

ccfa

WINTER 2009

VOICES

THE MAGAZINE OF THE COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION AND FINE ARTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

Collaboration with
Theatre Memphis
allows for
lavish production
of *Cyrano*

KNOX PHILLIPS
HONORED WITH
DEAN'S DISTINGUISHED
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

TERRA HOUSE
WILL SHINE FOR
RIBBON CUTTING





A Message from the Dean

In the last issue of CCFA *Voices* I began my Dean's letter by speaking of departures—saying farewell to our graduating students and six retiring faculty members, several of whom entered the University's post-retirement program. It never occurred to me that I would be saying goodbye forever to Dr. Carol Purtle, the Benjamin Rawlins Professor of Art History. I expected to see her teaching northern renaissance art history this spring. Carol and another dear friend, Dr. Keith Kennedy, professor emeritus, first director of theatre at (then) Memphis State University, died within a week of each other in December. Friends and family gathered at the

U of M's Main Stage on January 31st to celebrate Kennedy's life with a memorial event. The new electronic *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* (JHNA), plans to dedicate its inaugural June 2009 issue to the late Carol Purtle, one of the founders of *Historians of Netherlandish Art* and a major scholar of fifteenth-century Netherlandish art. Friends of both professors have initiated memorial funds in their honor and memory, and encourage you to give to the University of Memphis Foundation to help endow these funds.

I didn't anticipate more farewells, but due to extreme budget cuts at the University of Memphis in both fiscal year 2009 and 2010, the Tennessee Board of Regents approved a program of early retirement buyouts. Several CCFA faculty and staff members accepted the buyout. Gloria Baxter and Susan Chrietzberg, professors of theatre; Konnie Saliba and Joan Gilbert, professors of music; Erin Hamilton, instructor at the Community Music School; Vivian Bradley, who had recently left the Department of Art to be the office assistant in the new Department of Architecture; and Tommy Towery, the College's long-time computer support provider. They will all be very much missed. Baxter, Chrietzberg, and Gilbert entered the post-retirement program and will be with us in a limited teaching capacity. It is unclear when—or if—we will be able to fill the vacated positions, because of the state's grave budget projections.

Although there have been better financial times for the College of Communication and Fine Arts, we are moving forward on many fronts. The magazine's cover story about the University of Memphis-Theatre Memphis co-production of *Cyrano* is only one example of how CCFA "keeps moving forward," thanks to a great partnership with Theatre Memphis and a generous grant from the Jeniam Foundation.

We have moved aggressively to develop CCFA's new Web site: ccfa.memphis.edu. The site is a convenient tool to find out about our events and news, or to tune in to "WUMR U92 FM," which is now streaming online and broadcasting 24 hours a day. We also want to make sure that you have unlimited access to this magazine, as this may be one of the last printed versions of *Voices*.

As we advance in the field of electronic communication we encourage our readers and friends to provide us with their e-mail addresses. We want you to be part of CCFA, share our successes and learn about our achievements through our stories.

While the cuts in state funding are a serious problem for higher education, know that we will do everything possible to keep CCFA the place of high quality programs and education that it has been for more than 30 years. Your help will be vital to our success. Remember the College, departments and professors who have meant so much to you and mean as much to the education of today's students, by giving to our funds, such as the new Kennedy or Purtle endowments or others of your choice. Online giving is now available on CCFA's Web site. Checks payable to the University of Memphis Foundation should be mailed to:

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Don't think that any gift is too small. All gifts make a difference and are deeply appreciated.

Richard R. Ranta

Richard R. Ranta, Dean
College of Communication and Fine Arts

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Editor: Simone Wilson
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Michael Hagge, David Horan, Lindsey Lissau,
Carol Morse, Michael Schmidt, Eric Wilson

Contributing Writers: Alice Berry,
Lisa Francisco-Abitz, Michael Hagge, Lurene Kelley,
Shirley Oakley, Patty Bladon

Please send address changes
and copy corrections to:

The College of Communication
and Fine Arts
Attn: Simone Wilson
CFA Building, Room 232
Memphis, TN 38152

THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS
Dreamers. Thinkers. Doers.



In October, The Chamber Opera of Memphis in cooperation with the Scheidt School of Music presented the U.S. premier of "Pergolesi's Home Service" at the University of Memphis. Composer Bent Lorentzen's sophisticated new version of the baroque Opera La Serva Padrona was directed by German stage director Michael Leinert, with Mark Ensley, Director of Opera Studies at the School of Music and Music Director of The Chamber Opera, conducting from the keyboard. The cast included Susan Owen-Leinert, assistant professor of voice; April Hamilton, graduate student in music; Moira Logan, CCFA Associate Dean and Director of Research and Graduate Studies; and John Mueller, associate professor of trombone.

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On the cover: Jerre Dye, U of M Theatre alumnus plays *Cyrano de Bergerac* a University of Memphis-Theatre Memphis co-production of *Cyrano* that runs through March 1.

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Knox Phillips, pictured with U of M President Shirley Raines, was honored with CCFA's Distinguished Achievement Award in October.

Knox Phillips Honored with Distinguished Achievement Award

The legendary Rendezvous restaurant in downtown Memphis was the location for CCFA's 2008 Distinguished Achievement Award this past October. U of M President Shirley Raines, CCFA Dean Richard Ranta, the College Advisory Board and more than 200 friends, fans and family members were on hand for the luncheon honoring Knox Phillips, whose behind the scenes dedication and creative energies have helped keep the Memphis music industry going and growing for decades.

Phillips' long time friend Mike Post, famed film and television music composer, arrived from Los Angeles just in time to join the festive salute to Phillips' 40 years of

nurturing talent and creating opportunities for musicians and music in his home town. Post, widely recognized for the scores of such popular television series as "Law and Order," "Hill Street Blues," and "The Rockford Files," praised Phillips' remarkable dedication to the industry including his founding of the important local chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS). He also gave kudos to the extraordinary film tribute to Phillips created for the event by Steve Ross, U of M professor of film.

Many of the well-known community and industry figures who contributed testimonials to the film also attended the event to demonstrate the value and importance of the

honoree's role in the success of Memphis as a global music force.

In the liner notes of the film's DVD provided to each guest at the luncheon, Phillips is quoted, saying, "Music offers us freedom of expression. It is the greatest avenue for human connection for good there is. To have been able to revel in that since I was a little kid—man, I tell you, it's been a life well spent."

Sponsors for the 2008 award included the Elvis Presley Charitable Foundation, FedEx Corporation, Memphis Music Foundation, Charles Vergos Rendezvous and Ardent Music.



The College of Communication and Fine Arts has recently updated its Web site with more information for future and current students, faculty, and members in the community. We created the new Web site as a news and events tool for those who want a convenient way to keep up with our programs, workshops, exhibitions, plays, and performances. The Web site is also intended as a resource for finding out about our degree programs, scholarships, study abroad, employment opportunities, and the many other options we offer our students, faculty, and staff. As we move toward a more environmentally and budget friendly way of communication, we encourage you to visit us online at cfa.memphis.edu where you can submit your e-mail address to receive our news updates and monthly events calendar, as well as the "e" version of this magazine.

CCFA Remembers Keith Kennedy and Carol Purtle

The College of Communication and Fine Arts is saddened by the loss of retired faculty members Keith Kennedy and Carol Purtle.

Keith Kennedy, former director of Theatre at what was then Memphis State University and chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance (then the Department of Speech and Drama), died December 17, 2008 of congestive heart failure.

Although Kennedy will be remembered for the many plays he directed during his time at the University, the production, that is most often associated with him is *Hair*, staged at Memphis State in March 1970.

The University's was the first non-professional production of the controversial anti-war musical and brought a record audience to the campus theatre.

After 20 years at the University, Kennedy wanted to "find one more big adventure," and took early retirement in 1986 to pursue that dream and continue directing plays in local theaters. In 1992, Kennedy was one of three University employees to receive the Martin Luther King, Jr. Human Rights Achievement Award. In 1996, he received the Eugart Yerian Award for lifetime theater service.

Recently retired from the Department of Art, Carol Purtle, Benjamin Rawlins Professor of Art History, had hoped to find



Keith Kennedy (top left) and Josie Helming at CCFA's retired faculty luncheon this past September. Keith Kennedy was most often associated with the production of *Hair* at Memphis State in March 1970.

more time for research and travel after her long career of teaching at the U of M. She died unexpectedly on December 12, 2008. Purtle was a founding member of the noted Historians of Netherlandish Art, and is considered one of the world's foremost experts on



Carol Purtle, Benjamin Rawlins Professor of Art History, was one of the world's foremost experts on Jan Van Eyck. She retired from the U of M in May 2008.

Jan van Eyck, a preeminent Flemish painter of the 15th century. She was in the process of finishing her latest book on Van Eyck, *Looking at Jan van Eyck: The Art and Science of Painting*, which is scheduled for publication this year.



Jordan Stonecipher (right), freshman in the Department of Art, and **Richard Ranta**, Dean of the College of Communication and Fine Arts, at the Three Stars of Tennessee inaugural exhibition of Tennessee artifacts, fine and applied art, in Jackson. Stonecipher, a native of Jackson, was chosen to draw a portrait of the city's namesake and seventh president of the United States, Andrew Jackson. Her charcoal drawing was unveiled during the exhibition's preview party on October 30, 2008. Also present for the event was **Jon Meacham**, editor of *Newsweek*, and author of the bestselling book *American Lion: Andrew Jackson in the White House*.

Michael Hagge Named Chair of the Newly Established Department of Architecture

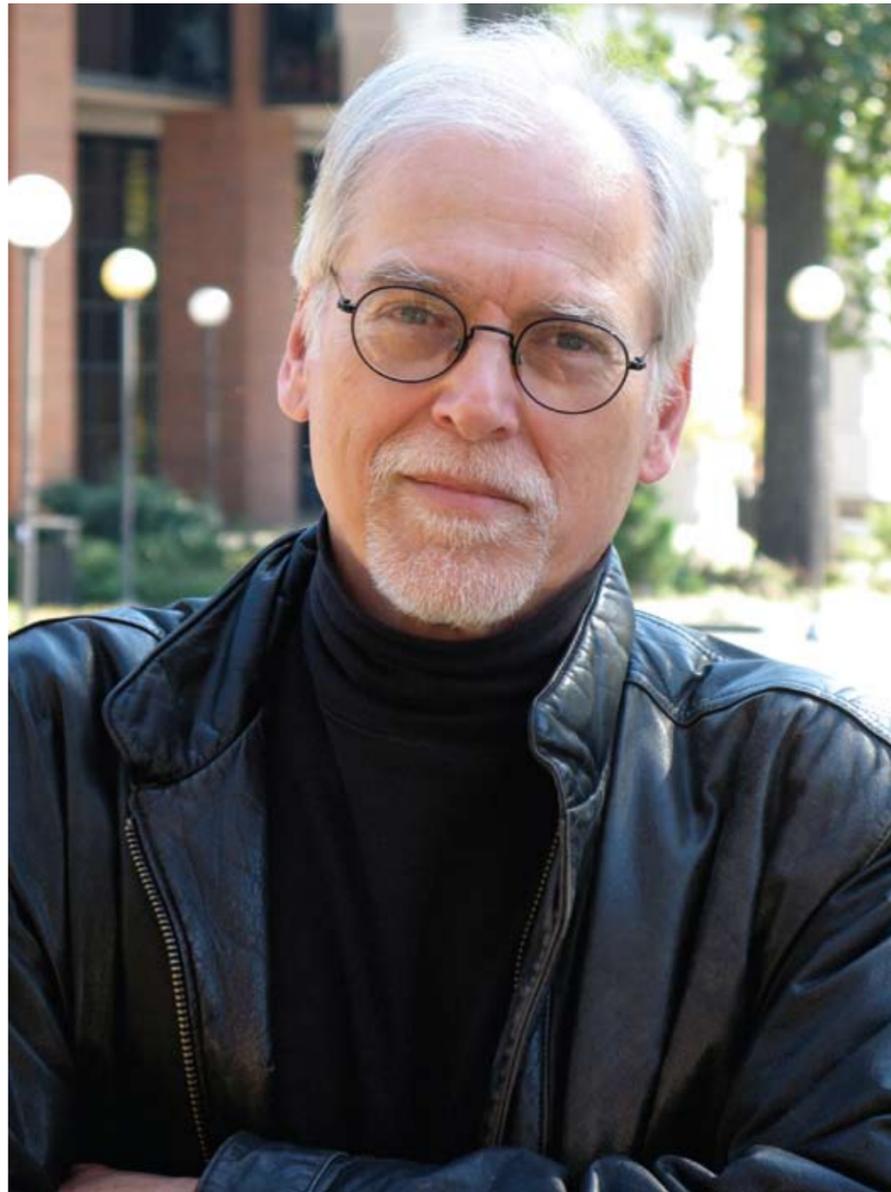
In August 2008, Michael Hagge, associate professor of architecture, was appointed chair of the Department of Architecture. The Department was established just a month earlier, by moving the existing architecture and interior design programs from the Department of Art. With the Department's inauguration came the first students, admitted to the newly established professional Master of Architecture (M.Arch) degree.

"People often ask why I was interested in this position" Hagge says as he motions, "five minutes," to a student with a study model, waiting outside his office. "Our students are one of the main reasons; being able to engage everybody in the department in meaningful community-based projects is another."

