Celebrating Artistic Praxis in Educational Theatre

Next year marks an anniversary of sorts, the tenth year in which I and my full time colleagues, David Montgomery, Joseph Salvatore and Nancy Smithner, began at NYU. Hard to believe that in that period we have overseen close to fifty mainstage and community-engaged productions.

The process of artistic praxis (Action, Reflection, Transformation—ART!) is core to our mission. We commit to the notion that the next generation of educational theatre operatives need to make, perform, evaluate and apply their artform. It is therefore vital to our enterprise that students have multiple opportunities to engage with their own and others’ theatre artistry.

Our students work in a range of performance arts venues, including the landmark Provincetown Playhouse on MacDougal St, the Frederick Loewe Theatre on West 4th Street, the Skirball Center for the Performing Arts on Washington Square South, and our Black Box studio on Washington Place. At our Global centers, students have worked at the Samuel Beckett center in Ireland, the Globe Theatre in London, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford upon Avon, and the Center for the Theatre of the Oppressed in Brazil.

But as an educational theatre program where many study with us because of our outreach and unveiling of a permanent display in the lobby of the newly renovated Provincetown Playhouse. This is the second renovation of the theatre since Lowell Swortzell worked with the university to preserve the space in the 1990’s. As a result of his work and dedication, the Program in Educational Theatre has been able to grow New Plays for Young Next year marks an anniversary of sorts, the tenth year in which I and my full time colleagues, David Montgomery, Joseph Salvatore and Nancy Smithner, began at NYU. Hard to believe that in that period we have overseen close to fifty mainstage and community-engaged productions.

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Celebrating Artistic Praxis in Educational Theatre

applied theatre focus, we work in a range of community and school sites. Since 2003, we have taken our clever cuts of Shakespeare to over 3,000 students in 300 schools, as well as established our own youth theatre ensemble that works throughout the year, including the summer. We have a long standing prison theatre initiative, and have collaborated in homeless shelters, hospitals with terminally ill children, and with other agencies committed to social welfare and equity.

Each year we offer a storytelling season for our Greenwich Village community, as well as a play development series on theatre for young audiences. The Provincetown Playhouse originally began to support new works by American authors, and I am delighted to say we have continued in that tradition in our sponsorship and commissioning of numerous original scripts. Furthermore, Theatrix!, a student ensemble under faculty supervision, develops skills in playwriting, acting, directing, theatre technology, and teaching artistry.

All of this artistic praxis is supported by a rich and well rounded curriculum committed to play production and design, history and criticism, dramatic literature and theatre pedagogy. I do hope you will join me over the coming year as we celebrate the remarkable artistic legacy that began here in 1966 and has been consolidated in the past ten years by an exceptionally dedicated and talented faculty. I am forever grateful to them for their support and passion. Thank you Nan, Joe and David! And kudos to all those artists who have contributed greatly to the program’s creative life.

TEN YEARS OF OUTSTANDING PRODUCTION WORK:
SOME HIGHLIGHTS

Contemporary American Theatre
• 5 X Wilder dir. by Joe Salvatore (Fall 2003)
• Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde dir. by Dr. Philip Taylor (Spring 2007)
• Sonia Flew dir. by Dr. Nan Smithner (Spring 2010)
• Provincetown Players dir. by Joe Salvatore (Spring 2011)

Contemporary Avant-Garde
• Polaroid Stories dir. by Joe Salvatore (Fall 2006)

Theatre for Young Audiences
• The Mischief Makers dir. By Professor Nancy Swortzell (Spring 2003)
• Folktale Journey dir. by D. Montgomery (Spring 2004)
• Arabian Nights by Professor Lowell Swortzell (Spring 2004)
• The Giver dir. by David Montgomery (Spring 2009)
• Stories from the Magic Lake dir. by David Montgomery (Spring 2006)
• Kindertransport dir. David Montgomery (Spring 2008)

