

UC SAN DIEGO THEATRE & DANCE

Week 3

October 12th, 2016

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Department News

Molli & Arthur Wagner Walk Ribbon Cutting

A dedication ceremony for the Molli & Arthur Wagner Walk was held Monday, Sept. 26, 2016 in honor of Molli and Arthur Wagner. Arthur Wagner was the founding chair of the UC San Diego Department of Theatre and Dance.

About 80 people attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony that took place in the Potiker Plaza. The Molli & Arthur Wagner Walk runs from the parking lot to the entrance of the Potiker on the UC San Diego campus. The speakers praised the Wagners as true patrons of the arts and remembered the late Arthur (who died in 2015 at age 92) with anecdotes and stories.

The event included heartfelt speeches from Interim Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Peter Cowhey, La Jolla Playhouse Board of Trustees Chair Margret McBride, Managing Director of La Jolla Playhouse, Michael Rosenberg, Theatre & Dance Chair Charles Means, and Zora Howard, class of 2017 and recipient of the Molli and Arthur Fellowship for Acting.





(Arthur and Molli Wagner Walk)



(Left to right: Dean of the Division of Arts and Humanities Cristina Della Coletta ,Wayne Wagner, Molli Wagner, Theatre & Dance Chair Charles Means, La Jolla Playhouse Board of Trustees Chair Margret McBride, and Interim Executive Vice Chancellor for

Academic Affairs Peter Cowhey.)



(Zora Howard, class of 2017 and recipient of the Molli and Arthur Fellowship for Acting)



(From left: Molli Wagner, Janet Hoover, and Acting Faculty Eva Barnes)



(Zora Howard, MFA Actor Class of 2017)



(Joan and Irwin Jacobs)



(Left to right: Mo Rodvanich ('18 MFA Actor), Keith Wallace ('16 MFA Acting Alum), Kamra Jacobs ('17 MFA Stage Manager), Caroline Siewert ('17 MFA Actor), Yonatan Gebeyehu ('18 MFA Actor); second row: Sean McIntyre ('17 MFA Actor), and Terrance White ('17 MFA Actor).



(Dean of the Division of Arts and Humanities Cristina Della Coletta, Molli Wagner, and Theatre & Dance Chair Charles Means.)



(Molli Wagner and son Wayne Wagner)

Celebrate Artists of the Future Fundraiser

Celebrate the Artists of the Future fundraising dinner and gala to benefit the Theatre and Dance Student Production Fund took place at the home of T & D SPF committee member Janet & George Hoover on September 10, 2016. The event included UCSD Theatre and Dance alumni. MFA acting alum Zan Aufderheide was the fantastic auctioneer, MFA acting alum Ricardo Chavira flew in from San Antonio to deliver heartwarming remarks and perform a scene from *Motherf**er with the Hat*, MFA directing alum Josh Brody eloquently spoke about the department, and there was dramatic entertainment provided by a talented troupe of current MFA students. Live auction items were arranged by UCSD alumni Danny Burstein, West Hiler, and our very own Robert Brill. Graduate advisor Marybeth Ward was indispensable keeping the evening rolling and designing the beautiful orchid flower arrangements. Special guests included Chancellor Pradeep Khosla and Dean of Arts and Humanities Cristina Della Coletta, both of whom delivered warm remarks.



(Hosts Eden, George, Janet and Kian Hoover. Photos by McKenzie Images/Del Mar Times.)



(UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep Khosla, Dean of Arts & Humanities Cristina Della Coletta, MFA Alum Ricardo Chavira, Molli Wagner, Mary and Wayne Wagner, Theatre and Dance professor Eva Barnes, Theatre and Dance Chair Charles Means. Photos by McKenzie Images/Del Mar Times.)



(Scenic design professor Robert Brill, promotions manager Mark Maltby. Photos by McKenzie Images/Del Mar Times.)



(Kat Wacker and Teri Reese. Photos by McKenzie Images/Del Mar Times.)



(Larry and Janet Smarr. Photos by McKenzie Images/Del Mar Times.)



(Phil and Catherine Blair, Linda and Mel Katz, La Jolla Playhouse managing director Michael Rosenberg. Photos by McKenzie Images/Del Mar Times.)



(La Jolla Playhouse general manager Debby Buchholz, Joshua Brody, Mia Fiorella, Gabe Green. Photos by McKenzie Images/Del Mar Times.)