Hagge is used to the demands of his new position, having led the student-centered BFA in architecture program since 2002, two years after the program re-located to the College of Communication and Fine Arts from the College of Engineering. Hagge's passion for architecture, urban design, and teaching is apparent in his pursuits of the best hands-on experiences and learning opportunities for his students, his leadership and the Department's impact on the community. "As department chair I'm in the perfect situation to bring all of these aspects together," Hagge says.

Part of establishing the Department of Architecture in July 2008 was launching the graduate level professional Master of Architecture degree. When creating the curriculum for the M.Arch, Hagge, other faculty members, and professionals in the Memphis community looked for models at some of the best architecture programs in the country. Hagge earned his M.Arch from Virginia Tech, one of the top architecture schools in the country, and the Memphis program naturally includes components from his Alma Mater.

"We asked ourselves, what kind of architecture program and department do we want to be? We combined our faculty's experiences and implemented ideas from other schools



Michael Hagge

to fit our specific needs—the result is a demanding and well respected curriculum that produces outstanding graduates," Hagge says. "Now, we are working on improving our Interior Design curriculum."

Although the Interior Design program is a new responsibility for Hagge, he is proud of its recent re-accreditation, and the program's curriculum is one of his main priorities for the immediate future.

"Michael [Hagge] has been one of the most influential professors in my educational experience," says fourth-year Interior Design student Heather Dacus. "There has never been a time when I could not find him to answer a question. He has helped me with class projects and professional development. I know my educational experience would not be the same without his advice and guidance."

In their courses, students work with community partners on real and theoretical projects, such as designing neighborhood parks, affordable housing, or a performing arts center. They stay in touch with the clients' needs as well as those of the community in which the project exists.

The students know the demanding courses and long hours of preparation will pay off. Since the BFA in Architecture was established eight years ago, all of the U of M's architecture graduates applying to M.Arch programs across the nation have been accepted. Many of the schools accepting the students are among the most prestigious in the United States. Now, with the M.Arch in place, some students make the Memphis program their top choice.

Alzbeta Bowden, a Czech native and U of M alumna now enrolled in the U of M's

M.Arch program, was accepted to several outstanding Master of Architecture programs, but chose to remain in Memphis.

"My experience with Michael [Hagge] has been very enlightening. He is a very inspiring person, who cares for his students. Although he is well known and recognized, he remains down to earth, able to maintain a friendly dialog on a high level of professionalism."

The Department has built a solid reputation for its commitment to inter-disciplinary engaged research. Hagge believes that professionals have a responsibility to "give back" to the community. This belief is not lost on the students in the department, most of whom are active in student and civic organizations.

When asked about his accomplishments, Hagge's focus is on the Department: The Master of Architecture degree, the living

learning communities, the work in the community, the partnership with the University's School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy (SUAPP), national recognition for the Department, and the students' and faculty's awards and accomplishments.

"None of this would have been possible without the commitment and shared vision of the whole department— faculty, staff, and students," Hagge says. "Being part of CCFA and earning the support of the administration and the professional community has also been significant."

"Okay," Hagge nods to the waiting student. "Presentations are due in studio next week and the students are working on final modifications to their designs," Hagge explains as he walks off with the student.

—By Lauren Chapman

From Ordinary to Extraordinary: Department of Architecture Receives Two Strengthening Communities Grants

In 2008, the Department of Architecture received two grants from the 2008 Strengthening Communities Initiatives Program, funded through the University of Memphis, the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, and the United Way of the Mid-South. The Department of Architecture was the only U of M department that received two grants. The Strengthening Communities Program focuses on bringing together academic and non-profit community partners to address various issues in the community, such as education, housing, and safety.

The Department of Architecture's "Ordinary to Extraordinary: Living and Leading Green (O2E:LLG)" proposal, developed in collaboration with BRIDGES USA, was one of five funded proposals under the 2008 grant program. The department also received a Strengthening Communities Small Grant Award for the Caritas Peace Garden at Caritas Village, a non-profit community center, coffee shop and cultural art center in the old Masonic Temple on Harvard Avenue



Michael Hagge (left rear) and Kate Bidwell (right rear) work with architecture and city planning students to develop a math and science curriculum that teaches environmentally sound building and neighborhood design

in Memphis' Binghamton neighborhood.

Michael Hagge, chair of the Department of Architecture, leads the O2E:LLG project along with third-year architecture student Kate Bidwell. The outcome of the project is a math and science curriculum that teaches

seventh graders about sustainable design.

The curriculum will be implemented in Memphis' Humes, Vance, and Bellevue middle schools. After completing the in-class sessions, students will take a field trip to the BRIDGES building and the TERRA demon-

stration house, both examples of sustainable design, located in the Uptown neighborhood.

“The O2E:LLG project will inspire leadership,” says Mollie Merry, program coordinator for BRIDGES. “It takes the sustainability concepts the students learn in the classroom and teaches them in a very hands-on way how to put those things into tangible action steps they can do in their own life.” BRIDGES hopes to bring additional schools into the program next semester.

“As professionals, we have an obligation to give back to the community,” says Hagge. “This is an excellent way to do that and to involve our students in meaningful community engagement.”

The Caritas Peace Garden project in Memphis’ Binghamton neighborhood, funded by the Strengthening Communities Small Grant Award, is led by Chere Doiron, assistant professor of Interior Design.

“We have been given the opportunity to help improve this neighborhood and are currently designing a transition house to go on the adjoining lot with the Caritas house. This same lot will also contain the Peace Garden,” explains Hannah Huggins, third-year interior design student.

In January, Doiron and her third-year interior design students expanded their work with community partners on the project which includes public meetings and an exhibition,

the completion of the design of the transitional residence, and the design and programming of the garden space. The project will also fund a competition for public art, and the design and fabrication of exterior signage.

“When academic experiences can be integrated into actual projects within the community, student learning is immeasurably enriched,” says Doiron. “What’s most profound to many of the students is how their designs impact quality of life issues.”



U of M Foundation Studio art students work on murals at the Peddler Bike Shop and the Goodwill store on Highland.

Arts Academy and Public Art Project Aimed at University Neighborhood District

When the Department of Art received a grant from the Strengthening Communities Initiative for its proposal of a Saturday arts academy for middle school students and a public art project in the University Neighborhood District, Donalyn Heise, assistant professor of art education, felt that the grant described precisely what she and her colleagues set out to do.

“I love the name of the grant,” Heise says. “Strengthening Communities—that’s exactly what we are doing.”

For Heise, who will receive The National Art Education Association’s Beverly Levett Gerber Special Needs Lifetime Achievement Award this spring, the grant means that she can continue and expand work she has done with similar community-strengthening art projects in the past.

In 2005, Heise was able to add the alternative art practicum to the curriculum for art education students. In addition to the traditional elementary, middle and high school art practicum, students can now choose an alternative setting and teach art to children and adults with special needs, individuals with behavior disorders, victims of domestic violence, or homeless and elderly individuals.

“Our goal with all these community projects is two-fold. They are not only an excellent way to prepare students for teaching in a diverse, urban classroom, but also to look at ‘art making’ in a different way,” Heise explains. “I’m interested in art as a tool to foster resilience, a tool to discover identity, to find a voice. With the arts academy, we want to

foster positive youth development through art, and we want to do it in a community setting.”

In the spring of 2008, Heise collaborated in a four-month art-based pilot project with the Art Museum of the University of Memphis (AMUM) and faculty from the Department of Art at the Charles Powell Community Center in Southwest Memphis, which was funded by an Access and Diversity grant from the Tennessee Board of Regents. For the project, a group of middle and high school students came together every Saturday for art lectures and workshops, field trips to local museums and galleries, and hands-on art projects that culminated in a final photo exhibition at AMUM.

“What the Strengthening Communities grant allows us to do is build on our previous experience, and hopefully establish a community art program that is permanent. Our long-term goal is a community art center with staff and a permanent location that provides after school art activities for students as well as art programs for others in the community,” Heise says.

For the current project, Heise’s focus is on the University Neighborhood District and students from the surrounding schools. The district includes the Normal Station Historic Neighborhood, the East Buntyn Historic Neighborhood, the Joffre Area Civic Neighborhood, and the Red Acres Neighborhood.

Cedar Nordbye, assistant professor of art, leads a public art project as part of the department’s Strengthening Communities grant.

It focuses on developing community-based art that reflects the community’s character and provides a voice for its residents.

“We started the project in my Foundation Studio I this past fall,” Nordbye says. “To get a feeling for the community we attended neighborhood association meetings and talked to the residents to find out how they see their neighborhood and what type of public art they would like to incorporate into their neighborhood.”

Nordbye and his students are in the process of painting a mural on the north wall of the Goodwill building on Highland. The mural is based on photographs and statements of some of the residents that were interviewed. In a second step, the students submitted proposals for additional art projects for the neighborhood, five of which will be funded through the grant.

In the meantime, Heise and her students have been preparing for the spring’s art academy. The program’s community partner is the Mason YMCA on Walker, which currently offers a once-a-month youth art program focused on conflict resolution.

“Working with community organizations like the YMCA is very helpful for us because a lot of the infrastructure is already in place,” Heise says. “Those collaborations also make a difference in how we impact the community. It’s a real-world experience and not something that we create in a lab and then take out into the real world to see if it works. It’s real world all the way.”

This past August, the University of Memphis learned that the Master of Architecture degree was approved for accreditation Candidacy from the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB). The NAAB grants Candidacy status to new professional architecture degree programs that have developed viable plans for achieving initial accreditation. Although the NAAB only accredits the professional degree program, the team reviewed the various elements of the pre-professional Bachelor of Fine Arts in Architecture degree as well. In its report, the NAAB team complimented the faculty for the passion and commitment that they bring to the education of their students, and noticed the enthusiasm, camaraderie, and joy with which the students approach their studies. The team also noted that the program possesses an impressive energy and vitality, which provides critical visibility for the program as well as the university.

Candidacy status indicates that a program should be accredited within six years. “Having an accredited degree in architecture is something we have been working on for longer than some of our current students have been alive,” says Michael Hagge, chair of the Department of Architecture. “This step would not be possible without the continued support from the professional community and the University administration.”



Before and after: The lighting studio in building 47 on the University's Park Avenue campus is part of a 5,000 square foot space that was given to the Department of Art to accommodate six graduate studios, a book arts studio for students in printmaking, and a student gallery.

Department of Art Receives Studio Space on the University's Park Avenue Campus

Faculty, staff, students, and friends of the Department of Art have contributed more than 600 volunteer hours, renovating a section of "Building 47" on the University's Park Avenue campus. The Department's proposal to the University's Space and Planning Committee emphasized that the approximately 5,000 square foot section of the building would be used to expand gallery and studio space for art students. The photographic lighting studio is complete, and six graduate studios, a book arts studio for students in printmaking, and a student gallery are almost finished. Currently very few of the Department's graduate students in photog-

raphy have their own studio, and because of space limitations, Bachelor of Fine Arts seniors can only show their thesis work in a group exhibition.

"This is not an ideal situation for our students," says Richard Lou, chair of the Department of Art. "Nationally it is common practice that graduating BFA students have solo exhibitions. We hope that adding the space in Building 47 to our inventory of art studios and galleries will bring us closer to accomplishing this goal. The additional space will definitely help students work towards a more consistent and larger body of work for their senior show."

Lou also expects that the new space will be an invaluable recruiting tool for undergraduate and graduate students.

"Art departments of our size typically have three to four gallery spaces at their disposal," Lou says. "Of course it's important for our students to be resourceful and creative in regard to finding locations that will show their work and we encourage them to find venues in the community; however, lab galleries are a very important educational component because students will be able to get hands-on gallery experience that prepares them for their future artistic careers."

Rebekah Laurenzi, 2008 BFA graduate with a concentration in sculpture, was the first BFA senior chosen by the Department of Art for a solo exhibition in Jones Hall Gallery. "Putting together a solo exhibition is a great experience and we felt that it was important to make that experience available," says **Richard Lou**, chair of the Department of Art. Laurenzi learned about the award this past spring and worked all summer on the pieces for *I Measure the Shakes*. "This was my first solo show and it was definitely challenging, but also a very rewarding experience," Laurenzi says. "I had to create a body of work in three months, and luckily there were many components, such as funding and finding a location, that I didn't have to worry about. I had an opportunity to fully immerse myself in creating the art work." The solo show award will be given annually to a BFA senior selected by a committee within the Department of Art.



Rebekah Laurenzi, *Cranes*, 2008, cardboard, thread, papier-mâché, nails.



Michael Leff Elected President of the Rhetoric Society of America

Michael Leff, chair of the Department of Communication, will become president of the Rhetoric Society of America (RSA) this summer. The RSA was organized in 1968, and the majority of its members come from departments of communication or English, but disciplines such as linguistics, philosophy, history, political science, and sociology are also represented. The Society publishes the journal, *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*. RSA is a member of the Alliance of Rhetoric Societies and recently has been admitted to the American Council of Learned Societies.

Voices met with Michael Leff to learn about his new role and about the Rhetoric Society and its functions.

Q. Do you have any specific goals as the Society's new president?

A. My first objective is to focus on the 2010 biennial convention in Minneapolis. Another major issue has to do with the growth of RSA; it has nearly tripled its membership during the past decade—how do you sustain the culture and purposes of what was a relatively small and friendly group when it evolves into something much larger? Finally, I would like to encourage greater interaction between our Society and similar organizations in other parts of the world. As rhetorical studies have gained momentum, international interest has increased rapidly.