Classical
• Blood Wedding by Lorca (Fall 2002)
• The Caucasian Chalk Circle dir. by Dr. Philip Taylor (Fall 2004)
• Eumenides dir. by Dr. Nan Smithner (Fall 2007)
• Woyzeck dir. by Dr. Philip Taylor (Fall 2009)
• Midsummer Night’s Dream dir. Dr. Nan Smithner (Spring 2004)

Musical Theatre
• Jacques Brel co production with VP, (Fall 2002)
• Alice: The Looking Glass Girl dir. by Dr. Amy Cordileone (Fall 2010)

Devised Theatre
• God Lives in Glass by Dr Landy, co production with VP (Fall 2003)
• The Class Project dir. by Joe Salvatore (Fall 2008)
• Brecht Beckett Workshop dir. by P. Taylor (Spring 2003)

Contemporary British
• Love and the Nightingale dir. By Zachary Moore (spring 2003)
• Mad Forest dir. Dr. Nan Smithner (Fall 2005)
Provincetown Reopening

continued from page 1

Audiences, Looking for Shakespeare, and Storytelling, three program initiatives which return to the Provincetown during this academic year.

Among the highlights of the afternoon was a visit by Professor Nancy Swortzell, co-founder of the Program in Educational Theatre. She stopped by in order to present certificates to the six new Swortzell Scholars (see their profiles on page 5). She was joined on stage by Dr. Nan Smithner and Dean Mary Brabeck to congratulate the students on their achievements.

The display features images of Eugene O’Neill, Susan Glaspell, George Cram Cook, Ida Rauh, Mina Loy, Djuna Barnes, and Edna St. Vincent Millay (members of the Provincetown Players) as well as playwright Edward Albee and actors Rose McClendon, Bette Davis, Charles Gilpin, Paul Robeson, Mary Blair, Pat Carroll, and Cynthia Nixon. Productions represented in the display include Lowell Swortzell’s Young Eugene (1998), Edward Albee’s The Zoo Story (1960), Laurie Brooks’ Everyday Heroes (2002), Charles Bush’s Vampire Lesbians of Sodom and Times Square Angel (1985), Marty Martin’s Gertrude Stein Gertrude Stein Gertrude Stein (1979), Eugene O’Neill’s The Emperor Jones (1920) and All God’s Chillun Got Wings (1924), Seth Zvi Rosenfeld’s Servy-n-Bernice 4-ever (1991), and Sam Shepard’s The Unseen Hand (1982).

Storyteller Regina Ress returned to The Provincetown with Stories from the Provincetown on Sunday, February 11, 2011. Professor Joe Salvatore presented Plays from the Provincetown Players as our spring production in late February and early March.

The renovation retained the character of the space while updating its functionality.

THE BULLY MENACE SYMPOSIUM: APRIL 2011

By Alex Siriani (Ph.D. Student)

The playground bully has been a longstanding archetypal villain, cultivated in our collective unconscious through the faded remembrances and cautionary tales of our formative years. Employed as an unavoidable hurdle along the path to individual autonomy, the role had nearly been demystified to almost benign — hoping to empower those to simply defy the tyrannical stranglehold, thereby causing it to instantly crumble. The cruel reality, however, is much more subversive and complex, though long-suffering victims are finally finding their voice.

How does this dynamic begin to manifest and escalate? How and why do perpetrators victimize? What are some effectual responses and support systems available to those in need? What role should we as educators/facilitators play? The Bully Menace and the Applied Theatre Symposium seeks to explore these and other questions through applied theatre in an effort to further the discussion on this epidemic of oppression. The primary focus of this symposium will be to foster dialogue regarding the multiplicity of experiences by employing dramatic activities in search of meaning-making. As these senseless brutalities become more commonplace each day, the need for a deeper understanding of their impetus is vital for all pedagogues in order to facilitate both personal and academic growth in students. Dramatic activities will be used to illuminate and explore what has long remained a cloaked iniquity for our young people. It is our most sincere hope that through these efforts we might uncover functional methods for dethroning the “bully menace” and instilling agency in all students for future application.
New Student Seminar Career Day

By Ashley Thaxton (ETHR ’14)

During the fall 2010 semester, Thursday afternoons found the first year students of the Educational Theatre undergraduate program all together in the basement of 35 West 4th Street.

