Two SETC Design Competition Judges Announced

LEWIS BROWN
Costume Designer

“The color scheme of Lewis Brown’s costumes … is daring. Brown’s costumes often define character more sharply than the actors.”
- Jeff Smith, The San Diego Reader, July 17, 1997, on The Comedy of Errors

NARELLE SISSONS
Set Designer

“Narelle Sissors’ road-map-inspired set has just the right quality of ironic abstraction.”
- Ben Brantley, New York Times, March 17, 1997, on the original Off-Broadway production of the Pulitzer Prize-winning How I Learned to Drive

During his 50 years in the business, Lewis Brown has earned a reputation as a costume designer extraordinaire from coast to coast. At the 2010 SETC Convention, he will share his expertise as one of the distinguished designers judging the SETC Design Competition.

Born and raised in California, Brown was drawn at an early age to a career in the theatre.

“I think the decisive moment was seeing Eugene Berman’s designs for Romeo and Juliet, the Anthony Tudor ballet for Ballet Theater, which premiered about 1943 in Los Angeles,” Brown recalls. “That remains among the most beautiful designs I have ever seen, elegant and painterly.”

Brown went on to earn a BA in art from the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), then did two years of graduate studies in theatre before being drafted into the Army. He got his start as a designer in television before moving to New York City in the late 1960s.

Since coming to the U.S. in 1991, Narelle Sissons has made a name for herself as an inspired set designer on Broadway, Off-Broadway and at major regional theatres across the U.S. She will share her insights with students at the 2010 SETC Convention, where she will present a master class on set design.

“Narelle Sissors’ set looks as if it has been lacquered in red nail polish, and the movable glass structures and set of revolving doors that dominate the stage seem to represent the facade of a trendy Italian department store.”
- Peter Marks, Washington Post, October 5, 2007, on The Taming of the Shrew at the Shakespeare Theatre Company

What’s Inside

- Shoes and More for SETC 2010
- Help LCT Win $1 Million
- State Convention Reports
- People News
- Light Lab Returns
- ADA Issues, Theatre Bytes
- Barbizon Gives to Endowment

JOIN US FOR THE BLUEGRASS MEETS RED CARPET GALA!
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, March 6, 2010
Where: Bluegrass Ballroom, Lexington (KY) Convention Center
Enjoy an evening with your friends at the end-of-convention banquet and awards ceremony!
Apply NOW to Participate in Grad/Undergrad Auditions
The application deadline is January 28 for those wishing to participate in Undergraduate Auditions & Interviews or Graduate Auditions & Interviews. More information: Visit www.setc.org/conventions/auditions.php

Preliminary School List
Listed below are schools that had registered to participate in the 2010 auditions as of December 21. Check the website for updates.

Undergraduate Auditions & Interviews:
Agnes Scott College
Anderson University
Appalachian State University
Carnegie Mellon University
Catawba College
Chattanooga State Community College
Clemson University
Cleveland State University
Coastal Carolina University
Converse College
Davis and Elkins
Elon University
Florida Atlantic University
Florida International University
Florida School of the Arts
Florida Southern College
George Washington University
Greensboro College
Illinois State University
Illinois Wesleyan University
James Madison University
Lees-McRae College
Lynchburg College
Lyons College
Marshall University
New York Film Academy
Newberry College
Piedmont College
Rutgers University
Savannah College of Art & Design
Seton Hill University
Shenandoah University
Transylvania University
University of Alabama Tuscaloosa
University of Houston
University of Miami
University of North Carolina School of the Arts
University of South Carolina Aiken
University of Tennessee Chattanooga
University of West Florida
University of West Georgia
University of Wyoming
Wake Forest University
Western Kentucky University
Winthrop University
Wofford College

Graduate Auditions & Interviews:
Florida Atlantic University
George Washington University
Illinois State University
New York Film Academy
Rutgers University
Savannah College of Art & Design
University of Alabama Tuscaloosa
University of Houston
University of North Carolina School of the Arts
Regent University
Southern Utah University
University of Tennessee Knoxville
Wayne State University
University of Nevada Las Vegas
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

Q What shoes should I wear to the SETC Convention?
A Anything comfortable! You want to hit the ground running when you arrive in Lexington, KY, for SETC 2010 (March 3-7, 2010).