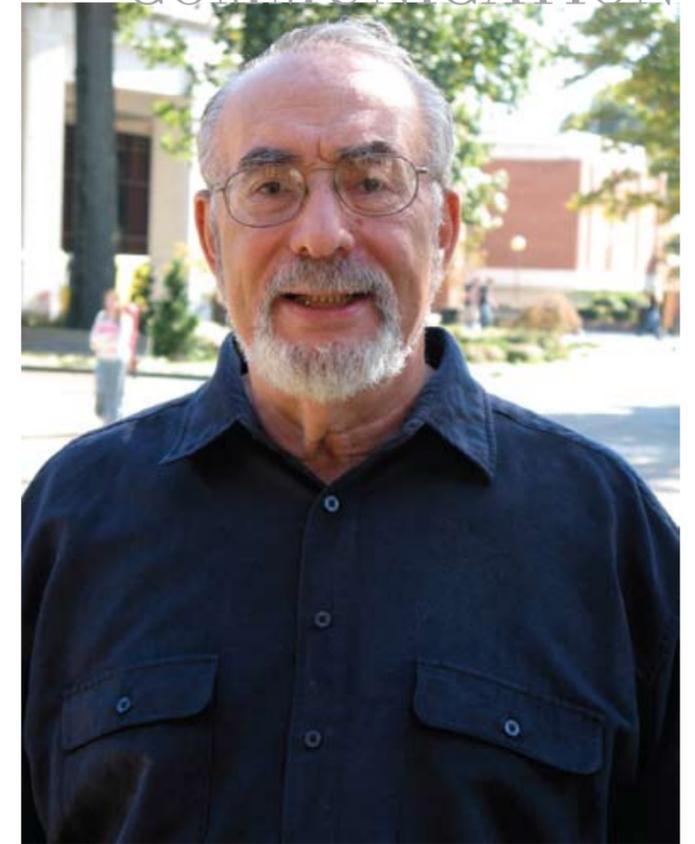
Q. When and why did you become a member of the Rhetoric Society?

A. I became a member more than thirty years ago. It was a small organization then, and it offered the only venue for meeting others who studied rhetoric but were not in a department of communication, or of speech, as it was then called. RSA serves a unique purpose because there is no other place where people interested in rhetoric can converge and talk about mutual interests.

Q. Rhetoric often carries with it a negative connotation, and many people are confused about its status as an academic subject. Could you clarify what you and members of RSA mean by "rhetoric"?

A. Some of the common definitions of rhetoric are: the art of persuasion, the art of discovering the available means of persuasion, the study and practice of persuasion in civic affairs, the art of adapting discourse to its end, the effort to influence those addressed by modifying or strengthening their representations of the surrounding world, and the study and practice of symbolic inducement. In the most narrow and traditional sense, rhetoric has to do with persuasion about public or civic concerns, and the most obvious examples of its use would be in political speeches or written polemics.

The scope of rhetoric, however, has been extended to include almost every mode of communication, such as the rhetoric of paintings and illustrations, of ritual performances, of public monuments, of musical compositions, of novels and poems, of documentary and fiction films, and—more recently—of digital messages. Perhaps the common denominator here is concern about the way that symbol systems influence human thought and action. It is important to understand that rhetoric is a mutable concept that changes as it is conceived for different purposes and applied to different objects.



Michael Leff

Q. When did you first become interested in rhetorical studies and what led to devote your career to the study of rhetoric and public address?

A. As an undergraduate, I was on the debate team, and, in part because of that, I took a course in argumentation. My debate coach and argumentation instructor, Forbes Hill, was also a specialist in classical rhetoric. One of the main attractions for me was the constructively ambiguous status of rhetorical studies.

Rhetoric and public address can be approached as a kind of academic discipline, but it also almost necessarily forces consideration of other disciplinary domains—history, psychology, logic, political science, and the like. I thought of rhetoric as both disciplinary and interdisciplinary. This combination of tidiness and messiness intrigued me from the moment I recognized it.

Rhetoric also involves an organic connection between teaching and research. To teach rhetoric requires mastery of an academic body of knowledge but it also entails application and adaptation of such knowledge in order to work with students learning how to speak, persuade, and argue. And the process also works in the other direction, since experience in the classroom teaches the rhetorician important lessons about how practice informs theory. This position at the intersection between the practice of teaching and contemplation of a subject makes rhetoric special for me, makes it a unique place in the modern research university where it is possible to be a research scholar and a teacher at the same time and without suffering from a divided professional psyche.

Exchange Program with Germany Has Profound Impact on Students

What grew from a partnership between German television executive Fritz Hattig and former University of Memphis professor of journalism and Hardin Chair of Excellence, Jim Willis, is now a full-blown bilateral exchange program for U of M students and students from Germany.

Initially a professional development program for broadcast journalists and cameramen of German public television station ZDF, m3+zdf is now an exchange program that allows U of M students to study journalism and related fields at one of three universities in the Frankfurt area (Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Mainz University of Applied Sciences, Wiesbaden University of Applied Sciences), and add an internship at the prestigious ZDF.

“This is a huge opportunity for our students,” says Joe Hayden, assistant professor of journalism in charge of the program at the University of Memphis. “We don’t limit this opportunity to journalism students, but the internship at ZDF is a once in a lifetime opportunity for our students. German journalism majors would give an arm and a leg to be considered for an internship there and for our students it basically gets tagged on to their study abroad trip.”

However, Hayden also knows that the language barrier keeps many students from considering Germany as an option for a study abroad program and the internship requires students to have conversational skills in German.

“We promote the exchange program with students who are taking German classes, but I also tell my journalism students to consider taking German to fulfill their degree’s language requirement,” Hayden says. “It’s really a smart choice, especially for students who have a remote interest in foreign relations or want to work as a journalist abroad.”



Andreas Eufinger (right), German exchange student who came to the University of Memphis with the m3+zdf exchange program, with WUMR broadcast engineer Jerald White.

Hayden’s point is supported by the fact that in the European Union, the language with the largest number of native speakers is German, and that a lot of people in Scandinavian and Eastern European countries, as well as The Netherlands, speak some German.

“Students who plan to spend a year abroad will probably get the most out of this program,” says Karl Renner, professor of journalism at Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, who oversees the program in Germany.

“It is designed so that American students can take an intensive German language course in the summer, enroll in classes for the fall semester, do an internship at ZDF and enroll in classes again for the spring semester, arriving back home just in time for their fall semester to start.”

Spending that much time away from home and possibly delaying graduation is another consideration that often keeps U of M students put. Rebecca Laumann, Study Abroad Director at U of M’s Center for International Programs and Services, knows that many students like the idea of studying abroad but tend to get cold feet when faced with leaving their friends and family behind for a semester or two.

“We had one student who filled out the application and paid the \$350 application fee twice and then decided not to go after all,” Laumann says. “The sad part is that there’s still a lot of misconception about studying abroad. One is that it will affect a student’s graduation date and the other is that only the few, more fortunate students can afford to study abroad, and that’s not true.”

According to Laumann, 95 percent of students who apply for a study abroad program are able to receive the Center’s study abroad scholarship in addition to any stipends the host country may offer to foreign exchange students.

“What’s most important is that the students think about studying abroad early in their college career,” Laumann says. “That doesn’t mean that they have to go abroad in their junior year, but they should make studying abroad part of their master plan.”

Laumann advises students to inquire about study abroad options at least a year prior to actually leaving, ideally sooner. That way she and the student’s adviser can look at the curriculum and find classes that will transfer to make the experience academically as well as personally meaningful.

“I also tell students that having studied abroad is what will set them apart from others when applying for a job after they graduate,” Laumann says. “A study abroad experience is a must on the resumés of many of our foreign exchange students. European employers expect their new hires to have experienced a foreign country and culture.

Derek Brown had no doubt that he would study abroad and because his major is German, choosing m3+zdf seemed like the obvious choice.

“I did most of the research myself and even though the U of M has other bilateral exchange programs with Germany, I chose Mainz because growing up in a small town near Jackson, I wanted to be in a larger city.”

Although Brown was prepared and ready for his study abroad experience, he acknowledges the initial culture shock when arriving in Germany.

“I definitely think that spending a year abroad is much more beneficial than going for just one semester. It takes about one semester to get used to the new environment and the somewhat different University system. During the second semester you can just enjoy being an exchange student and not worry about figuring out how to register, where to buy train or subway tickets, where to shop for groceries, and all those things you had to figure out during the first few months.”

Andreas Eufinger, a journalism student at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, used the m3+zdf exchange program to study in Memphis this past spring. He also had to overcome the initial culture shock and the fact that before his semester at the U of M he had never been away from home for an extended period of time.

“I was very nervous at first, but the experience turned out to be amazing,” Eufinger says. “I’m a huge sports fan and thought it

was great that students get to see a lot of the games for free. I spent a lot of time at the campus recreation center playing pick-up games, and I got to meet Derrick Rose—that’s huge.”

Academically, Eufinger was impressed with his classes, which he says presented journalism from a more practical point of view, and the fact that he was allowed to host his own show on WUMR U92 FM, the U of M’s radio station.

“I always thought I would end up in radio, and my time in Memphis gave me the confidence to really pursue this career goal,” Eufinger says.

“Studying abroad is a completely life-changing experience,” Brown echoes. “I know it sounds corny, but it’s true. Academically it might not affect students as much, but the personal growth and the cultural experience is just amazing. Of course it’s hard at times, but the reward is unbelievable.”

Journalism and U of M Alumni Honored at Annual Awards Dinner

The University of Memphis Journalism Alumni Club honored three outstanding U of M alumni accomplished in the field of journalism this past October at its annual Journalism Awards Dinner.

Journalism alumni Walter Leavy (BA, ’75), managing editor of *Ebony* magazine, and Paul Jewell (BA, ’78), marketing director for *The Commercial Appeal*, were presented with the Charles E. Thornton Outstanding Alumni Award. Deanie Parker (BPS, ’77), retired CEO and President of the Soulsville Foundation, received the Herbert Lee Williams Award.

Walter Leavy cut his journalistic teeth at *The Daily Helmsman* and went on to become a sports reporter for the now defunct *Memphis Press-Scimitar*. In 1980, he set his sights on Chicago-based *Ebony* magazine. Leavy has held several editorial positions at *Ebony* magazine, in which he was responsible for writing and editing a wide range of articles,

directing production, conceptualizing special projects, and contributing to the improvement of the overall look of the magazine. He has been *Ebony*’s managing editor for more than a decade now.

Paul Jewell formed his love of journalism at a young age. His first paid job with *The Commercial Appeal* was as a paperboy. He returned to the paper after college and has worked at the *C.A.* for more than 30 years. His positions have included news editorial assistant, copywriter and manager of creative services, and most recently director of marketing. Jewell has served as past president of the Journalism Alumni board and on the board of the University’s National Alumni Association.

Deanie Parker earned both a bachelor of professional studies and master of public administration (’88) from the U of M. She is the retired CEO and president of the Soulsville Foundation, which brought Memphis the Stax Museum of American Soul Music and the

Stax Music Academy. Parker was the Director of Publicity, Artists and Community Relations for Stax Records. Before taking the position at Soulsville, she was the vice president of communications and marketing at the Regional Medical Center in Memphis, the assistant director of Memphis in May, and the 1996 interim director for the MIM Festival saluting Brazil. Parker is a past recipient of the University of Memphis Distinguished Alumni Award and PRSA’s (Public Relations Society of America) Memphis Communicator of the Year.

Proceeds from the Journalism Awards Dinner go to the newly endowed Elinor Grusin-Journalism Alumni Enrichment Fund. Money from the fund will provide for a variety of expenses that benefit U of M journalism students, including academic enrichment activities, student travel to conferences and professional meetings, research support, awards, and scholarships.

David Arant Becomes Chair of the Department of Journalism

David Arant isn't a stranger in the Department of Journalism. He was a professor in the department and the program's graduate studies coordinator for ten years before becoming the associate dean of U of M's University College in 2002. Although Arant continued to teach one journalism class every year, he spent most of his time during the past six years providing day-to-day leadership for the interdisciplinary studies college. Now Arant is back at the Meeman building after being appointed chair of the Department of Journalism last summer.

"I'm excited to be back in the journalism department," Arant says. "I've always stayed connected to the program and my colleagues, and when the opportunity to lead the department came up, I knew I didn't want to miss the chance to return."

Arant is familiar with the U of M and the department, but it hardly gave him a head start in his new position. The boxes in his offices are not yet unpacked, his calendar is packed with meetings and events, and yet, he finds time to meet one-on-one with current and former students, advocate for the program, implement new online courses, and yes, teach a journalism class.

"That's the fun part," Arant says with a smile. "That and working with the faculty to create a new converged curriculum."

As new department chair, Arant finds himself in a somewhat unique situation because almost half of his faculty members are new professors who joined the department during the past six years.

"Three long-time professors retired last year so with the new hires we have many new, young and talented people in the department at this point," Arant explains. "They bring a lot of enthusiasm and new ideas to the program, which is great."

Arant didn't map out a career in journalism for himself. In fact, he discovered his passion and talent for journalism somewhat by accident.



David Arant

With an undergraduate degree in psychology from Davidson College in North Carolina, Arant initially wanted to get into the field of clinical psychology.

"I realized that I wasn't cut out for that kind of work after an internship at Broughton Hospital [in Morganton, North Carolina]," he admits. "It takes that special person who can accept that after years and years of work patients still might make very little progress."

Arant went on to receive his Master of Divinity degree at Emory University and worked as pastor for the United Methodist Church in South Carolina until 1986, which is where he also got involved in communication and public relations.

"I worked in communications and public relations for the United Methodist Conference while serving as a minister in South Carolina," Arant says. "That's when I realized that I enjoyed journalistic work, and then went to work full time editing the *South Carolina United Methodist Advocate*, the church's weekly newspaper. So I traded my clergyman position for the associate editor and business manager position at the *Advocate*."

