During her 30 years as a lighting designer, Heather Carson has worked on more than 200 productions in this country and abroad, including recent productions for the New York Shakespeare Festival, the Royal Shakespeare Company in London and Malmo Opera in Sweden. At the 2010 SETC Convention, she will share her expertise as an SETC Design Competition judge and as one of the distinguished speakers at a design keynote session.

Carson started out as a theatre major, interested in acting, at UCLA. “On the winter break of my first year at UCLA, I wandered into my neighborhood theatre, The Odyssey in Los Angeles,” (Continued on Page 2)

Lexington Opera House, which dates to 1886, is the site of the High School Theatre Festival.

Year’s High School Theatre Festival, will be held at the Lexington Opera House, located a block and a half from the Lexington Convention Center. The 1,000-seat theatre, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, has a 19th century aura, including plush décor, red velvet curtains, Chippendale-style mirrors, hand-carved walnut door frames and a French crystal chandelier. Built in 1886 and designed as one of the most well-equipped theatres of its time, the Opera House became a “B” movie house in the 1920s before falling into disrepair and being scheduled for demolition in the 1970s. A group of local philanthropists raised the (Continued on Page 2)
How would you like to work one-on-one with Broadway, international and regional costume designer Jennifer Caprio? One lucky graduate student in the Costume Design Competition will get the opportunity to do just that as the winner of the 2010 “Ready for Work” Award.

Caprio will mentor the winner, who will assist her on one of two projects this summer. Depending on Caprio’s schedule and the winner’s schedule, the projects could include working on a show that’s transferring to Broadway (Caprio cautions: “You know how these things go, though — it may fall through”) or on a huge new re-imagining of the musical Superman at the Dallas Theater Center in June. SETC will provide a cash award of $1,500 to assist the winner with expenses.

The winner will be chosen based on a portfolio review and personal interview by a committee, including last year’s winner, Eric Abele, who worked with Caprio. Caprio’s many credits include Broadway’s The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee.

**Buy These Sketches with a Winning Bid in SETC’s Silent Auction!**

Support the SETC Endowment by taking part in the annual Silent Auction in Lexington. Costumes are this year’s theme, and items in the auction will include a variety of renderings and signed photographs of costumes or renderings.

In addition to the donors above, others expected to contribute items include Broadway designers Jennifer Caprio and Toni-Leslie James.

**Carson (Continued from Page 1)**

and volunteered. I was building sets, then ASM’ing and then when the board operator didn’t show up … I was drafted to run the light board. Paulie Jenkins was the designer. There was no stage manager, and during a performance, she was whispering ‘Take 3 up. Now take 3 down slowly while bringing 2 up.’ I loved it and found I had a knack for it.”

Carson dropped out of school to become Jenkins’ assistant, a position she held for 2½ years before moving to New York to assist renowned designer Arden Fingerhut for 7 years. “That was my MFA!” says Carson.

She also assisted Ken Billington, Roger Morgan, Victor En Yu Tan, F. Mitchell Dana and Richard Nelson, among others, on over 40 Broadway and Off-Broadway shows, and studied at the legendary Lester Polakov’s Studio and Forum of Stage Design.

After 25 years based in New York, Carson moved back to her hometown, Los Angeles, where she is represented by Ace Gallery. “I have an art studio and am focused on my installation work with light,” she says.

Her philosophy of lighting design?

“What interests me about light is structure,” she says. “I’ve always been more interested in where the lights are, rather than what they do, trusting that if there is an interior logic to where they are, then what they do will have the right logic…. Rather than lighting the performer in space, I light the space to discover the performer within that.”

Carson’s advice for young people going into lighting design: “Gravitate toward what scares you. When starting out, say yes to everything. See and do everything.”

**Theatres (Continued from Page 1)**

money needed to purchase and restore the Opera House and it reopened as a nonprofit theatre venue in 1976. Today the theatre is the site for a variety of concerts, plays and musicals throughout the year, serving an average of 80,000 patrons annually.