Q What’s the online convention registration deadline?
A Online registration closes January 28. Go to the registration page at www.setc.org/conventions/registration.php to sign up.

Q Is walk-in registration available if I miss that deadline?
A Yes, you can complete walk-in registration on-site in Lexington at the SETC Convention. However, you'll pay a higher registration charge if you wait to register on-site.

Q How can I find a hotel in Lexington?
A Visit www.setc.org/conventions/hotels.php to see your options. You can choose from a variety of locations, including hotels at the convention center and hotels located a short walk, car ride or shuttle trip away. You must book by February 15 at most hotels (February 8 at one) to obtain the SETC special rate.

Q Can I volunteer to help at the convention? Will it save me money?
A Yes! And yes! SETC will waive your convention registration fee if you commit in advance to spend at least 8 hours volunteering during an assigned time slot at the 2010 convention. (You must pay your annual membership fee and any fees for special activities.) To apply for a volunteer slot, go to www.setc.org/conventions/volunteer.php. Application deadline is January 28, unless all positions are filled prior to that date.

Interested in Film or Television?
Don’t Miss These Events at SETC 2010!

Digital Cinema and Television Festival
Emerging video artists are invited to enter SETC’s first annual Digital Cinema and Television Festival, to be held during the 2010 SETC Convention. There are three entry categories: faculty, college/university students, and high school students. Screening of select entries will be held during the convention. Deadline for entry: January 18, 2010. Details: www.setc.org/conventions/festivals.php#film

ATTENTION, HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS: The winning high school student will receive a full-tuition scholarship to New York Film Academy’s 2010 summer program. The $5,900 value allows you to attend either the Los Angeles or the New York academy. On completion, you receive four transferable college credits that are accepted by more than 1,500 universities nationwide. (This award does not cover travel or living expenses.)

Master Classes: Acting for the Camera
Richard Robichaux, a nationally recognized actor and teacher, and Joan See, the artistic director of the New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts, will conduct a two-hour master class in acting for the camera. Three sessions will be held. Times are: 9 a.m., 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 4. Each class is limited to 20 people. Participants must preregister and pay a separate fee of $50. Details: www.setc.org/conventions/master_class.php

Workshops on Acting for Film and TV
Look for a number of workshops detailing what you need to know about acting in the big and little screens. Among the new presenters this year is Mary Lou Belli, an Emmy Award-winning producer, writer and director, whose workshops are: "Hollywood: What to Expect”, “Sitcoms: Acting for the Laughs” and “Acting for the Camera.” Her husband, Charles Dougherty, a working actor in film, television and commercials for more than 30 years, also will share his expertise in a workshop, “Commercial: Acting in Under a Minute."
39 Years of SETC
LCT’s Larry Snipes Won’t Be Fiddling Around at This Year’s Convention

When Larry Snipes attended his first SETC Convention in 1971, he was a high school senior portraying the fiddler in his school's competition play, The Devil and Daniel Webster.

Nearly 40 years later, Snipes won’t be carrying a fiddle at this year’s convention, but he and his staff will be orchestrating major parts of the event in Lexington, KY. Snipes is the producing director of Lexington Children’s Theatre (LCT), which is co-hosting the convention with the Lexington Convention Center. LCT connects with the convention center via walkways, making it a convenient location for SETC events.

Snipes, who has attended every convention except one since 1971, is excited that his theatre will help stage this year’s event. LCT’s 300-seat main stage will be used for the Theatre for Youth Festival, the Fringe Festival, the pre-convention K-12 Institute and the Tituss Burgess concert. LCT’s 100-seat learning stage also will be used for parts of the K-12 Institute and other workshops.

In preparing for convention events, Snipes says his biggest challenge has been determining the staff for events such as the Fringe Festival, which includes a midnight show, since “the hours are a little different than we’re used to as a children’s theatre.”

LCT, which has participated in SETC’s Theatre for Youth Festival a number of times, was the recipient of SETC’s Sara Spencer Award for outstanding contributions to children’s theatre in 2001.

