



# SETC NEWS

November / December 2007

## Help Us Create a Culture of Giving

**W**hen I addressed the membership at our annual business meeting in March, I called for planning to begin on the first capital campaign in the history of SETC.

My call is not meant to belittle fundraising efforts already in place – quite the contrary. If you have been to any of our recent conventions you have certainly seen our organizational leaders, particularly members of the Endowment Committee and Central Office staff, involved in a variety of fundraising activities. Such programs include silent auctions, raffles, sales of wearable art, and sales of polo shirts and T-shirts bearing the SETC logo. All of them have added money to our endowment. A capital campaign would build on these successes and take us to the next level.

From the President

David S. Thompson



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## Banks to Lead Keynote Discussion in Chattanooga

**A** different take on casting can open up a whole range of creative possibilities on stage. By the same token, approaching SETC's keynote presentations from a different slant creates a new opportunity for dialogue.

Those two concepts converge at SETC 2008 in Chattanooga, where our Friday keynote presentation will not be a speech or a talk, but rather a panel discussion – on the subject of “inclusive casting” – led by Daniel Banks. Inclusive casting is an all-encompassing term that covers such issues as “color-blind casting” and “cross-gender casting.”

Banks, a faculty member in the New York University (NYU) Tisch School of the Arts and the driving force behind hip-hop theatre, also will conduct two master classes in hip-hop theatre at the SETC Convention. In addition, the Fringe Festival will include a lecture-demonstration of hip-hop theatre.

An internationally recognized director, Banks has directed for such venues as the Vineyard Theatre, the National Theatre in Kampala, Uganda, the Belarussian Drama Theatre in Minsk, and NYU. He has choreographed for the New York Shakespeare Festival/Shakespeare in the Park, the Singapore Repertory Theatre, the La Monnaie in Brussels and Landestheater in Salzburg. Both in the U.S. and abroad, Banks has led *Theatre of Testimony* workshops, which have been the basis for performance pieces and community dialogue about oppression and identity. He has created the Hip-Hop Theatre Initiative in Undergraduate Drama and is a member of Theatre Without Borders.

He holds an undergraduate degree from Harvard University, a master's degree from NYU and a doctorate in performance studies from NYU.

- Glen Gourley, SETC President-Elect



Daniel Banks leads a workshop at the 2005 SETC Convention.

## 23 Years of Change: SETC Grows, Adds Services

**A**fter retiring this year, I have spent a great deal of time reminiscing. Retiring has been a good choice, but at the same time, it does change your life and you do tend to take stock. So, as I go into my final year as treasurer, I looked back over the more than 20 years I have been a member of SETC, and I marvel at how much the organization has grown and changed during that time.

The first year I attended was 1984, and the convention was held in Arlington, VA, in a snow storm. I recall specific people I met, the first panels I attended with other designers, and the size of the first design competition review that I attended. There were just six

costume entries, and they were laid on the floor of a meeting room for the single judge to view!

What a difference from Atlanta, where the Design Competition included 100 entries in four design areas, three judges, our own space and an all-day critique, followed by prizes and a wonderful party.

Each area of SETC has expanded in the

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From the Treasurer

Liz Hopper



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**It All Starts in the States. . .Don't Miss Your Convention!**

Workshops...Festivals...SETC Screening Auditions...and More

Details: [www.setc.org/auditions/state.asp](http://www.setc.org/auditions/state.asp)

## Did You Know SETC Gives Away over \$20,000 Annually in Academic Scholarships?

**Y**ou – or a student you know – could be the next winner of one of SETC's major scholarships! SETC offers thousands of dollars of help to students entering undergraduate and graduate school to study theatre. For students entering college, SETC offers two scholarships: the SETC Secondary School Scholarship and the Polly Holliday Award. For students entering graduate school, SETC offers four scholarships: for students interested in costume design, directing or theatre as well as one for teachers returning to school for an advanced degree.

The application deadlines are rapidly approaching for all of these awards and scholarships. If you're planning to begin graduate or undergraduate school in 2008, don't miss this opportunity to have SETC help pay for your education!

### **Marian A. Smith Award: \$2,300 Graduate Study in Costume Design or Technology**

**T**he Marian A. Smith Award, named in honor of the former SETC executive director, provides \$2,300 to a student pursuing a graduate degree in costume design and/or technology.

Up to three finalists will be chosen from those applying. Finalists must attend the SETC Convention in March to interview with the award committee. Each finalist will receive travel assistance.

Applicants must be entering or attending graduate school in costume design and/or technology and must have completed undergraduate work at an SETC region institution by August 2008. The recipient will receive a \$2,300 check after sending SETC's Central Office proof of enrollment at an institution for graduate study in costume design and/or technology.

