I am delighted to welcome new and returning students to the Program in Educational Theatre. As my colleagues Philip Taylor, Nancy Smithner, Joe Salvatore, Amy Cordileone, Jonathan Jones and I recently discussed, this past academic year and summer really flew by. What an incredible year it has been for the Educational Theatre community!

We experienced a superb fall and spring with academic courses in our three areas of concentrated study: drama education, applied theatre, and play production for artists and educators. Our diverse work in community sites continued to exhibit the ways in which our program is involved in important urban and global endeavors. Many students getting certified to teach drama were mentored in NYC schools through student-teaching—learning to plan, implement and evaluate drama; teams of students created applied theatre, including our prison theatre initiative, tackling a range of social justice issues; various theatre of the oppressed events were facilitated; directors’ scenes were presented weekly; and the program’s production season produced remarkable theatre.

In the fall, just in time for Halloween, Little Shop of Horrors showcased wonderful student actors and singers, and in the spring, six new plays by Joe Salvatore were featured in In Real Time, with student directors assigned to each play. This culminated in an evening of engaging and thought-provoking theatre. Our own Theatrix! project continued to profile new works by our students and provide rich opportunities for them to develop their theatre-making skills, while our Shakespeare to Go (STG) troupe brought their one-hour cut of Taming of the Shrew to schools throughout the city. Meanwhile, students involved in two Steinhardt student clubs, the Uproar Theatre Corp and Lamplighters, both founded by educational theatre students, impressively developed and produced full scale productions.

In January, many students studied physical theatre and mask work in Puerto Rico, with Dr. Amy Cordileone leading the program, and our annual storytelling performances, produced and curated by Regina Ress, featured six incredible storytellers from around the world telling stories at the Provincetown Playhouse (including Regina herself). In February, we were thrilled to accept our first two students to our brand new Doctorate of Education program, the EdD. And our annual forum, the 2015 Forum on Site-Specific Performance, was unforgettable as it offered interdisciplinary panels, performances and workshops with established art makers, emerging artists, and university students to explore site-specific work that developed nuanced relationships between spectators and space.

The 2015 summer’s two on-campus projects, New Plays for Young Audiences (NPYA) and Looking for Shakespeare (LFS), were met with great success as well. For its 18th season, NPYA presented three new works: Mario and the Comet that Stopped the World, book and lyrics by Gabriel Jason Dean, music and lyrics by David Dabbon; Nadine’s Coloring Book by Ashley Laverty; and Forever Poppy by José Cruz González. Keeping with the goals of the Program in...
Educational Theatre, the NPYA series effectively offered both students and theatre professionals the opportunity to test new ideas and methods within the field of TYA. It was a thrilling collaborative process that segued beautifully into the LFS program under the leadership of Dr. Jonathan Jones. The intensive four-week program for high school students from across the country worked with Dr. Jones as director, as well as an artistic team and 13 graduate students, to present Hamlet. It was truly inspiring to witness the dedicated collective of artists, educators and students work together to produce an outstanding production. Also, adding to the stimulating suite of summer offerings on campus was an intensive two-day course with renowned teacher/scholar Dr. Cecily O'Neill on Teacher in Role. Finally, following the success of the summer 2014 London Study Abroad program under the leadership of Dr. Philip Taylor, in 2015 NYU students studied in our Dublin program led by Dr. Nancy Smithner, working with Ireland’s finest drama practitioners and theatre artists to study community-engaged theatre and explore facilitation, devising, and playwriting/adaptation, along with approaches to using dramatic activities to create context for theatre work.

Looking ahead, this exciting work continues and will be available to everyone, including opportunities to participate in classroom and applied theatre settings, a wide-range of course offerings, main stage productions, Theatrix, STG, NPYA, LFS, Puerto Rico (and our London study abroad offering that will return in 2016), student club productions, storytelling events and next year’s April 2016 forum—among many other projects.

Speaking of which, the 2016 forum will celebrate fifty years of leadership and artist praxis in Educational Theatre at NYU. As one of the world’s premier academies of excellence, our Program was founded in 1966 by the late innovators Lowell and Nancy Swortzell, graduating over five thousand students who have assumed authoritative positions in cultural institutions, colleges and schools, community centers, and other agencies worldwide. For our 2016 annual forum, the Program will build on the Swortzell’s vision, as well as the work of previous annual NYU Forums on curriculum, assessment, teaching artistry, playwriting, ethnodrama, Shakespeare, citizenship, and site specific theatre, by inviting the global community to propose workshops, papers, posters, narratives, and performances around drama in education, applied theatre, theatre for young audiences, and play production. Also for the fiftieth anniversary, an alumni event will be held celebrating the achievements of the program. It will undoubtedly be a magnificent evening as colleagues and friends reunite and share classic moments of their time studying at NYU. So keep a lookout for further information to be posted on our Educational Theatre list-serve about this fiftieth anniversary celebration that you won’t want to miss.