Coming to a crossroad yet again, Arant decided to pursue a career in journalism academia in the late 1980s, receiving his M.A. in journalism from the University of South Carolina in Columbia, and his Ph.D. in Mass Communication from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

It seems like Arant's career took many twists and turns, but looking back at it all he feels that the positions he held and the degrees he earned were put to good use.

"Part of being a clergyman is to counsel and provide guidance, and my psychology degree was a good preparation for that. Advising students and helping them with career decisions is a similar experience. At the University College I was in charge of interdisciplinary studies program, which included religious studies, so I never felt any of my degrees or professional experience were wasted," Arant says.

"I see work as a calling, and not only as a means to an end. I enjoy helping others, and the journalism department truly feels like my home."

Taking Challenges in Stride—The University Singers Enchant Austria

When telling the story of how the University Singers captured Austria and won the admiration of many other nations during a trip abroad this past July, Lawrence Edwards, director of choral activities at the Scheidt School of Music, still seems amazed.

"It was the first time in probably 20 years that the University Singers went abroad, and what the students experienced was absolutely incredible. It will leave a lasting impression," Edwards says.

The University Singers, the Music Schools' flagship choir, is a mixed ensemble of 50 to 70 undergraduate and graduate students, performing choral literature from the 14th through the 20th centuries.

"To a certain extent, the University Singers take on the role of ambassador for the U of M and the Music School, giving off-campus concerts in local churches and throughout the community," Edwards says.

During the choir's trip to Germany and Austria, more than 30 of Edwards' singers had a chance to show the world what's happening at the U of M.

The 17-day trip took the group to the 45th International Competition for Choirs at the Castle of Porcia in Spittal an der Drau, Austria, and to the 5th World Choir Games in Graz, Austria. In Spittal, the University Singers competed with nine other choirs from around the world. In Graz, they were one of the non-competing choirs featured in two performances, one of which was televised nationally.

"The annual competition in Spittal is invitational. About 80 choirs apply each year, but only ten are chosen for the competition," Edwards says. "That we were invited to participate as the only choir from the United States was through a connection with Jing Ling-Tam, director of choral studies at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA)." From Ling-Tam, Edwards learned about Franz Herzog, director of choral studies at the Johann Joseph Fux



The University Singers during the competition in Spittal.

Conservatory in Graz, Austria, who was part of UTA's 2007 choral symposium. Familiar with the University Singers, Ling-Tam, a judge for the choir competition in Spittal, suggested that Herzog visit the U of M to work with the concert choir for a few days before returning to Austria.

"Franz was impressed with our choir and invited us to the World Choir Games in Graz," Edwards remembers.

Herzog, one of the artistic directors of the 5th World Choir Games, mentioned the University Singers to Hellmuth Drewes, his father-in-law and director of the Choir Competition in Spittal, and before Edwards knew it, his students were slated to compete in this international event with choirs from Indonesia, Sweden, Bulgaria, South Africa, Slovenia, and the Philippines, among others.

"We were completely surprised and excited to find so many people who do and love what we do. It's like realizing that there are others who speak your language even though they are from different parts of the world," says Mikah Meyer, a senior music performance major.

For the competition, the U of M choir had to prepare three obligatory works and a program of its choice, for which Edwards selected three folk songs and gospels by American composers.

"The first thing I noticed was that they had

put up the flags of the participating countries outside the concert hall, which seemed very grand," Edwards remembers. "Everybody was extremely serious during the pre-competition meeting. The judges wanted to know every little detail so that during the competition they knew we weren't making mistakes but had made adjustments to the music."

Trying to keep up with the German instructions as best as possible, Edwards understood quickly that this was an unbelievable opportunity for his choir. Having promised his students a fun trip abroad with some singing here and there, Edwards now realized that his students would hardly get a break from demanding rehearsals, the challenging competition and the performances that lay ahead in Graz.

"We really didn't have enough time to rehearse the mandatory pieces and the students were aware of the stellar competition," Edwards says. "The Singers weren't as confident and made a few mistakes."

Assuming that they would make last place, the students decided they had nothing to lose during their choice performance, which included the choir's signature piece, Eric Whitacre's "Her Sacred Spirit Soars."

"We were sure that we would come in last, so we felt that while we're here we might as

well have fun singing,” Meyer says.

With their final routine, the students made the judges and the audience take note by giving an extraordinary performance and putting forward a transformed choir.

“The students knew that they had done an outstanding job during the second part of the competition and all they hoped for was not to be in last place,” Edwards says.

When that last place was announced and it wasn’t for the University Singers, the students were ecstatic. The ninth place was announced and again, the U of M’s choir didn’t take that place.

“If I tell you that the University Singers placed eighth in a choir competition you may think that this can’t be a great choir,” Edwards says. “Placing eighth in this international competition in Spittal is an unbelievable achievement.”

However, what’s most important is that the students were allowed to participate in a competition of this caliber and see other outstanding choirs from around the world perform and represent their countries. “There was definitely the excitement of the competition,” says Jeremy Warner, graduate student in choral conducting and part of the choir, “but it was absolutely fascinating to witness how differently choral music is interpreted and performed by some of these choirs. For us, singing in a choir is a very formal affair, but for the choir from South Africa, for example, singing and dancing go hand-in-hand, and their performance was extremely lively. Other choirs were dressed in their county’s traditional costumes

during the second part of the performance—experiencing this ‘world of choir’ was absolutely stunning to all of us and it made us realize that we are one of many choirs, and not the choir, which ultimately made us realize what we’re up against.”

The University Singer’s trip didn’t end here. After the competition in Spittal, the students headed to Graz for two performances and many unforeseen events.

“There were 450 choirs from 92 countries at the World Choir Games, that’s a lot to keep up with and organize. Our men were supposed to sing a Verdi opera with a choir from Italy, but we never received the music. So we had about 24 hours to learn the music, and work on the Italian pronunciation to sing an Italian opera with an Italian choir,” Edwards laughs at the seemingly impossible. “At first the Italians thought that we hadn’t practiced and were the ‘lazy Americans,’ but once they realized how well the men did, having learned the piece in such a short time, they were completely amazed.”

When a soprano was needed to sing in a quintet from *West Side Story*, Edwards was asked if he had a singer who could learn the part quickly. Emily Heinz, music industry graduate, didn’t hesitate to fill the void and save the performance. Then a soloist became unavailable for yet another performance. Herzog asked Edwards if one of his singers could help out, knowing that he had students who were more than capable. Arthella Williams, music education senior, agreed to give up her day of sightseeing and instead

learn 16 measures for the solo, a task that would typically take her a week.

“I was actually getting sick, my sinus were bothering me and my voice started getting hoarse, but I never thought about saying no,” Williams says matter-of-factly. “They needed someone to sing the part, Dr. Edwards asked me and I said, ‘sure, why not.’”

When the conductor of the Hungarian orchestra, who needed the soloist, heard Williams sing, he was so impressed that he dismissed the professional tenor who was supposed to sing the encore and ask Williams to sing it instead.

“What amazed me the most about my students is that they didn’t complain once when there was yet more work and more rehearsing to be done,” Edwards says. “No matter the challenge, they always kept a positive attitude and never once said ‘no, we can’t possibly learn that much music in such a short time.’ On the contrary, the students were willing to take on whatever came their way.”

For many of the students the trip was their first experience abroad or away from home for any extended period of time. Although homesick at times, all agree that what they learned and experienced was amazing, and many have since looked into study and work abroad opportunities.

“It was an experience that I wouldn’t trade for anything,” says Jeanette Ann Gray, a music education senior. “I grew really close to the other students, and I’m actually looking into a teaching exchange program just to go back. I loved it that much!”

Randal Rushing is Interim Director of Scheidt School of Music

When Patricia Hoy resigned as Director of the Scheidt School of Music this past July, Dr. Randal Rushing, tenor and U of M professor of voice for the past 18 years, gave up his professional development leave and agreed to serve as the School’s interim Director for the academic year 2008/09.

Rushing is an established soloist of the concert and opera stage at home and abroad. He has performed extensively throughout Germany, Switzerland, Central America, the Czech Republic, and the United States, making his debut in 2001/02 with the St. Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra in a gala concert at Carnegie Hall as soloist in

Mendelssohn’s *Lobegesang* and in Finzi’s *Ode for St. Cecilia*. He was soloist for Bach’s *Christmas Oratorio* and Mozart’s *Requiem* at Carnegie Hall, where he also debuted in the American premiere of Bok’s *Missa Solemnis*.

The search for a new director is underway as the Music School continues to thrive, and plans for a new music building are pursued.



Randal Rushing



Southern Comfort Jazz Orchestra

School of Music’s Spring Performance Calendar Includes Many Highlights

The Music School’s spring 2009 performance calendar is packed with exciting concerts and festivals. A few highlights include U of M **Jazz Week** from March 3-7, featuring Joyce Cobb, widely recognized as one of the finest vocalists in the Memphis region, and Grammy Award winner Slide Hampton, an internationally renowned trombonist, composer and arranger who became an important force in Maynard Ferguson’s big band from 1957 to 1959, and led octets in the 1960s with such sidemen as Freddie Hubbard and George Coleman.

The Mid-South Horn Workshop is held at the U of M on March 21 and 22, featuring the American Horn Quartet, described by *The American Record Guide* as “the finest brass chamber ensemble in the world.” Also featured at the Horn Workshop are Neoteric, a unique en-

semble of cello, horn, and bassoon; Sopro Brasil, the faculty woodwind quintet from the Federal University of Pernambuco in Recife, Brazil, and the U of M’s Southern Comfort Jazz Orchestra and Wind Ensemble.

The Imagine New Music Festival runs March 26-28, and will feature works by Estonia’s most renowned composer Arvo Pärt, who is commonly identified as a pioneer of the mystic minimalism or sacred minimalism, which employs hypnotic repetitions and slow meditative tempo. A Selection of Pärt’s music will be performed by the University’s Contemporary Chamber Players, Symphony, and University Singers as well as the Ceruti String Quartet, which will also perform a piano quintet by John Baur, assistant director of the School of Music and professor of composition and graduate theory.



The Mighty Sound of the South, U of M’s marching band, has recently been decked out in new uniforms, featuring light-weight black pants, blue jackets, and blue cadet-style hats with silver insignia and a plume, giving the band a sleek contemporary look. Additionally, the band received 140 new brass instruments.



Set design of *Cyrano*, Act 1, by Christopher McCollum, scenic designer at Theatre Memphis.

Collaboration with Theatre Memphis Allows for Lavish Production of *Cyrano*

When *Cyrano* opened at Theatre Memphis on February 13, it marked the high point of a collaboration between the University's Department of Theatre & Dance and Theatre Memphis. The play, which closes on March 1, was a labor of love for Bob Hetherington, director and chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance. It was a matter of timing, the willingness to take risks, and the support of the Jeniam Foundation that brought Memphis' first full-size production of *Cyrano* to the stage.

"This is a production of large dimensions in every imaginable way," Hetherington says. "We have a cast of 30. More than 100 costumes had to be designed and made, together with wigs, hats, shoes, swords, and the like for all the characters, and five scene sets had to be constructed. We couldn't have done it alone, and Theatre Memphis couldn't have done it solo either. Without this collaboration, a full-size production of *Cyrano* wouldn't have been possible in Memphis."

Cyrano, first produced in December 1897 at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin in Paris, France, is one of the top romantic plays, with all the swashbuckling and skirt-sweeping drama of a true 17th Century romance. The American premier was in October 1898 at

the Garden Theatre in New York City with Richard Mansfield as Cyrano. A century later, the play has experienced a revival thanks to its latest Broadway production, which starred Kevin Kline as Cyrano, Jennifer Garner as Roxane, and Daniel Sunjata as Christian de Neuvillette. Directed by David Leveaux at the Richard Rodgers Theatre, the play closed in January 2008, and was broadcast on PBS as part of the network's "Great Performances Series" this January.

"Even if people haven't seen an actual theatre production of *Cyrano*, almost everybody will recognize the story," Hetherington says. "It's the age-old tale of unfulfilled love, of *Beauty and the Beast*, popularized by Disney, *Phantom of the Opera*, popularized by Andrew Lloyd Webber, and several 'Cyrano' movies such as the comedy *Roxanne* with Steve Martin and Daryl Hannah, and the French-language *Cyrano de Bergerac* with Gérard Depardieu and Anne Brochet, among others."

For the Memphis production of *Cyrano*, Hetherington chose Anthony Burgess' adaptation of Edmond Rostand's classic love story, bringing together community actors, University of Memphis theatre performance students and alumni. Jerre Dye, U of M alumnus and artistic director of Voices of the

South, plays Cyrano de Bergerac alongside Chris McCollum, theatre performance junior in the role of the suitor conduit Christian de Neuvillette, and theatre performance senior Claire Hayner as Roxane. Although the cast includes veteran community actors Bill Andrews, Barry Fuller, Parker Dinwiddie, James Dale Green, John Rone, and Blanch Tosh, the majority of the roles were cast with U of M theatre students.

"Aside from putting on a grand play, I knew that a collaboration with Theatre Memphis would be an immense opportunity for our students," Hetherington says. "We didn't pre-cast any roles, but I knew there would be room for a lot of student participation. Many of our collaborations in the past were for plays on the U of M Main Stage. This time, our students will perform alongside experienced actors and U of M alumni on Theatre Memphis' Lohrey Stage. We are taking our talent into the community, showcasing what we have to offer. That's an unbelievable opportunity."

