



NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



In our culture, as well as many others, it is common to measure time by accomplishments- week by week, year by year and even generation by generation – we ask, “what have we done?” I recently spent some vacation time in the Shenandoah Valley where I was reminded of our country’s history, recent and distant, accomplishments and disappointments. I was reminded of how deep local experiences are and how significant the national relevance

can then be and how the reverse is also true. Now, back at SDC, I am thinking about the tension between the local and national, between the individual and the collective, between the one and the industry and our need to set priorities and serve them all. Some say that the economy is improving -- certain sectors are weathering the storm and yet it is still unclear what the landscape will look like in the years ahead. One day Healthcare reform seems possible and the next it seems so very far away. We are sending all our support to Rocco Landesman as he steps in to lift the NEA up a notch, or two, or three. We are here supporting freelance artists as they try to piece together a living and Artistic Directors as they work to guide their organizations through this time.

What have we accomplished here at SDC? As we set our goals for the year ahead, as the theatrical Season begins for most of you and we make our plans, we stop for a moment – how are we doing? It seems the past year, for many, has been as much about minimizing losses as measuring gains. Very little looks the same today as it did just one year ago – we stood here just moments away from some pretty momentous events - bringing with them both hope and fear. Our financial systems unraveled before our eyes and the election season had most of us sitting on the edge of our seats. Many have spent the last year bracing themselves for the fall-out, for the next shoe to drop, waiting for another aftershock, holding our breath, hoping, celebrating and carrying on. Will our communities rise up to support our theatres? Does the recent news of a few prominent universities eliminating or dramatically reducing theatre programs portend more to come?

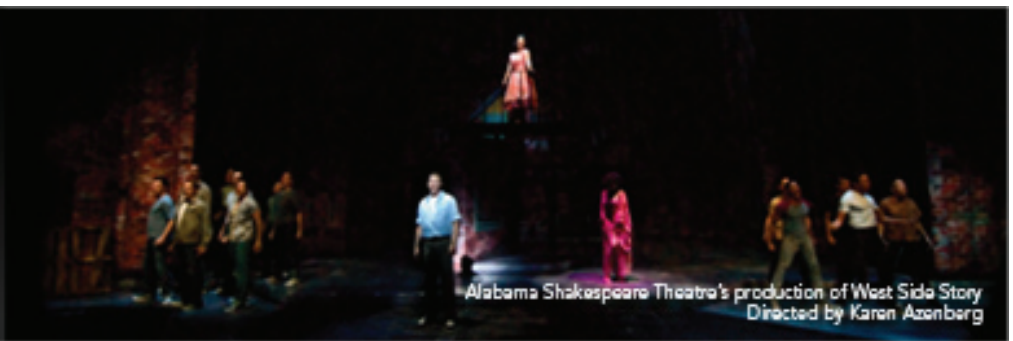
One university closing its theatre department is Western Washington University. My heart aches for the professionals and students who will no longer have that program. I am all too aware of how many of you teach in higher education. And my worries go beyond any one university campus. During my time in Seattle I was involved in working

to ensure that the arts were required in K-12 public education. We finally succeeded in part because we were able to point to university requirements – universities required incoming students to have arts as part of their basic education and therefore public schools had to provide it. What happens now if universities don’t provide theatre or arts degrees? Will they eventually not care if incoming students have music or dance or art? It is a delicate eco-system and our already fragile public school education could be further weakened. But I digress...

A year ago -- September 2008 we had just entered the first year of a new three year plan. A plan which focused the Union on three critical areas: Core, Infrastructure and Communications. A year later – here is some of what we have done:

The Core: your dedicated Executive Board and the staff here at SDC have navigated contract negotiations extremely well during this complex time. While always working to improve fees and wages, we have also focused our efforts on Health contributions. We have (as many of you know all too well) made some very difficult decisions regarding eligibility for benefits – and we have made clear to our bargaining partners that they must play a role in stabilizing our Health Plan. I am pleased to be able to report that, to date, employers are rising to the occasion with IPAs, Troika and others increasing Health contributions. While not always easy for these theatres, they recognize the significance of your work and the importance of Health contributions as part of your compensation package. September will be a critical month as we hold negotiations with LORT as well as work to bring our Broadway negotiations to a conclusion. The resulting terms of these two negotiations, combined with our new Tier initiative should give us the variables we need to assess more specifically the future our Health Fund, with our goal to rebuild in order to provide you with the benefits you need and deserve.

Another Core goal has been to more formally organize the full range of theatres which employ you. It is a diverse and varied ranged of employers – for this specifically the Tier was introduced and has shown early signs of being extremely effective. To date we have signed 115 Tier contracts with 47 theatres, most of whom have signed on paying at or above what they had previously paid. Finally across all negotiations we are paying close attention to new media and electronic rights and we have been very successful in bringing terms and conditions up to date in this rapidly changing area. All of this work on contracts had been supported by staff and Executive Board leader-



ship who are working to get out of New York more often, in an effort to better understand your work, the environment in which you are practicing your craft and to meet with employers to better understand their challenges.