The theatre is home to a number of people who have SETC connections and serve as volunteers with the organization. Even Snipes got his job through SETC. He was hired as managing director in 1979 after leaving his resume with SETC’s Job Contact Service at the 1978 convention. A past chair of SETC’s Theatre for Youth Division, Snipes serves on the Auditions Committee and was an adjudicator for the Alabama screening auditions this year. Vivian Snipes, Larry’s wife and the artistic director, has served in years past as an adjudicator at Kentucky screening auditions.Jeremy Kisling, the associate artistic director, is chair of SETC’s Theatre for Youth Division and also has been an adjudicator at state screenings. Resident designer Jerome Wills was hired through SETC last year. And the list goes on.

“We hire so many people from SETC, it’s hard to remember them all,” says Snipes.

This year, the Snipes’ son Casey will become part of the SETC tradition. He will be seeking a summer job through the Professional Auditions.

At the convention, members of LCT’s teen troupe will roam the site in costume, inviting attendees to events.

“We’re excited to have everybody coming to visit Lexington and our theatre,” says Snipes.

Your Facebook Vote Can Help Lexington Children’s Theatre Win $1,000,000!

Lexington Children’s Theatre (LCT) is one of 100 small and local nonprofit organizations competing nationally to win $1 million from Chase Trust. LCT made the first cut in December, winning $25,000 and a spot in the finals of the Chase Community Giving competition. All of the 100 finalists now must provide information on how they would use $1 million to benefit the community. Facebook users’ votes will determine the winner.

To help LCT win, become a fan on its Facebook page and use the link provided to vote— from January 15 to 22. The winner will be announced February 1.

Don’t miss SETC’s 5th Annual K-12 INSTITUTE

Wednesday, March 3, 2010
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Lexington Children’s Theatre
Lexington KY
Cost: $75
Registration deadline: February 15

Keynote Speaker:
Liz Lerman
Liz Lerman Dance Exchange

The K-12 Institute is open to all who are interested in furthering theatre arts for K-12 students and in gaining strategies for incorporating the arts into any curriculum in the classroom.

To register or get more details: www.setc.org/conventions/k12.php

Commercial Exhibitors Commit to SETC 2010

Look for the following vendors in the Commercial Exhibits area at the 2010 SETC Convention in Lexington, KY. This list, current as of December 21, is expected to grow even more by the time of the convention.

Anchorage Press Plays
Apollo Design Technology
Bakers Plays
Barbizon Lighting
Costume Holiday House
Custom Stage Services
Dramatic Publishing
Dramatists Play Service
ETC
Field Template
Fisher Theatrical
GAM Products
Magnum Companies, Ltd
Mainstage Theatrical Supply
Miller and Campbell Costume Service
Players Press
Playscripts
Q Lighting
Samuel French
Sculptural Arts Coat
Select Travel Service
Stiktek
Texas Scenic Company
Theatrical Rights Worldwide
The Craft of Film Acting
Timothy Mooney Repertory Theatre
USITT
States Report on Annual Conventions;

**ALABAMA Conference of Theatre**

ACT held three events this year: College/University Festival & SETC State Screening Auditions: ACTFest ‘10; and the Walter Trumbauer Secondary School Theatre Festival.

**Number attending:** 350; 120; 1500.

**Winner of Community Theatre Festival:** All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten, Wetumpka Depot Players, Wetumpka, AL.

**Winners of High School Theatre Festival:** Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Huntsville High School, Huntsville, AL; Jedem das Seine, Spain Park High School, Hoover, AL.

**Idea to Share: Expand Interest in Community Theatre.** ACT built its community festival program this year by including workshops by adjudicators and other community experts along with the play performances and holding the event over two days instead of one and a half days. We also gave two festival tickets to each community theatre in the state to build interest in the festival process. We expect to increase our competing productions from three this year to six next year as a result of this raised awareness!

Sue Ellen Gerrells
Executive Director

**GEORGIA Theatre Association**

**Number attending:** 1275.

**Winner of Community Theatre Festival:** The Lion In Winter, Colquitt County Arts Center, Moultrie, GA.

**Winners of High School Theatre Festival:** SETC Festival: Snoopy, Greater Atlanta Christian School, Norcross, GA; Troy Women, DeKalb School of the Arts, Avondale Estates, GA. Georgia High School Association Festival: Wiley and the Hairy Man, Manchester High School, Manchester, GA.

