

# Behind the Scene

Volume 11, Issue 4  
**Fall  
2005**

**Serving the Washington area since 1992**

## Recent Developments

The Theatre Lab is expanding—in many directions. The most significant expansion is a physical one: Starting in early 2006 we will be housed in a wonderful new facility just a block from the Gallery Place Metro station, in the heart of downtown DC. Our administrative offices will be in the same building as our classes for the first time in our thirteen-year history, and we'll be able to accommodate many more programs in much greater comfort.

And we're expanding into the suburbs as well! The Theatre Lab is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Fairfax County Public Schools' Office of Adult and Community Education. Longtime faculty member Michael Rusotto taught our first class on the Centreville campus—an installment of our famous Drama Workshop—this past March, and it was such a success that MaryBeth Wise will be teaching another class there in the fall. We expect the offerings to pro-

liferate as time goes by. Classes take place in a beautiful auditorium—and all will be taught by the same great instructors who teach all our other classes. Please take advantage of this new location if it happens to be your neck of the woods, or help us spread the word to the citizens of Fairfax County!

Auditions for the Honors Conservatory at The Theatre Lab—our new one-year intensive program for actors who

*(Continued on page 3)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Youth Programs	2
Fall classes	3
Where are they now?	4
Course Update	5



**Register  
online  
today for  
classes!**

## Fund for the Future Attracts Major Donors

The Theatre Lab's Fund for the Future, supporting our relocation to the Calvary Woodward Building at Gallery Place and the accompanying expansion of our educational programs planned for 2006, is drawing ever nearer to its target goal of \$200,000. Thanks to major pledges from the **DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities' Main Street Initiative** (\$25,000), the **Philip Graham Fund** (\$20,000), the **Eugene and Agnes Meyer Foundation** (\$20,000) and **Gilbert and Jaylee**

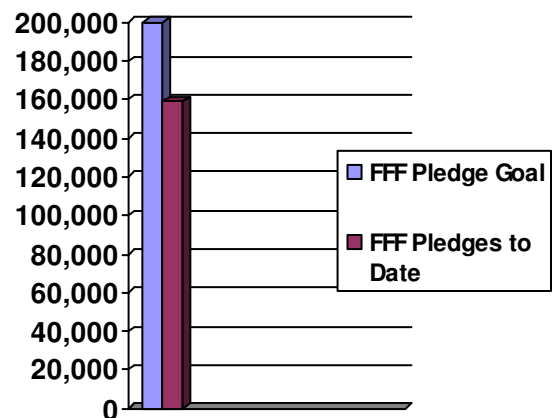
**Mead** (\$20,000), the pledge total now stands at **\$159,000**—more than three quarters of the way toward our goal!

We are now turning to our loyal community of students, artists, and friends to bring the campaign home. If you'd like to make a donation, call our office at (202) 588-8113 or click the "Fund for the Future" link on our website.

With your support, The Theatre Lab plans to be fully operational at the Gallery Place site in early 2006. More classes, big-

ger and better performance spaces, easier metro access, more time to enjoy the company of fellow students and faculty—these are just a few

of the things you can look forward to when we consolidate all our activities under one roof. We can't wait to welcome you into our new home! Ω



## Summer Youth Programs Soar

More than 200 young people participated in The Theatre Lab's acting and musical theatre camps this year, helping to make this our most successful and exciting summer ever.

Teens interested in musical theatre performed *More Than This*, an original revue featuring the songs of Stephen Schwartz, under the direction of Jane Pesci-Townsend, Washington's most beloved musical theatre diva (and the Chair of the Musical Theatre Department at Catholic University). From *Godspell* to *Wicked*, these performers embraced the complex material with a passion, humor and understanding that belied their youth and ignited the crowd during each of their three performances.

In the Summer Acting Institute for Teens, Theatre Lab founders Deb Gottesman and Buzz Mauro and a host of theatre professionals trained young artists in improvisation, scene study, auditioning, voice and movement. At the end of the program, students displayed their skills in a showcase featuring the works of Sam Shepard, Arthur Miller and Joyce Carol Oates, among others.

As for the 13-and-under set, 2005 marked a major expansion of our Summer Acting Camps to include programs for 6-8 year-olds as well as older elementary and middle school-age youth. The younger kids dove into creative dramatics—learning mime and comedy, exploring heroes and villains, and producing an original show about adventures in *The Wild Kingdom*—while older kids honed their theatre mus-

cles by dramatizing original folktales, tackling Shakespeare and even developing a show rooted in Noh Theater.

As the summer winds down, we have just one more program to launch: the area's first-ever magic camp. Under the direction of Karen Beriss, one of the country's top female magicians, 9-14 year-olds will learn the tricks of the magic trade and perform a full-length magic show at area senior centers and children's hospitals.

Thanks to our terrific faculty, the kids and all their families for making this a summer to remember! Ω



Antoine Lee performing in *More Than This*, this year's MTIT performance.

## The DC Cabaret Scene by Judy Simmons

I remember nine years ago when I was at the Eugene O'Neill Cabaret Conference and someone said, "There is no cabaret in Washington, DC." But, luckily, they were wrong—cabaret is alive and well and thriving and represented at a variety of venues in the DC area. I am a cabaret performer and the Executive Director of The DC Cabaret Network founded in 1997 by Wendy Lane Bailey (who has since moved to New Jersey and continues to be a vibrant cabaret performer in NYC.)