In the area of Infrastructure, our key initiative has been technology. Creating a porous environment and the necessary tools to fully serve a national membership has been a priority. Whether it is through an up-to-date phone system or integrated information systems, SDC has been advancing our ability to manage data and analyze information all with a desire to strategically advance our work. The clearest demonstration is the new website which, needless to say, only happens with a great deal of work on the back end. The staff now has the capacity to function on an integrated platform and we are creating efficiencies which allow us to find better ways to serve the Membership. It is a multi-year initiative that will, in the end, provide you with online access to your account information, fees, dues, pension credits, etc.

Our third goal area is Communications and we are truly building the bridge while we cross the river when it comes to overall Communications for the Union. As we have said in the past, the 50th brings cause for celebration but more importantly it provides a vehicle for us all to explore what the Union is, what it does and how we choose to do our work. The timing is fortuitous – as there is no better time than a challenging time to make sure an organization is focused, clear about its goals and aspirations as well as finding ways to succinctly communicate with its constituents. The re-branding work that took place earlier in the year has already brought a sense of unity and clarity to much of our work and will continue to do so over the coming years.

With the recent publication of The Journal we visited the past of SDC in great detail. Now we are focused on today and have been working to reinvigorate our DCN programming. We are focusing the DCN on issues and using them to discover what the questions are. What are you asking about how you do your work? What do you need and how do you respond to external events? Later in this issue we report more on recent events. Later this fall you will begin to see LORT theatres recognizing SDC's anniversary through a special program we have been working on with institutional leaders. We are reaching out and engaging in conversations with audiences around the country about the work of Directors and Choreographers – trying to illuminate the "what do you do?" of this, at times, illusive craft.

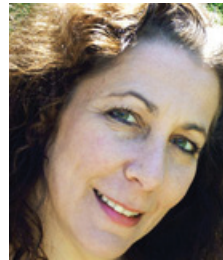
And we set about continuing to do the good work – setting goals, measuring progress. We respond to the external environment and we adjust according to your needs. As always, keep in touch, direct us, encourage us and tell us what you're up to – stop in and see us –

and vote. Vote in the SDC elections and in your local elections. It is singularly one of the most important things you can do. Hope to see you soon.

Best Wishes,
Laura Penn, Executive Director

NEWS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

By Karen Azenberg, SDC Executive Board President



My kids just came back from summer camp. While for most of us that brings to mind campfires and mosquito bites, what their enthusiasm and, frankly, giddiness about their summer experience brings to my mind is the joy and comfort of spending time in a community of peers; it was a four week party. Well it is time to party! On November 8th in celebration of our

50th Anniversary we are having a gala event in New York. It is going to be a once in a lifetime celebration of both SDC and every one of its Members. The theme of the evening is "Legacy," which I think reflects the work of our illustrious Founders as well as our Honorary "50 for the 50th" – an amazing list of 50 living leaders in the fields of direction and choreography – and also looks forward to the future generations of directors and choreographers. Legacy...how many of us can pinpoint the beginning of our careers to advice, guidance, or an opportunity given by another director or choreographer, maybe they are one of the folks we are recognizing? Ours is a craft that is very often literally handed down from one generation to the next and in this age of technology, that itself is a dying art. The SDC and the SDC Foundation are committed to preserving that legacy, our legacy, and assisting a new generation in securing the kind of access to working directors and choreographers that will allow for these experiences and knowledge to be passed down for another 50 years and beyond. To that end the proceeds from our Gala event will be going to support and expand our SDCF Fellowship and Observership Programs. Sure this is a difficult time for all theatre artists, but I think in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of this Union we can best honor those who have helped each of us by paying it forward and doing the same for those that are coming after us. So I hope you got the magnet to "Save the Date", now watch for your invitation. And if you aren't in New York, schedule that audition trip for November 8! There are many different levels of participation which we hope will encourage everyone to attend, so you will be able to tell your mentees that you were a part of this very special event, kind of like summer camp – but better food, drink and no mosquito bites!!!



MEMBER SERVICES UPDATE

By Gretchen M. Michelfeld, Membership Coordinator



Those of you who've been coming to SDC Foundation and Special Program events over the years have no doubt noticed something new. This spring we decided to change up our popular Director/Choreographer Network meetings. We left behind the traditional panel/audience format and embraced a "roundtable" approach, which we hope will lead to more organic and diverse discussions.

One of the most exciting things to come out of the 2009 DCN's so far has been the beginning of a new SDC Member Library in the Founder's Lounge. In May, the DCN topic was "Sharing Resources in Tough Economic Times," and we asked attendees to think of ways SDC could help its Members and Associates weather the present recession. Associate Member, **Nicole Watson** talked about the need to access new plays without spending a lot of money. Together we came up with the idea to start a Library of newly-published new works. I reached out to the SDC Executive Board for donations and the books have been pouring in! We've been cleaning out the room adjacent to the Founder's Lounge (previously used for storage), and plan to furnish it with a comfy chair, a good reading lamp and lots of new plays. I'll keep you posted about our progress and let you know as soon as the Library is officially open. For any Board Members or Tony voters reading this, I still need donations. I'm looking for published plays and musicals that have recently been produced or revived on or off Broadway or in a major festival like Humana or EST. (In an effort to help more of our Members see each other's work, I'd also like to remind Artistic Directors, both in NYC and across the country to think of SDC when you have an invited dress rehearsal or if you're having a slow week and need to paper. You can contact me for details: GMichelfeld@SDCweb.org.)