**Community Theatre: Guignol Theatre**

The Community Theatre Festival will be held in the Guignol Theatre on the nearby University of Kentucky (UK) campus. The Guignol (pronounced Geen-yohl) Theatre is a 390-seat proscenium theatre located in UK’s Fine Arts Center, just a short shuttle ride away from the convention center.

The current theatre was built in 1950 after the first Guignol (built in 1927 and named for the Grand Guignol Theatre in Paris) burned to the ground in 1947. It was renovated in 2000 and reopened in 2001. The University of Kentucky, which offers a BA, an MA and a minor in theatre, also has a 125-seat proscenium theatre and a black box space.

**Getting Around in Lexington**

**Driving in?** The Lexington Convention Center offers free parking, except during major events at Rupp Arena.

**Walking to events?** Most convention events are in easily walkable distance.

**Looking for a ride?** Shuttles will run from the convention center to the Crowne Plaza Hotel, The Inn on Broadway and Spring Hill Suites-Marriott, as well as to the Guignol Theatre during the Community Theatre Festival.
Lisa Leonard Is New SETC Audition Room Director

If you will be an auditionee or an auditioning company at SETC 2010, Lisa Leonard is a name you should know. As the new director for the SETC Professional Auditions, Leonard will be working behind the scenes to make your experience in Lexington pleasant and productive.

“I’m so very excited to be facilitating the auditions this year,” Leonard says.

Her goal is to make the auditions as stress-free and relaxing as possible.

“There are always challenges with the space, the schedule, and circumstances that we cannot control,” she notes. “What we can control is our attitudes and how we interact with each other. I want the auditionees to know that the staff is there to support them in any way that we can. This way, I hope that they can take a break, relax and show their companies their best work.”

Leonard has been involved with the SETC Professional Auditions for a decade, first as timekeeper, then as assistant director and, most recently, as director of the Fall Professional Auditions in 2009.

“I had a great experience facilitating the Fall Auditions in Charlotte, and we have a great team of Pro Audition staff members who are ready for spring auditions in Lexington,” Leonard says.

Leonard, who operates her own massage therapy business, also is a singer and actress. She sings with the North Carolina Master Chorale, acts in community theatre and has appeared in commercials (you may remember her face from some RBC Centura commercials). She lives in Apex, NC, in the Triangle area. In addition to her own work in theatre, Leonard has a daughter, Emily, who is a recent music theatre graduate of Baldwin Wallace Conservatory and is now pursuing work in New York. Her son, Abraham, also a musician, is a student at Appalachian State University.

Top 6 Ways to Socialize with Your SETC Friends in Lexington!

Here are just a few of the informal and formal socializing opportunities you will find at SETC 2010:

Design-Tech Mixer, 8-9:30 p.m., Wednesday. Sponsored by TOMCAT, USA. Open to all in design and technical fields.

Theatre for Youth Reception, 7-9:30 p.m., Thursday. Sponsored by Dramatic Publishing, Lexington Children’s Theatre and Anchorage Press Plays. Open to all in youth theatre.

Presenters’ Thank You Reception, 6-7:30 p.m., Thursday. Presenter’s ribbon required.

Friday Lunch, 1-2:20 p.m. Sponsored by state theatre organizations. Sold out.

SETC President’s Reception, “Bluegrass Meets Red Carpet” Banquet, and 61st Annual Awards Ceremony, 7 p.m., Saturday. Open to all. Banquet ticket: $30. Purchase on-site at Registration Desk until 5 p.m. Thursday, March 4.

Celebration Dance, 10 p.m.-Midnight, Saturday. Open to all. See details below.

Saturday: Sing and Dance the Night Away with SETC’s Own DJ!

Are you ready to party? This year’s celebration dance on Saturday night will have its own SETC DJ, Robert Lewis, a veteran of two previous SETC Conventions. He plans to cater his program to match the exuberance of SETC.