(From left to right: '18 MFA Actor Kyle Hester, '17 MFA Actors Katherine Ko & Mary Glen Fredrick; Photos by Charlie Jicha)



(Left to right: Lily Padilla '18 MFA Playwright and Claire Roberson '18 MFA Actor; Photo by Charlie Jicha)



(Left to right: '17 MFA Actors Hunter Spangler and Martin Mercourri; Photo by Charlie Jicha)



(Left to right: '17 MFA Actor Zora Howard, '18 MFA Actor Kyle Hester; Photo by Charlie Jicha)



(MFA Acting Alum Zan Aufderheide, auctioneer; Photo by Charlie Jicha)



(MFA Acting Alum Ricardo Chavira; Photo by Charlie Jicha)

(Photo by Charlie Jicha)



(Left to right: Julie Bronstein, Janet Hoover, host, Chancellor Pradeep Khosla, and George Hoover, host)



(Left to right: Janet Hoover and Molli Wagner, Acting Faculty Eva Barnes, '17 MFA Actor Katherine Ko; Photos by Charlie

Jicha)



(Photo by Charlie Jicha)



(Photo by Charlie Jicha)

Alumni News

Keith Wallace, Deborah Stein, Charlie Jicha, Melissa Ng, Brandon Rosen, Kamra A. Jacobs, & Mandisa Reed: "The Bitter Game"



Last year, La Jolla Playhouse's Without Walls Festival had more than two dozen shows, but a clear critics' favorite was "The Bitter Game," an interactive solo play about an unarmed black man shot to death by police in Philadelphia.

UC San Diego **2016 MFA graduate Keith A. Wallace** wrote and starred in the dark, searing play, which was staged like a basketball game on UCSD's Revelle basketball court. The play gave mostly white audiences a one-hour glimpse of what it's like to be a black man in America.

This week, the Playhouse is remounting the play at the outdoor graffiti art yard Writerz Blok in Encanto, through a partnership with the community-focused Jacobs Center for Neighborhood Innovation. The production is directed by **Playwriting Faculty Professor Deborah Stein**.

Scenic Design by **Charlie Jicha (MFA Scenic Design)**

Costume Design by **Melissa Ng ('16 MFA Costume Design Alum)**

Lighting Design by **Brandon Rosen (MFA Lighting Design)**

Stage Managed by **Kamra A. Jacobs & Mandisa Reed (MFA Stage Management)**

Ngozi Anyanwu & Jiehae Park: Lincoln Center New Writers Residency



Lincoln Center Theater has established the LCT New Writers in Residence program, which offers writers a no-strings-attached opportunity to develop new work. "We are so happy to be able to do this," said artistic director André Bishop in a statement. "All we want to do is to be helpful and supportive of these gifted, young writers."

The program will be spearheaded by LCT3 artistic director Evan Cabnet and associate director Natasha Sinha. The yearlong residency will offer writers office space and resources. This year's recipients, chosen by Cabnet and Sinha, are **Ngozi Anyanwu (MFA Acting Alum)**, Jocelyn Bioh, Sarah DeLappe, Olivia Dufault, Julia Jarcho, Jason Kim, Phillip Howze, and **Jiehae Park (MFA Acting Alum)**.

Kate Jopson, Halei Parker, Bo Tindell, and JR Bruce: "1984"

Kate Jopson (MFA Directing Alum) is directing "1984", a novel to stage project, in LA.

Halei Parker (MFA Design Alum) is costume designing and **Bo Tindell (MFA Design Alum)** is designing the lights. **JR Bruce**, who previously worked in paints and props, is the Scenic and Props Designer.

About the show:

"War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery and Ignorance is Strength." Greenway Arts Alliance Presents. George Orwell's "1984", directed by Kate Jopson as the first production of their novel to stage program Greenway Reads. 300 Fairfax High School students are reading the novel and will attend matinee's of the theatrical production. The adaptation by Alan Lyddiard creates an interactive and engaging experience for audience members. Jopson said, "We're trying to create an immersive experience. The elements of the play and its themes are all around us in the real world. We try to emphasize that and as soon as you arrive at the theater there's not anywhere you're not in the set of 1984, even in the lobby and bathrooms."



Hilary Ward Widdifield, Ruth McKee, and Jennifer Chang: "Mountain View"



Marshall College presents a special performance and reception with Artist-in-Residence, **Hilary Ward Widdifield (MFA Acting Alum)**.

Mountain View

The story of one teacher's struggle to understand the balance between the preservation and loss of innocence.

Date: Wednesday,
October 12th
UC San Diego, Wagner

Theatre (below Galbraith Hall)
7:00pm - Show
8:00pm - Reception with the artist
FREE EVENT

Ms. Hilary Ward Widdifield will perform *Mountain View*, the story of Candace Alexander's first day as a substitute teacher at Mountain View elementary. As scandal looms over the school, Candace wonders how she can cross generational and language divides to even begin to speak to her students about the pervasive tragedy of losing innocence.