During the hour we spent together each week, with our fearless leaders Sara Simons and Liane Tomasetti, we had countless questions answered as we learned about being a successful student at NYU. From navigating the library’s websites to relaxation techniques to interview pointers, every base was covered.

Towards the end of the semester, we enjoyed the company of a diverse panel, there to answer our most pressing and daunting question: “What on Earth are we going to do after graduation?”

We heard from Jonathan Jones, Alex Sarian, Melinna Bobadilla, and Liane Tomasetti. All of them are associated with the program in Educational Theatre, either as a graduate student, alumni, or undergraduate, and they were all such valuable resources for us. Perhaps the most exciting aspect was the wide variety of careers and experiences the panelists spoke about, including work they had done all over the U.S. and the world. It was incredibly inspiring to see successful theatre artists that are making a difference through their work. They shared with us their struggles and triumphs, setting much of our trepidation in regards to the future at ease. The more we continue to learn and explore, the more I am increasingly thankful to be a part of the incredible community of artists and educators that is Educational Theatre.

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PlayLAB with Humana Festival

From November 16th-21st, The Program in Educational Theatre partnered with Actor’s Theatre of Louisville and the Humana Festival for a series of play development workshops and panels focused on cultivating new voices in U.S. American Theatre.

The week featured readings of 10 minute plays written by students in Educational Theatre who had the opportunity to have their work heard and receive valuable encouragement and feedback from dramaturg Amy Wegener.

Two of the students whose plays were selected were Ekene Okobi and Tyler Grimes.

Ekene Okobi

Working with Amy Wegener was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that gave me renewed confidence in my skills as a dramatist. She gave me focused and insightful comments that helped bring my work to the next level. I have been writing plays since I was 8 years old, and yet sometimes I neglect to take my talent seriously enough to further develop the work I create. The PlayLAB process renewed my faith in my own artistic abilities. Throughout the process, Amy also modeled for me the ways in which an instructor can provide the sort of thoughtful feedback that brings the best out of a student’s work. An added bonus of the entire experience was that Amy encouraged me to keep writing and expressed an interest in seeing more of my work. This experience was such a blessing for me, it was the inspiration I needed and I am so grateful to have had it!

Tyler Grimes

As a very young playwright, there are few things more valuable than the experience of an intensive workshop with a professional in the field. The fact that we had the privilege of working with someone from the Actor’s Theatre of Louisville is a true honor. I met with Amy Wegener, and we talked for a solid hour about my play, Meat. She offered up incredibly smart and constructive criticism, which allowed for me to hone in on the big problems with my play. While I did not get to see the reading of my play, I know it is in a much better place thanks to my time with Amy.

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Theatre for Public Health Forum

By Sara Simons (Ph.D. Student)

The Program in Educational Theatre is delighted to host the NYU Forum on Theatre for Public Health from April 21-23. The goal of this forum is to facilitate a dialogue on the intersections between drama and public health education. The forum will also investigate the perceived boundaries and barriers for artists and educators when delving into health education, as well as those for health professionals when utilizing drama in their work. The Call for Proposals has received submissions from scholars and practitioners from various fields across the globe, working on topics such as nutrition, HIV prevention, and substance abuse.

The Forum will include plenary sessions with experts from theatre and public health, as well as presentations and hands-on workshops that will leave participants with valuable skills to incorporate into their work.