“At this year’s dance, the kids can expect much excitement with new music, a few songs to take you back to the good days, a special song for the winning state, and much participation from me as the DJ,” Lewis says. “I love for my crowd to sing along with the songs and I love to cut the music out and listen to my crowd sing the rest. I will make you want to sing every song I play!”

Lewis, who is from Huntsville, AL, attended his first SETC Convention in Orlando in 2006 as a high school student. He also was an auditionee at last year’s Birmingham convention. He is a theatre major at Calhoun Community College.

A little over a year ago, he started a DJ business, Ya Boi Boi Productionz, with some friends. “In one year, I have become one of the top DJ’s in the city,” he says. “I have a club that has recently added my team as their house DJ.”

Lewis says his theatre training helps with his DJ work. “It’s great with my acting background, because it keeps me fresh – I’m always on top of my toes,” he says.
See Design Comp winners Saturday

One of the most exciting events at this year's SETC Convention will be the annual Design Competition, where emerging designers display their work for feedback from guest adjudicators and distinguished SETC Design/Tech faculty. This year the exhibition hall will be open for extended hours on Saturday morning, giving more opportunities for those attending to see the winning designs created by our talented young designers.

We are excited to have Robert Lewis, Narelle Sissoms and Heather Carson

as our special guest adjudicators. Come hear them discuss their work at the always enlightening Designer Keynote Session on Thursday night.

The "Ready for Work" award is back for the second year. (See details, Page 2.)

Kick off the convention on Wednesday night at the Design-Tech Mixer, sponsored by TOMCAT, USA. What a great way to greet old friends and make new ones!

Also be sure to check out our many workshops and presentations. It will inspire you for the coming year. Several workshops on sound design are being offered this year. (See details, Page 2.)

Be sure to check the convention program for the Design Competition schedule, and join us for our interest area meeting Saturday at 10:30 a.m.

Jennifer Matthews, Chair
Design/Tech Committee
jmatthew@sewanee.edu

intermediate interest group meeting Thursday at 9 a.m.

Ellis offers ideas for utilizing "Viewpoints" in design/tech interest group meeting Thursday at 9 a.m.

an up-to-date listing of all of the workshop workshops available. Check out the conven-

Now obviously, these are only a few of the workshops available. Check out the convention program link on the SETC website for an up-to-date listing of all of the workshop goodness! And be sure to join us for our interest group meeting Thursday at 9 a.m.

Paul B. Crook, Chair
Acting/Directing Committee
pcrook@latech.edu

advice for you

addle up, everyone, we’re going to Lexington! OK, I know it’s a silly cliché, but I LIKE silly clichés! You won’t find anything silly or clichéd on the acting and directing workshop schedule at the SETC Convention, though (well, maybe a few silly things – but actors need that once in awhile). Everyone from professors and teachers to seasoned professionals, and from college students to high school students will find a variety of events on the schedule to stimulate their interest.

Some workshops of interest: Kathi E. B. Ellis offers ideas for utilizing “Viewpoints” in the classroom (Wednesday, 4 p.m.); three members of the University of Central Florida (UCF) faculty discuss art-based service learning partnerships (Thursday, noon); Missy Barnes covers exercises for actors of all levels, touching on Alexander technique, Laban and Lessac (Thursday, 1 p.m.); and Duke Guthrie and Phillip Jones look at professor-student co-direction (Friday, 9 a.m.) And, as always, we’ll have a bountiful bluegrass bouquet of audition workshops.

Our workshops of interest will appeal to students and academics interested in theatre history:

For example, “Dramaturgy: What in the Word Is it?” and “Dramaturgy: Pursuing the Word” will be of interest to students and professionals. “The Problem of Teaching Shakespeare” will be of special interest to teachers.

The following panels will appeal to students and academics interested in theatre history:


We would like to invite you to attend ourye's convention will see the inauguration of the SETC Digital Cinema and Television Festival. Come watch as we screen the entries at 5:30 p.m. Thursday. New York Film Academy has generously offered a full-tuition scholarship to its 2010 summer program for the best entry by a high school student.