Applicants should submit: completed application; personal letter outlining plans and objectives; complete resume; 10 slides/photographs of completed work or renderings, or website address; names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of three to five references; and complete transcript(s). Finalists will be asked to bring portfolios to their interviews at the convention.

#### **More information and an application:**

[www.setc.org/scholarship/smith.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/smith.asp)

**Questions:** E-mail committee chair Carey Hanson at [costumes@olemiss.edu](mailto:costumes@olemiss.edu).

**Application deadline:** Jan. 15, 2008

### **Leighton Ballew Award: \$3,300 Graduate Study, Directing**

**T**he Leighton Ballew Award is a \$3,300 award presented annually, based on merit, to a student entering an accredited MFA or PhD program in directing. The student must be a graduate of an accredited undergraduate college or university within the SETC region. Up to three finalists will be selected and must attend the SETC Convention in Chattanooga, TN, to meet with the committee.

#### **More information and an application:**

[www.setc.org/scholarship/ballew.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/ballew.asp)

**Questions:** E-mail committee chair Marc Powers at [mpowers@arts.usf.edu](mailto:mpowers@arts.usf.edu)

**Application deadline:** Jan. 15, 2008

### **SETC Secondary School Scholarship: \$2,100 Undergraduate Study in Theatre**

**A**ttention, high school students. Would you like some help with funding your college education? This year SETC will provide \$2,100 in assistance to a high school senior who lives in the SETC region and plans to pursue a theatre major at a college or university in the region. Selection criteria for the SETC Secondary School Scholarship include aptitude in theatrical practices such as playwriting, design, stage management, acting and directing, as well as potential for academic success in college. Don't miss your opportunity to apply for this scholarship!

More information and application: [www.setc.org/scholarship/setc\\_secondary.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/setc_secondary.asp)  
Deadline for application: Jan. 15, 2008.

### **Polly Holliday Award: \$1,000 High School Student Planning to Major in Theatre**

**S**ETC's Polly Holliday Award recognizes a talented high school student who could use a little "pocket money" as he or she heads off to drama school. The award, named for and started by the actress who starred as the waitress Flo on the CBS sitcom *Alice*, will provide \$1,000 this year to a high school senior in the region who plans to attend a college or university and major in theatre. Criteria include: financial need, talent and potential for academic success.

**More information and an application:** [www.setc.org/scholarship/holiday.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/holiday.asp)

**Questions:** E-mail committee chair Roy Hudson at [rhudson@jefcoed.com](mailto:rhudson@jefcoed.com)

**Application deadline:** Jan. 15, 2008

### **William E. Wilson Scholarship: \$6,500 Graduate Study in Theatre/Speech by a Secondary School Teacher**

**T**he William E. Wilson Scholarship provides \$6,500 to a secondary school teacher pursuing a graduate degree in theatre or speech and theatre.

Applicants must be a legal resident of a state in the SETC region and must have at least one year of experience as a full-time teacher and director of theatre in a regionally accredited secondary school in the SETC region. The recipient must enroll in a regionally accredited graduate program in the SETC region within one year of being selected for the scholarship.

This scholarship was made possible by a \$100,000 endowment given by its namesake, a theatre educator, in support of secondary school theatre educators in the Southeast.

**More information and an application:** [www.setc.org/scholarship/wilson.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/wilson.asp)

**Questions:** E-mail to committee chair Sandra Cockrell at [scockrel@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:scockrel@tampabay.rr.com)

**Application deadline:** Jan. 15, 2008

### **Robert Porterfield Award: \$3,400 Graduate Study in Theatre**

**T**he Robert Porterfield Award provides \$3,400 in assistance to a student who will attend graduate school in theatre next fall. First-time graduate students and students who are not on stipends or tuition waivers are given priority for the scholarship. Students in all theatre disciplines are eligible.

Students who have graduated (or will graduate before fall 2008) from an accredited college or university in the SETC region are eligible for the award. Finalists, chosen by committee members, must be available for interviews at the 2007 SETC Convention in Atlanta, GA.

**More information and an application:** [www.setc.org/scholarship/porterfield.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/porterfield.asp)

**Questions:** E-mail committee chair David Balthrop at [david.balthrop@murraystate.edu](mailto:david.balthrop@murraystate.edu)

**Application deadline:** Dec. 15, 2007

## KEAP Grants Help Deserving Students Attend SETC

**K**now a student who would benefit from a grant to attend the SETC Convention? Four high school students will win Keynote Emerging Artists of Promise (KEAP) awards from SETC to attend the 2008 convention in Chattanooga. These awards are for students who show promise in theatre and would benefit from a grant to attend the convention. KEAP recipients are recognized at keynote addresses, the state luncheon and the SETC Awards Banquet for their dedication to theatre and academic excellence. For more information on how to nominate a student, visit the website at [www.setc.org/scholarship/index.asp#keap](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/index.asp#keap) or contact KEAP chair Chris Rich at [rcrich@trioy.edu](mailto:rcrich@trioy.edu). Nomination deadline is Jan. 15, 2008.