In discussing the diverse work being implemented across the world in schools, community, and health care settings, the Program in Educational Theatre will facilitate a conversation about how theatre can be used to improve public health outcomes and education around public health issues. Artists and educators will learn side-by-side with public health professionals at the Forum, discussing issues such as ethics, aesthetics and evaluation as the growing field of theatre for public health evokes and expands.
**EDUCATIONAL THEATRE PROFILES**

**Spring 2011 Swortzell Scholars**

This generous scholarship was established by the co-founders of the program in Ed Theatre, Lowell and Nancy Swortzell. Each scholar wrote a 200-word essay on what the NYU Steinhardt Educational Theatre program means to them and have received a tuition bursary to assist with their spring or summer studies. The fund has enabled over 30 students to date to reap the benefits of this wonderful gift.

**Solange De Santis** is a candidate for the M.A. in Educational Theatre, Colleges and Communities (graduating May 2011). She is an accomplished arts journalist (www.solangedesantis.com) seeking new horizons in drama education and is eager to share her passion for the transformative power of theater. She is also a theater practitioner with experience in directing, sound design, playwriting and stage management.

**Jack Dod** is a sophomore in Educational Theatre and this is his first semester in the program. He is from Portland, Oregon. He loves to ski race, perform magic, write plays, act, play Halo, play basketball, and watch the greatest basketball team of all time, The Portland Trail Blazers. Follow him on Twitter @BlazingTheTrail or follow his soon-to-be-operational blog: The Overtime Index (http://theovertimeindex.blogspot.com).

**Michelle Hakala Wolf** is currently in the EDTC Master’s Program. Raised in Northern California she has lived all over the country. Michelle spent most of her life acting, singing and teaching acting and singing. She received her Bachelor’s degree from California State University, Hayward in Liberal Studies; teaching track, emphasis in drama education. Michelle is happily married and has one large dog.

**Ekene Okobi** is a first-generation writer who has produced news stories for a number of NPR-affiliated shows and stations in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. She is originally from San Francisco and has returned to school in order to rekindle her love affair with performance and theatre.

**Ashley Renee Thaxton** is a freshman in the undergraduate program in Educational Theatre. A Southern California native, she has worked as Stage and Company Manager of the Pasadena Musical Theatre Program, a non-profit theatre arts program for elementary to high school students. She was most recently seen on stage as Lilly in NYU’s production of Alice: The Looking-Glass Girl.

**Jonathan Zautner** received his BFA in Dance from UW-Milwaukee. While working as a dance educator with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, he found enjoyment in teaching within a public school setting and became a high school drama coordinator. A strong desire to continue to learn and grow as a theater director and implementer led Jon once again toward higher education, where he is thrilled to be a part of the Educational Theatre program at NYU.

If you would like to donate to the Lowell and Nancy Swortzell Scholarship Fund, please visit: http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/edtheatre/programs/scholarship

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**The NYU Prison Theatre Initiative with Rehabilitation Through the Arts (RTA)**

By Dr. Nan Smithner, Clinical Assistant Professor

The Prison Initiative continued in full force this Fall 2010 at Woodbourne Correctional Facility. I led a workshop on devising original work, and was accompanied by two graduate students, Marilyn Young and Lucia Rodriguez. The goal was to create an original piece of theatre. There were approximately 15 men in attendance. At this point in time, I had been working with some of the men for 3 years, teaching Physical Theatre, Physical Comedy, Clown, and Directing, and had developed a vocabulary and an ensemble training system with them.

The workshop, which met every other week for eight sessions, began with a brainstorming session to cull themes for the piece. The men articulated the notion that they wanted to create a work that took place outside the prison walls. I asked the men to each write down 5 themes that they were interested in exploring. From these ideas, we narrowed down the topic to four major themes: the trouble with change, the power of forgiveness, ambitions of chaos, and the hypothetical Mosque proposed to be built near Ground Zero. The men were compelled by this cultural debate because it incorporated both religious and political controversies.

