Upcoming Productions

A DOLL'S HOUSE
FEBRUARY 12-15, 7:30PM | FEBRUARY 16, 3:00PM

A PLAY BY: Henrik Ibsen
ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY: Brenda Lunsford Lilly
CHOREOGRAPHER: Karyn Tomczak
PRESENTED BY: The School of Stage & Screen's Theatre Program
LOCATION: Hoey Auditorium
TICKETS: $15 Adults; $10 Faculty/Staff/Seniors; $10 Students ($7 in advance)

Long before Barbie and Ken’s dream house there was Henrik Ibsen’s play “A Doll’s House.” Now, the play that has been universally hailed as the beginning of modern era drama will take another leap forward onto the post-modern stage. As adapted by Brenda Lunsford Lilly, this imaginative and original interpretation is set in 1962, just as “Mad Men” and second-wave feminists prepare to meet head-on.

LES MISÉRABLES
APRIL 3-5, 7:30PM | APRIL 6, 3:00PM

A MUSICAL BY: Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schönberg
BASED ON A NOVEL BY: Victor Hugo
MUSIC BY: Claude-Michel Schönberg
LYRICS BY: Herbert Kretzmer
ORIGINAL FRENCH TEXT BY: Alain Boublil and Jean-Marc Natel
ADDITIONAL MATERIAL BY: James Fenton
ADAPTED AND ORIGINALLY DIRECTED BY: Trevor Nunn and John Caird
ORCHESTRATIONS BY: John Cameron
DIRECTOR: Terrence Mann
MUSIC DIRECTOR: Nathan Thomas
PRESENTED BY: The School of Stage & Screen’s Musical Theatre Program
LOCATION: John W. Bardo Fine & Performing Arts Center Theatre
TICKETS: $20 Adults; $15 Faculty/Staff/Seniors; $10 Students ($7 in advance)

The worldwide stage and film sensation comes to WCU for four performances only. Based on Victor Hugo’s epic 1862 novel, the Tony Award-winning musical includes some of the most loved songs of the last century, including “I Dreamed a Dream,” “On My Own” and “Bring Him Home.” Distinguished Professor of Musical Theatre Terrence Mann, who played Javert in the original Broadway cast in 1987, directs this production.
Productions are at the heart of everything we do. Don’t get me wrong, classes are important. They set the foundation for all the work we do in our productions, but it is the productions that are our real-world, hands-on test of our artistry and our skills. This is where our students take what was learned in the classroom and apply it. This semester we have three excellent examples of the variety of work that our students do. We will start with a new adaption, by our very own Brenda Lilly, of the classic play, “A Doll’s House.” Set in the early ’60s it explores the changing role of women in society during this important period of our history. This will be a world premiere production by our students. Next up will be the popular musical “Les Misérables” directed by Terrence Mann, who originated the role of Javert on Broadway. Our students will hone their craft working with this three-time Tony nominated Broadway performer. And finally we end the year, as we always do, with our “Controlled Chaos” student film festival. This festival highlights the talents of the entire school, including our actors, designers, technicians, and most importantly our filmmakers. It truly is the highlight of the season. Two of the films from last year’s “Controlled Chaos” have gone on to critical acclaim. “Jerry” won the best student film in the 2013 Asheville Film Festival. This film competed with student filmmakers from schools across the Southeast including, UNC School of the Arts and UNC Wilmington as well as schools from Georgia and Florida. “Cataloochee” by Katherine Bartel was turned into a full-length documentary and had its premiere at Haywood Community College in December. This is a beautiful film about an important part of our history. Our graduates are working; please check out the alumni news in this newsletter. Two recent highlights: Tyler McKenzie is in the national tour of “Mamma Mia” and Peter O’Neal is in the national tour of “The Fantasticks,” which will play the Bardo Center on April 27. Please check out the rest of this newsletter for all of the exciting things our students, faculty and alumni have been doing and the exciting projects that are upcoming. See you at the theatre...