**Idea to Share #1: New Play Festival.** This year KTA started a “Roots of the Bluegrass” New Play Festival. More than 20 entries were received, and three finalists were selected to have cuttings of their scripts read at the conference. The winner was announced after the readings. Winner: Elizabeth Ormdorff for Aidan’s Gift; 1st Runner-up: Nancy Gall-Clayton for For Bernice Sizemore’s 70th Birthday; 2nd Runner-up, Walter May for Gone Astray.

Kathi E.B. Ellis
State Representative

**KENTUCKY Theatre Association**

**Number attending:** 850.

**Winners of Community Theatre Festival:** Selected Plays of Samuel Beckett, Balagula Theatre, Lexington, KY; 1st Runner-up, Overtones, Shelby County Community Theatre, Shelbyville, KY (both productions forwarded to SETC Festival).

Angie Hays
Executive Director

**NORTH CAROLINA Theatre Association**

**Number attending:** 1000.

**Winner of Community Theatre Festival:** No festival this year.

**Winners of High School Theatre Festival:** Lonestar, Shelby High School, Shelby, NC; At the Bottom of Lake Missoula, Pinecrest High School, Pinecrest, NC.

**Idea to Share: Try an Event that Brings a Mix of Theatre People Together.** In addition to its traditional fall gathering, NCTA hosted a Producing Theatre Gathering for the second year in 2009. The event, which drew 60 participants, is designed for anyone who produces theatre, including staff, board members, actors and directors from all types of theatres. Participants enjoy great conversations, learn new ideas and find tools to use immediately upon their return home.

Donna White
State Representative

**FLORIDA Theatre Association**

**Number attending:** 1125.

**Winner of Community Theatre Festival:** Steel Magnolias, Baker County Community Theatre, Glen St. Mary, FL.

**Winners of High School Theatre Festival:** 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Gulf Breeze High School, Gulf Breeze, FL; The Dining Room, Manatee School of the Arts, Bradenton, FL.

**Idea to Share: Florida Theatre Idol.** We had a wonderful time in our second experience with the FTC IDOL. Participants paid $5 at registration and performed twice during the conference. Votes were collected ($1 per vote) for three days. The 16 entries were narrowed to 4 by the panel of judges. The finalists performed during closing ceremonies, with the winner receiving $200 and the runner-up receiving $100. We also had a great time at The Tech Olympics, which we borrowed from the Virginia Theatre Conference. Thank you, Virginia!

Donna White
State Representative

**Winner of High School Theatre Festival:** Best Play: Almost, Maine, Owensboro High School, Owensboro, KY; 1st Runner-up: Taming of the Shrew, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, Lexington, KY (both productions forwarded to SETC Festival).

Kathi E.B. Ellis
State Representative
Share Festival Winners, Innovative Ideas

**SOUTH CAROLINA Theatre Association**

**Number attending:** 207.
**Winner of Community Theatre Festival:** Parallel Lives, Rock Hill Community Theatre, Rock Hill, SC.

**Winners of High School Theatre Festival:** 1st Place: Bash: Latterday Plays, James F. Byrnes High School, Duncan, SC.
2nd Place: Wiley and the Hairy Man, Woodmont High School, Piedmont, SC.

**Idea to share: Hold Division Social Events.** This year we had a social event with food for each division. The idea was to bring people together at an event where they would have opportunities to network, share ideas and socialize. Because of low attendance at our convention, this only worked in a couple of divisions but it is an idea that we feel will work with time.

**Leslie Dellinger**
State Representative

**TENNESSEE Theatre Association**

**Number attending:** 394.
**Winner of Community Theatre Festival:** Suicide in B Flat, Backstage Series at Cookeville Performing Arts Center, Cookeville, TN.

**Winner of High School Theatre Festival:** Doubt, a parable, Cordova High School, Cordova, TN.

**Idea to Share: Luncheon for High School Students and College Reps.** Several years ago, we began having a meet-and-greet luncheon for high school students and college reps from around the state so they have time to mix and ask questions. The convention provides display areas and pizza and drinks. We feel it has been a very successful event. Our college attendance as a whole had dropped the past several years because colleges and their students really don’t see a necessity to attend, other than for the SETC state pre-screenings. This gives the colleges something to plan for at the annual fall conference.