In the Classroom

New EdD Program
By Dr. Jonathan Jones

In winter 2014, the program began accepting applications for our new practice-based Doctor of Education program, the EdD in Educational Theatre in Colleges and Communities. The 42-point program provides specific pathways for specialized study in arts-based research methods at the doctoral level within three areas of educational theatre praxis: Drama in Education, Applied Theatre, and Theatre for Young Audiences and Play Production.

The EdD in Educational Theatre is designed for individuals who intend to pursue leadership positions in the practicing professions, preparing candidates for senior positions as principals, superintendents, arts administrators, researchers, curriculum developers, policy analysts, educational consultants, and theatre practitioners. In summer 2015, we welcomed our first two students, Carmen Meyers and Michael Yurchak, and we look forward to applications for fall 2016 in the coming months.

Happenings

Forum on Site-Specific Performance
This year’s annual Forum was a spectacular three-day event, presenting a festival of site-specific performance in conjunction with dialogue about this innovative theatrical genre. A series of images from four of the diverse offerings shared at the forum appear below and at right.
Happenings

Photos from Hall Pass at Grace Church High School
Developed and produced by Blake McCarty, directed by Sabrina Jacob, and featuring new works by 35 composers and playwrights, including multiple NYU alums and faculty.
Photos courtesy of Blake McCarty

Photos from The Poetry Corridor
Curated by Nan Smithner, directed and in some cases performed by students in the Advanced Directing Class as well as middle school students from Institute of Collaborative Education under the direction of alum Natalie Mack (EDTC '13)
Photos courtesy of Nan Smithner

Photos from Under Construction by Spica Wobbe & Lauren Jost
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Forum on Educational Theatre
By Dr. Jonathan Jones

In April 2016, the Program’s annual forum will build on the work of previous annual events in curriculum, assessment, teaching artistry, playwriting, ethnodrama, Shakespeare, citizenship, and site specific theatre by inviting the global community to propose workshops, papers, posters, narratives, and performances around one of the following topics:

- Drama in Education
  (i.e., studies in drama/theatre curriculum, special education, integrated arts, assessment and evaluation)
- Applied Theatre
  (i.e., studies in community-based theatre, theatre of the oppressed, the teaching artist, diversity and inclusion)
- Theatre for Young Audiences and Play Production
  (i.e., studies in acting, directing, dramaturgy, playwriting, dramatic literature, theatre technology, arts-based research methodologies)

Additionally, we will be awarding the first ever Swortzell Innovator Awards for leadership in the field of Educational Theatre in each of the three strands listed above. Please visit the following website for further details:
steinhardt.nyu.edu/edtheatre/forum

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Impressions of the High Line

By Aliza Moran (EDTC Student)

Absurd, naturalistic, funny, touching, and lyrical are words that best describe The High Line group-devised site specific project, which was created during the Devised Theatre course in summer 2014. I was challenged by the process of devising a piece of theatre that was fashioned by numerous writers, the explorations through movement, and the observations of the space. Throughout the start of the process I would ask myself questions such as: How would a group of ten people create a work from scratch in three weeks? What would our piece be about? How could a performance travel through The High Line? The answers to those questions would come along through a creative process that had me wondering at every turn.

I was nervous and excited when the suggestion of performing on the High Line was proposed. I had never been a part of a site-specific theatre piece. I did not know what to expect from the process or how the piece would be created. It was not until the assigned readings of theory and technique did I understand the methodology for devised theatre, which is all about experimentation with ideas, images, and concepts, leading to editing, revision, and re-shaping.

The writings that the group created brought about some unique challenges and insights. The writings varied in style. For example, there were several works about children and parents interacting in the space, there was a young woman stalking a past lover, and a daughter relaying her dissatisfaction of traveling with her mother by the use of hashtags. Because of the different tones and subjects within the group writings, the question of cohesiveness came into play within the process. What would our work be about? Should we incorporate some fictional historical narratives or should we remain in the present day experiences of The High Line? Should we fuse the two and meld the past and the present to create one cohesive unit?