## 2006 KEAP Recipient Makes National Splash

**H**aley Moon, winner of a KEAP Award in 2006, is now a published author and a college student. She was interviewed on the *Good Morning America* television show in August about her new book, *Katrina Tears*. The book recounts her own emotional struggles – and those of other teens – after their homes and lives were turned upside down by Hurricane Katrina. It is available through the publisher, Wasteland Press ([www.wastelandpress.net](http://www.wastelandpress.net)), and on the Amazon website.

Haley recently began her freshman year at Barnard University, which awarded her a full scholarship. She plans to double-major in biochemistry and dance. A native of Biloxi, MS, Haley is a dancer, actor and choreographer who studied at the WINGS Performing Arts Center in Gulfport, MS.



*Haley Moon in 2006*

## Are You a Playwright? You Could be the Next Winner of SETC's . . .

### High School Play Contest \$250 Prize, Staged Reading

Submissions are being accepted through December 1 for SETC's High School Play Contest. The winning high school playwright will receive \$250 and a staged reading of his/her play at the March convention. The winning playwright must attend the convention. Only one entry accepted per playwright. Entry fee is \$10. Questions? Contact Katie Watts, contest chair, at [wattsk@thewalkerschool.org](mailto:wattsk@thewalkerschool.org).

#### Details and application online:

[www.setc.org/scholarship/secondary.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/secondary.asp)

### Getchell Award

#### \$1,000 Prize, Staged Reading

Have you written a play that you believe is a winner? Then submit it to SETC's Charles M. Getchell Award competition. This contest is open to SETC members (regardless of residence) and to non-member playwrights studying in or living in one of the 10 SETC member states. The 2008 award deadline has passed, but entries will be accepted again March 1 for the 2009 award. Questions? Contact Mark Charney, contest chair, at [cmark@clemson.edu](mailto:cmark@clemson.edu).

#### Details and application online:

[www.setc.org/scholarship/newplay.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/newplay.asp)

## Enter SETC Design Competition to Earn Prizes, Recognition

**Prizes**  
1<sup>st</sup> place: \$125  
2<sup>nd</sup> place: \$75  
3<sup>rd</sup> place: \$50

Open to undergraduate and graduate students  
at SETC member institutions

Entry postmark deadline: Jan. 28, 2008

For more information: [www.setc.org/scholarship/designcomp.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/designcomp.asp)

Prizes awarded in the following categories:

**Costume Design Scene Design Lighting Design Technology/Crafts**

ask  
SETC  
ask  
SETC

**Q** Is anything new planned for K-12 educators at the SETC Convention?

**A** Yes! This year, SETC will partner with the American Alliance for Theatre & Education (AATE) to develop programming for its annual K-12 Teachers Institute. Building on the success of past programs, representatives from both organizations will collaborate to provide a comprehensive one-day professional development experience for K-12 theatre specialists and classroom teachers. Attendees will experience stimulating speakers, workshops and exchanges designed to spark new ideas for creative learning and inspire the teacher, artist and advocate within. Additionally, the combined resources of the two organizations will provide both regional and national perspectives on the growing field

of theatre education. Be sure to join us in Chattanooga on Wednesday, March 5 to gather resources, exchange ideas and get inspired! For details and to register, click on "K-12 Programming" on the SETC website at [www.setc.org](http://www.setc.org).

- Leigh Jansson, Operations Manager, AATE

## Nominate a Children's Theatre for the Sara Spencer Award

**D**o you know a person or organization that deserves recognition for work in the field of children's theatre? If so, nominate your candidate for the SETC Sara Spencer Award, given to recognize an individual's or group's contribution to the quality of child drama in the SETC region. This award, first presented in 1979, honors the memory of Sara Spencer, a children's theatre playwright, publisher and pioneer.

More information: [www.setc.org/scholarship/spencerchild.asp](http://www.setc.org/scholarship/spencerchild.asp)

Questions: E-mail committee chair Teresa Lee at [leete@appstate.edu](mailto:leete@appstate.edu)

Application deadline: Nov. 15, 2007

## From the President

(Continued from Page 1)

I am sure that some of you are reading this and thinking the worst. Does all of this talk of fundraising indicate trouble ahead? Let me assure you that all is well with SETC. The September board and committee meetings in Charlotte featured a clean audit of our accounts and a glowing report from our investment advisor. The Finance and Endowment Committees offered enthusiastic assessments. SETC is a financially healthy organization. (See *Audit, Page 7.*)

So why am I concerned about raising money? Successful organizations build upon their strengths. Colleges, large charities and even presidential campaigns find it easier to raise funds when they are secure. SETC has been – and continues to be – financially stable in its income and conservative in its expenditures. Now is the time to think about the future.