Hilary is an alumna of UC San Diego, having earned her master's of fine arts degree in 2007. Most recently, she starred in HBO's *All the Way* in the role of Coretta Scott King. She is also a co-founder of Chalk Repertory Theatre in Los Angeles.

Mountain View is written by **Ruth McKee (MFA Playwriting Alum)** and directed by **Jennifer Chang (MFA Acting Alum & Head of Undergraduate Acting)**.

Sherrice Mojgani: Leadership U Grant

Sherrice Mojgani (MFA Design Alum) was a recipient of the Leadership U Grant.

Theatre Communications Group (TCG) has announced the 2016 Round 4 recipients of the Leadership U(niversity) One-on-One program. Grants of \$75,000, supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, have been awarded to eight early-career leaders from all areas of theatre.

The recipients will also receive mentorship at a TCG Member Theatre. An honorarium of \$5,000 will be gifted to each of the participating mentors.

Ricardo Chavira: "Jane the Virgin"



Desperate Housewives alum **Ricardo Chavira (MFA Acting Alum)** is set for a recurring role on the upcoming third season of "Jane The Virgin", playing Xo's (Andrea Navedo) ex-boyfriend who dated her when he was married.

In one of several cliffhangers in the Season 2 finale of the CW series, Xo, who had just slept with ex-husband Rogelio's nemesis Esteban, was seen holding a positive pregnancy test for a baby that could be any of the two men's.

Chavira starred as Carlos Solis opposite Eva Longoria on all eight seasons of ABC's *Desperate Housewives* and has been recurring as Presidential candidate Francisco Vargas on ABC's *Scandal*. He'll next be seen opposite

Drew Barrymore and Timothy Olyphant on Netflix's new comedy series *Santa Clarita Diet*.

Matt Henerson: "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom"

Matt Henerson (MFA Acting Alum) is currently playing Sturdyvant in "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" directed by Phylicia Rashad at the Mark Taper Forum through October 16.

About the show:

Ambition and art collide with the business of the blues in this red hot play filled with music that made the '20s roar. An American masterpiece, August Wilson's "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom" is set in 1927 Chicago during a recording session at a white-owned studio with the legendary singer-inspired by real-life Mother of the Blues Gertrude "Ma" Rainey. Tony Award winner Phylicia Rashad directs this groundbreaking play with a powerhouse cast.

Jade Wu: "Luke Cage"



Jade Wu (UG & MFA Alum) appears in a four episode character arc on the new Netflix show "Luke Cage".

About the show:

Given superstrength and durability by a sabotaged experiment, a wrongly accused man escapes prison to become a superhero for hire.

Mike Colter stars as Carl Lucas / Luke Cage, a former convict with superhuman strength and unbreakable skin who now fights crime. Mahershala Ali, Simone Missick, Theo Rossi, Erik LaRay Harvey, Rosario Dawson, and Alfre Woodard also star.

Jack Mikesell & Les Waters: "Macbeth"

Check out **Jack Mikesell (MFA Acting Alum)** sword fighting and then bloodied at the beginning of the video below. **Les**

Waters (Faculty Emeritus) directs one of Shakespeare's most well known tragedies, "Macbeth".



About the show:

How far would you go to achieve your greatest ambition? Grand hopes give rise to ghastly deeds in Shakespeare's riveting tale of a brave warrior and his wife who become murderous monarchs, caught in the thrall of power's dark temptations. Unfolding in a blood-soaked world haunted by ghosts and supernatural forces, *Macbeth* is one of the theatre's most fascinating horror stories about betrayal, dangerous desire, and the kind of evil that never sleeps.

Melody Butiu: "Sunday In the Park with George"

Stephen Sondheim's stunning masterpiece centers on enigmatic painter Georges Seurat and his search for love, inspiration, and "the art of making art." One of the most acclaimed musicals ever, this Pulitzer Prize winner features a glorious score, with the songs "Finishing the Hat," "Putting it Together," and "Move On," is directed by Artistic Director Peter DuBois (A Little Night Music), and features Adam Chanler-Berat (Broadway's Peter and the Starcatcher and Next to Normal), Jenni Barber (Wicked), and **Melody Butiu (MFA Acting Alum)**.

Check out a video excerpt from the production at Huntington Theatre Company below.



Chalk Repertory Theatre: Flash Festival

Chalk Repertory Theatre in LA opened their Flash Festival on Thursday, October 6th, 2016 and it runs for the next three weeks.



(All MFA Alums from left to right: **Rebecca Bonebrake, Halei Parker, Owiso Odera, Jennifer Chang, Ruth McKee, Larissa Kokernot, Hilary Ward Widdifield, Peter Wylie, Amy Ellenberger, and Brian Slaten.**)

Written by 15 Los Angeles Playwrights

Performed by 15 Teams of Actors
Directed by 15 Directors

In their fourth biennial FLASH Festival, Chalk Rep has invited fifteen Los Angeles playwrights to create original ten-minute plays inspired by a space, to be performed in that location. This year they are in residence at St. John's Cathedral, with plays written on the timely theme of Religion & Politics!