In June, Executive Director Laura Penn and Contract Administrator Randy Anderson led a vigorous DCN discussion about New Media. They were especially glad to have your input as the media component of each contract negotiation becomes more and more intricate. In July Laura and I lead a discussion about the challenges and rewards of doing non-traditional work. Our special guests included **Stephanie Gilman**, **Joanne Zipay** and actress/producer Catherine Porter. Their contributions to the dialogue were fascinating.

We've taken a DCN break in August, but are back at it in September. September 29th at 6PM is the next roundtable and the topic will be

"Audition Strategies for Directors: examining different content and structure models." We'll discuss the most interesting and productive ways to find a great cast.

There are lots of terrific topics coming up including: "Orchestration 101," "Creating a Choreographic Vocabulary," "Working with Writer-Performers," and "Creating a Rich Children's Theatre Experience."

Feel free to email me at SpecialPrograms@SDCweb.org if you have ideas for future DCN's. I'd love to hear them all!

GREEN COMMITTEE UPDATE

By SDC Contract Administrator, Randy Anderson



This fall the Henry Miller's Theatre will open with the Roundabout's production of *Bye, Bye Birdie*. Broadway hasn't seen a new theatre in over twenty years, and it's never seen a theatre quite like this. Recycled materials, waterless urinals, energy efficient lighting, and state of the art cooling systems all come together to create Broadway's first green theatre and it's the first New York theatre to meet the environmental standards of the United States Green Building Council.

It's a monumental moment for Broadway and one more performing house in a growing list of green theatres. Portland Center Stage's Gerding Theater was the first US theatre to receive a LEED (Leaders in Energy and Environmental Design) certification, Berkeley's Greek Theatre went carbon neutral a few years ago and the Wild Project in New York City opened their green theater in 2007. It's an exciting time for green architecture and inspiring to see the performing arts at the forefront. For more information on these and other 'greening' theatres visit the Green Theater Initiative website at www.greentheaters.org

Nothing enables theatre productions to go green better than a theatre built or renovated with green efficiencies. But just because you're working in a drafty 80 year-old barn turned theatre doesn't mean you can't be green. As **John Carrafa** wrote in this newsletter earlier this year, there are many things you as a director or choreographer can do to encourage green practices wherever you work. If you want to learn more, contact us at gogreen@sdcweb.org.



FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY UPDATE

By Karina Miller, Director of the 50th Anniversary Initiative



There are so many exciting things happening in the world of the 50th Anniversary I don't know where to begin. Let's start with the website. I'm hoping that by now most of you have visited the new website and are finding it informative and user-friendly. The part that excites me the most is the online community forums. When I did the initial brand audit the one thing that everyone I interviewed kept coming back to was the sense of disconnect they felt as a Director or Choreographer – not from their work, but from other people

in their profession. Over the last 8 months we've held some focused Membership Meetings in regions around the country. We're constantly amazed how excited Members are to meet other Members in their area. This is the type of energy and sense of community that we're hoping to build with the forums. For example, SDC Contract Administrator Randy Anderson is currently planning a trip to the greater Philadelphia area and has set up a new forum thread in hopes of gathering more information about the Philly-area theatre community. This forum will engage Members from all over Philadelphia in conversation, not only with SDC but with each other as well. It's only one example of the way this new technology is going to help make our Members feel more connected to each other.

As busy as the summer has been for the 50th, the fall/winter season has even more in store for you. The first event is the 50th Anniversary One-on-One Conversation Series. For those of you who have not experienced this before this series provides the rare opportunity to interact with masters of the theatre, and hear them speak on a broad range of topics. Each 90-minute session is an in-depth interview of artists by a moderator, with questions from an audience of directors, choreographers, students, theatre artists and theatre enthusiasts. In honor of our 50th Anniversary this year's One-on-One conversation will be with **Hal**



Prince, moderated by Robert Marx of the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation. The event will be held on the evening of Monday October 5th at Playwrights Horizons. Tickets will be \$15 for Members and Associates and \$20 for the general public. We will notify you as soon as tickets go on sale with Ticket Central.



The biggest event of the season will most definitely be our 50th Anniversary Gala. The evening of Sunday November 8th will include both a fundraiser for the SDC Foundation as well as a huge celebratory dance party where members of the entire theatrical community are welcome to join us in celebrating the first

50 years of this vital organization. **Kathleen Marshall** and **Rob Ashford** are coordinating the entertainment for the fundraiser and **Bill Castellino** has some surprises in store for the dance party. We hope to see you all there – dancing the night away. Keep an eye on your mailboxes as invites, including an advance purchase discount for the dance party, will be arriving within the next few weeks.



For those of you on the West Coast who are unable to make it to NYC for the Gala we have a special event planned in the LA-area on Sunday December 6th. This cocktail evening celebration will include the presentation of a brand new award, the details of which will be divulged soon. I would like to thank **Art Manke** and **Douglas Clayton** for co-chairing the event. More details to follow shortly.