The day of performance was an exciting time because we had no real concrete idea about how the performance would be received. The actual performance of The High Line was subject to several challenges — construction noise, unexpected patrons being in performances spaces, and an interruption by the park police all created a sense of adventure among the group. I think that the use of music, movement, and text gave our audience members a varied and playful experience. We came together as an ensemble and worked together to problem solve and create a piece of devised theatre that was unique to that day. What I learned most through the group collaboration was that you must expect the unexpected, continue to move forward, stay true to your purpose and goals, and welcome an adventure that you did not expect.

The High Line
Photos courtesy of Nan Smithner

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Applied Theatre in Prisons

By Ashley Hamilton (PhD Student)

When I am doing this work, creating art, for just a little while I get to forget that I am in prison.

(Bedford Hills Maximum Security Prison Devising Theatre Participant)

My work found me, before I found it. My first introduction to working in the prison system, using the arts as a rehabilitative tool, came prior to even starting my master’s degree in Educational Theatre (EDTC) at NYU, long before I understood what the field of “applied theatre” was. Through a serendipitous chain of events, I secured my first teaching artist gig using writing and theatre inside the New York City juvenile jail system. I had no real training, but I felt deeply drawn to the work of being inside of the walls with folks who were yearning for expression; I knew even then that something transformative was occurring.

As you may know, the Educational Theatre program has a longstanding, collaborative relationship with Rehabilitation through the Arts (RTA) — an organization that uses arts practices in various New York State Prisons in order to work toward the rehabilitation of incarcerated folks. In the first year of the PhD program, I had the opportunity to assist Dr. Nancy Smithner in teaching a Physical Theatre class, along with master’s student Melissa Sonia (now an alumni) at Bedford Hills Maximum Security Prison for Women. Soon after, I had the opportunity to co-teach a six-month long Devising Theatre course, alongside Clare Hamnoo (an EDTC alumni) at Bedford Hills. Clare and I created the class to explore various socially minded themes through movement and writing. Then, after a particularly salient theme emerged from our exploration, we continued on to write a play through a physical and writing based devising process.

The class culminated with a performance of the mounted play for the remaining prison population. After months of writing, devising, and rehearsing, we had created a play about the contradictions of womanhood inside prison walls. The play interrogated themes of body image, beauty, motherhood, self-sustainment, sexuality, and gender.

The women wrote from raw and deep places, clearly craving an opportunity to tell their stories. Throughout the course, Clare and I found ourselves constantly reflecting on several themes, but specifically: our roles as facilitators, boundaries, the role of therapy in applied theatre, and emotional

continued on back page
Little Shop of Horrors: Suddenly Seymour

By Andrew Anzel (BS '15)

It seems like only yesterday that I was being eaten, daily, by a carnivorous plant. While our Little Shop may have closed, the doors to reflective practices are ever wider. Thinking back, I am realizing that so much of what I have learned and experienced through my classes and extra-curricular work in this department have shaped me into the performer (artist/educator/person) who appeared on that folding set.

Some takeaways which come to mind are:
- the use of urgency during performance from Judyie Al-Bilali/Uta Hagen's missing object exercise in the Acting: Fundamentals class
- using improv within structure from David Montgomery's Forum Theatre unit in the Intro to Educational Theatre class
- learning to be an authentic performer from Jonathan Shmidt Chapman's Theatre for Young Audiences class and subsequent friendship
- using presentational and physical styles of acting from all the work I have done with Nan Smithner

While these are potent examples, they are only a few which have contributed to my current artistry and I can't wait to see how my experiences in Little Shop and other aspects of my final year as a student in the Program in Educational Theatre add to that growing list.

Little Shop of Horrors: Audrey Too

By Bethany Moore (EDTC Student)

As a first-semester graduate student, I figured there was no better way to learn about the Program in Educational Theatre than to throw myself into a departmental musical. I have never been a part of a university production where there was such a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and future plans. As an undergraduate Musical Theater major, the students in my department were all basically in the same place in our lives and had very similar career goals. Little Shop of Horrors provided a fascinating theatrical environment in which both graduate and undergraduate students could work together building a show. The points of views, past production experiences, and energy levels made the rehearsals and performances an incredibly colorful and rich environment and I thank whoever had the idea to let both the younger and older kids play together and put on a show.

