Casey is currently rehearsing with the National Theatre for Children based in Minneapolis, Minn. She will be in the touring production of "Louie, Louie."

**Chris Read '12 BFA-MPTP:** Chris is working on getting his MFA in Directing at Dodge College of Film and Media Arts, Chapman University in Santa Ana, Calif.

**Dayna Damron '10 BFA-THEA:** Dayna moved this past winter to New York City, where in March 2012 she was contracted to direct "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" at Curtain Call Youth Players. She broke box office records from the last four years. She also taught stage combat for the theatre this past summer. She is currently in an improv troupe at ACT3 productions where she performs regularly.

**Jessica Humphrey '11 BM-THEA-MT:** Jessica will be in the cast of "9 to 5" at the Broadway Palm Dinner in Fort Meyers, Fla., as an ensemble member and as an understudy for one of the main characters, Judy. The show runs from October through Nov. 18.

**Kaley McCormack '09 BFA-THEA:** After graduation, Kaley moved to Chicago and started the program at iO (Improv Olympic), Del Close and Charna Halpern's Theatre. She performed there for a while until she got into the Conservatory at Second City. She graduated from the program in December. She then was signed to an agency named Lilly's, where she filmed corporate videos for Banana Republic, The Gap, and Old Navy. She was cast in an improvised role in a pilot this past spring called "The Crunket Firm." She stayed in LA where she signed with an agent and a manager. She is now leaving Chicago and heading to LA to continue her acting career.

**Zack Heaton '12 BFA-MPTP:** Zac's senior thesis film *Moses Cove* was accepted into the Atlanta Film Festival. He worked on the film as writer and cinematographer, and fellow graduate Chris Read directed the film.

## Alumni Advice

Ever wanted to share the insights you gained here with the WCU students of tomorrow? Every fall issue of the newsletter will have a section where alumni can share their words of wisdom for our new students about to embark on the adventure that will culminate in a degree from the School of Stage and Screen. Alumni are welcome to submit their gems of knowledge via our Facebook page "WCU School of Stage & Screen." Here is some advice from our alumni to the upcoming freshman class. We shared these words with the class of 2016 at the annual Stage and Screen picnic.

*"Whenever possible say yes to new opportunities, meeting new people and working overtime."* – Amanda Kouri '12 BFA-THEA-MT

*"Make a website. Record everything you perform in to start making a reel, and take lots of pictures."* – Casey Weems '12 BFA-THEA-MT

*"Every audition is an opportunity, so make the most of it. Feel free to make mistakes and learn from them."* – Jessica Humphrey '11 BM-THEA-MT

*"The most important things are to take pride in the work that you do, and to remember that the most valuable thing is time and try your hardest not to waste yours or the people's around you."* – Zack Heaton '12 BFA-MPTP

*"Take advantage of office hours. It's amazing how much learning takes place OUTSIDE of the classroom."* – Mandy Hughes '11 BFA-MPTP

## Welcome New Alumni: May 2012 Graduates

Rachel Alford, BA-STSC

Christina Banner, BFA-THEA

Jeb Bennett, BFA-MPTP

James Brown, BFA-MPTP

Thomas Cooley, BFA-THEA

Sarah Hardy, BA-STSC

Zack Heaton, BFA-MPTP

Amanda Kouri, BFA-THEA-MT

Chris Read, BFA-MPTP

Mason Taylor, BFA-MPTP

Courtney Tomlinson, BA-STSC

Kelli Walker, BFA-MPTP

Jessica Ward, BA-STSC

Casey Weems, BFA-THEA-MT

Elizabeth Wiltcher, BFA-THEA-MT

Alice Ziegler, BA-STSC

Vladimir Zubenko, BFA-THEA