However, we are not ready for a full campaign. Not yet. We must investigate options, set priorities, and plan a course before we ask others outside SETC to join our fundraising effort. What we can do, right now, is create a culture of giving.

The phrase “culture of giving” is frequently used by development officers and fundraising professionals. It describes a climate where those affiliated with an organization see the value in making it thrive and routinely donate to the cause. The donation becomes a habit, a habit that enriches all.

As we enter discussions about a full-blown campaign, I encourage all members to make a donation to SETC. Because SETC is a 501(c)(3) corporation, your donations are tax-deductible. There are many easy ways to cultivate the giving habit.

If you find yourself writing a check to SETC for one of our services, include a little extra as a contribution. Adding a bit to an audition payment, a membership renewal or a convention fee gets the ball rolling. If your company reimburses you for professional travel to SETC events, consider shifting a portion of that back to the organization.

Think of a deserving future colleague who will some day win an award and “buy” him or her a book or part of a tuition payment. Honor a talented student or treasured mentor with a contribution to a scholarship fund. Pay tribute with a memorial gift.

Creating a culture of giving can involve the entire membership in ways both large and small, thus promoting a common bond, encouraging pride in our organization, and ensuring that SETC continues its good work for future generations.

## What Do You Do When Disaster Strikes?

**S**eptember 11, 2007: Before most of us awoke, the staff of *The Lost Colony* was already sorting through the embers of a disaster. A midnight fire (*right*) had destroyed the North Carolina outdoor drama’s costume shop and maintenance shed.

Gone forever: Irreplaceable costumes, props and set pieces as well as programming materials and puppets for year-round educational programs. It is a tragedy of monumental magnitude for any theatre, let alone one with intricately detailed costumes dating back 70 years. All of the costumes designed by Irene Rains and Fred Voelpel are gone. Many of the William Ivey Long designs also were destroyed.

Executive Director Carl Curnutte learned of the 911 call – made by a resident who spied smoke across the water – in time to watch the buildings burn. With wisdom, he asked colleague John Buford to take the photos of the fire that we all have seen in the newspaper and on the Web. It is those pictures that help all of us understand the devastation – the reality. Things are gone!

By 4:50 a.m., well before most people got to work, the photos and press releases had been sent to the media, theatre organizations and others. While the reality was sinking in for the rest of us, *Lost Colony* staff and board members, under the leadership of Carl, were taking a moment to stop, assess the situation and develop a cohesive action plan.

The plan they developed embraces all those who are reaching out to help, including textile companies offering fabric and seamstresses, sewing guilds and leather crafters offering their skills. As countless donations of financial assistance and reconstruction began to pour in from all over the country and internationally, *The Lost Colony’s* leaders wanted to ensure that each gift would have a far-reaching impact honoring the intent of the donor.

Coordination, they knew, was key. So a design package was developed to send out to colleges, universities and others who want to build costume and set pieces. Jennifer Matthews from Fairmont State College in West Virginia crafted an e-mail that was sent to all SETC members and institutions, asking them to let her know what their



The *Lost Colony’s* costume shop burns.

### How to Help

If you would like to make a donation to help *The Lost Colony*, visit the outdoor drama’s website at [www.thelostcolony.org](http://www.thelostcolony.org) and click on the yellow “Lost Colony Costume Replacement Fund” banner.

costume shops could do – whether it’s crafting a ‘mob’ cap, a petticoat or a full costume. Charts were created to identify, coordinate and track items, costumes and donors.

Next, the planning moved back to *The Lost Colony’s* home in the Waterside Theatre on Roanoke Island. Buildings were designated to serve as a costume shop, storage area and collection center for donations. Three people were hired to help organize donations and begin the rebuilding effort.

As they worked, a child who had studied the history of *The Lost Colony* in fourth grade started a collection jar. A 1984 alumnus of the theatre took the idea across the state of North Carolina.

Through all of this, the spirit of *The Lost Colony* staff remains undeniable. Taking a page from the history they portray, they are moving forward. Out of tragedy comes new direction.

## Southern Theatre Wins National Award

**S**ETC’s quarterly magazine *Southern Theatre* was recognized for excellence in the 2007 national communications contest sponsored by the National Federation of Press Women.

The magazine received second place in the one- to three-color magazine category for the 2006 College & University issue. The award was presented to Editor Deanna Thompson at the group’s annual convention in Richmond, VA, on Sept. 22, 2007.

Earlier, the same issue of the magazine won first place in the statewide competition held by the organization’s North Carolina affiliate.