Thomas Salzman
Director, School of Stage & Screen
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UPCOMING EVENTS

“1964” The Tribute to the Beatles February 9, Part of the Galaxy of the Stars Series 5pm – 7pm the Bardo Arts Center
Imago Theatre Presents: “Frogz” February 11, 7:30pm At the Bardo Arts Center
The Squirm Burpee Circus March 2, Part of the Galaxy of the Stars Series 5pm – 7pm the Bardo Arts Center
Carolina Chocolate Drops March 3, 7:30pm At the Bardo Arts Center
An Evening with Gloria Steinem March 6 7:30pm Bardo Arts Center
1960s Take It All In Event
FOA Silent Auction April 4, 5pm – 7:25pm Before that night’s performance of
“Les Misérables” the Bardo Arts Center
“Echoes of the Cotton Club” Radio Show April 24, 6th Annual collaborative staged radio broadcast featuring
The Catamount Singers and Electric Soul 7:30pm – 9pm Bardo Arts Center
“The Fantasticks” April 27, Part of the Galaxy of the Stars Series 5pm-7pm Bardo Arts Center
“Controlled Chaos” Film Festival May 2, 7pm Bardo Arts Center

DON’T FORGET TO “LIKE” US ON FACEBOOK AT facebook.com/theatreandfilm
On Nov. 9 the Jury Prize for best student film in the 2013 Asheville Cinema Festival was awarded to “Jerry,” a senior project film produced by students in WCU’s Film & Television Production Program. Director Christy Conyers flew in from Los Angeles, where she is pursuing a career in filmmaking, to accept the award along with producer and FTP senior Andrew Dyson. The film was written by FTP students Grant Hengeveld and Mike Hill and features Grant as well as BFA Theatre graduates Joe Callahan, Hannah Chatham and Jaclyn Helms. Ninety student films were submitted to the festival, of which 14 were selected for competition, including films from UNCSA, UNCW, UCF and SCAD. FTP Senior Jeff McElmurray worked as a coordinator for the festival, and many FTP students worked as volunteers.


Senior Film and Television student Michael Hill just won 2nd place in a fiction writing award. Congrats Michael! Read more about it here. (http://clclt.com/charlotte/the-2014-fiction-issue/Content?oid=3299783)

Great News!
WCU Film Program has a new updated webpage. The new link is Filmandtv.wcu.edu. Check it out!

WELCOME NEW ALUMNI:
DECEMBER 2013 GRADUATES

**BA: Stage & Screen**
Jessi Lawson
James Martin

**BFA: FTP**
Katherine Bartel
Jason Ledford

**BFA: Theatre**
Ben Chafetz
Charity Ruth Haskins
Leslie Helms
Paul Thiemann
Amanda Wilson

After over 40 years, Theatre Professor, Dr. Richard Beam will be retiring at the end of the Spring 2014 semester. We will miss your Dr. Beam!
School of Stage & Screen Represents at NCTC Thirty-two Stage & Screen students auditioned at the North Carolina Theatre Conference (NCTC) this year; thirteen will move on to audition at the Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) in March for summer and year-round professional work in all aspects of theatre. Congratulations to all who auditioned, and break-a-leg to those heading to Alabama for SETC: Alex Drost, Alex Hairston, Anastasia Teel, Chase McCall, Elena Cope, Emily Lindeman, James Hendley, Jordana McMahon, Joshua Farrar, Josh Jones, Madeline Seagle, Paige Smith, Will Bryant.

FTP graduate Katherine Bartel’s documentary about Cataloochee and the life the people carved from the land was featured in the “Smoky Mountain News.” The 90 minute film was made as Katherine’s senior project. Click here to read the story.
FEATURED ALUMNI

Within every newsletter we like to introduce to you one of our recent alumni. Our current featured alumnus is Musical Theatre graduate: Tyler McKenzie ’12 BFA-THEA.