Debbie Litch, executive producer at Theatre Memphis, shares Hetherington's excitement.

"We have always worked closely with the U of M's Department of Theatre & Dance. Theatre couldn't exist without collaboration,



Costume sketches by André Bruce Ward, costume designer at Theatre Memphis.

especially for plays of the size of *Cyrano*. However, this is the first time that Theatre Memphis and the U of M have collaborated on an entire show," Litch says. "This is truly a win-win situation for everyone because we were able to utilize the best of what both theatres have to offer and produce an extraordinary play in our community, for our audience." When Hetherington initially proposed this collaboration in 2007, he knew that there was no local model for what he wanted to do, but he felt confident that the mutual desire for great theatre would make this partnership possible.

Theatre Memphis' resident designers Christopher McCollum and André Bruce Ward designed sets and costumes exclusively for this production. An Academic Enrichment grant from the University of Memphis and a grant from the Jeniam Foundation allowed the Department of Theatre & Dance to bring in Kathie Brookfield as artist-in-residence costume design technician. Brookfield, an expert in 17th Century period costumes with more than 35 years of experience in pattern-making, draping, tailoring, and millinery, worked together with Ward and students, staff and faculty from the theatre department on making and fitting the costumes for the play.

"Roxane has five costumes, Cyrano has two, and other roles have as many as three," Brookfield explains. "That's a lot even if it was a small production, but we have 30 actors playing multiple roles, and we are making every costume from scratch."

Kim Yeager, the theatre department's costume shop supervisor, chimes in, "it's one thing to find matching boots for a cast of five, but a totally different thing to find them for a cast of 30. From a dress-making stand point, *Cyrano* is an all-out pageant with big hair, big skirts, big boots, lots of accessories, and not to forget a big nose," Yeager laughs.

"For the audience this means that they get to see something absolutely spectacular. *Cyrano* with all its splendor is eye candy, and the romantic plot is heart wrenching. Watching this production is like entering a different world. It's a two-hour retreat from the usual every-day life," Yeager says.

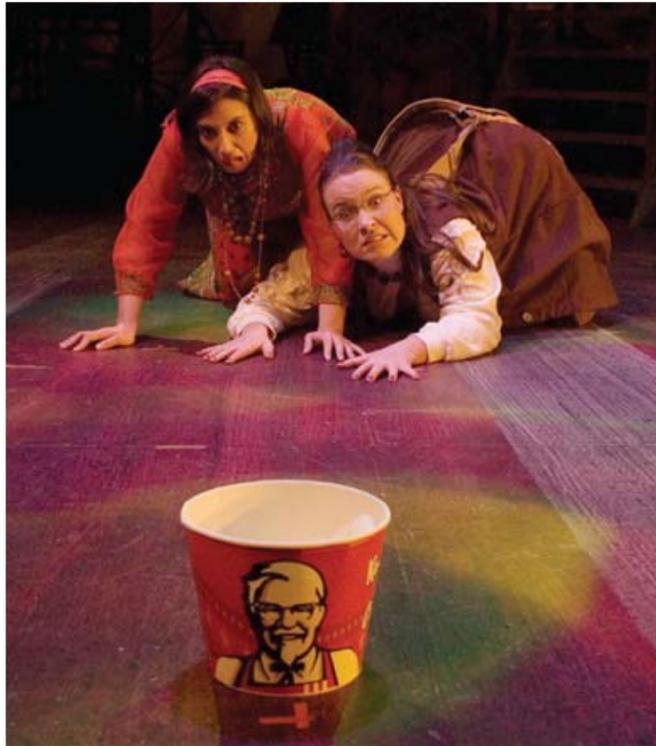
For both theatres, *Cyrano* is part of the regular season, which means that while the designers in the scene shop work on the five sets for *Cyrano*—balcony, theatre, bakery, battlefield, and convent—and the costume shop is jam-packed with enough costumes to outfit a small arrondissement in 17th Century Paris, sets and costumes for the season's other

plays have to be made too, rehearsals for additional productions begin, and school is in full swing for many of the student actors.

"When we started this endeavor we knew it would be a challenge because we have two locations with different schedules and different demands that handle specific parts of the production," Hetherington says. "But everybody really wanted to make this happen, and the help and goodwill we've received is just amazing."

Thinking that he would have to find a composer for the play's music or pay a lot of money to use an already existing title, Hetherington was surprised to find that Nigel Hess from the Royal Shakespeare Company in Great Britain allowed him to use his music for the nun's song, and Rick Fox, director of music for the Stratford Festival of Canada, gave him permission to use two songs from his new, still unproduced musical of *Cyrano*.

"This is how great theatre can be done," Hetherington says. "People recognize that someone who is doing a production of *Cyrano* has his hands full, and there is a general willingness to help out; but we have truly been very fortunate with this production, and it shows."



Above: The U of M's production of George Orwell's political parable *Animal Farm*, was directed by Gloria Baxter, professor of theatre. Left: The U of M garnered recognition and several Ostrander Awards for its production of *Assassins*.

2008 Ostrander Awards

The Department of Theatre & Dance had a lot to celebrate at the 2008 Ostrander Awards this past August, when alumni, students, and faculty received awards for excellence in performance, directing and design.

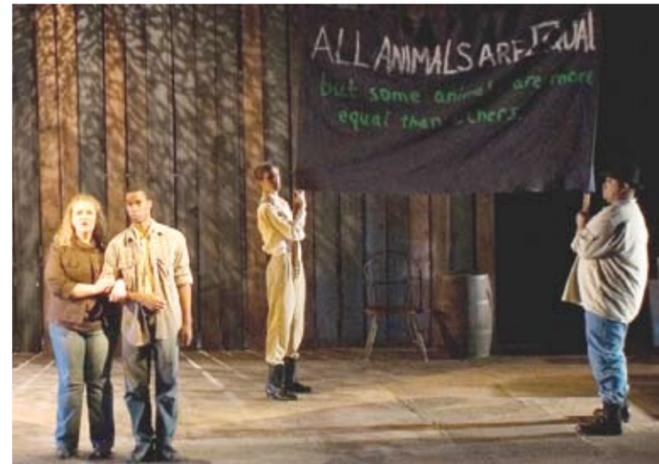
Larry Riley Rising Star Award – **Ken Friedhoff**

ASSASSINS

The U of M's 2007/08 season's "killer musical" was a dark and funny roller coaster ride through the "American Dream." A musical vaudeville about the nine assassins or would-be assassins of American Presidents who insisted, "everybody's got the right to be happy." Awards won were: *Set Design* – **Craig Lewis**; *Supporting Actor in a Musical* – **Jason Hansen**; *Leading Actor in a Musical* – **Chris McCollum**

ANIMAL FARM

George Orwell's political parable adapted by Nelson Bond was staged at the U of M in April 2008. Directed by Gloria Baxter, professor of theatre, the play about the famous tale of livestock insurrection and regime



change in an agrarian community, garnered the Department of Theatre & Dance seven Ostrander Awards: *Lighting Design* – **Ken Friedhoff**; *Props* – **Emily Wells**; *Supporting Actor in a Drama* – **Matthew Crewse**; *Leading Actor in a Drama* – **Reginald C. Brown** (faculty); *Ensemble Acting* – **University of Memphis**; *Direction of a Drama* – **Gloria Baxter** (faculty); *Dramatic Production* – **University of Memphis**

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD

Co-produced with the Scheidt School of Music, the Tony Award-winning musical which ran on the U of M's Main Stage in February 2008, allowed the audience to decide "whodunit," making each performance unique, and also winning seven Ostrander Awards for the U of M: *Costume Design* – **Janice Lacek** (faculty); *Music Direction* – **Mark Ensley** (School of Music faculty); *Choreography* – **Jay Rapp** (alumnus); *Supporting Actress in a Musical* – **Shaheerah Farrakhan**; *Leading Actress in a Musical* – **Kirie Walz**; *Direction of a Musical* – **Stephen Hancock** (faculty); *Musical Production* – **University of Memphis**

Anne Marie Gideon (center), theatre performance senior, spent this past semester studying at the **Accademia dell'Arte in Arezzo, Italy**. Asked to describe her experience, Gideon is quick to respond: "Everything in Arezzo was wonderful! I had such an amazing experience. I learned so much more than I ever could have anticipated. I could not be more grateful for this opportunity that gave me so many new tools as an actor, not to mention all the wonderful places I've visited. It's been fantastic!" The study abroad program for theatre majors at the Accademia dell'Arte is made possible by Memphis business leader James McGehee and the late Mrs. McGehee.

AMUM

AMUM Expands Art Storage Space to Prepare for Accreditation

The paint is dry, the dust has settled; renovations and construction of a new art storage space in the Art Museum of the University of Memphis (AMUM) are complete. When the Museum opened in 1981, it was intended for temporary and/or traveling art exhibitions. The storage and exhibition preparation area was small because the emphasis was on showcasing rather than storing art and art objects. Over the years, however, AMUM received a collection of Egyptian antiquities (now part of its permanent collection), a loan of traditional West African masks, more than 100 works on paper, and assorted cultural artifacts, including two suits of Japanese armor, flintlock dueling pistols, Ethiopian spear points, ancient Greco-Roman glass, and Navaho textiles.

The new storage room provides space to store those and other art and artifacts that aren't on display in the Museum, without any loss of exhibition space.

It is common for museums to dedicate more than half their total space to areas used for collection storage and exhibition preparation. As the AMUM's role changed it became clear that its art storage and preparation area needed to be expanded.

During the renovation, which started in May 2008, all of AMUM's stored art objects were organized and inventoried. Many objects were "re-discovered," and their origin and significance now needs to be determined. Some of the discoveries include Codex Duran (hand colored prints recording the history of the Aztecs), Thomas Handforth prints, Pre-Columbian artifacts, engravings from *The Complete Works of Shakspeare* [sic], and more than 200 political cartoons from *Harpers Weekly*.

AMUM is in the process of evaluating all of these objects, cataloging, documenting, and properly storing the previously owned and new objects, as well as identifying objects with inherent material problems.

In doing so, the museum has to consider if the objects support the museum's mission and academic programs at the University of Memphis and if they can be stored safely. These collection management issues are a critical component in AMUM's quest to seek accreditation by the American Association of Museums.

A long-term project at AMUM is developing a traveling exhibition on the life and work of architect Paul R. Williams, which has been awarded more than \$120,000 in grants.

The exhibition is scheduled to open at AMUM in 2010 and then tour across the country to universities with an architecture program. Several students from the Museum Studies program are working on the primary and secondary research for this multi-faceted project, which also includes a Web site designed to facilitate research and discourse about Williams and is intended as a resource for art teachers who can use the information on the site to incorporate architecture into their lessons.



Chandler Fulton Pritchett's "Clouds" was part of AMUM's 2008 MFA Thesis Exhibition

This past fall, in addition to work shown in the ArtLab and Caseworks galleries, AMUM featured four temporary exhibitions: "Mississippi River Fugues" by Margaret Cogswell; "Anybody and Nobody: Andy Warhol Photographs;" "Bonnie Baxter: Rewind," and the "MFA Thesis Exhibition: Yijun Liao, Chandler Fulton Pritchett and Robert G. McCarroll."

Margaret Cogswell's "Mississippi River Fugues," a site-specific installation, is the latest effort in AMUM's visiting artist program—a program that provides U of M students the opportunity to work with an artist in developing and executing an exhibition. For Cogswell's exhibition, students from the Department of Art assisted with design decisions and created large sculptural pieces that were an integral part of the installation.

AMUM volunteer and BFA graduate Christia Leigh Blankenship curated "Anybody and Nobody: Andy Warhol Photographs." Blankenship, a Museum Studies' student, organized and researched the recent gift of 150 Polaroid photographs from the Andy Warhol Foundation. The exhibition was the culmination of her work.



Robert F. Fogelman and his wife, Martha H. Fogelman (far right), have made a generous gift of more than 180 pieces of Sub-Saharan African art to the Art Museum of the University of Memphis (AMUM). Featuring such objects as an elaborate, beaded Yoruba priest's tunic, a cast metal Benin head from Nigeria, and wooden Fang funerary mask from Gabon, the Robert and Martha Fogelman Collection provides a rich core of valuable research and study material that will attract thousands of visitors to the U of M campus. Also pictured are (at far left) Leslie Luebbers, director of AMUM, President Shirley C. Raines and Frances Brinton Hyde, granddaughter of the Fogelmans.

CMA

CMA Offers Exchange Program in Digital Media at Hochschule Ulm

The Center for Multimedia Arts (CMA) celebrated its fifth anniversary this past fall. Founded in November 2003 through a multidisciplinary and collaborative effort by U of M faculty and staff as one of the first research centers in the University's FedEx Institute of Technology (FIT), the CMA has garnered local and national attention as one of CCFA's extraordinary research centers.

The CMA works on a variety of projects, from Web, graphic, and exhibit design to television PSAs, training videos and documentaries and, more recently, user experience design and usability testing. The Center has developed an emphasis in the design of systems for complex decision-making, particularly around child health and development, creating long-term initiatives with St. Jude, Duke University Hospital, the Shelby County Office of Early Childhood and Youth, the Center for Urban Child Policy, and The Urban Child Institute.

Additionally, the CMA initiated a bilateral exchange program with the Hochschule Ulm (University for Applied Science) in Ulm, Germany. The program is open to CCFA students and students from the Herff College of Engineering.

"Through a personal connection at the Hochschule we were approached about the possibility of an exchange program in 2004," says Juliane Richter, a native of Germany and the Center's art director.