From the  
Executive Director  
**Betsey Baun**



## EXCOM NEWS

by President David S. Thompson

**A**ccording to SETC rules, "The President shall include a report on the proceedings of the Executive Committee [ExCom] meetings to the general membership in the SETC Newsletter." ExCom is composed of elected officers, a division representative and a state representative. The Board of Directors, composed of elected officers plus all division chairs and all state representatives, reviews ExCom actions and has authority to establish or revise rules. ExCom met on June 15-16 and September 8. The September 8 meeting was followed by a Board meeting. Action was taken in the following areas:

- **Member Directory.** Revised Rule 1.20 regarding distribution of publications to reflect our move from a printed member directory to an online directory (ExCom recommendation, Board approval).

- **Student Listings.** Moved a passage that prohibits the listing of students in the directory into a new rule, Rule I.21 (ExCom recommendation, Board approval). This is consistent with existing SETC policy and is designed to ensure student privacy. The shift in location makes Rule I.20 solely about publication distribution and Rule I.21 solely about protecting student information.

- **New Play Project.** Revised Rule IV.10 to allow all members to enter the New Play Project, regardless of current residence (ExCom recommendation, Board approval). Previously, SETC members who lived out of the region were not permitted to enter the contest. This action is designed to ensure equal access for all SETC members while also increasing contest script submissions.

- **Corporate Reserves.** Revised Rule III.5, changing corporate reserves from 60 percent to 50 percent of the operating budget, as recommended by the Finance Committee and our investment consultant. This will allow us greater fiscal flexibility and maximize return on our holdings (ExCom recommendation, Board approval).

- **Online Publication.** Placed *Theatre Symposium* with the digital database services EBSCO and ProQuest, which will provide greater visibility for both the journal and SETC (ExCom).

- **Early Registration Incentives.** Approved a new convention registration structure that provides financial incentives for early registration (ExCom). Members with registrations postmarked by December 21 qualify for "early registration." Higher fees apply after that date. For more details, visit the website at [www.setc.org](http://www.setc.org).

## Fall Meetings, Auditions Held in Charlotte

### First Fall Graduate Auditions Draw Raves from Schools

**T**hanks go out to all of you who made SETC's inaugural Fall Graduate School Auditions in Charlotte, NC, a success! Close to 50 actors, as well as six technicians/designers and three directors, auditioned or interviewed at the event on Saturday, Sept. 8. Eighteen representatives from 14 graduate programs located around the country participated in the recruiting process. SETC expects the number of graduate school acting auditionees and technical/design interviewees to grow annually.

Here are some comments from those who attended:

*"The students were prepared and very focused. I think we may have gotten a few students for our next year's graduate class. I thought they [the auditions] were well-run and organized."*  
– Robin Carr, University of Southern Mississippi

*"It was so easy to participate, thanks to all of your organizational effort. I had a great experience, and I thank you and all the others who helped you. The facility was wonderful, and so was the staff."* – Heather Moss-Layman, Auditionee

*"Just a quick note to tell you all how good I thought the grad auditions were this fall. I was particularly impressed by the quality of talent that I saw on the stage. Not every audition was wonderful, of course, but I saw more excellent people than usual, even though the overall numbers were slightly smaller than we usually see in the spring. That alone made this a smashing success. 'It really was worth the money I spent to fly in.'*  
*As I expected, students who are auditioning for graduate school in the fall are more focused, prepared, and on the ball than many who wait until spring, and so we may have been getting the cream of the crop. Thanks, everyone, for all your work on this. It really was worth the money I spent to fly in.'* – Rinda Frye, University of Louisville

Fall Graduate School Auditions were added this year at the request of SETC's membership and do not affect the traditional spring Graduate School Auditions. By adding fall auditions, SETC hoped to provide help to recruiters earlier in the application process, enabling them to recruit from a larger pool of applicants for admission and/or financial aid.

We now look forward to the Spring Graduate School Auditions in Chattanooga. If you have a question about graduate school auditions, please contact me at [lori@setc.org](mailto:lori@setc.org).

– Lori Leigh, Educational Theatre Services Manager

### Professional Auditions Attract 250 Auditionees, 34 Theatres

**H**igh energy – and hiring! That was the atmosphere at Spirit Square in Charlotte, NC, on September 9 and 10, as the SETC Fall Professional Auditions took place.

Roughly 250 auditionees demonstrated their skills for representatives from 34 theatres, who were looking for actors to fill approximately 1,200 roles. The total number of callbacks was 1944, yielding an average of 7.87 callbacks per person and 67.03 per company. While results are not yet in for the number of actors hired, we anticipate that there will be a strong showing.

This year, companies received new information from auditionees, indicating the types of venues of interest to them. This proved to be valuable insight for the companies and resulted in a streamlining of the callbacks.