Thank you again to all Members and Associates for your patience during the web-transition. I look forward to celebrating with you over the next few months.

GALA PHOTO CALL

As part of the 50th Anniversary Gala celebration in November we are celebrating Legacy – the legacy of our Founders, the legacy of our Union and the legacy of our Members—all of our Members! One element of the celebration will be a collection of photographs of our Members from all around the world which will be on display throughout the room. Help us celebrate the legacy of our union by helping us celebrate you! Send in your pictures of yourself and other Members, especially pictures taken in the rehearsal room of you doing what you do best!

Please send your images as JPEGs to Fiftieth.Anniversary@SDCweb.org

Don't forget to include the **Name of the Member** in the photo and the **Name of the Production** being rehearsed. Thank you for your help in creating a visual legacy for the SDC!



Alabama Shakespeare Theatre's production of West Side Story
Directed by Karen Azenberg

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

By SDC Contract Administrator, Evan Shoemake



Securing a position as a full-time faculty member at a college or university, can be an incredible professional and creative opportunity, but it can also be quite challenging. Many Directors and Choreographers are thrilled to have the chance to work full time in higher education for a variety of reasons. The college/university setting is a great place to take a crack at those shows that you have always

wanted to mount but haven't necessarily found the right opportunity. These settings are also beneficial because there is a greater freedom to try new things, re-imagine old work and build new pieces with a group of students who are generally as enthusiastic, if not more so, than the Director/Choreographer!

As most SDC Members know, whenever you work, you must file a contract. Of course, there are exceptions, the realm of higher education sometimes being one of them. So, what do you do when directing/choreographing is only part of the overall reason you are hired by a college/university and therefore filing a contract isn't necessarily an option? How do Members balance the opportunities available to them within the university system while maintaining their status as a Member of the SDC? For the answers to this and other questions, we turn to **John Dillon**. Dillon is Director of the Theatre Program at Sarah Lawrence College, chair of the SDC College/University Committee, and the person who designed the rules for filing contracts in the college/university setting and helped set up the U/RTA contract, thereby facilitating more Members to work in higher education.

What is the process of directing/choreographing like on a college campus versus in a regional or commercial theatre? Is your focus different? Is your style of working different?

Usually all the collaborators are with you from the inception of the project so it's easy to constantly collaborate. The rehearsal time is longer so you get the pleasure of being able to chew over decisions and have a longer gestation process. The thing about the regional production is that the actors are more skilled and ready to move quickly. Students may lack that, but I can decide in the 4th week of rehearsal that I have done something wrong and need to start over. Colleges and universities are willing to take greater risks because the box office doesn't dominate, so colleges may be more accommodating to projects that seem "out there." It's a great way to test stuff that could go on and have a life in the professional arena.

What is it like, working as a Director/professor at an institution of higher learning, where you're not only preparing and working with students to make them excel in any given production but also dealing with the added challenge of making them the best actors they can be so they can find work upon graduation?

Because Sarah Lawrence is a liberal arts college with no official theatre major, some students have professional aspirations and some don't, so I don't concern myself with that. I try to apply professional standards and a work ethic but I don't do anything differently with any other show.

What makes working with college-aged students different, if at all, than working with say professional actors in regional and commercial theatre?

What the students lack in craft they make up for in enthusiasm. There is a "we'll try anything, we're up for anything, and we're not committed to an image of who we are" attitude; they are really exhilarating.

Student crises get less lead time than the professionals. A student might come two days in advance saying "I'm freaking out, I might fail Chemistry" so you have to be flexible. They are also not being compensated; it's part of their educational process.

Is there a benefit to filing a contract when working at a University? Why? Why not?

I have to file because directing isn't included in my job description. As the Director of the theatre program I'm not required to direct shows. When I do I take it on it's as an optional activity, but they value my SDC Membership so I receive extra money and I file a contract. I have a heavy workload and can't direct as much as I'd like so having it as an option is ideal. Filing a contract clarifies my work as an artist versus being a teacher versus being an administrator because they are unique – I'm functioning as an artist, not as a teacher. By filing a contract I am making clear to the university that I am functioning in a different capacity as an artist. For example, if I write a book I expect to receive royalties and as a Director/artist I'm doing the same thing, making a contribution to the school but also making them understand who I am an artist. When I explain to the cast that I'm filing an SDC contract I also explain why this is important.

How does a Director make a career, if possible, as a Director of higher education productions?

I would like to see more Directors working in the college/university setting because nothing clarifies what a professional Director does



more than having one on a college campus. That's why the SDCF Guest Artist Initiative was created, why it's important, and why we're seeing growth. Many colleges/universities would like to hire SDC Members but don't know how to do it. Directors/Choreographers on campuses need to do a better job of networking so that people can make a living at doing it in colleges and universities. I'm different because I'm a full time employee, but I would like to do more freelance work in colleges/universities.

With the new SDC guidelines for healthcare working in higher education can help Members get closer to health insurance eligibility, particularly by utilizing the Guest Artist Initiative. SDCF's Guest Artist Initiative Program is a new grant program for American colleges and universities that encourages the hiring of professional stage Directors and Choreographers as guest artists and to provide up to \$5000 in matching funds for the guest artist's fee.