**Darren Michael**
State Representative

**WEST VIRGINIA Theatre Conference**

**Number attending:** 400.
**Winner of Community Theatre Festival:** Under the Lintel, Charleston Stage Company, Charleston WV.

**Winner of High School Theatre Festival:** The Apple Tree, Greenbrier East High School, Lewisburg, WV.

**Idea to share: Hold Theatre Fests at One Site over Two Days.** We have scheduled all the high school plays on Friday, and all the community theatre plays on Saturday, so we can use one space for both festivals, and everyone gets to see all the plays instead of having to choose.

**Gregory Mach**
State Representative

**VIRGINIA Theatre Association**

**VTA held two events:** Virginia Theatre Association (VTA) Annual Conference (including Secondary School Theatre Festival and Community Theatre Festival); and VTA Young People’s Theatre Festival.

**Number Attending:** 1455:508.
**Winner of Community Theatre Festival:** Deliver Us Not! (Or, Birth, Where Is Thy Sting?) Stage Door Productions, Fredericksburg, VA.

**Winners of High School Theatre Festival:** 1st Place: The Proposal, Colonial Forge High School, Stafford, VA; Runner-up: Nora’s Last, Yorktown High School, Arlington, VA (both productions forwarded to SETC Festival).

**Idea to Share #1: Reward Top Auditionees.** VTA reimburses the college student with the highest score on state screening auditions for SETC registration expenses.

**Idea to Share #2: Lunch and Scholarships.** VTA lifetime members and past presidents are invited to a luncheon convention weekend. VTA covers the cost of the meal. The past presidents serve as a scholarship committee under the guidance of the VTA president to decide which high school seniors will receive scholarships. Two VTA college scholarships are awarded: one for performance and one for technical theatre.

**Mary K. Molineu**
Executive Director

**People on the move**

**Alan Litsey,** a professor of theatre at Birmingham-Southern College in Alabama, will have a production of his play Visits in the Dark performed this year in the Bulgarian language by the Plovdiv Drama Theatre, one of the top professional theatres in Bulgaria. Litsey is the president-elect of SETC.

**Michael P. Howley,** a professor of theatre at Alabama State University, was honored by the Alabama Conference of Theatre (ACT) with the 2009 Hall of Fame Award, given to pioneers in Alabama theatre. Howley is the SETC state representative for Alabama.

**Josie Helming** received the 2009 Eugart Yerian Award for Lifetime Service to Memphis Theatre at the Ostrander Awards, annual city-wide awards for excellence in theatre. Helming, who is a former SETC Auditions Committee chair, is an actor, director and retired University of Memphis professor of theatre.

**Atlanta playwright Daniel Guyton** has had a busy year. His new play The Mother of God Visits Hell (A Play in Iambic Pentameter) received two simultaneous world premiere productions on opposite sides of the country: at the Town and Gown Playhouse in Athens, GA, and at the Alive Theatre’s Cherry Poppins Play Festival in Long Beach, CA. In March, the play also received a staged reading at the Living Theatre in New York, starring the legendary Judith Malina [this year’s SETC Distinguished Career Award recipient] as the title character. During the course of 2009, Guyton has had six books published. For more information, visit his website at www.danguyton.com.
**2010 CONVENTION NEWS, EVENTS**

**Buy a Shirt, Send a Kid to School!**

Want a cool SETC shirt? Want to help students go to theatre school? Your purchase of an SETC shirt helps fund the SETC Endowment, which will pay out more than $20,000 in scholarships this year. Look for SETC shirt displays at the convention site in Lexington, KY.

**Designers: Renderings, Sketches Sought for SETC’s Silent Auction!**

Costumes will be the theme of the Silent Auction at the 2010 SETC Convention in Lexington, KY. The Silent Auction supports the SETC Endowment, which awards valuable scholarships to students.

This year we will auction renderings and signed photographs. Please consider contributing an original costume rendering or costume sketch to the auction. Any donations will be greatly appreciated. Also consider including a poster frame or mat to help protect and display your rendering.