We recently caught up with Tyler and inquired about his experiences at WCU as well as what he has been up to since graduation and here is what he shared:

“I decided to come to Western because it had the most comfortable environment out of all the colleges I visited and auditioned for. I figured if I wanted to really work hard, be serious about my craft, and improve, I needed a place with little distractions and professors who cared about me. Along with that, it was important to find a school where my creative energy could thrive no matter what day it was or what time of day it was. The two most important lessons I learned at Western that I continue to practice in my career are to “stop acting” and “if all else fails, always rely on your professionalism.” You can probably guess which professors taught me those lessons. I learned those lessons pretty early in my college career. If it’s one thing I can stress to current and future students, it’s to treat yourself like a professional as soon as you get to school. Take what you are learning in your acting classes, your professional development classes, your voice lessons, etc., and apply to your training now. It’ll make the transition from school to “the real world” so much easier. If you do this then you will never truly have to say goodbye to Western because the teachings will always be with you. I will always credit Western for any successes that occur in my career.”

Tyler is currently in the national tour of “Mamma Mia.” You can find the tour dates at http://www.mammamiaontour.com/mm/.

D. V. Caitlyn’s new comedy, “Zombies on Campus! A SlaughterPocalypse!,” had a very successful sold out run of its premiere production. Performance rights licensing to other American Colleges and Universities will begin in late December/early January, and unsolicited inquiries have already started to come in.

Amy Dowling and Susan Brown-Strauss will be collaborating with Frank Brannon of the WCU School of Art combining costume design, paper sculpture and movement for the Black Mountain College Museum and Art Center’s Re-Happening event on April 6. Celebrating the spirit of Black Mountain College, the evening brings together artists of all mediums in celebration of the experimental and ground-breaking work for which BMC was known.

Karyn Tomczak last fall performed with other Rockette Alumni in “Remembering the 40’s” at the Reagle Music Theatre in Massachusetts. She also taught master classes at the Tennessee Dance Festival in Chattanooga. Coming up this spring she begins with a Precision Dance Clinic for the Hi-Steppers of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. In March, she will be teaching master classes at the Southeastern Theatre Conference in Mobile, Ala, and at the Southeast regional American College Dance Festival at Georgia College in Milledgeville, Ga.

D.V. Caitlyn

Jack Sholder

Faculty Highlights

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Brock Baird ‘13 BA-STSC: Brock is working as a Carpenter Intern at Flat Rock Playhouse in Flat Rock, N.C.

Hannah Chatham ‘13 BFA-THEA: Hannah spent this past summer working Patron Services in Creede, Colorado at Creede Repertory Theatre where she also did some performing in a cabaret at the Headwaters New Play Festival. She currently lives in Atlanta, Ga., where she is in the middle of a yearlong Acting Apprenticeship at Horizon Theatre.

Jonathan Cohrda ‘13 BFA-MT: Jonathon recently worked at Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts- Fletcher Opera Theatre in Raleigh, N.C., in the show “Frosty the Snowman” as Frosty.

Christy Conyers ‘13 BFA-FTP: Christy has been living and working in Los Angeles, Calif., for the past five months. She has worked as an Art Department Assistant and has done some freelance editing on short films. She is currently working as a Post Production Assistant on an unnamed feature film produced by Blumhouse productions.

Sara Dodson ‘06 BA-THEA: Sara recently played the role of Annelle in “Steel Magnolias” at the Susquehanna Stage Company in Marietta, Pa.

Charity Ruth Haskins ‘13 BFA-MT: Charity is currently working for Playhouse on the Square in Memphis, Tenn., as an Associate Company Member. Her roles have included Tiger Lilly and Mrs. Darling in “Peter Pan,” Miep in “The Diary of Anne Frank,” and future roles in “Spamalot,” “Free to Be You and Me at the Same Time” and “Gypsy.”

Jessica Humphrey ‘11 BFA-MT: Jessica has loved living and working in New York City. This past Christmas through February 2014 she worked at the Herb Strauss Theatre on Sanibel Island, Fla., performing in their Holiday Spectacular and “Into the Woods” as Little Red. She is also busy applying to grad school for Musical Theatre.