The Transition of Doodle Pequeño

By Melanie Ridgway (BS Student)

One year ago, I noticed a similarity in my course syllabi for Intro to Theatre for Young Audiences I and Masters of Modern Drama: both courses were scheduled to read The Transition of Doodle Pequeño by Gabriel Jason Dean. If this play was considered worthy material for both a TYA course and a play about “masters,” I knew it had to be worth reading. I was right; it was love at first “bahfoogee.”

The Transition of Doodle Pequeño is a magic-filled, multiple-award-winning play for all ages about two boys who become friends in spite of their differences. It’s Halloween and Doodle is the new kid in the neighborhood. Accompanied by his imaginary goat, Doodle befriends Reno, a boy who is unpopular with the neighborhood kids because he likes to wear dresses. A blend of English, Spanish, and “Goat,” this comic play takes a heartwarming look at the consequences of misused language and interrogates the issue of gender-bullying.

After reading through this play the first (and second) time, I was amazed at the risks this play took, especially considering it was a play for young audiences. Gabriel Jason Dean approaches some very heavy topics, topics that even adults are afraid to talk about. Despite its heavy content, the story is still hilarious, playful, and engaging. I needed to bring it to life.

Doodle has been performed in readings and workshops at universities like Northwestern and The University of Texas, but I was surprised that it had not been performed yet in New York. Thanks to the support of Lamplighters (NYU’s Theatre for Young Audience Club) and the leadership of director (and my dear friend) Kathleen Turner, The Transition of Doodle Pequeño finally received its New York debut! As opening morning approached, I could not have been more proud of the hard work put in by the cast and production team.
In Real Time: A Sense of Gratitude

By Elena Stephenson (EDTC ’16)

When I reflect on my directorial contributions for In Real Time, I can’t help but feel a sense of gratitude. I feel gratitude for the experience, gratitude for the depth of learning, and gratitude for being able to work with a talented design team and ensemble. This experience was new for me because it was my first time serving as a director for a new play in development.

In summer 2014, I was able to take Problems in Play Production with professor and playwright Joe Salvatore. During that class, I was able to track the role of a director in the new play development process. That learning came full circle once I was able to put it to practice, by working alongside Joe as a director for one of his plays.

I immediately connected with How do You Say Window in Italian?, catching the Three Sisters Chekhov reference in the title. The play appealed to me because of the strong sibling dynamic and the way that the sisters resembled Olga, Masha, and Irina. It was impossible not to connect to this play on a personal level because of my husband’s work as a nurse, specifically caring for those that suffer from dementia.

What I loved most about all these plays is though they were very different, they all held a common thread of exploring human connection and capturing a moment “in real time.”

In Real Time: Directing M Squared

By Nick Robertson (EDTC Student)

When Joe Salvatore posted the Student Directing notice for In Real Time, I jumped at the opportunity. I’d taken three directing classes in the department (with Nan Smithner and Amy Cordileone, all of which I highly recommend) and was eager to put the concrete skills I’d learned into real-world practice.

I applied to direct M Squared, a mysterious little play about a semi-schub of a guy, Chad, whose sedate life is totally disrupted when Marilyn Monroe crashes into his kitchen one night. As I began my application, I realized skills alone were not going to be enough to successfully direct this show.

Looking for Shakespeare 2014

By Corinna Rezzelle (EDTC Student)

Looking for Shakespeare (LFS) has been one of the most self-reflective experiences of my graduate studies thus far. Now, it is work. It is a lot of work—early-mornings-with-no-coffee-and-so-much-to-do kind of work, but it is such a great experience that I would recommend it to every student in the Educational Theatre program.

Last summer, we worked on Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night. Shipwrecks, mistaken identities, over the top-ness in general—it was glorious fun! On top of the already wacky script, we added another layer: we set everything in the early 20th century with a Vaudevillian flair and several classic songs. Looking back, I am in awe of all that we accomplished in such a short period of time. Our group (graduate students and high-schoolers alike) were such a dedicated and hardworking group, we probably could have accomplished anything.