Hochschule, which is well known for its engineering program, had implemented a digital media curriculum just two years earlier, and the CMA saw the exchange program as an opportunity for U of M students as well as students from Ulm. When setting up the program, Schmidt and Richter included the U of M's Herff College of Engineering in their plans, which started offering an exchange with the Hochschule at about the same time as the CMA.

"This is typically how new exchange programs at the U of M get started," says Rebecca Laumann, Study Abroad Director at U of M's Center for International Programs and Services. "Faculty members have a connection to or know someone at a university abroad, they start talking about student exchange options, eventually bring us in on the conversation, and if everybody agrees, we officially set up a bilateral exchange program."

Richter knows that German students have a great interest in exchange programs in the United States, whereas American students are somewhat reluctant to choose Germany.

"The language barrier is probably one of the greatest fear factors for our American students," Richter says.

Maximilian Willier, CMA's current exchange student from Ulm can relate. "The language is definitely a bigger problem for foreign students who come to study in Ulm, even though we offer some classes in



Although many U of M students haven't heard of Ulm, it is often associated with the tallest church in the world, the Ulmer Münster, a gothic minster, and it is also known as the birthplace of Albert Einstein.

English. On the other hand, German students are pretty much expected to have some study abroad experience. That's often the first thing a prospective employer looks for on our resume," Willier says. "Naturally the application and selection process for study abroad programs is highly competitive and not everyone who wants to study abroad will actually receive a spot. So there are challenges on both sides."

Martina Igberaese, a senior graphic design student at the U of M, studied at the Hochschule in Ulm this past spring, saying that the experience exceeded her expectations. "I learned so much more about foreigners, traveling, design, and Germany than I expected and I would definitely do it all again." Her advice to students who are considering studying abroad: "I would do a lot of research of the location, campus, and culture."

CSD



TERRA House in Memphis' Uptown neighborhood just before its completion in January.

TERRA House Will Shine for Ribbon Cutting in February

After more than three years of research, design, and planning, the TERRA (Technologically + Environmentally Responsive Residential Architecture) demonstration house is complete. The project, which was initiated in 2005 by the Department of Architecture through the U of M's Center for Sustainable Design (CSD), broke ground in June of 2007. One of the project's main objectives was to embody the idea of "green" design while blending in with the other residences in the area.

With a formal opening February 27 at 10 a.m., the house brings a new understanding of sustainable architecture and design to Memphis. The two-story, 1,500 to 1,700 square-foot home will be one of the first in the region to conform to the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED guidelines for homes. It features energy efficient and environmentally responsible techniques, materials, appliances and fixtures. It adheres to Memphis Light Gas and Water Division's EcoBUILD program and to the American Lung Association's Health House standards.

Designed entirely by Department of Architecture students under faculty supervision, the house incorporates several features, such as insulated concrete forms, special soy-based insulation, rainwater harvesting system, and a greywater recovery system, among others, that are uncommon for the building industry in the Memphis area. Contractor for the TERRA house was DPC Construction LLC of Memphis.

In addition to serving as a teaching tool for sustainable design, the TERRA house is an actual family residence.

The Department of Architecture plans to continue faculty and student research into sustainable design through the design of prototype affordable and sustainable residences in other neighborhoods within the Memphis area.

The project has benefited from partnerships between the University of Memphis, AIA Memphis (American Institute of Architects), the Memphis chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council, and the Uptown Partnership, which includes the Henry Turley Company, Belz Enterprises and the City of Memphis.

A video of the TERRA project can be viewed at <http://architecture.memphis.edu/terravideo.wmv>.

WUMR

Radiothon, Live Streaming and More

WUMR, "The Jazz Lover U92 FM," capped off its 2008 Jazz in June Radiothon with "An Evening with Bill Easley and Friends" at Owen Brennan's Restaurant. The event served as a fitting tribute to Bob McDowell, WUMR's late general manager and associate professor of communication.

U of M alumnus Easley, a world-renowned saxophonist, traveled from New York to jam the night away for a full house of enthusiastic jazz lovers. Proceeds from the event helped establish a fund in McDowell's memory for the support of WUMR. To make a donation to the fund make your check payable to the University of Memphis Foundation, noting that your gift is for the McDowell fund. Send to: U of M Foundation, Dept. 238, P.O. Box 1000, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN 38148-0001.

New at WUMR this year—the station is now streaming worldwide. With this innovation has come the 24-hour daily broadcast schedule. Visit wumr.memphis.edu and listen live to your "Jazz Lover U92 FM" from anywhere in the world.



Renowned saxophone player Bill Easley (right), performed at WUMR's 2008 Jazz in June tribute to the late Bob McDowell, the station's long-time general manager



The cover of this issue of *Voices* and the feature story on the production of *Cyrano* offer a vivid description of an exemplary university and community collaboration—a wonderful play on the city’s storied stage at Theatre Memphis, including a cast of both student, alumni and community actors under the direction of Bob Hetherington, chair of U of M’s Department of Theatre and Dance. The multiple requisites of such an undertaking necessitate the dedication and hard work of everyone on stage and also behind the scenes. This joint venture has been made possible, in part, by the encouragement and support of the Jeniam Foundation of Memphis, whose participation is value-added impetus to success.

Established in 1992 by now retired AutoZone executive and enthusiastic arts leader Andrew Clarkson with the purpose of engaged and involved philanthropy, the Jeniam Foundation’s intent matches perfectly the aim of U of M President Shirley Raines to engage the University with the community in high levels of scholarship and creativity for the common good. This is being accomplished by the Department of Theatre and Dance in its relationship with the Jeniam Foundation. The relationship began in 2001 when U of M student Nate Eppler’s original play, *Keeping Up With The Joneses*, was

selected for performance at the American College Theatre Festival in Clemson, South Carolina. He and others traveled there with the help of the Jeniam Foundation. With this extraordinary experience on his resume, Eppler would soon successfully launch a career in professional theatre in New York.

The Jeniam Foundation has long supported successful theatre projects and productions at venues such as Playhouse on the Square, Circuit Playhouse and Theatre Memphis. Since its initial support for student theatre at the U of M, the Foundation has continued to help the department in ways that many funding agencies and organizations otherwise decline. In 2003-2004, the Jeniam Foundation Design Lab was created in a cooperative venture with the University. This classroom renovation project brought major technology upgrades, and the lab continues to provide excellent instructional programming and individual design functions to both students and faculty. Additionally, the facility is available to other theatres in the Memphis area. For example, when Playhouse on the Square undertook the production of *Jerry Springer: The Opera*, large backdrops for the stage sets were created using Jeniam lab equipment. Other theatre professionals have also taken advantage of the department’s router table, a large computerized saw that was purchased with Jeniam funds in 2006 and is used for crafting intricate scenery and props. The Foundation also said “very good idea” and provided support for construction materials when the department proposed saving money by fabricating its own winches for moving heavy equipment around the stage.

When obsolete lighting equipment for the theatre’s stage failed prior to the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year, the Foundation offered a challenge grant to the University for 50 percent of the expense of replacing the crucial lighting board. This allowed the year’s entire production schedule to proceed. In another near-emergency situation, the Foundation paid for replacement of old and deteriorated mirrors on the walls in the department’s dance studio, in this case with safer reflective materials.

The Foundation helped fund the residency of a Shakespearean theatre specialist in 2006 when *As You Like It* was produced on campus. And now, as part of the team effort for *Cyrano*, it has sponsored a highly qualified resident costume cutter/drafter whose skills and artistic talents have been put to maximum use in preparation for the play and in studio teaching and directing community workshops.

The Jeniam Foundation’s generous investment in the students, faculty and production needs of the Department of Theatre and Dance is full measure of their wisely considered philanthropy. Noting needs and capabilities throughout the community that will benefit from shared resources and teamwork has become its hallmark. “The Foundation is helping us achieve our goal of being a good neighbor and essential resource to the arts in Memphis,” says Bob Hetherington.

Won’t you join in supporting the arts everywhere by supporting our students and faculty in the College of Communication and Fine Arts? We are happy to help you match your interests with our goals.

Pat Bladon

Director of Development
901.678.4372
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Mr. E Trent McVay
Ms. Carolyn P Mears
Mr. Eric J Melkent
Ms. Lucia Merker
Mr. and Mrs. Bergen S Merrill Jr.
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Mr. Michael Miller
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Mr. and Mrs. Harry E Murchison
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Miss Jacquelyn J Nerren
Ms. Jennifer P Newton
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Dr. Harendra Om
Mr. and Mrs. Penn Owen III
Ms. Jennifer G Parris
Mr. Robert G Patterson Jr.

Ms. Demetria Pearl
Mr. John C Pekar
Mr. Ira M Phillips
Ms. Catherine L Philpot
Mr. George Pipik
Mr. and Mrs. Frank F Pitts
Ms. Kini Kedigh Plumlee
Mr. Robert B Powell
Ms. Rochelle Prince
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Mr. Elton Robinson
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Ms. Briggita S Rogers
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Ms. Beverly B Ross
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Mr. Richard S Rumley
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Mr. Gregory A Spiros
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Mr. and Mrs. David W Tankersley
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Mr. Walter C Yager
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Ms. Amana M Ajanaku
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Ms. Doris B Cox
Mr. William N Cox
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Mr. William S Craddock Jr.
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Mr. Vervon E Davidson
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Mr. Mark R Dunn
Dr. Elizabeth M Dupont
Mr. Blaine Dyess
Ms. Sue Earnheart
Ms. Gloria H Echols
Mr. Nat B Ellis
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Ms. Elizabeth P Farrelly
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Ms. Melanie Alexander James
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Mr. S J Jenkins
Sandy Jennings
Dr. Evelyn Singleton Jewell
Ms. Vickie B Johnson
Ms. Gwen Jones
Mr. Richard Jones Jr.
Mr. Jack Joyner
Ms. Julie Joyner
Mr. Sean Joyner
Ms. Margaret S Kallaher
Ms. Mary A Kalmanson
Ms. Saralyn Kaplan
Mr. David C Kee
Ms. Rebecca L Kemp
Mr. Gary R Kendrick
Maj Robert E Kirkland Jr.
Ms. Jen Knight
Ms. Karen Knight
Mr. and Mrs. Barry J Kudlowitz
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Ms. Fannie S Leake
Ms. Sherri D Lee
Ms. Johanna Lehfeldt
Ms. Inez Lensch
Ms. Kristin M Lensch
Ms. Jane K Lester
Mr. and Mrs. William D Levy
Ms. Marjorie V Levy
Rongling Li
Mr. Robert A Libby
Ms. Susan M Lipscomb
Ms. Sheila Litten
Mr. Charles V LoBianco
Mr. Henry Gregg Loeb
Mr. John H Lovelady
Ms. Peggy S Lux and Mr. John E Lux
Ms. Marie M Lydon
Ms. Pamela W Mabon
Mr. Jessie Maclin
Ms. Deborah K Magee
Mr. George E Malone
Mr. Shaye R Mandle
Ms. Shirley Manis
Ms. Katherine Mannerino
Mr. Daniel Margosian
Ms. Martha L Marin
Mr. Curtis R Mason
Rev. Deborah M Mathewson
and Mr. Harry F Mathewson

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Mr. Ernest Prater
Ms. Maggie Prater
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Ms. Tina Scott
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Shivani Singh
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Gertrude Tara-Casciano
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Ms. Wreatha A Witte
Ms. Barbara Beauregard Woods
Mr. Andrew Wright
Mr. and Mrs. Nubar Yacoubian
Ms. Sangita Yadav
Ms. Laurie A Yeargin
Mr. Richard A Zurburg

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Dr. and Mrs. John R Adams
Andy Warhol Foundation
Ms. Patricia S Cloar
Martha and Robert F Fogelman
Ms. Lauren A McGehee
Mr. and Mrs. J Michael Robinson
Waitzkin Memorial Library Trust

Organizations

\$10,000 and Above

Andy Warhol Foundation
Stanford Financial Group
Elvis Presley Charitable Foundation
Hohenberg Charity Trust
Jeniam Foundation
Laurelwood Shopping Center Incorporated
McGehee Family Foundation
SunTrust
The Vazomica Foundation Incorporated
William R Eubanks Interior Design Incorporated

\$5,000 to \$9,999

Hamilton Media Group
Scripps Howard Foundation
Waitzkin Memorial Library Trust

\$2,500 to \$4,999

ArvinMeritor
Blues City Cafe
Community Foundation of Greater Memphis
EP Delta Kitchen and Bar
James E and Katherine B Harwood Charitable Trust
Lemag LLC
Memphis University School
Procter and Gamble Fund
Robinson Family Foundation
The Commercial Appeal
The Hutchinson Clinic

The Presser Foundation
Wiz-X Incorporated

\$1,000 to \$2,499

1910 Frame Works and Gallery
Cleghorn Reunion
Express Shutters and Blinds
Fred L Davis Insurance Agency
Gannett Foundation Incorporated
Indelible Inc
Joseph-Beth Booksellers
Memphis Advertising Federation
Monogram Brands LLC
R P Tracks
Rhodes College
Shaw Industries Group
St Mary's Episcopal School
The David Brown Book Company
The Jewish Foundation of Memphis
The Mid South Jazz Foundation Incorporated
William Randolph Hearst Foundation

\$500 - \$999

Belz Foundation
Experience Art in Memphis
Eyewear Gallery
Investec Realty Services
John C Larkin Jr. Living Trust
Marathon Oil Company Foundation
Perkins Services
Russ Berger Design Group
Varsity Tennis Shop