This year’s convention will also see the return of the master class in “Acting for the Camera,” taught by Richard Robichaux and Joan See, as well as an array of sessions on subjects such as Hollywood, acting for commercials and “The Close-up Conundrum.”

Join us for our interest group meeting Saturday at noon.

Jeffrey Green, Chair
Film/Television Committee
jgreen@canes.gsw.edu

history

stincted - diversity

The Cultural Diversity Committee is sponsoring a wealth of programs of interest to all. “Celebrating Women” is the committee’s theme for this conference, which features two women as keynote speakers.

Grab a cup of coffee and join us for our three 9 a.m. “Breakfast Roundtables,” which are open to anyone. Topics are: Thursday, Women & Women’s Issues; Friday, Gay & Lesbian Issues; Saturday, People of Color Issues.

Other sessions range from an analysis of Kentucky women in theatre (Friday, 4 p.m.), to a performance of Pearl Cleage’s A Song for Coretta (Thursday, 10:30 a.m.), to “Celebrating Women in Stage Movement” (Friday, 5:30 p.m.), to “Defining Black in Theatre” (Saturday, 1 p.m.)

All who are interested in cultural diversity are invited to our interest group meeting Thursday at 5:30 p.m.

Michael Howley, Chair
Cultural Diversity Committee
mhowley@alus.edu

film/tv

View Digital Cinema and TV Festival

his year's convention will see the inauguration of the SETC Digital Cinema and Television Festival. Come watch as we screen the entries at 5:30 p.m. Thursday. New York Film Academy has generously offered a full-tuition scholarship to its 2010 summer program for the best entry by a high school student.

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Join us for our interest group meeting Saturday at noon.

Jeffrey Green, Chair
Film/Television Committee
jgreen@canes.gsw.edu

Cultural Diversity Committee Chair
jmatthew@sewanee.edu

Jennifer Matthews

Dawn Larsen

film/tv

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Join us for our interest group meeting Saturday at noon.

Jeffrey Green, Chair
Film/Television Committee
jgreen@canes.gsw.edu

history

Explore dramaturgy and more

D on’t miss our annual Young Scholar’s Award panel, scheduled for Thursday at 4 p.m. during the SETC Convention. It will feature the winning paper presentations from graduate student Alice Allen and undergraduate student Mary Robinson.

Our workshops for the 2010 convention include panels of interest to students, scholars and professionals.

For example, “Dramaturgy: What in the Word Is it?” and “Dramaturgy: Pursuing the Word” will be of interest to students and professionals. “The Problem of Teaching Shakespeare” will be of special interest to teachers.

The following panels will appeal to students and academics interested in theatre history:


We would like to invite you to attend our
committee forum and meeting, scheduled for Saturday at 1 p.m., where we will discuss, among other things, theatre history, theory, criticism, and literature! We will also discuss plans for the continued Young Scholar’s Award program, as well as strategic and long-range planning to better define and shape our committee into a more grounded presence at SETC. We would love to hear your thoughts.

Dawn Larsen, Chair
History/Theory/Crit/Lit Committee
llarsen@fmarion.edu

movement———

Experiment with masks, mime, more

Whether you are an experienced performer, an educator or a young student, you will find exciting programs in stage movement at SETC 2010. Most movement workshops are geared toward experienced performers and university or conservatory students; some are geared toward educators and directors. Topics include discovering a character’s physical life, mime, mask work, stage combat, Laban, Alexander Technique, Suzuki, Commedia dell’Arte, physical comedy and Chekhov’s psychological gesture. “Make It, Take It: Fleece Balls and Juggling 101” is a wonderful workshop for high school students as well as people at any stage in their career who want to try juggling for the first time! “Masks for the Performer, Teacher and Director Who’s Been Handed a Mask and Thought, Now What?” is a program to assist educators in teaching mask work in their classes. Several introductory workshops, such as “Feldenkrais Technique and Voice,” “MELT for Actors” and “Viewpoints” provide the professional/adult actor with new insights as well as people at any stage in their career who want to try juggling for the first time! “Masks for the Performer, Teacher and Director Who’s Been Handed a Mask and Thought, Now What?” is a program to assist educators in teaching mask work in their classes. Several introductory workshops, such as “Feldenkrais Technique and Voice,” “MELT for Actors” and “Viewpoints” provide the professional/adult actor with new insights as well as people at any stage in their career who want to try juggling for the first time! “Masks for the Performer, Teacher and Director Who’s Been Handed a Mask and Thought, Now What?” is a program to assist educators in teaching mask work in their classes.