For more information on how to send your donation, contact Freddy Clements at JSUdesigner@aol.com.

Finally, be sure to view the Silent Auction items at the convention – and place your bid!

**Lewis Brown**

(Continued from Page 1)

1950s. Soon he was doing costume design for theatre, opera and ballet. He worked throughout the U.S. and abroad, from Broadway, to the Guthrie Theater in Minnesota, to the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, and many other places in-between.

His Broadway credits include 1994’s *The Government Inspector*, 1991’s *Mulebone* and 1968’s *Jimmy Shine*.

In addition to accolades from critics, Brown has won a number of awards for his designs over the years, including a Drama-Logue Award for *Candide* in 1995, and a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for *Cyrano de Bergerac* in the 1970s.

His philosophy of costume design? “You are subservient to a script, to an author who has indicated where the script is heading. Clever directors beware, and that also applies to clever designers. Some notions work; many more do not.”

**Narelle Sissons**

(Continued from Page 1)

will serve as a distinguished designer and critique entries in the Design Competition.

A native of England, Sissons is a graduate of Central St. Martin’s School of Art and Design and The Royal College of Art in London. She knew she was destined for the theatre from the time she saw a production of *Aladdin* in London at age 5.

“The curtain opened onto his ‘extravagant cave’ and that was it – I was hooked,” Sissons recalls. “Since then I have become a little more sophisticated in my taste. However, I still love to be wrapped up in an amazing experience or be delighted by the magic of the event, such as the production of Complicite’s *Mnemonic* in New York a few years ago.”

Sissons has created her own magic onstage, too. She designed the set for Broadway’s 1997 *All My Sons*, presented by the Roundabout Theater Company, and for the original Off-Broadway production of Paula Vogel’s *How I Learned to Drive*. She also has designed for numerous regional theatres in this country and abroad.

Her work has been nominated for Drama Desk, American Theatre Wing and Helen Hayes awards. She is a recipient of the Garland Award and the Leon Rabin Award.

Now an associate professor of design at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Sissons also continues to design regularly.

Her advice to students: “Do your best work at all times. People will remember you if your work is different from the next person. Travel the world and have fun!”

**Light Lab Returns:**

**A Special Opportunity for Lighting Designers**

Sponsored by Kenton Yeager and University of Tennessee, Knoxville

What better way to learn about and to explore the creative uses of light than to actually TURN ON the lights? Last year’s popular Light Lab returns to the SETC Convention in 2010. Using a 1-to-6-scale lighting lab set up on-site, we will offer creative and skill-building projects to all those interested. Please come by to participate in the projects and learn how to create your own scale lighting lab. Look for more details in your convention newspaper and convention program.

**Design-Tech Mixer**

**Who’s Invited:**

All techies and designers who work or study in any aspect of technical theatre or theatre design. Celebrate the start of the 61st SETC Convention at the Design-Tech Mixer. Last year it was the event of the convention!

**When:**

8-9:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 3, 2010

**Where:**

Hyatt Patterson Ballroom
Lexington, KY

**Snacks** **Cash Bar**
ADA Issues Continue to Raise Questions for Theatres

My mother is now blind as a result of glaucoma. A niece injured her foot. A friend uses a hearing aid. The legislative history for the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) accurately indicated that most people, at some time in their lives, would have a period of disability.

That law requires theatres to provide reasonable accommodation for audience members with disabilities. We know that "reasonable accommodation" means providing wheelchair accessibility, and we kind of know it means interpreters/assisted listening devices for hearing-impaired people, and we are beginning to understand that it might mean descriptive audio for visually-impaired individuals.

The ADA also affects theatres from an employment standpoint. If your theatre has 15 or more employees, its employment practices are covered under the ADA. The law applies to tech/administrative/backstage jobs just as it applies to jobs in businesses.

However, it's a more complicated issue when it comes to casting persons with disabilities in onstage roles.

Case in point: On October 13, 2009, the New York Times reported that the decision to cast a hearing actor in a deaf role in the New York Theatre Workshop's production of The Heart is a Lonely Hunter had drawn protests from deaf actors and deaf theatre groups. Some likened it to putting a white actor in blackface.