Clara Kelly ‘13 BA-STSC: Clara spent her summer in Creede, Colo., at Creede Repertory Theatre as a Stitcher. She now lives in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., working at King’s College as their costume shop supervisor and resident designer.

Amanda Kouri ‘12 BFA-MT: Amanda has been living and working in New York City since graduation. She is currently applying for casting internships and is planning on going back to school in the Fall 2014 to work toward getting an MBA so that she can go into casting full time.

Tatjana Moffitt ’13 BA-THEA: Tatjana is touring with Missoula Children’s Theatre. This past summer she was an Actor in “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” and she is currently Acting in “Alice in Wonderland.” She is planning on applying for an international tour this summer.

Courtney Paige Olivier ‘13 BA-STSC: Courtney has applied to multiple law schools and is hoping to start law school in fall 2014.

Leslie Putman ‘11 BFA-MT: Leslie just finished a year and a half at Wayside Theatre in their resident company. She is currently in the production of “The Sound of Music” at Mill Mountain Theatre in Roanoke, Va.

Peter O’Neal ’13 BFA-MT: Peter worked at Theatre West Virginia a as an actor from late May 2013 – late August 2013. His roles were Tin Man in the “Wizard of Oz,” Roy Lee Cooke in “Rocket Boys the Musical,” Preacher Hatfield in “Hatfields and McCoys.” He worked at North Raleigh Arts and Creative Theatre from mid-September to early November as an Actor in the role Tommy Ross in “Carrie the Musical.” In early November through December 2013 he worked at the Nebraska Theatre Caravan in Nebraska on their Midwest tour of “A Christmas Carol.” He is currently on the National Tour of “The Fantasticks.”

Jordan Snead ‘13 BFA-THEA: Jordan lives in Atlanta, Ga., now and is in the middle of his yearlong Acting Internship at Actor’s Express. He will soon perform as Woody in “Six Degrees of Separation”.

Abigail Taylor ’13 BFA-FTP: Abigail is working as a personal assistant and grip on a Food Network Show called “Food Court Wars”. The show is in its second season and it is currently being filmed in Hickory, N.C. The show will air sometime in March 2014.

Alexander Quitman Volpi ’13 BFA-THEA: Alex worked with The Old Creamery Theatre in Iowa as an actor from August through December, 2013. He is currently working at the Missoula Children’s Theatre in Missoula, Mont., as an actor.
RECENT PRODUCTIONS

NEXT TO NORMAL
SEPTEMBER 2013
MUSIC BY: Tom Kitt
BOOK AND LYRICS BY: Brian Yorkey
DIRECTOR: Terrence Mann & Nathan Thomas
“It was a feel-everything type of musical.”

ZOMBIES ON CAMPUS!
A SLAUGHTERPocalypse!
NOVEMBER 2013
A NEW COMEDY WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY: D.V. Caitlyn
“It had just the right amount of ridiculousness.”
Here is what our Dance Program worked on last semester and what you can look forward to seeing this semester:

**NAI-NI CHEN MASTER CLASS**

On Oct. 2, over 35 students participated in a master class taught by Nai-Ni Chen. Her style uses “the dynamic freedom of American modern dance with the grace and splendor of Asian art.” The Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company performed that evening at the Bardo Arts Center and students were able to see the choreography they learned in class performed live on stage.

**ASHEVILLE HOLIDAY PARADE & JINGLEFEST**

On Saturday, Nov. 23, in their annual performance in the Asheville Holiday Parade “A Star is Born,” the WCU Holiday Dancers performed “The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers.” Brian Gay, a musical theatre senior, and Katie Weant’s mom, Wendy, joined the girls by carrying the WCU banner. They won 3rd place! They also performed “Happy Holidays” at the Jinglefest, which took place at Pack Square immediately following the parade.

**DILLSBORO LIGHTS AND LUMINARIES**

Amidst the wind and rain, the WCU Holiday Dancers also helped bring in the holiday season at the Dillsboro Lights and Luminaries on Dec. 6. They performed “Happy Holidays” to a small but enthusiastic audience.

Previous issues of The Front Row can be found at our online archive here.