Playwriting ———

Attend play readings, workshops

This year’s convention will include 12 panels and meetings covering areas of special interest to playwrights, both practicing professionals and new writers.

Don’t miss the staged readings of this year’s Charles M. Getchell Playwriting Award-winning play (Friday, 7 p.m.) and the High School Play Contest winner (Saturday 10:30-11:50 a.m.).

Workshops include: “The Hated Synopsis,” to help playwrights compose synopses of their work (Saturday, 9:10-20 a.m.), and “The Dramatist’s Bill of Rights” (Thursday, 5:30-6:50 p.m.), both led by Dramatists Guild executive Gary Garrison; “Breaking into the NYC Playwriting Scene” with Rosary O’Neill (Thursday, 4:5-20 p.m.); and a panel by Fairmont State University faculty and students detailing how they created a play from an oral history about the 1968 Fairmont mining disaster.

In addition, I will lead two panels of playwrights – one discussing the difficulties of creating stage adaptations of nondramatic works (such as novels) in “Whose Line Is It Anyway?” (Friday, 9:10-20 a.m.) and the other a discussion on the pros and cons of play development in “Being Pecked to Death by Ducks” (Saturday, 10:30-11:50 a.m.).

All are invited to our interest group meeting Thursday from 9-10:20 a.m.

Steve Burch, Chair
Playwriting Committee
sburch@as.ua.edu

religion———

Find faith, theatre connections

I am excited to be the new chair of the Religion and Theatre Committee. If you’re interested in how faith and theatre intersect, please come to our interest group meeting Friday at 5:30 p.m. This will be an informal chance to meet others with similar interests and discuss what you’d like to see from the committee.

Workshops of special interest to adults include Kevin Kern’s “Teaching Shakespeare Behind Bars” (recently featured in Southern Theatre) and a session on possibly using theatre in treating Asperger’s Syndrome, led by Dale Savidge.

Convention attendees also may be interested in several sessions of advice and discussion on the life of a working actor from a spiritual perspective. I’m also leading a session examining a mystery play that I recently adapted and staged using medieval texts, actor-developed movement techniques and masks.

If any of these sessions – or the area in general – appeal to you, please look me up in Lexington.

E. Bert Wallace, Chair
Religion and Theatre Committee
wallacebe@campbell.edu

voice/speech———

Expand your range in voice

His has been an exciting year in the world of voice and speech. If you have a chance, check out American Theatre magazine’s January edition, which focuses primarily on voice practitioners, including Janet B. Rogers, one of our members from Virginia Commonwealth University, who will be leading a workshop with Marlene Johnson at the SETC Convention, “Vocal Archetypes.”

Other workshops cover topics that should appeal to adults and students alike. We have discussion-based workshops such as “Preparing For Tenure and Promotion” and “Y Buzz… A Spectrographic Analysis of Lessac Tonal NRG” and experimental explorations such as “Avoid Straining Your Voice-Resonate!” and “Feldenkrais Technique and Voice.”

Students (and adults) will highly benefit from the voice/body warm-up sessions offered each morning.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the meet and greet Thursday at 8:30 p.m. and at the voice and speech interest group meeting Friday at 5:30 p.m., following by a “burning issues” workshop at 7 p.m. This session is a fantastic way for all professionals, educators and students to share their explorations with other voice and speech practitioners.