Discrimination issues with casting are complicated. While we inherently know that it would be wrong to put a white actor in blackface to play an African American character, we don't know whether it is wrong for a white actor to play a Latino character. At what point does the magic of theatre stop into the realm of discrimination? Through the enactment of the ADA, we, as a society, have declared that it is wrong to discriminate against persons with disabilities. Directors' casting decisions are hard to second-guess, but we all need to consider the question: How much of our own artistic sensibilities are informed by our misunderstanding of the capabilities of persons with disabilities?

ADA and Your Theatre

Does your theatre regularly provide accommodation for hearing-impaired theatregoers? For visually-impaired theatregoers? How do you handle casting for a character who is deaf or blind? Share information for a possible future story by e-mailing answers to Dan Ellison at artandmuseumlaw@aol.com.

Before the Blue Screen of Death Looms Once Again... Consider Adding an Online Backup Service

Can you survive another nightmare about your computer crashing? If you lose sleep worrying about computer crashes, accidentally deleting files, or simply failing to back up your files, help is available. You can subscribe to a fee-based online backup service.

Online (or remote) backup systems usually offer the client a software program that is scheduled to collect data for backup, typically once a day. This program collects, compresses, encrypts and transfers the data to the backup service's servers from which you can retrieve individual files as you need them or download your entire account’s contents to a new computer.

Go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Remote_backup_service for an excellent article explaining what online backup services are and how they work. The article includes lists of "advantages" and "disadvantages" of using remote backup rather than private backup systems. "Advantages" include the hands-off nature of the services since they run in the background. The fact that you can easily retrieve your files even on someone else’s computer is perhaps the most comforting advantage of all.

There are few “Disadvantages.” Primarily, they include transmission compatibilities and disasters rendering the service unavailable. The need to remember a “key” to access your files is cited as a disadvantage; however, a key also insures complete privacy for the client, which is an advantage.

While there are tons of these services advertising online, I’m going to briefly discuss two highly recommended services – Carbonite.com and Mozy.com – to illustrate what they can do for you.

On its homepage, Carbonite.com advances the need for remote backup: “Your computer is filled with irreplaceable files: e-mails, photos, music, business contacts and financials. Carbonite automatically and securely backs up the irreplaceable contents of your computer for only $54.95 per year no matter how much stuff you need to back up.”

When you sign up, Carbonite installs an application that runs in the background on your computer. You won’t need to learn a new interface; however, Carbonite requires you to use Internet Explorer 7 or higher. Although it was originally developed for PCs, Carbonite now offers the same services for Macs. A free trial is available.

An online site, Gadget Advisor, recommends Mozy Pro as the all-around winner for those who are serious about online backup protection. Actually, Mozy.com offers both Mozy Pro and Mozy Home, and little differentiates one from the other. Mozy uses the same protocol as Carbonite; that is, it installs a program on your computer to run in the background and collect data to back up. Mozy’s home page quotes a fee of $4.95 per month. Both Carbonite and Mozy collect their fees by billing your credit card account.

Although online backup services were developed in the 1990s, they have only recently become a hot topic. If you have valuable information on your computer that you wouldn’t want to lose, take the time to inform yourself about these services.

Contact Don Wolfe at wolfe@wfu.edu.
Asolo Repertory Theatre, a professional theatre in Sarasota, FL, has received a $25,000 grant from Publix Super Market Charities to support the theatre's education and outreach initiative, Access to the Arts. This support will enable disadvantaged schoolchildren to experience live theatre through access to subsidized tickets and transportation.

Palm Beach Atlantic University has purchased the former home of Ballet Florida for $1.85 million. The building will be used by the Theatre Department for faculty offices, classrooms and performance space. The university is in West Palm Beach, FL.

The Orlando Shakespeare Theater, in partnership with the University of Central Florida is featured on the cover of the new Central Florida AT&T Real Yellow Pages companion directory. The theatre’s entrance, with William Shakespeare’s image prominently displayed, is on the cover. More than 762,000 copies of the directory have been produced for distribution. Jim Helsinger, artistic director, notes that “this means that for the next year, this beautiful facility with all it has to offer will be front and center anytime someone uses a directory…”

Venice Theatre, one of the largest community theatres in the U.S. and a landmark in Venice, FL, since 1950, has shored up its financial future, thanks to the efforts of two financial institutions, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice (GCCFV), and a group of private donors. The theatre got the opportunity to reduce its annual debt service by almost two-thirds when Stearns Bank offered to accept a significantly reduced guarantee commitment from the GCCFV, as well as guarantees and cash investments from several private donors, which made the transaction possible.