More information about the SDCF's Guest Artist Initiative Program visit www.SDCWeb.org.

John Dillon has staged productions at leading theatres in England, Russia, Japan, and Egypt and has directed few works by such noted playwrights as David Mamet, Romulus Linney, Larry Shue, Y York, Anthony Clavoe, Joanna Glass, Ariel Dorfman, David Rambo, and Amlin Gray. Dillon has also staged productions in over two dozen of the country's leading regional theatres, including Atlanta's Alliance Theatre, D.C.'s Arena Stage, Chicago's Goodman Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, New Haven's Long Wharf, the Missouri Rep, Seattle's ACT Theatre, Chapel Hill's PlayMakers Rep, Syracuse Stage, the Georgia Shakespeare Festival, the Seattle Children's Theatre, the Berkeley Rep, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where his staging of WIT won him a Backstage West Garland Award. He holds a B.A. and an M.A. from Northwestern University, an M.F.A. from Columbia University. Dillon lives in Mt. Vernon with his wife, Joanna Melamed.

Dillon served as artistic Director of the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre for 16 years from 1976 to 1993.



WHERE IN THE WORLD IS SDC:

By Wendy C. Goldberg, SDC Executive Board and Artistic Director of The National Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center

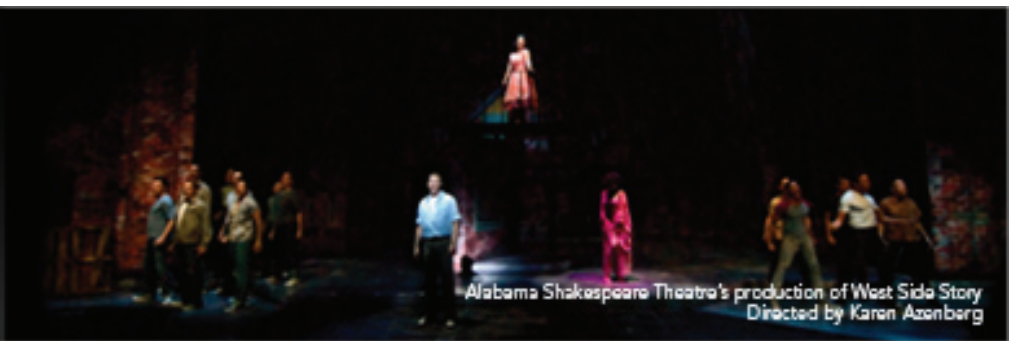


On July 8th 2009, I organized a discussion to promote, educate and bring an additional level of visibility to the work that is done by SDC. The event was the first of its kind and part of a larger effort designed by a small working committee on the Executive Board to both further an understanding of the work of directors and choreographers as well as celebrate SDC's 50th anniversary. The idea (we hope) is to have Artistic Directors at theatres across the country talk about their personal relationship to the Union and to help educate audiences about our work as artists.

I invited Laura Penn to join me; and the audience for this particular event was ideal. I scheduled it so it would fall during the week of our annual Trustee Residency Conference. This season the conference was led by Jed Bernstein, and the mission of this program is to educate Trustees from theatres across the country about their role on a Board as well as to help them understand the needs of new plays as they are nurtured, developed and produced. This season we had Trustees present from The Alliance Theater in Atlanta, Dad's Garage Theater also in Atlanta, Seattle Rep, and Northern Stage in Vermont. In addition to this audience, I invited the student directors working on campus as assistants, including our own SDC Award Winner from the Kennedy Center's American College Theater Festival, **Doug Oliphant**.

The conversation was wide ranging. We began by talking a bit about the history of the Union and why it exists. We then moved on to current relationships to the Union, talking about the nature of being a director and educating the audience on the role of a director in a development or production process. Since we had students present, we were also able to talk about all of the various programs that exist through the SDC Foundation as many questions were brought up around seeking out assisting opportunities. I was also able to encourage the directors to become SDC Associate Members so they can stay in the loop with our publications and website information. At the end of the hour we distributed SDC "swag"—The Journal, SDC postcards and pens that light up (in four different colors, brilliant for note taking in the dark!)

Everyone felt the event was successful and meaningful for our participants. It was an honor to host a "kick off" event of this kind, and I am looking forward to hearing about what other Artistic Directors will do at their companies as we move forward in celebration of our 50th year.



WHERE IN THE WORLD IS SDC?

by Ethan McSweeney, SDC Executive Board and Artistic Director, Chautauqua Theater Company



"Oh, I will have to come visit you at Chautauqua this summer!" Laura blithely enthused at the June Board meeting, little aware of what she might be getting herself into. Native American names can be tricky. "Chautauqua" (pronounced shuh-taw-kwuh) sounds a lot like "Chappaqua" (where Bill and Hillary live). One of them is in upstate New

York. The other is in Western New York. And there is a big distance between the two.

Laura hasn't been back East for all that long and it is an easy mistake to make. So on a Friday afternoon in July she and her indefatigable daughter Grace found themselves on an epic 8-hour Amtrak to Buffalo and then a short one-and-a-half hour drive south to the Chautauqua Institution – a trip long enough for Grace to learn to play solitaire, and even to master it.