\$250 - \$499

Bigfish
Delta Riverboat Co
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
Illinois Tool Works Foundation
Project Motion Incorporated
The Foster Family PrograMs. Incorporated
The Jazz Foundation of Memphis Incorporated
Vistacare Health Services Incorporated

\$100 - \$249

Africa in April Committee
Amro Music Stores Incorporated
Cultural Development Foundation
El Cap Trip Fund
Elvis Presley Enterprises Inc
Jane S Dutcher Trust
Lansky Brothers Incorporated
Madeleine Edwards & Thomas E Edwards Joint Trust
Memphis Convention and Visitors Bureau
Neil's
Shirley W McRae Revocable Trust
The New Earnestine & Hazel's
The Sully Corporation
Toomey and Associates
Wachovia Foundation Matching Gifts

\$50 - \$99

Baird Foundation Inc
Clark Dixon Associates
Flinn Broadcasting Corporation
Glycerin Gardens
Hickory Ridge Studio
Internal Medicine East
Media Source
Regions Morgan Keegan Trust
Renaë's Window Treatment
Schering Plough Foundation Incorporated
The Antiquarians
Volunteer Enterprises-Benco Sales

Up to \$99

A and P Associates
AT&T
Barbco Wood Products
Bill Howard Company
Cannon and Company CPA PC
Emerson Electric Company
F Blair and Jamie B Wright Rev Trust
Laura Derrington Writing Services
Lenow International Incorporated
Taylored Lawns and Gardens Inc
TCB for Elvis

Faculty News

AMUM

Leslie Luebbers, Director of the Art Museum at the University of Memphis (AMUM), was awarded a grant from the Graham Foundation for the Advancement of the Fine Arts for the Paul R. Williams Project. For the same project, Luebbers has also been awarded a grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services from the National Endowment for the Arts. Luebbers is co-organizer with **James Lutz** of a panel entitled, "Paul R. Williams: Architect to the Hollywood Stars—And That's Just the Beginning" at the annual meeting of the College Art Association in February, 2009. Luebbers' essay, "Susan Sontag and Howard Hodgkin: A Way of Feeling is a Way of Seeing, Emotion and Beauty in the Visual Arts," is included in *The Legacy of Susan Sontag*, forthcoming in 2009 from Columbia University Press.

ARCHITECTURE

Sherry Bryan, associate professor of architecture and **Jeanne Myers**, adjunct professor of architecture, collaborated with the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Memphis on the exhibition "America's Favorite Architecture" at the Memphis and Shelby County Public Library.

Michael Chisamore, assistant professor of architecture, was the judge for the 2008 "Tilt-up Concrete Association Achievement Awards" for the best use of tilt-up concrete in the nation. His work was featured in the 2008 American Society of Architectural Illustrators touring exhibition and book.

Chere Doiron, assistant professor of interior design, received a Strengthening Communities Small Grant Award to establish a plan for community outreach work for the Caritas Peace Garden in Memphis' Binghamton neighborhood.

Michael Hagge, associate professor and chair of the Department of Architecture, was appointed to the Design Consultancy Committee established by U of M President Shirley Raines. Hagge was also elected to the Steering Committee, Memphis Regional Design Center (MRDC). He was co-coordinator and session presenter at the MRDC Urban Design 101. In partnership with BRIDGES USA, Hagge received a Strengthening Communities Grant to develop a sustainable design curriculum for Memphis City Schools. He also participated in the 2008 Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) Leadership Conference sessions on National Architectural Accreditation Board (NAAB) accreditation and Architecture + Interior Design.

Tim Michael, instructor of architecture, won the 2008 *Masonry Construction Magazine's* Residential Project of the Year for the Woodard Residence located in downtown Memphis.

Jimmie Tucker, adjunct professor of architecture, was elected 2008 president of the Memphis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). He will also serve on the 2009 AIA Tennessee Board of Directors. Tucker presented at the annual conference of the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) on the work of Paul Revere Williams (1894-1980).

James Williamson, associate professor of architecture, was chair of the 2008 AIA Memphis Design Awards Committee. He was also chair of the 2008 Interfaith Forum on Religious Art and Architecture (IFRAA), a Knowledge Community of the AIA. Williamson chaired an IFRAA Conference in Rome

in October 2008 and served as moderator for group discussions, including a presentation by architect Paolo Portoghesi.

Randle Witherington, associate professor of interior design, is a Victorian Village Inc. board member. Witherington was interviewed in the Willy Bearden Film "View from Adams Avenue," which aired on WKNO. Witherington also gave two lectures at Memphis' Dixon Gallery and Gardens.

ART

Mariam Ayad, assistant director of the Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology (IEAA), has finished her latest book, *God's Wife, God's Servant: The God's Wife of Anum*, which will be published by Routledge in 2009. Ayad also participated in the 34th Annual Symposium of The Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities on Ancient Egypt and Nubia: Golden Kingdoms on the Nile, held this past November at The Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada. In the fall Ayad spent time in Luxor, working at the tomb of Harwa (TT 37) on the Theban western bank.

Bryna Bobick, assistant professor of art education, presented her paper "Combining Art Education and Museum Education" at the Southeastern College of Art Association Conference in New Orleans in September 2008. Bobick co-authored "Colorful Kindergarten Mice," an article published in Volume 108, Number 1 of the *School Arts Magazine*, and had pieces of her work shown in the Tennessee Art Education Association Juried Exhibition at the Memphis College of Art.

Hugh Busby, local technical support provider and instructor of graphic design, received the 2008 Information Technology Division Local Support Provider (LSP) of the Year Award. This past December, Busby showed work in his first solo exhibition, "The Cher Show," at the Memphis Gay and Lesbian Community Center.

Lorelei Corcoran, director of the Institute of Egyptian Art and Archaeology (IEAA), received a contract from the J. Paul Getty Trust to co-author a monograph in their series, *Studies on Art*, with Getty conservator Marie Svoboda.

Carol Crown, professor of art history, won national recognition with *Amazing Grace: Self-Taught Artists From the Mullis Collection* for which she wrote the principal essay. The book won a bronze medal at the 2008 Independent Publisher Book Awards in Los Angeles this past spring.

Beth Edwards, associate professor of painting, held a solo exhibition this past fall at St. Louis Community College in St. Louis, Missouri. The exhibition featured Edwards' work from the past 15 years. Edwards' paintings were also included in "Water Works" an invitational watercolor exhibition at the Memphis College of Art's On the Street Gallery; she was selected as one of the four artists for the River Arts Fest invitational Art Show at Askew, Nixon, Ferguson Architects in Memphis, and exhibited in "Artists at Play: The Art of the Toy" in the Bradbury Gallery of Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

Gary Golightly, associate professor of graphic design, received Awards of Excellence for three pieces that he entered in the 38th Annual UCDA (University & College Designers Association) Design Competition.

Donalyn Heise, assistant professor of art education and art education program coordinator, was chosen for the Beverly Levett Gerber Special Needs Lifetime Achievement Award. The award recognizes art educa-

tors who foster and honor the unique contributions of students with special needs. Heise will be presented with the award during NAEA's 2009 National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, April 17-21, 2009.

Katherine Hoffman was chosen for the **Dorothy K. Hohenberg Chair of Excellence in Art History** for 2008/09. Hoffman received her Ph.D. from New York University. She joins the Department of Art with extensive teaching experience from St. Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire; Karl Franzens University in Graz, Austria; Richmond University in London, England; Bradford College, Bradford, Maine; The University of South Carolina, Vermont Community College, Brooklyn College, and Antioch College in New York.

David Horan, instructor of photography, curated and exhibited "The Mediated Landscape: Marks, Monuments, and Memorials," at The Brooks Museum of Art, and presented a gallery talk about the exhibition. Horan also served as a juror for the 2009 New Mexico Purchase Initiative Public Art Award, and presented a talk on photo history for the docents at The Brooks Museum of Art.

Jed Jackson, professor of art, had an exhibit at Memphis' Dixon Gallery and Gardens this past fall. "Jed Jackson: Toujours L' Audace", showed a variety of Jackson's quirky genre paintings. Also in 2008, the Tennessee Arts Council and the Southern Arts Foundation named Jackson a "Southern Artist of Distinction."

Lawrence Jasud, associate professor of photography and photography program coordinator, co-chaired the 2008 regional conference of the South Central Society of Photographic Education. The conference was hosted by the U of M's photography program in collaboration with the Memphis College of Art. **David Horan**, instructor of photography, and **Raleigh Roger**, graduate student in photography and president of U of M's Student Photography Society, supervised and organized several aspects of the conference.

Earnestine Jenkins, associate professor of art history, in collaboration with the exhibition "Memphis World" at the Brooks Museum of Art, created the exhibition "Early African American Photographers in Memphis," at U of M's Jones Hall Gallery. Jenkins also participated in the African Studies Association conference in Chicago this past November, where she presented "Menelik II: Imaging an African Leader in the Era of Colonization."

Richard Lou, professor of art and chair of the Department of Art, had an exhibition at Power House Gallery in Memphis this past fall. "Richard Lou: Stories On My Back" was an installation based on the stories of class, power, race, and assimilation, which Lou's father, a native from Canton Province in China, shared with his family.

Greely Myatt, professor of art, served on the National Screening Committee for Sculpture/ Installation Art for Fulbright Fellowships at the Institute of International Education in New York and gave a lecture at The University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. Myatt exhibited work in a solo exhibition "Sometimes I settle for a chuckle" at the University of the South, a group exhibition "Heartland" at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, Netherlands and a two person exhibition "us: Pinkney Herbert/Greely Myatt," at Kunstruimte NP 40 in Amsterdam.

Val Oliver joined the Department of Art for a one-year appointment. She teaches painting and drawing and is an accomplished educator and professional

Faculty, Staff, Students & Alumni

artist. She holds an MFA from SUNY Buffalo and a BFA from the Memphis College of Art.

Todd Richardson joined the art history program as an assistant professor. He received his Ph.D. from the Universiteit Leiden, in the Netherlands. With two master’s degrees in religion and a B.A. in philosophy Richardson, who specializes in Netherlandish renaissance art, brings a highly valued interdisciplinary approach to the study of art history.

Niles Wallace, professor of art, showed work in “Nappy-Headed Stranger,” a solo exhibition at Rhodes College this past fall. This was Wallace’s first one person show in Memphis in more than 15 years, featuring simple structures from found materials like carpet and recycled wood as well as pieces that reflect Wallace’s work from the past few years. Wallace presented a lecture on his work.

Nancy White, associate professor of art, had work included in an exhibition at the University of Chicago’s Smart Museum of Art and the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, as well as in an invitational exhibition at North West Mississippi Community College and a sculpture exhibition at L. Ross Gallery in Memphis.

CCFA

Moira Logan, CCFA Associate Dean and Director of research and Graduate Studies, performed the role of Vespone, an actress and mime, in “Pergolesi’s Home Service,” a contemporary comic opera presented by the Chamber Opera of Memphis. Logan attended the International Conference of Fine Arts Deans in Portland, Oregon,

Richard R. Ranta, CCFA Dean, was reelected treasurer of the Southern Arts Federation. He was a member of a national study of the “Future of Fine Arts” at a meeting of a dozen Fine Arts Deans held at Eastern Michigan University.

CMA

Michael Schmidt, associate professor of graphic design and director of the Center for Multimedia Arts (CMA), co-authored “Visualizing Meaningful Assent: Interactive Media Design for Pediatric Advance Care Planning,” which was published in the fall 2008 issue of *The International Journal of Healthcare & Humanities*. Schmidt presented “Employing Visual Design to Support an Ethical Decision-Making Process Regarding High-Risk Clinical Trials in Pediatric Oncology” at the 6th Annual Medical Humanities Consortium Meeting in Pennsylvania, and “Legacy Building and the Suffering Child’s Sense of the Future” at the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities Annual Conference in Cleveland, Ohio.

Eric Wilson, multimedia producer at the CMA, completed several public service announcements for Memphis Crime Stoppers, Memphis Youth Symphony, the Shelby County Office of Early Childhood and Youth, and the Memphis Police Department’s Operation Blue C.R.U.S.H. His post-Hurricane Katrina documentary “After the Storm” was aired on WKNO this past September.

COMMUNICATION

Babyland, the documentary by **David Appleby** and **Craig Leake** about infant mortality in Memphis was featured as a one-hour report anchored by Elizabeth Vargas on ABC’s “20/20” this past August. The film-

makers and professors of communication are currently working on a longer version of the documentary that will include more material.

Jill Greenman has joined the Department of Communication as an assistant professor for a one-year appointment. For the past four years, Jill has served as a graduate assistant for the department while earning her Ph.D. this past summer. Before receiving her Ph.D. in communication from the U of M this past summer, Greenman worked in the public relations field. She earned her M.S.J. in journalism from Northwestern University and her bachelor’s degree from DePauw University.

Kris Markman, assistant professor of communication, taught a new special topics course titled “Media 2.0: Production & Distribution in the Internet Age,” this past fall. The course examined how the Internet and related technologies are offering alternative means for producing and distributing entertainment and information content.

Steve Ross, professor of communication, produced a video tribute to Knox Phillips for CCFA’s 2008 Distinguished Achievement Award, which was presented to Phillips this past October. Ross was invited to the Everson Museum in Syracuse, New York to present his film “Winslow Homer: Society and Solitude,” which began its distribution on public television stations nationwide this past fall. It has been broadcast on WKNO in Memphis and more than 100 stations across the country.

JOURNALISM

Carrie Brown joined the Department of Journalism as an assistant professor. Brown returned to academia after spending three years managing a training program for the Committee of Concerned Journalists. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Missouri.