Robin Carr, Chair
Voice and Speech Committee
Robin.Carr@usm.edu

INTEREST AREA NEWS, EVENTS

Tiza Garland
Chair
Stage Movement Committee
TizaG1@aol.com

Tiza Garland

E. Bert Wallace

Steve Burch

Robin Carr
Take a ‘Moment’ to Make Connections, Serve SETC

“Every little moment has a meaning all its own.” - Sanford Meisner

I am fond of quotes, and so it is fitting that I open my last column as president with a quote from one of the great acting coaches. It has been a year since I took office, yet it has only been a moment in the broader perspective of my SETC involvement.

I trace the roots of my “moment” to 2001, when I first served SETC as a location volunteer coordinator when the convention came to Jacksonville. I continued serving as a volunteer, which evolved into the role of convention on-site supervisor. Continued service and commitment to SETC led me to become an elected member of the Executive Committee.

My service in this organization has been meaningful in so many ways. It has fostered personal and professional growth, while also allowing me to make a wealth of connections with others dedicated to theatre arts. I leave this position in March in the very capable hands of Alan Litsey, but I do not leave the organization. Does anyone ever truly leave SETC?

During my “moment” as president, we started groundbreaking work on a new organizational plan, and now we need input from you to complete it. Consider this as your moment to bring new meaning to your work with SETC. Volunteer, and you too can grow with SETC as it continues its work as a model arts organization that is recognized as a leader in the theatre community.

Share Your Input on SETC’s Strategic Plan at Convention

Members are invited to share ideas for SETC’s strategic plan at two sessions during the SETC Convention in Lexington, KY.

Thursday, 10:30 a.m.-11:50 a.m., Hilton - Blackberry Lily
“SETC’s Strategic Planning Talkback”
Presiders: Bill Mitchell (Strategic Planning Consultant), Betsey Baun (SETC Executive Director), Beth Harvey (SETC President, Florida CC Jacksonville)

Here is your chance to hear about the exciting strategic planning process SETC embarked on last fall. Ask questions. Share insights. Discuss our organization’s exciting future. Join us!

Saturday, 10:30 a.m.-11:50 a.m., Hilton - Saddlebred
“Inspiration Station: Share Your Story”
Presenter: Dennis Wemm (Glenville State College)

SETC has always provided its participants with an exciting place to connect with others. Make yourself part of SETC’s strategic plan by sharing your most exciting moment. Stories will be recorded!

SETC and Theatre Enhance, Change Lives

It is a privilege to serve SETC and support the art form of theatre. Theatre is personal. Theatre makes a difference. SETC strives to nurture theatre and theatre people, providing opportunities to connect on many levels: professionally, socially, educationally and artistically.

We – you and I – are SETC. We make things happen in our organization. Got a great idea? Want to get more involved? Contact a member of our Board or our Central Office staff. It’s that easy.

Want to help chart our organization’s future? Within the context of our strategic planning process, we continue to have conversations about the future and how our organization can best serve its members. I hope you will join us for the Strategic Planning Talkback on Thursday, March 4. (See details above.) Come. Ask questions. Share insights. Discuss our organization’s exciting future. Join us!

I also invite you to explore our website, which continues to grow and improve. And did you know SETC is on Facebook? Take a minute to become a fan! There’s a link at www.setc.org.

In our ever-evolving world of electronic communication and distraction – our daily swirl of e-mail, iPods and smart phones – quality human interaction is becoming more and more elusive. Theatre provides an opportunity for us to reflect on our relationships as we see our stories told. Theatre not only enhances lives, theatre changes lives. As members of SETC, we grow the theatre of the present – and the future.

Ask SETC

I’ve got a great idea for a magazine article. How can I get it published in SETC’s quarterly magazine, Southern Theatre?

Come to the session, How to Become a Writer or Editorial Board Member for Southern Theatre, SETC’s Popular Magazine, at 4 p.m., Friday, March 5. This workshop will provide information on how you can write for the magazine and help shape the magazine’s content as a member of the Editorial Board.