In the following sessions, we engaged in intensive Physical Theatre sessions, and then the men immediately wrote stream of consciousness monologues, rants, raps and plays on words. We created tableaux, moving pictures and improvisations on the themes as well. During the two-week period between class sessions, the men went away and wrote scenes. In class, we shared the scenes and discussed them, critically reflecting on the dramaturgical implications for the show as a whole. The men, with our feedback, put the monologues and scenes together in an order, which wove various characters throughout the play in a collage-like format. On the final session, we did a very raw staged reading led by me and my assistant director, a member of the WCF inmate steering committee, adding choreography, vocal effects and blocking. Marilyn and Lucia had roles in the play, some of which were in Spanish. While the final reading was rough, we had in attendance the Superintendent of the prison, the Head of Programs, and director of RTA. At the end, there was not a dry eye in the house, as the play was extremely moving and completely absorbing. Our plan is to revisit the work, hone it and perform it in April.
In October 2010, I traveled to Belfast for an event designed to bring together producers and presenters of theatre for young audiences in order to share best work practices and methodologies towards the development of theatre for young people throughout Ireland. As part of the TYA-UK Centre of ASSITEJ (International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People), TYANI is linked to theatres, organizations and individual artists around the world.

By Dr. Nan Smithner, Clinical Assistant Professor

One of the main objectives of the gathering was to build the infrastructure of theatre for young people, to increase its profile and develop its sustainability. Local performances were presented on an international platform, as there were representatives present from France, Scandinavia, England, Spain, Germany and the US. Discussions and practical workshops were held about how to foster cross-border and international collaborations, create accessibility to work for young audiences, and form a support structure to assess new work and improve quality.

This gathering was an unprecedented meeting of the minds since all other TYANI conferences have been held in the south, in Dublin and elsewhere in Ireland. There was discussion of a need for peer review, giving critical feedback, and the creation of new partnerships. Suggestions were made that there needs to be a framework to create language to discuss artistic work, either through mentorship, collaborative exchange and creation of aesthetic standards.

Inspiring performances were offered at the conference of different types of theatre for young people of varying ages, i.e. serious drama, puppetry, storytelling, experimental theatre and circus arts. The goal of the conference, to share work and get new ideas, was clearly achieved. For my part, I was able to participate in and observe a model wherein producers, artists and companies were exchanging ideas and pooling resources to gain a fuller idea of the value of theatre for young people. If we, in this country, could create and sustain such a dynamic cultural exchange concerning the state of TYA in the US, the work developed here would greatly benefit. In the Program in Educational Theatre, we are keen to continue the dialogue.

By John Lavigne (ETHR’11)

Sometimes small conversations can lead to great experiences. This became clear last spring when, by chance, a short conversation with David Montgomery led me to audition for the New Plays for Young Audiences (NPYA) festival. “Sure, why not?” was my response to the invitation, and I am ever grateful for auditioning. I was fortunate enough to be cast in a new play by Jose Cruz Gonzales titled, at the time, Mighty Miracle Saves the World. Admittedly, I had some misgivings about being cast as a dog named Miracle. I heard somewhere that it’s never a good idea to work with animals (or children), but considering my lack of experience with theatre for young audiences, I went for it. As with all the plays developed by NPYA—three plays in three weeks every summer—the series gave me direct contact and experience with the creative process of playwriting and developing Mighty Miracle, which was most exciting.

The cast worked hand in hand with the renowned TYA playwright, Jose Cruz Gonzales; the director, Emily Kohring from the Metro Theatre Company in St. Louis, Missouri; and dramaturg Cecily O’Neill, leading educational theatre practitioner, author and theorist to bring to life a fun, engaging, sensitive and brand new piece of theatre for young audiences. Each day, the cast, director, playwright and dramaturg worked together in editing and experimenting with dialogue, often through the staging of scenes. The dialogue and situations evolved, and every day a little more of the play came into focus. From a student’s point of view, participating in NPYA offered the chance to be a part of the creative process during the early stages of a play’s development and see the combined efforts of the creative team come together. As an actor, the collaborative efforts of the crew gave me the opportunity to continually develop and refine my character. Creative and constructive feedback from Jose, Emily and Cecily, as well as the rest of the cast, was an enormous help in the creation of the physical and emotional framework of my character Miracle, and ultimately led to a unified vision of the character.