Situated on the shore of a lake by the same name, the Chautauqua Institution defies easy description. Celebrated historian David McCullough made a game effort when he said: "There is no place like it. No resort. No spa. Not anywhere else in the country or anywhere in the world – it is at once a summer encampment and a small town, a college campus, an arts colony, a music festival, a religious retreat and the village square and there's no place – no place – with anything like its history."

A few years ago, playwright Anthony Clarvoe was up for a month creating a new translation of a neglected Camus play for me, and he walked into rehearsal one day beaming: "I've got it! It's 'NPR – The Theme Park.'"

Both Clarvoe and McCullough get it partly right, but whatever else it is, it is a place where people come to re-enact a kind of civic ideal, one where scholarship and inquiry dominate the day and the arts dominate the night. Alongside our resident theater company, the Institution boasts a resident symphony, dance program, opera, and visual arts program. It is a bit like being in the Berkshires, but everything is within walking distance.

For the last five summers, I have shared the artistic leadership of Chautauqua Theater Company with my partner in art, actress Vivienne Benesch. Together we have led the Company through a period of remarkable growth in audience size and box office income (both up 75%) and in national recognition. At the core of the organization is

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our Conservatory – fourteen emerging actors drawn from the top training programs across the country. These actors share billing with guest actors, directors and designers to create a summer season that includes three full productions and two new play workshops, all within an intense ten-week period.

On deck for Laura's visit was the opening night of my production of *The Glass Menagerie* featuring the fabulous Franchelle Stewart Dorn as Amanda alongside three Conservatory actors: Amelia Pedlow (Juilliard) as Laura, Ryan Garbayo (NYU-Tisch) as Tom, and Kevin Alan Daniels (Yale) as the Gentleman Caller.

SDC connections abounded. Also in attendance at opening night was Member **Anne Kauffman**, who was in her second week of rehearsal for an exquisite production of *The Winter's Tale* that concluded our season, and CTC's Communications Manager, Elizabeth Miller, who held Gretchen M. Michelfeld's title at SDC earlier this year and also helped create the glorious *Journal* published earlier this spring. (It is my profound suspicion that Laura mostly wanted to see Elizabeth, who also coordinated her visit and travel.)

CTC is the Brigadoon of theater companies, springing to life as a full-fledged theater with more than 100 employees between June and August, and then disappearing into the fall mists (with only one full-time employee) between September and May. It has been a remarkably fortunate position for me, providing a full range of artistic director activities and all the drama those entail while still allowing me an active freelance career. CTC not only provides an artistic summer home for me, it also allows us to host other artists in our summer idyll, including Member **Davis McCallum**, who opened our season with a brilliant production of *Arcadia*.

In their whirlwind one day, we took Laura and Grace to a local diner for breakfast, gave them a thorough golf cart tour of the grounds (and yes, Grace got to drive), and then packed them off for an afternoon of mini-golf. That evening the two of them attended opening night and accompanied us to the party late into the evening until Grace determined that her day had been quite full enough.

All in all, the trip was an excellent demonstration of Laura's determination to get out into the field and see Members at work beyond New York City. We were proud to have her come up to CTC and hope that next time she comes, she stays for a week.



FROM THE CONTRACT DESK

By Mauro Melleno, SDC Director of Contract Negotiation



2009 has been (and continues to be) quite a busy year for collective bargaining at SDC. As you may be aware, the SDC/League Agreement, which covers activity on Broadway and 1st class tours/ productions, expired August 31, 2008. Co-Chairs of the Broadway negotiating Committee **Susan H. Schulman** and **Kathleen Marshall**, along with Committee members **Mark Brokaw** and **Walter**

Bobbie have been working tirelessly meeting with representatives of the Broadway League to bring these talks to a close for another multi-year contract.

The SDC/LORT Agreement expired in April 2009 and negotiations are scheduled to begin in New York on September 21. The negotiating team is co-chaired by past Executive Board President **Pamela Berlin** and current President **Karen Azenberg**. Both bring extensive LORT negotiating experience to the table. We will also be guided by Executive Director Laura Penn and Counsel Ron Shechtman.

Co-Chair and Former President **Pamela Berlin** on the negotiations, "Traditionally held in New York over the course of one week, this allows both teams to have a consistent group of negotiators. LORT is our largest collectively bargained agreement. In 2008, 718 LORT contracts were filed, making them an important partner. There are several issues expected to be discussed, during this negotiations, including health contributions, new media agreements, and the difficulties facing LORT theatres in this economy. Watch for updates on our website."

Other Collectively Bargained Agreements expiring this year are the Dinner Theatre Agreement (DTA), expiring October 31, 2009, the Council of Resident Stock Theatres (CORST) Agreement, expiring December 31, 2009, and the Outdoor Musical Stock (OMS) Agreement, expiring January 31, 2010. In addition to the collectively bargained agreements, the following independent producer's agreements will be up for renewal:

Steppenwolf: expired 6/30/2009

Disney: expires 12/31/2009

Chicago Shakespeare Theatre: expires 2/14/2010

Troika: expires 8/31/2009

O'Neill Theatre Center: expires 12/31/2009

Inside Broadway: expires 8/31/2009

NY Stage & Film: expires 12/31/2009

If you have worked on any of the above-mentioned contracts and would like to share your thoughts or get involved, please contact either Randy Anderson (RAnderson@SDCWeb.org) or Renee Lasher (RLasher@SDCWeb.org) at the SDC office.