Through October 22nd, 2016.

Steven C. Kemp, Emily DeAngelis, & Jonathan Silverstein: Tick... Tick, Boom!



(Photo from tech of "Tick... Tick, Boom!")

Steven C. Kemp (MFA Set Design '08) this fall opened, Lucia di Lammermoor, his 10th opera for Opera San Jose, as well as the National Tour of "The Loser Letters" in DC with costumes designed by **Emily DeAngelis (MFA Costume Design '08)**. The Off-Broadway revival of "Tick...Tick, Boom!" starts previews in NY on October 4th directed by **Jonathan Silverstein (MFA Directing '01)**. Opening later this fall are his designs for Don Giovanni at New Orleans Opera, the US premiere of "You Will Remember Me" at Hudson Stage Company, "Madame Butterfly" at IU Jacobs School of Music and finally the Off-Broadway run of the world premiere musical "A Taste of Things to Come".

David Ari: "August: Osage County"



David Ari (MFA Acting '04) is currently appearing as Bill Forham in Marin Theatre Company's 50th anniversary season opener, *August: Osage County*, by Tracy Letts, directed by Jasson Minadakis. David is now a permanent Bay Area resident, and is exceedingly happy about it.

About the show:

When alcoholic patriarch Beverly Weston goes missing, his daughters Barbara, Ivy and Karen reluctantly return home to their mother Violet - cancer-stricken, drug-addled, and a bigger piece of work than ever. With in-laws, cousins, grandchildren and new beaus in tow, the entire Weston clan makes the journey to the family home, where old grievances are aired, family secrets are spilled, and cutting remarks-especially those from Violet-take deadly aim. Featuring a huge cast of Marin Theatre favorites, and in one of the first Bay Area professional production since the Broadway tour in 2009, Tracy Letts' dark comedy is an acidic and acerbic take on the juicy American family drama.

Directed by MTC Artistic Director Jasson Minadakis (*The Invisible Hand*, *Anne Boleyn*), this huge Broadway and national hit was written by the Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist of *Bug* and *Killer Joe*, which MTC produced in 2006.

Kent Davis: "The Changer's Key"



Kent Davis's (MFA Acting Alum) second book was released this week as a follow up to *A Riddle in Ruby*. Check out the review of his book below.

About the book:

In this sequel to *A Riddle in Ruby* (2015), Ruby Teach has been taken prisoner by her nemesis, Wisdom Rool. Prison, as it turns out, is a fortress training camp for reeves, the crown's warriors and spies and the thorns in Ruby's side. When a creepy doctor there pledges to interpret the secret in Ruby's blood, Stockholm syndrome surfaces, and she decides siding with Rool has a certain appeal. As her father and friends battle wilderness and bounty hunters to rescue her, Ruby struggles to comprehend what secrets stream through her veins, what the moral repercussions for serving Rool may be, and what the actual threat to Colonial America is.

Where Book 1 stumbled in finding its meter, here there is no faltering, just momentum. Wilderness, fortresses, predatory cats, and a yeti for good measure transmute a game of find-the-Ruby into a combustive delight. Fans of Snicket-ian gloom will revel in the thrill that the oft-grim landscapes proffer. Dastardly, heroic, and powerful roles are played by both sexes, but this tale is well-populated by members of the not-so-weaker sex who are ready to throw a

punch. In this alternative Colonial America the demographic tends toward white. However, good vs. evil vs. undecided serves the conflict more than race or socio-economic cataloging.

Andrea Stolowitz and Lily Kelting: "Berlin Diary"

Next week is the world premiere of **Andrea Stolowitz's (MFA Playwriting Alum)** new play called "Berlin Diary". **Lily Kelting (PhD Alum)** interviewed the playwright while in Berlin. The piece premieres in Portland in April 2017.

Check out the full interview [here](#).

About the play:



In 1936 Dr. Max Cohnreich escapes Berlin, Germany and arrives in NYC settling there with his immediate family. In 1939 he writes about his experiences in a diary intended for his as yet unborn grandchildren. In 2015 his great-granddaughter Andrea Stolowitz travels to Berlin to use the diary to explore the life he describes and the relatives she never knew. The parallel lives of the characters create a narrative about the search for home and family which operates at the border of reality and memory and the intersection of national history and private lives. A play about remembering and forgetting.

UC San Diego

ARTS AND HUMANITIES Theatre and Dance

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Sincerely,

[UC San Diego Theatre & Dance](#)

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