The NPYA series afforded me an experience that was wonderfully unique and worthwhile. Playing a part — no pun intended — in the creation of a new story, and collaborating with professionals in the field, is an experience for which I am truly grateful. Thanks to Jose, Emily, Cecily and the rest of the cast for their help and guidance in making the festival a highly meaningful experience.
Salsa Colada Politica Y Cultura

A poem by EDTC MA Candidate Maria Rosalie Zerrudo on her experience in Puerto Rico with the Winter Intersession course

Salsa Colada Politica y Cultura

Puerto Rico
In your shores
You welcomed people of all colors
Young and old, black, brown, de color, Moreno, mulato, prieto, indio, negro, blanco and mocha
Mixed like your famous original piña colada

I heard your people speak in many voices
Language so sweet
Silenced by mascarera Deborah Hunt
For she lets the masks speak loud for freedom
She never stops to create so women have a voice against violence

I am speechless, when I find a haven in Ponce where colors blends with garden and sky
Only a man with a superfluous visions and a mind advance of his time
Inanimate things come alive for they become extensions of his soul
“when is a sketch a final drawing, when is a drawing a sketch”
The tireless Antonio Martorell speaks of “drawings as narration without the words”

One afternoon we met Maricha Perez and the Jovenes de ´98
for a quick exchange of ideas as starter
A youth-based street theater
inspired by Theater of the oppressed practitioner
Together we created powerful images and gained a new sense of connections

Oh adios Puerto Rico mi amor
I shall long to be back in your shores
I shall let this memory grow in my heart
Until the next time I see you again, we remain familiar, dear and sweet.

Shakespeare-To-Go Across the City

By Robert M. Stevenson (ETHR ’13)

On Friday mornings, the Shakespeare-To-Go ensemble wakes in the early morning for a subway ride to a New York City school. We wear our costumes and carry a large suitcase, as well as a seven-foot-tall walking stick. We get inquisitive looks. Then, at around nine or ten, once we’ve all arrived and our playing space is prepared, we begin the performance: Romeo and Juliet for elementary through high school students.

With a cast of eleven, the show is very much an ensemble piece.

Each scene leads directly into the next with very few transitions or breaks, utilizing physicality or sounds to indicate separations. Our forty-five minute production is obviously quite shortened, but it maintains the themes and language of the original text surprisingly well. Certain scenes in the full-length play—such as the opening disagreement and fight (“thumb-biting”)—are simply shortened or indicated visually.

The longest scenes in the show—only about five or seven minutes—can still seem long to our young audiences, but this is much of the fun of performing with Shakespeare-To-Go. With this show more than any other, the actors are aware that they are in front of a crowd. We definitely sense the excitement and hear the conversation when Romeo (Tyler Grimes) and Juliet (Jess Honovich) first kiss or when Mercutio (Andie Patterson) and Tybalt (E Okobi) are killed. We can speak directly to the audience to grab their attention or call upon their feelings during a monologue.

Another rewarding aspect to the production is the talkback following every show. We’ve received some very funny questions: How does the knife work? Are Romeo and Juliet really married? What does Romeo’s girlfriend think about this?

We also receive some very thoughtful ones: Why do these families hate each other so much after so long? Where did Romeo get the poison he uses? How did all of you decide to become actors? Hearing from individual students reminds us of what we appreciate so much, as educators and collaborative artists.