NEW MEMBERS

Ernest Abuba
Director/Choreographer
New York City

Jeremy Aldridge
Director
North Hollywood, CA*

Carol Dunne
Director
Etna, NH

Robert Randle
Director/Choreographer
New York City

Sarah Rasmussen
Director
Brooklyn, NY

Bill Theisen
Director/Choreographer
Milwaukee, WI

*Upgrade from Associate

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Tom Gualtieri
Director
New York City

Karla Kash
Director/Choreographer
Des Moines, IA

Portia Krieger
Director
Brooklyn, NY

Adam LeGrant
Director
New York City

Yin Mei
Dir/Choreographer
Port Washington, NY

Doug Oliphant
Director
Coventry, CT

Tony Spinosa
Director/Choreographer
New York City

Stephen Wargo
Director
Astoria, NY



HEALTH AND PENSION

By John Everson, SDC-League Funds Administrator



October 1st marks the beginning of a new eligibility period for the SDC-League Health Fund. If you are eligible for benefits for the upcoming six-month period, you should have received formal notice by now from the Fund Office. If you believe that you are eligible, but have not received notification, please give us a call at 212-869-8129.

To be eligible for benefits, your employer(s) must make contributions of at least \$870 during a six-month period, either January through June (for eligibility at October 1st) or July through December (for eligibility at April 1st). When this level is met, you will be entitled to at least six months of paid benefits, with your period of eligibility determined by your first rehearsal date(s). If your contribution level is \$1,740 or more in a six-month period, you will be entitled to a full year of paid benefits. If contributions made on your behalf in a contribution period exceed \$870 but do not reach \$1,740, you may apply the excess to the next period to help meet the minimum eligibility level. Please note however, that excess contributions over \$870 may be carried forward one period only.

We believe that the SDC-League Health Plan continues to be one of the best in the industry. For freelance directors Option A provides first-rate medical and hospitalization coverage that is portable from job to job. For those who have insurance through another source, Option B provides a tax-free \$2200 medical spending account that can cover most out-of-pocket medical costs. Don't ignore this hard-fought-for benefit. It has something to offer all eligible SDC Members.

Q. Once I am eligible, what else do I have to do to obtain benefits?

A. Along with your eligibility notification letter, you will have received an Option Election form. If you have not already done so, please return this form as soon as possible, electing either Option A (for major medical and hospital insurance), or Option B (for the \$2,200 medical spending account) and we will send you additional enrollment materials. Note that if you are electing Option A, you are also required to pay a semi-annual enrollment fee of \$200 for single participation or \$400 for family participation. Family coverage is available on a self-pay basis. While the Fund pays for your coverage, the premiums covering your spouse, partner, and/or children will be your responsibility. Call the Fund Office for details and rates. **Your timely response is important.** Our plans with Oxford and Kaiser require that all enroll-

ments be completed no later than October 31st.

Q. I don't live either in New York or California. How can the Fund help me with my health insurance needs?

A. For those eligible participants who live outside the Oxford and Kaiser service areas, the Trustees have authorized a premium reimbursement arrangement. Quite simply, you may find the best health insurance plan (including dental insurance) available to you in your local area, and the Fund will reimburse your monthly premium up to the amount we pay for participants in New York.

Q. How are the Funds funded?

A. All of the Pension Fund's revenue and most of the Health Fund's revenue comes from contributions your employers are required to make when you work, and from investment income on our reserves. Dues and assessments that you pay to SDC go to support the negotiation and administration of contracts, but do not contribute to your eligibility for benefits through the SDC-League Funds.

While closely affiliated with SDC, the SDC-League Pension and Health Funds are legally separate entities from the Union, and are managed by a joint Board of Trustees. This Board is comprised of four Trustees from SDC (appointed by SDC's Executive Board) and four Trustees from Management (representing Broadway and Tours, Off-Broadway and Regional theatre producers). With advice from the Funds' actuary and consultant, and the guidance of the Funds' co-counsel and accountants, the Trustees have the responsibility for ensuring the fiscal soundness of the Funds, as well as providing the best possible benefits to you, the participants.

ON-LINE CREDIT CARD PAYMENT OPTION NOW AVAILABLE

We are pleased to report that in addition to making your payments for SDC dues and assessments, you may now make payments to the Health Fund on-line. Health Fund payments for your COBRA or family insurance premiums, or your semi-annual Option A enrollment fee may be made with your credit card by logging on to www.SDCweb.org and clicking on "Make A Payment" at the top of the page. If you have questions or need assistance, give us a call at 212-869-8129.