OFFICER COLUMNS, CONVENTION NEWS

EXCOM NEWS by President Beth Harvey

You recently received a document via e-mail describing proposed amendments to SETC Bylaws. These changes were approved by the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors on September 12, 2009, at the annual fall meeting in Charlotte, NC. These changes must be approved by a majority of voting members present at the Annual Business Meeting on Saturday, March 6, 2010, in order to take effect.

Please take a few minutes to review these changes, for they are critical to the future growth and leadership of SETC. The changes are posted on the SETC website. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me (beth@setc.org) or any member of the Executive Committee.
Looking for an Offstage Job? Or an Offstage Employee? Try SETC’s New Online S.O.R.T. Program!

SETC has launched a new online resource called S.O.R.T. (SETC’s Online Resumes for Theatre), which makes SETC even more useful to those seeking a job and to employers seeking employees. S.O.R.T. is an online service with up-to-date features that allow job seekers to present themselves in the most advantageous way. S.O.R.T. is designed for off-stage job seekers (anyone but performers) looking for theatre work.

How it works for job seekers

Job seekers should go to http://sort.setc.org where they can register for the service. Once a job seeker has registered with a login name and a password, he can move on to his “profile” page, which organizes his resume for employers’ perusal.

Cost for job seekers

The cost for S.O.R.T. services is a reasonable $45 for three months. Job seekers who pre-registered for Job Contact Service at the 2010 convention will automatically get a free, three-month subscription to the service. Inactive resumes can be stored on-site. Later, upon paying the S.O.R.T. fee, you can access your resume, edit, as necessary and make it public again.

How it works for employers

You must be an SETC organizational member to access S.O.R.T. To use the service, organizational members simply contact the SETC Central Office to obtain a login name and password. They then can search the candidate pool in several ways: by job title, dates the person is needed and location of the job.

Making the most of S.O.R.T.

S.O.R.T. offers great opportunities for finding work, but it is only as good as the information it shares. Job candidates should present themselves as dynamic and experienced theatre practitioners. A successful profile will reflect the candidate’s best assets. If, however, candidates fill the categories carelessly, employers will probably think them unqualified and move on.

In researching the site, I accessed a number of profiles. Generally, I found the profiles not well done at all. Whole categories were left blank; many students failed to state their objective (It can be as simple as “I want to find a job in Stage Management.”) I urge job seekers to take the time to develop accurate, detailed profiles if they wish to get good value for their money. Since networking is so important in theatre, be sure to provide locations where you have worked and mention supervisors’ names.

The service is very easy to use and provides a great service. Credit for conceiving and developing this new service goes to Betsey Baun, April J’Callahan Marshall and Chris Chandler in the SETC Central Office.

Contact Don Wolfe at wolfe@wfu.edu.

‘If It’s Tuesday, This Must Be Belgium!’

The 1969 comedy of that name translates in SETC’s production world to “If it’s 2010, this must be Lexington!” And if it’s 2011, it is Atlanta. What about 2012? Chattanooga! And if it’s 2013, it must be Louisville. That’s our SETC Convention line-up through the next four years.

Our goal of rotating cities in a three-year pattern, plus adding a new site the fourth year, is partially realized. Atlanta and Chattanooga have become part of our rotation. Lexington and Louisville are now being tried out for joining our rotation.

The criteria for selection remain unaltered: a city with all the amenities and facilities we need; easy and affordable travel access; and inexpensive room nights.

We’ve had to drop several cities we visited in the past because our basic criteria could no longer be met. Greensboro’s and Orlando’s hotel room costs are too high.

Arlington, Norfolk and Jacksonville can’t provide enough workshop space.

As our programs and events change or grow, our criteria also changes – and each city has to be reconsidered during the next round. For example, the High School Theatre Festival has grown to include 20 productions performed over two days. This exciting opportunity challenges both the Atlanta and Chattanooga theatre facilities, which were contracted prior to the shift. By the time I signed Louisville on for 2013, the theatre space became a “deal-breaker.”