On March 5th, the ensemble performed to a large crowd of children, parents, and members of the Ed Theatre community at the Skirball Center as a part of the 2010/2011 BIG RED CHAIR FAMILY SERIES. The Shakespeare-to-Go school tour continues until Friday, May 6th.
Theater of the Oppressed: Jana Sanskriti

By Lorena Elizondo (ETHR '11)

Thanks to the generosity of the Program in Educational Theatre, I was given the opportunity to travel to India and attend Muktadhara IV, a biannual festival held in the heart of West Bengal celebrating the work of the pan-national Jana Sanskriti movement. Before arriving in India, I had some previous knowledge of Jana Sanskriti, but my academic understanding of the largest Theater of the Oppressed (TO) movement in the world fell extremely short of its reality. From the first moment we set foot in India, Jana Sanskriti welcomed us with open arms, making us feel comfortable and at home.

The first week of the festival was spent at a resort-type hotel located in the village of Badu, just outside of Madhyamgram. Here we participated in a week long workshop called “Scripting the Play Instead of Playing the Script” facilitated by Sanjoy Ganguly, the charismatic founder and representative face of Jana Sanskriti. However, “we” were no longer a group of four students from NYU, but a group of over seventy people representing almost 30 countries. These workshops exposed me to many variations of TO techniques currently used by practitioners around the world. There were some directly political variations, as well as more personal variations. We created strong relationships that continue to flourish and shorten even the longest distances.

At the end of the first week we were transported to Kolkata for five days of celebration, workshop and performance at the Muktadhara IV festival. Watching Forum Theatre from around the world was an amazing experience. First of all, I became aware that, although the specifics differ, human struggle remains universal at its core. Secondly, I re-evaluated how I view and assess Forum Theatre plays. I learned to view Forum Theatre not for its inherent political content but as a piece of art in itself.

The festival culminated in an amazing finale. We joined Jana Sanskriti supporters several miles north of the festival ground and began what Sanjoy called “a march for humanity.” The procession of giant puppets, drummers, singers, dancers, foreigners, and citizens was undoubtedly a gesture of global solidarity. When we arrived at the festival ground several hours later, my body should have been overwhelmed by fatigue.

Instead, I was full of energy and love. Overall, my experience in India was incredible. I learned more about TO and its practices and representations around the world than I had in more than two years of independent research and education. I learned how to trust myself and my instincts, as well as how to use the theoretical concepts about collaboration, social theatre, education and group work that we are taught here in the Program in Educational Theatre.

— Robert Keith ETHR ’13, contributed to this article

Student and Alumni Updates and Awards

Robert Stevenson (ETHR ’13) and Emma Lieber (ETHR ’14) were among a group of students who travelled to San Francisco during the winter recess. From January 16th - 20th, the Steinhardt Scholars explored their year-long theme while taking in the sights and doing community service. Robert, Emma, and the other scholars assisted in the final stages of construction of several East Oakland homes for Habitat for Humanity.

Dr. Robin Beth Levenson (Ph.D ’07) is now Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at LaGuardia Community College and City University of New York. Dr. Levenson teaches all aspects of speech and communication, including Oral Interpretation, Speech 101, Speech for Non-Native Speakers, Voice and Diction, and others. She also presented on a panel last October for ALTA, the American Literary Translators Association, on translating for actors in the works of Anton Chekhov. Her book Acting in Translation is being re-edited for Routledge Publishers. During summer 2010, she taught Script Analysis for the Stella Adler Studio Summer Intensive Program.

Honey Goodenough (EDTC ’06) founded an Alumni Scholarship to attend the National Puppetry Conference held at the Tony award winning Eugene O’Neill Theater Center. The second annual fundraiser is called Puppet Pandemic, a showcase of works developed at the National Puppetry Conference. She also appeared in Phantom Limb’s The Fortune Teller at HERE Arts Center.

Alex Sarian (EDTC ’07) gave a TEDx speech at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto in November, in which he spoke about Educational Theatre and his time in the program. In particular, his speech highlighted his experience in the Shakespeare-to-Go touring company. TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to spread ideas. The speech is on Youtube at the following link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56GBnm3zdzg. Alex currently serves as the Director of Education and Outreach at MCC Theater.