Among the company representatives pleased with this year's event was Lee Buckholz of Derby Dinner Playhouse in Clarksville, IN, who wrote an e-mail thanking SETC staff members for "the amazing job you ... did with this year's fall auditions!! Each year ... things get tighter, and I truly appreciate the way that the organization listens to its members."

A special thanks goes out to Doug Truelsen of Actors' Equity Association for again making himself available to talk with actors and companies about the benefits and drawbacks of Equity membership and hiring. Doug speaks as a testimonial to SETC – he got his start through the SETC Professional Auditions a few years back! And as always, we appreciate the generous donation of time and energy by Deb Curl, Corey Mitchell and the students of the Northwest School of the Arts. The staff of Spirit Square and the North Carolina Blumenthal Performing Arts Center went beyond the call of duty to make the weekend go off without a hitch. Thanks also to the Metrolina Theatre Association for its invaluable assistance.

We look forward to seeing our auditionees and companies in the spring (March 6-8, 2008 in Chattanooga) and again at Spirit Square next fall!

– April J'C Marshall, Professional Theatre Services Manager

**Join the Marathon Madness**

**Who:** Undergraduate SETC members  
**What:** Ten-Minute Play Festival  
**When:** March 5-6, 2008  
**Where:** SETC Convention

**Details and application:**  
[www.setc.org/festivals/10minuteplay.asp](http://www.setc.org/festivals/10minuteplay.asp)

**Application deadline:**  
 Jan. 28, 2008

All SETC members are invited to attend Thursday night's performances

**AROUND**  
 the region

**WINGS Performing Arts Program** at the Lynn Meadows Discovery Center in Gulfport, MS, has been chosen as a 2007 Coming Up Taller Semifinalist by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. WINGS' selection distinguishes it as one of the top arts-and-humanities-based programs in the country serving youth beyond the school hours. It was one of 50 semi-finalists chosen from more than 350 nominations from 46 states, the District of Columbia, and the US Virgin Islands. A national jury will select 15 finalists, who each will receive \$10,000 at an awards ceremony.

□ □ □

The **Center for Puppetry Arts** in Atlanta has received a major donation – Kermit the Frog and hundreds of his puppet friends. The Jim Henson Foundation announced in July that it would give the center, considered by many to be the top puppetry arts center in the country, a large collection that includes 500 to 700 puppets, including some of the first Muppets built; props; scenic elements; posters; sketches; and drawings that Henson created for shows such as “The Muppet Show,” and “Sesame Street.” The center plans to open a new Jim Henson Wing.

□ □ □

**Mill Mountain Theatre** in Roanoke, VA, has received a \$1,500 grant from Target Corporation to support drama enrichment and outreach programs. Mill Mountain plans to use the money to offset the cost of live theatre for school groups and community members that need financial help. **Note:** Target donates 5 percent of income to arts, education and other programs in the communities its stores serve. Visit the Target website ([www.target.com](http://www.target.com)) and click on “community” under “Company Info” for info on how your theatre can apply for a grant.

**Community Theatre Festival Lands Top-Rated Adjudicator**

**K**ate Snodgrass, an acclaimed playwright and the artistic director of Boston Playwrights Theatre, will serve as one of the adjudicators for the 2008 Community Theatre Festival in Chattanooga.

Among other works, she is the author of Actors Theatre of Louisville's Heideman Award-winning play *Haiku*. A lecturer in playwriting at Boston University, she is the national chair of playwriting for the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

Interested in hearing her thoughts on playwriting? In addition to adjudicating the festival, Snodgrass also will present a workshop at the convention on the art of dialogue. Look for more details in your convention newspaper.

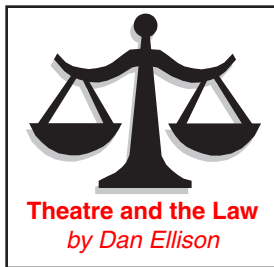


Kate Snodgrass

**‘This Director Stinks!’ Fact or Opinion?**

**A**n interesting lawsuit was filed in August in Saskatchewan, Canada. A conductor sued six members of the orchestra he conducts for defamation.

The genesis of the suit, according to news reports, was a report by a union steward that criticized the conductor for “a long list of [alleged] abuses from haranguing players to choosing wildly fast tempos.” The report was sent to the Saskatchewan Arts Board, which is the provincial funding body, and forwarded to the Canada Council for the Arts, the news reports said. The conductor is seeking over \$200,000 (Canadian dollars) in damages.



The issues this case presents are analogous enough to the theatre to warrant writing about (even though this particular suit is a Canadian one).

Defamation is the all-encompassing word for both slander (spoken) and libel (written). In short, defamation describes an untrue communication that damages a person's reputation. Actionable defamation varies somewhat from state to state, but it is always balanced against the First Amendment rights of free speech.