Brown Burnett joined the Department of Journalism as an instructor. Burnett began his journalism career at the early age of 15 as a sportswriter and feature writer with the *Calhoun County Journal* in his hometown of Bruce, Mississippi. After graduation with a B.A. in journalism from the University of Mississippi, he worked as a magazine and newspaper editor, copy editor, reporter, feature writer, page designer, makeup editor for various news publications including *The Commercial Appeal*, as well as in public relations, advertising and communications.

Vicki Dabney joined the Department of Journalism as an assistant professor of advertising. Dabney has more than 25 years of advertising, public relations, promotions, and marketing experience and is a former board member of the Memphis Advertising Federation.

Under the leadership of **Joe Hayden**, assistant professor of journalism, several journalism faculty members and graduate students are working with the civic organization **Common Ground** to help improve race relations in Memphis.

Thomas Hrach joined the Department of Journalism as an assistant professor. Hrach received his Ph.D. in journalism from the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University this past summer. Prior to coming to Memphis, he was a teaching associate at Ohio University. Along with his academic experience, Hrach has worked 18 years as an editor and reporter at two Ohio newspapers.

Sandra Utt, associate professor of journalism, is on leave this year so she can serve as a visiting professor in the in the Department of Marketing and Communication at Emerson College in Boston.

Beena White, assistant professor of journalism, has received a VOX award from the Memphis Chapter of the Public Relations Society of American for her work promoting the Memphis Greek Festival.

Jin Yang, assistant professor of journalism, has written an article titled “One War, Three Pictures: A Cross-Country Analysis of the 2003 Iraq War,” which has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Global Mass Communication*.

Professors **Joe Hayden**, **Jin Yang**, **Sandra Utt**, and **David Arant**, chair of the Department of journalism, as well as professor emeritus **Elinor Grusin** participated in the 91st Annual Conference of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) in Chicago this past August.

MUSIC

Lily Afshar, professor of classical guitar, released a DVD entitled “Virtuoso Guitar” with Mel Bay, Inc. She performed as a soloist with the Tupelo Symphony Orchestra and gave a lecture and recital at M.R. Dye Public Library in Horn Lake, both in Mississippi. Afshar also performed concerts and taught master classes at 1st Pera International Guitar Festival in Istanbul, Turkey; Niavaran Cultural Foundation, Barbod Music Institute, House of Artists, and Rudaki Hall all in Tehran, Iran, as well as at Hafez Hall in Shiraz, Iran, Berkshire Community College in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, The 8th Annual Guitar Festival of the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York, in Oneona, the 15th Annual Festival Hispanoamericano de Guitarra in Tijuana, Mexico, the MANC Guitar Festival in Greensboro, North Carolina, Knoxville/Oakridge Classical Guitar Society, North High School Auditorium in Downers Grove, Illinois, Art Cage Gallery and Cultural Center in Amsterdam and Bashgah “Golshan,” in The Hague, Netherlands.

John Baur, assistant director of the Scheidt School of Music and professor of composition and graduate theory, was on faculty leave during the fall semester, working on *Magdala*, a new opera based on the life of Mary Magdalene. In addition to his work on the opera, Baur has produced a piano quintet (piano plus string quartet), which will be performed by the Ceruti Quartet with Victor Asuncion at the Music School’s 2009 **Imagine Festival** in March.

Jack Cooper, associate professor of jazz and area coordinator of jazz studies, has been chosen for an ASCAPLUS award by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). Cooper performed on and recorded the U of M’s new big band jazz orchestra CD *Coming Through Slaughter*. Planned release for the CD is late 2009. Cooper’s commissioned euphonium work “One of the Missing,” was premiered this past June by **John Mueller**, associate professor of trombone and euphonium and pianist **Donna Loewy** at the International Tuba Euphonium Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. As staff arranger for Alfred Publishing ,Cooper wrote a new jazz ensemble arrangement of “On A Clear Day” to be released in international distribution in 2009. He also wrote six new jazz orchestra/vocal arrangements for the jazz CD and touring show “The Music of Betty Boop,” which was premiered at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign this past November. He served as a special craft committee member for the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) in the nominating process for the 2008/09 *Grammy Awards*. Cooper’s clarinet sonata for his new chamber music CD with Centaur Records was recorded in December.

David Evans, professor of musicology, has pub-

lished an article titled “Patterns of Reinterpretation in African-American Music of the United States,” in *African Perspectives: Pre-Colonial History, Anthropology, and Ethnomusicology*.

Nicholas Holland, associate director of bands and area coordinator of instrumental and music education, published “Sound Pressure Levels Measured in a University Concert Band: A Risk of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss?” in the Fall/Winter 2008 issue of *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*.

Albert Nguyen joined the Scheidt School of Music as Director of the Mighty Sound of the South marching band. Nguyen is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a D.M.A. and M.M. in wind/ band conducting and received a B.M. in music education from Arkansas Tech University. He has served as conductor of the University of Texas Concert Band and the Longhorn Concert Band. He has taught in public schools in Morrilton and Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Susan Owen-Leinert, assistant professor of voice, has founded The Spohr Society of the United States along with her husband, Michael Leinert, stage director, dramaturg, and author. The aim of the Spohr Society is to promote the music of the German romantic composer Louis Spohr (1784-1859) in the U.S. and other countries with the focus on his Lieder (songs), oratorios, and operas.

Randal Rushing, Interim Director of the School of Music and professor of voice, recently traveled to Germany to work with conductor and singer Peter Schreier at the Hochschule für Musik in Duisburg.

Kevin Sanders joined the School of Music as an assistant professor of tuba. He holds a D.M.A. from Michigan State University, a M.M. from The Julliard School and a B.M. from Indiana University. Most recently he has been a visiting instructor at the Crane School of Music (State University of New York), a faculty member at the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, and a faculty member at the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith.

Lecolion Washington, assistant professor of bassoon, and **Michelle Vigneau**, assistant professor of oboe, were featured guest artists at the University of Alabama Double Reed Day. An article written by Washington entitled “Music for Bassoon by African-American Composers” was published in Vol. 31, No. 3 of *The Double Reed*, the journal for the International Double Reed Society.

Kraig Alan Williams, associate professor of conducting and Director of Bands, was resident conductor at the Brevard Music Center in North Carolina this past summer. He also conducted the Transylvania Symphony Orchestra and was the orchestral assistant for Keith Lockhart, artistic advisor and principal conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra.

J. Copeland Woodruff joined the Music School as an assistant professor for opera studies. He is a graduate of the University of Indiana with an M.S. in stage directing for opera and the University of South Carolina with an M.F.A. in theatrical design, a M.M. and B.M. in vocal performance. His most recent teaching experience includes positions at Oberlin Conservatory, Temple University, and Yale University. Copeland has directed productions at Oberlin, the Harrower Opera Workshop, New York City Opera, Chautauqua Opera, and Indiana University Studio Opera.

THEATRE & DANCE

Sarah Brown joined the Department of Theatre & Dance as a tenure-track assistant professor of theatre after serving a one-year appointment. She teaches various levels of acting and audition preparation. Brown received her M.F.A. in Acting from Yale School of Drama in 1994.

Bob Hetherington, professor of theater and chair of the Department of Theatre & Dance recently directed a production of the musical *1776* for Circuit Playhouse in Memphis, which successfully played to full houses throughout its five-week run. This past summer, his essay on Leonard Bernstein’s “Wonderful Town” was published in the house programs for the production at The Shaw Festival of Canada in Ontario.

Student News

ARCHITECTURE

Kate Bidwell, third year architecture student, was one of six U of M students selected to present work from the Honors Program Works in Progress at the “Posters at the Capitol,” an event at the Tennessee Capitol building in Nashville. Bidwell also completed an internship with GreenSpaces in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Alzb ta Bowden, architecture graduate student, **Mary Carroll**, fourth year architecture student, **Alysa Butterfield**, fourth year interior design student, and **Philip Jaynes**, architecture alum, participated in the Sustainable Technologies Awareness Day and the EcoBuild Home Tour and represented the Department of Architecture and the TERRA demonstration house.

Heidi Dawson, first year interior design student, and her company Diva Redesign Group in partnership with Stoneridge Builders won “Best Decorating” and “Best Curb Appeal” for their work in the Jackson Area Homebuilders Homeshow.

Colby Mitchell, third year architecture student, was elected President of the U of M student organization Empowered Men of Color. Mitchell was also awarded an honors study abroad scholarship for research in China.

ART

Sarah Boyce, **Rebecca Shellabarger**, and **Kyle Wingo** were featured in “Brooks Introduces,” a series of exhibitions organized by the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, designed to showcase the work of emerging, young artists who are enrolled in art programs, or who have recently graduated.

Stephen Almond, **Tim Kinard**, **Elizabeth Owen**, and **Clare Torina**, U of M fine arts students and graduates, showed new work in “Double Date,” an exhibition at Marshall Arts Gallery in Memphis, which ran through February 16, 2009.

Jessa Wilcoxon, a graduate student in graphic design, had six illustrations accepted into “Getting Out,” an exhibition of work by graduate students from The University of Mississippi, the University of Memphis, and the Memphis College of Art, held at Northwest Mississippi Community College this past November.

MUSIC

Mikah Meyer, music performance senior, has been selected as a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar for 2009/10. Meyer plans to enroll at the Royal Academy of Music in London for his graduate studies this fall.

Southern Comfort Jazz Orchestra’s CD release *Voices* received an excellent review in the 2008-09 issue of The Jazz Education Guide, a publication of Jazz Times. The article praised the group’s “rich ensemble sound” and “playing that is so impressive and has the feeling of being effortless on what must have been rather difficult charts to master.”

Franklin Willis, music education senior, presented research at the Works in Progress Symposium,

sponsored by the University of Memphis Honors Department. His presentation, entitled “The Evolution of the Negro Spiritual: History, Function, and Message,” received superior ratings and was selected for presentation at the annual Tennessee Collegiate Honors Council statewide conference at Austin Peay State University in February 2009. Willis was also selected to participate in “The Posters at the Capitol” where he will present his research to state legislators in Nashville, Tennessee. Willis’ research presentation was selected and submitted for application to the National Conference on Undergraduate Research, which will be held in April 2009.

Alumni News

ART

Anthony Biggers, graphic design MFA ‘08 was appointed visiting professor at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University in Huntsville.

JOURNALISM

Suheir Rasul, journalism M.A. ‘08, was named co-director of the Jerusalem office of Search for Common Ground (SFCG), an international non-profit organization focusing on conflict transformation and collaborative problem solving.

MUSIC

Justin Johnson, who is in his first year as marching band director at Central High School in Memphis, was the subject of a feature article in the Commercial Appeal in September.

Kofi Martin, music performance B.M. ‘08, has been invited to become a member of the 2009 International Honors Wind Symphony to perform in Avery Fisher Hall (home of the NY Philharmonic) at Lincoln Center on May 23, 2009. The concert will feature 75 invited young musicians from around the world.

Anthony “Tony” Reedus, drummer and former member of the **Southern Comfort Jazz Orchestra**, died in November. He was a native of Memphis and nephew of the late jazz pianist James Williams. While attending Memphis State University in 1978, Reedus was recruited by Woody Shaw. He left the University when he was just 19 years old and joined Shaw’s band.

Thomas Rimes, former student of Pu-Qi Jiang, presented the premiere performance of his first full-length opera, “The Long Ride Home,” at the Independent Theatre in North Sydney, Australia this past summer.

Scott Hines, D.M.A. graduate in music composition, had his electronic composition, “Dreaming Again,” performed at the Akdeniz University Fine Arts Faculty Building in Antalya, Turkey.

Reginald Brown Premieres Richard Wright Adaptation at U of M

In conjunction with the Richard Wright Centennial celebration at the University of Memphis this past October, Reginald Brown, assistant professor of theatre, premiered his solo performance of Wright's *The Man Who Saw the Flood*, *The Ethics of Living Jim Crow*, and *Down by the Riverside* for the Memphis audience. In June, Brown had previewed the play at the Richard Wright Centennial Conference at the American University of Paris, France.

"I got turned on to the works of Richard Wright in 1979, when I was an undergraduate student at Rutgers University," Brown remembers. "One of my first performances was in a production of Wright's play *The Long Dream*, which consequently inspired me to read more about Wright. When Brown graduated from Rutgers, he co-founded the Ensemble Theatre Company of Newark, whose mission was to continue adapting literature for the stage to generate interest in the works of novelists and poets who, as Brown puts it, "linger in obscurity."

"We felt that performing literary works would generate interest in the writers' material, and in this specific instance in Richard Wright." With Wright's work high on the Company's list, he contacted Wright's widow, Ellen, in the early 1980s and received permission to adapt *Uncle Tom's Children*. When pursuing his MFA in theatre at Virginia Commonwealth University, Brown received permission from Wright's daughter, Julia, to adapt *Fire and Cloud* for his master thesis.

"I was surprised how many students hadn't heard of Wright or read any of his works," Brown says. "I knew then that, as an educator, I wanted to



Reginald Brown, assistant professor of theatre in his solo performance, "Performing Richard Wright," during the Richard Wright Centennial Celebration at the University of Memphis this past October.

expose as many people as possible to the words of Richard Wright."

Brown was able to meet Julia Wright in 2007 and share the progress of his solo project. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Julia Wright suggested that Brown include *The Man Who Saw the Flood* with the two pieces he had already adapted for the solo performance.

"What is most amazing about Wright's work is that it is just as relevant today as it was when it was first written," Brown says. Future plans for the solo performance include an expanded version and a tour.

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Room 232
Memphis, TN 38152