Q. Can I enroll my family members in the Plan?

A. Yes. Spouses or domestic partners and dependant children may be enrolled for benefits under Option A on a self-pay basis. If you are enrolling in the Plan for the first time you may enroll your family members at the beginning of your eligibility period. If you currently are covered, you may enroll your dependants only during specified



open enrollment months, or within thirty days of your marriage or the birth of your child. Call the Fund Office for premium rates and further details.

Q. I am a staff director in a LORT theatre and my theatre provides a health insurance plan for me. Can I still take advantage of Option B?

A. Yes, but only if your employer agrees to make health contributions to the Fund on your behalf. Please note that under the LORT Minimum Basic Agreement theatres may be relieved of their obligation to make contributions to the Fund for staff directors if they are already providing health insurance for those individuals. If you are a LORT Artistic or staff director and want Option B in addition to your theatre's health plan, you must negotiate with your theatre to make the appropriate health contribution for each production you direct.

Q. How do I know which Option is the right choice for me?

A. Only you can make the final decision about your health care needs and options. For most people the first priority is securing good major medical and hospitalization insurance to cover you in the event of injury or illness. Option A provides such insurance through Oxford Health Plans in the New York City metropolitan area, through Kaiser Permanente in California, and through premium reimbursement in other areas. However, if you are already covered under another health plan, Option B can provide you with up to \$2,200 in tax-free medical expense reimbursements for each six months of eligibility.

2009 EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTIONS

As per SDC Bylaws: Any Member-in-good-standing for at least two (2) years has the right to be a candidate for a position on the Executive Board by submitting a written petition containing the signatures of ten (10) Members-in-good-standing to the Executive Director, which must be received forty (40) days prior to the annual meeting in November.

The 2009 Annual Membership Meeting will be Monday, November 16th. All write-in candidate submissions must be received no later than Wednesday, October 7th.

Ballots will be mailed to all Full Members-in-good-standing in October and all completed ballots must be returned to SDC no later than 3:00 PM on Monday, November 16th in order to be counted. Please direct any questions about the election to Preston Copley at 212-391-1070, ext. 252.

2009 SLATE OF CANDIDATES



Benny S. Ambush
Director
Lynn, MA



Linda Hartzell
Director
Seattle, WA



Karen Azenberg
Director/
Choreographer
New York, NY
Incumbent President



Doug Hughes
Director
New York, NY
Incumbent
Treasurer



Donald Byrd
Director
Seattle, WA



Sue Lawless
Director
Brooklyn, NY
Incumbent



Joe Calarco
Director
New York, NY
Incumbent*



Jonathan Moscone
Director
Oakland, CA



Valarie Curtis-Newton
Director
Seattle, WA



Stephan Nachamie
Director/
Choreographer
New York, NY



Sean Daniels
Director
Louisville, KY



Sharon Ott
Director
Savannah, GA
Incumbent



Michael John Garcés
Director
Los Angeles, CA
Incumbent



Lonny Price
Director
New York, NY
Incumbent



Wendy C. Goldberg
Director
Brooklyn, NY
Incumbent



Oz Scott
Director
Los Angeles, CA
Incumbent

*Joe Calarco was elected to a one (1) year term in 2008 fulfilling an election requirement per the SDC By-Laws, Joe must therefore run again in 2009



CURRENT SDC EXECUTIVE BOARD

Julie Arenal, Los Angeles, CA
Rob Ashford, New York, NY
Karen Azenberg, *President*, New York, NY
Walter Bobbie, New York, NY
Joe Calarco, New York, NY
Larry Carpenter, *Executive Vice President*, New York, NY
Tisa Chang, New York, NY
Edie Cowan, New York, NY
Marcia Milgrom Dodge, New York, NY
Gerald Freedman, Winston-Salem, NC
Michael John Garcés, Los Angeles, CA
Wendy C. Goldberg, Brooklyn, NY
Richard Hamburger, New York, NY
Doug Hughes, *Treasurer*, New York, NY
Sue Lawless, Brooklyn, NY
Paul Lazarus, Los Angeles, CA
Kathleen Marshall, *Vice President*, New York, NY
Ethan McSweeney, New York, NY
Tom Moore, Los Angeles, CA
Amy Morton, Chicago, IL
Sharon Ott, Savannah, GA
Lisa Peterson, New York, NY
Lonny Price, New York, NY
Mary B. Robinson, *Secretary*, New York, NY
Susan H. Schulman, New York, NY
Oz Scott, Los Angeles, CA
Leigh Silverman, New York, NY
Daniel Sullivan, New York, NY
David Warren, New York, NY
Chay Yew, New York, NY

Lisa Peterson and **Mary B. Robinson** Co-Chaired the Nominating Committee, which consisted of the following members: **Julie Arenal**, **Tisa Chang**, **Leah Gardiner**, **Igor Goldin**, **Richard Hamburger**, **David Hilder**, **Amy Morton**, **Kate Powers**, **Peter Pucci**, **Seret Scott** and **Leigh Silverman**. SDC thanks you for your time and diligence in conducting the business of the Nominating Committee.

Ballots will be mailed to all Full Members-in-good-standing in October and all completed ballots must be returned to SDC no later than 3:00 PM on Monday, November 16th in order to be counted. Please direct any questions about the election to Preston Copley at 212-391-1070, ext. 252.