In general, communicating your opinion about someone is not actionable defamation. So, “John Doe is the worst director ever,” although stated rather factually, is still clearly an opinion and not actionable.

On the other hand, the following statement presents **facts**: “Director John Doe is the worst director ever. He always shows up late to rehearsals with alcohol on his breath, and if you want a good role, you might as

well forget it unless you sleep with him.” If those facts are not true (truth is always an absolute defense to a defamation action), the statement could be actionable.

To be actionable defamation, the statement must also be communicated to a third party. If you tell the director that he/she is a lying, cheating, philandering bad director, it isn't actionable unless you also tell it to someone else.

There may also be some instances where communicating the information to a third party is not actionable because it is considered “privileged communication.” For example, telling the board of directors or the personnel director sometimes is privileged communication – but those instances are not always easy to discern.

Speech that has a clearly negative impact on a person's livelihood is likely to be the most problematic. If the speech causes the subject to lose a job or not get a job, the amount and extent of the damages is easier to show as well.

The lesson to be learned: If you want to speak ill of someone (the director, the producer, an actor, whomever), and if you are going to present your statements as fact, make sure you have the facts right. Careers in the arts rely heavily on word-of-mouth.

**Note:** The contents of this column are intended for general information purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice or legal opinion on any specific facts or circumstances.

*Dan Ellison is a Durham, NC-based attorney who has concentrated on arts-related law and nonprofit law for 15 years. He is a past president and the current executive director of the North Carolina Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Have a question? E-mail him at: [artandmuseumlaw@aol.com](mailto:artandmuseumlaw@aol.com).*

## From the Treasurer

(Continued from Page 1)

same manner and, over the 20-plus years, many new areas have been added.

The first year I attended the SETC Convention, it lasted just a day and a half. Now

we have expanded beyond our typical three and a half days and are closing in on a fourth day.

When I first attended the convention, there were no scholarships. The organization was a theatre convention – and that

alone. This year, through our endowment accounts, SETC is proud to offer \$22,300 for scholarships to be given out in March, including our newest Secondary School Scholarship and Keynote Emerging Artist of Promise awards, as well as the annual Leighton Ballew, Porterfield, Smith, Holliday and Wilson awards. (See Pages 2-3, or visit [www.setc.org/scholarship](http://www.setc.org/scholarship) for details.)

One thing has not changed from the first time I attended the convention until now, and that is the wonderful feeling I experience of being with people like **me**. Each year they are drawn back to the SETC Convention for the camaraderie, the panels, the speakers, the play competitions, the terribly excited and nervous students, the old and new friends that they would have never met without SETC. There's nothing to compare to the atmosphere of an SETC Convention, where I am surrounded by people who care as much as I do about making theatre in all its varied forms. I can't wait to see all of you in Chattanooga in March.

By law, we must publish our fiscal audit for the membership. That information is listed below.

## Papers Sought for Theatre Symposium on Outdoor Drama Topics in 2008

Once one begins to explore the topic of outdoor drama, it's easy to see that a large proportion of theatre history and practice falls into this subject area.

Scholars who have explored this area are invited to submit papers for SETC's annual Theatre Symposium event, which will focus on outdoor drama in 2008. The event will be held in Chapel Hill, NC, on April 11-13, 2008.

The many types of performance that fall into the category of outdoor drama range from the outdoor Greek and Roman spectacles, through the civic Passion plays, the *commedia dell'arte*, and Elizabethan public playhouses, all the way to the contemporary dramas performed outdoors as a choice. Non-Western dramas, too, frequently make use of outdoor public spaces as not only a venue for the performance, but an important grounding of the meaning.

Whether its subject matter celebrates the community's religion, history or traditions, the outdoor drama seems a subject ripe for examination in historical, theoretical and performance-based terms.

We invite papers especially that analyze the nexus of history and theory as it applies to the production of some particular facet of outdoor drama. (See *possible topics, next column.*)

One-page paper abstracts for the 2008 Theatre Symposium may be sent to:

Dr. Jay Malarcher  
Editor, *Theatre Symposium*  
Division of Theatre and Dance  
Box 6111  
West Virginia University  
Morgantown, WV 26506-6111

Submissions by e-mail attachment are encouraged (Word document or .pdf preferred). (See *e-mail address at end.*)

Selected conference papers will be considered for inclusion in the peer-reviewed journal, *Theatre Symposium: A Publication of the Southeastern Theatre Conference, Volume 17.*

Deadline for submission of abstracts is Monday, Jan. 17, 2008. Registration fees and hotel information will be sent with invita-

SETC THEATRE SYMPOSIUM  
CHAPEL HILL, NC  
APRIL 11-13, 2008  
TOPIC: OUTDOOR DRAMA

### POSSIBLE PAPER TOPICS:

Summer Festivals  
Passion Plays  
Street Performance  
Practitioners' Stories/Experiences  
Actors Equity and Outdoor Playing  
Aesthetics of Outdoor Performance  
Logistics of Outdoor Production  
Representing Nighttime/Other Effects  
Writers of Outdoor Drama  
Pageants  
Historical Dramas  
Audience Reception  
Water or Barge Shows  
Outdoor Puppetry  
Any other topic that relates!

DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACTS:  
JAN. 17, 2008

tion in late January. More information may be found at [www.setc.org](http://www.setc.org).

Keynote speakers for the 2008 Theatre Symposium event will be Rob Fox, the current director of the Institute of Outdoor Drama located at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ([www.unc.edu/depts/outdoor](http://www.unc.edu/depts/outdoor)), along with Mark Sumner and Scott Parker, both former SETC Presidents and former directors of the Institute.

Join them and other scholars for a lively overview of subjects that touch on and amplify the theme of outdoor drama at the 2008 Theatre Symposium event.

If you are interested in participating in next year's Symposium and have a question, please contact me via e-mail.

- Jay Malarcher

Editor, *Theatre Symposium, Volume 17*  
E-mail: [jay.malarcher@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:jay.malarcher@mail.wvu.edu)

### AUDIT SOUTHEASTERN THEATRE CONFERENCE, INC. Schedule of Cash Receipts, Disbursements General Fund Year ended June 30, 2007

<b>Income</b>	
Membership	174,585
Committees and projects	53,612
Festivals	3,020
Conventions	358,557
Auditions	49,085
<i>Southern Theatre</i>	49,107
Interest & dividends	25,694
Sales tax refund	1,430
Other	1,972
Outreach workshops	1,670
<b>Total</b>	<b>718,822</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Membership directory	6,455
<i>SETC News/Southern Theatre</i>	84,739
Committees and projects	34,064
Auditions	41,310
Officer's expense	18,845
Conventions/Festivals	110,698
Awards	2,965
Central office	343,084
Credit card discount	12,671
Management fees	4,909
Outreach workshop	873
<b>Total</b>	<b>660,613</b>
<b>Revenue over expense</b>	<b>58,209</b>

Copies of the audit are available at the SETC Central Office by request.



**Southeastern Theatre Conference**  
**P.O. Box 9868**  
**Greensboro, NC 27429-0868**

# SETC NEWS

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## Bring Your Play to SETC's Fringe Festival!

*Do you have a production you would like to showcase at SETC 2008? We are seeking groups to present plays in the fifth annual SETC Fringe Festival. Shows will be selected Dec. 15, so be sure to submit your application ASAP. More info: Visit [www.setc.org/festivals/fringe.asp](http://www.setc.org/festivals/fringe.asp). Or e-mail SETC President-Elect Glen Gourley at [glen@setc.org](mailto:glen@setc.org).*

### PEOPLE on the move

**Jim Stacy**, associate professor of theatre/communication studies at Louisiana State University at Alexandria, is the editor of a new book, *Reading Brokeback Mountain: Essays on the Story and the Film*. Published by McFarland and Co. ([www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com)), the book includes 15 essays on the short story and film *Brokeback Mountain*. In addition to editing the book, Stacy wrote two of the essays. Members of the editorial board of readers included **Susan Kattwinkel** of the College of Charleston and **Scott Phillips** of Auburn University. The book is available online through Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Borders.



The Institute of Outdoor Drama has named **Rob Franklin Fox** as its new director. He was formerly general manager of PlayMakers Repertory Company, a professional theatre at UNC-Chapel Hill. Fox replaces **Scott J. Parker**, a former SETC President, who retired July 31. Next April, Parker

will become dean of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre, an honorary society based at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC.



**Ginger Heath** and **Keith Martin** jointly received the Theatre Person of the Year award from the Metrolina Theatre Association in Charlotte, NC.

#### SETC Executive Committee Meeting

5 p.m., Jan. 4, 2008

9 a.m., Jan. 5, 2008

Central Office, Greensboro, NC

*All SETC members are invited to attend.  
 Board members are encouraged to attend.*

#### Endowment Fund Contributions

All contributions to the SETC Endowment are acknowledged in the convention program and in *SETC News*. Thanks to Donald Loeffler for a donation.

## SETC 2008

Chattanooga, TN March 5-9

### Where to Send News

*SETC News* is published bimonthly for the Southeastern Theatre Conference. Deadline for the next issue is November 10.

Please send news items to:  
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 E-mail: [deanna@setc.org](mailto:deanna@setc.org)

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 P.O. Box 9868  
 Greensboro, NC 27429-0868  
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 Fax: 336-272-8810  
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 Website: [www.setc.org](http://www.setc.org)