It just hit me that some of you all might not have an idea of how LFS works, so I thought I’d tell you a little bit about the process. Within the class, you get firsthand experience guiding high school students through the wonders of acting in a Shakespearian play. Within the

Looking for Shakespeare 2014 (continued on righthand page —>
My experience this summer with NYU’s New Plays for Young Audiences (NPYA) play development series at the Provincetown Playhouse has been an education in a myriad of areas, but, most of all, it has been an education in the art of collaborating in the pursuit of clear and specific goals. In a play development workshop or reading, the playwright, director, dramaturg, and cast of actors all work together in service of the play’s development. In their book Scriptwork: A Director’s Approach to New Play Development, authors David Kahn and Donna Breed (1995) outline the aspirations and purpose of the collaborative team, stating, “The goal of playwright, director, and actors is to take the script through a developmental situation and emerge with a carefully examined and theatrically tested script” (p. 2).

As we discovered throughout our three-week course, Theatre Practices: Problems in Play Production, the Development of New Plays, each member of the team functions in a specific way, performing a particular role. For my final course project, I decided to focus my observations upon the role of a play developmental actor. As a result, and at the end of the NPYA lab series, I have come to believe that it takes a particular kind of actor — one who is intelligent, flexible and adaptable to daily changes, a risk taker, naturally inquisitive, and confident enough to voice his or her findings and questions — to fully perform the role of a developmental actor.

month-long program, you are assigned to a particular group of students with whom you work. While you work with the teens, you are able to do your own bit of directing, all while learning from your fellow graduate students and the instructor. We also had the opportunity to teach our own workshops for the students: stage combat, improvisation, musical theatre, and auditions were just some of the topics that we covered.

Jonathan Jones, our professor, was truly a great life raft, mentor, and such a wonderful professor throughout the process. He gave the graduate students the support that we needed to feel confident enough to let our voices be heard when we had blocking ideas or suggestions for the students; however, he also gave us the right balance of guidance to help lead us to find new ideas and discover other methods of teaching.

Though there were many “ah ha!” moments for me during LFS, what meant the most was getting to work with other theatre educators. The summers are such a fun time at NYU because the program is filled with a great mix of New York residents and other theatre teachers that come from all over the country. It’s so rewarding to meet other theatre teachers that think like me, learn different techniques and games, and build a brand new support system of teachers that I can call friends — all of which made this summer such a great experience.
Study Abroad

Once in A Lifetime: 
Theatre Practices in Puerto Rico

By Rachel Gubow (EDTC Student)

The Theatre Practices in Puerto Rico intersession was a once in a lifetime opportunity that allowed me to explore dance, movement, and theatre through a different cultural lens.

In Javier Cardona’s physical theatre class, I was pushed to physical and mental limits as our ensemble explored unconventional ways of creating movement that connected body and voice as one whole instrument. Our trip was filled with delicious food, meeting brilliant artists, seeing moving performances, and learning to dance bomba.

One of our many adventures in the city of Old San Juan included participating in a parade to celebrate San Sebastian Festival, which fills the narrow city streets with over half a million people! As we all enjoyed the beautiful weather and rich bonding experience, I came to a deeper understanding of how we can use art and theatre to break down barriers and tell stories that connect us within and across cultures.

London: Drama and Youth

By Isaiah Bent (EDTA Student)

NYU Steinhardt sent nineteen graduate students to London for three weeks jam-packed with new and exciting ways to approach theatre. We experienced theatre for children with special needs, opera for children, process drama with the brilliant Cecily O’Neill, and of course, all the Shakespeare we could handle.

It was a once in a lifetime experience. Not only did we get to see around fifteen theatrical productions, but Dr. Philip Taylor put together an all-star group of British educators for us to work with during our stay.

A new wrinkle in this year’s London program was the amazing opportunity we had to devise a theatrical experience for second graders. We guided sixty children through different “imagined worlds” we created using the new techniques we learned from our London professors.

In the Community

Applied Theatre in Prisons

continued from page 4

safety and wellness. The deeper we went into the work, the more questions and contradictions emerged. The women’s final performance was met with compassion and grace by the prison population as they echoed that they shared very similar experiences and deeply appreciated the vulnerability of their peers. And, Clare and I walked away from that experience stretched emotionally, mentally, and physically, but with so many more questions than when we began.

Currently, Clare and I are co-facilitating a “Life Skills through Acting” class at Fishkill Correctional Facility for Men, a very different yet just as complex experience. We are only a few weeks into the class, and I am already finding that my questions, thoughts, and general reflective practice are just as prevalent, but are more centered on questions of gender and aesthetic distance. I am fascinated by the immediate difference I have found in working with men versus women, and by the way I find myself (as a white, cis-gendered woman) performing gender and race in this hyper-masculine, racialized space.