Lexington, KY, is one of the smallest cities we have visited. However, it has the potential to meet our needs well into the future. It exceeds our basic criteria by offering great theatre, city and individual support, as well as restaurants of the caliber you would expect in larger cities, located within walking distance. There is even free parking! Almost all locations are walkable, and a shuttle will transport you to several overflow hotels and the Community Theatre Festival. This is the first time we have been able to offer a concert in a theatre and an early morning tour. I’ve got my fingers crossed for adding Lexington to the rotation.

Where is SETC in...?

2011 (March 2-6) … Atlanta, GA
2012 (March 7-11) … Chattanooga, TN
2013 (March 5-10) … Louisville, KY

Are You SETC’s Next Winning Playwright?

Entries accepted March 1-June 1

Charles M. Getchell Award

www.setc.org/scholarship/newplay.php

MISSISSIPPI Theatre Association

The Mississippi Theatre Association held its annual festival in Tupelo in January.

Number Attending: 550.

Winners of Community Theatre Festival: Eleemosynary, Actors Playhouse, Pearl, MS.; Rabbit Hole, Starkville Community Theatre, Starkville, MS

Winner of High School Theatre Festival: Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, Oxford High School; The Winner, Pearl River Central High School.
In Memoriam

Karla Johnson Murphy passed away January 11, 2010. She was the wife of Mike Murphy, a professor of theatre design and technology at Marshall University in Huntington, WV.

People on the move

Gweneth West of the University of Virginia and Jeff Gibson of Middle Tennessee State University were recipients of Kennedy Center Medallions at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) Region IV event in February.

Roy Hudson, a theatre teacher at Shades Valley High School and the 2009 Alabama State Teacher of the Year, has a story in the recently published Chicken Soup for the Soul: Teacher Tales.

Jesse Bates, chair of theatre arts at the Alabama School of Fine Arts, received the 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Birmingham Area Theatre Alliance.

Anna Filippo is the new executive director of the Tennessee Theatre Association.

‘Force Majeure’: If the Show Doesn’t Go On, Who Loses Money?

T
his past winter, much of the South was hit with snow and ice. Like many theatregoers, a few Saturdays ago I was paying careful attention to “the whether” – whether the Broadway touring show I had bought tickets for months before would be cancelled.

The news stations were suggesting that people stay off the roads unless absolutely necessary. I knew my street would be a sheet of ice, but that major roads might be passable. What would the theatre do? What about all that fine print on the back of the ticket and on the website?

What about ... “force majeure”? Most contracts – including the contract formed with the purchase of a theatre ticket – have a “force majeure” provision. It provides that, if the contractual obligation cannot be performed because of an act of God, civil disobedience, epidemics, governmental action, fire, earthquake, labor strike or other causes beyond the party’s control, then that party to the contract is not in default. In short, if there is a “force majeure” occurrence, the theatre can cancel the show.

But what then? The various contracts in place (between the theatre and the audience, and between the theatre and the performers or production company) should specify what happens. Does the ticket holder get a refund or a credit (or nothing)? Do the actors and production company get paid anyway?

It is typical for performers to get paid so long as they are ready, willing and able to perform. These terms are negotiable, however. Before signing a contract, both parties should consider what is reasonable under “force majeure” scenarios and negotiate. It is a question of assigning monetary risk. When the show cannot go on for reasons beyond anyone’s control, who should lose money?

Our severe weather this winter is a reminder that these boilerplate terms do have a purpose. Theatres and actors need to think about them before accepting the status quo on a contract form. It’s a bit less important for me, the ticket holder. I might be out the cost of a ticket. But for a theatre or a performer the details of “force majeure” terms can mean thousands of dollars.

Do You Have a Legal Question?

Dan Ellison will discuss theatre and the law at two sessions at the SETC Convention: 4 p.m. Friday and noon Saturday.

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.

People News, The Law

Where to Send News

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