Palm Beach Atlantic University has purchased the former home of Ballet Florida for $1.85 million. The building will be used by the Theatre Department for faculty offices, classrooms and performance space. The university is in West Palm Beach, FL.

The Orlando Shakespeare Theater, in partnership with the University of Central Florida is featured on the cover of the new Central Florida AT&T Real Yellow Pages companion directory. The theatre’s entrance, with William Shakespeare’s image prominently displayed, is on the cover. More than 762,000 copies of the directory have been produced for distribution. Jim Helsinger, artistic director, notes that “this means that for the next year, this beautiful facility with all it has to offer will be front and center anytime someone uses a directory…”

Venice Theatre, one of the largest community theatres in the U.S. and a landmark in Venice, FL, since 1950, has shored up its financial future, thanks to the efforts of two financial institutions, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice (GCCFV), and a group of private donors. The theatre got the opportunity to reduce its annual debt service by almost two-thirds when Stearns Bank offered to accept a significantly reduced guarantee commitment from the GCCFV, as well as guarantees and cash investments from several private donors, which made the transaction possible.

Barbizon Gives Donation to Benefit Future Students

ETC received a surprise gift in December. Barbizon Lighting Company’s Atlanta and Charlotte offices donated $1,500 to the SETC Endowment Fund in lieu of sending holiday gifts to clients. SETC is honored to be chosen for this donation.

The money was designated for two funds: the Secondary School Scholarship and the Keynote Emerging Artist of Promise (KEAP) Award. Both scholarships benefit high school students; one helps them continue their education, while the other immerses students in our field by sending them to SETC’s annual convention.

Barbizon’s donation shows a commitment to building future theatre practitioners. Their generous gift will help build SETC’s Endowment accounts, giving us the ability in the future to add additional scholarships or increase the value of the awards we now give. Award amounts are determined by designating 5 percent of the total account fund for the scholarship. The 2010 cash award for the Secondary School Scholarship is $2,100. Currently four students receive the KEAP scholarship annually.

KEAP started with a remarkable gift from playwright Samm-Art Williams. When offered his honorarium check for presenting a keynote address in 2005, he gave it back to SETC. His donation initiated this scholarship to help talented, scholarly high school theatre students who are economically disadvantaged attend the annual convention.

On behalf of the student beneficiaries, we thank you, Barbizon.

Get a Look at SETC’s New Road Map in Lexington

The weekend before Christmas, SETC’s Board of Directors and senior members of the Central Office staff convened in Charlotte with consultant Bill Mitchell to continue developing a strategic plan that will serve as the road map for SETC’s future. We had members from all 10 states and all of SETC’s divisions.

Our goal? To answer two major questions.

Question 1: Why does SETC exist? That’s not an easy question to answer, but it’s one that must be answered in our mission statement. The mission statement defines “why” we are, the key measure of success for all stakeholders.

Question 2: Where are we going? Our vision statement defines “where” we will aim our energies in the next five years, tapping SETC’s values and determining how we can best serve members for years to come.

One might expect that opinions on “why” and “where” would be clear as mud with nearly 30 people around the table. Yet our individual answers were relatively similar. Shared passion, shared beliefs and a drive to succeed for the good of SETC made for a productive weekend.

I’m pleased to report that we left Charlotte with a solid draft of SETC’s road map, the beginning of a plan that builds on past successes to create our future. You will get an opportunity to hear the new mission and vision statements when we come together in Lexington.

Where to Send News

SETC News is published bimonthly for the Southeastern Theatre Conference. Deadline for the next issue is February 5.

Please send news items to: Deanna Thompson, Editor Phone: 336-292-6041 E-mail: deanna@setc.org or to: Southeastern Theatre Conference P.O. Box 9868 Greensboro, NC 27429-0868 Phone: 336-272-3645 E-mail: setc@setc.org Web site: www.setc.org/