What is cabaret? That is not an easy question to answer. There are many definitions of cabaret that encompass many types of entertainment. The classic cabaret show is usually one or two people who sing 13-14 songs with an encore

and it lasts from 50 to 60 minutes. There is usually a theme reinforced with patter. What is so wonderful about cabaret is that it is a very naked and personal performance. The cabaret artist directly addresses the audience and the audience becomes part of the show. It is important that the performer makes each of the songs unique and individual. It is also important that each song tell a story. This is not the time to sing your favorite show tunes!

A number of theatres promote cabaret series as part of their regular season. One of the longest-running cabaret series is at Signature Theatre, where they primarily showcase local cabaret performers. The In-Series has also produced cabaret performances for many years. Local restaurants have jumped on board and there are several venues that feature cabaret artists on a regular basis including Sala Thai, Asia Bistro, Café Mozart, and L'Appetiti Restaurant. Wolf Trap presents international

*This summer we are proud to have worked with partners including House of Ruth, Martha's Table, CentroNia and others to provide more than \$20,000 in scholarships to disadvantaged young people from all over the metropolitan area. Thanks to the Rachel Liba Cardozo Children's Foundation, the Gilbert and Jaylee Mead Family Foundation, the Gary Rosenthal Collection Foundation, the Anthony Lucas Spindletop Foundation, the Weissberg Foundation and the many individual donors who make our scholarship initiatives possible.*

(Continued on page 7)

## Classes of Note

### Intensive Character Development

Popular Theatre Lab instructor David Toney received the 2005 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Resident Play, and he's here to share with you everything he knows about creating a character. *Intensive Character Development* is David's totally unique class that uses a recent theory of how the brain functions to help actors create "spontaneous memories" that fill out the life of any character, resulting in more believable and powerful performances. This intensive course is an intensive next step for any actor with some scene study experience.

### Playwriting Workout

Whether you've got several full-length plays under your belt or are looking for a way to get started as a play-

*For class dates, times, and locations see the Course Update on page 5.*

wright, Paul Donnelly's *Playwriting Workout* will provide the inspiration and techniques you need to take your craft to the next level. Paul brings his experience as an award-winning playwright (and beloved instructor) to this brand new class, which is designed to give playwrights at all levels an opportunity to expand their skills, produce new manuscripts or polish old ones, and connect with the joy of the creative process.

### Great Ideas in Acting

If you caught Studio Theatre's recent smash hit *Take Me Out*, you're well acquainted with the talents of Rick Foucheux, who brought the house down with his star turn as the delightfully flamboyant financial manager Mason Marzac. But even if you didn't, if you attend theatre in Washington at all, you've come across Rick at one time or another, in one or another

of his complex and masterful performances. There's no Washington actor we'd rather sit down and talk about acting with, and that's exactly what students get to do in Rick's fascinating class, *Great Ideas in Acting*. Rick leads the group through discussions inspired by the greatest writing that's ever been done on the craft of acting—by the likes of David Mamet, Uta Hagen, and Constantin Stanislavsky—and suggests eye-opening exercises for actors and new approaches to the art for theatre lovers of all persuasions.

### Stand Up Comedy

The Theatre Lab's Stand Up Comedy class has become so popular, we're offering *two* sections of it this fall! Taught by nationally acclaimed comic Eddie Sarfaty, Stand Up Comedy is great training whether you're an actor looking to sharpen your comedy skills, an up-and-coming comic ready to hit the circuit, or a class clown in need of a little structure. Eddie has performed across the country and on Comedy Central and he comes down from New York just to teach this class for us. He'll cover all aspects of stand up, including joke structure, delivery issues, developing your comic persona, and much more.

### Creating a Role

Theatre Lab Directors Deb Gottesman and Buzz Mauro are back to teach the class that is in many ways central to the Theatre Lab experience. Nobody else offers anything quite like it. In *Creating a Role*, acting students at all levels—Beginning Scene Study is the only prerequisite—come together to rehearse and perform a major full-length play. Past offerings include *The Grapes of Wrath*, *The Oresteia*, and *The Laramie Project*, and this time around—just in time for the holidays—it will be *Mrs.*

*Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge*, a crazy comedy by Christopher Durang, crowned prince of contemporary comic theatre. Perhaps not as family-friendly as *A Christmas Carol*, but definitely funnier. If you have some time and energy to spare, join us for the ride. Ω

## Developments

*(Continued from page 1)*

would like to work professionally—will be held in the fall. The program will be starting up in January. See the audition notice on page 6 for more info.

The Theatre Lab website is undergoing a complete overhaul. Look for it soon! In addition to a more up-to-date look, the new site will feature special articles and interviews on the actor's craft, password-protected pages of benefits just for Theatre Lab Members, and much more info on our popular Life Stories programs and how you can get involved. And you'll find it much easier to register for classes online. You'll also find advice on devising a custom curriculum from among our wide selection of classes and how to make the most of your Theatre Lab experience. Please visit us soon at [www.theatrelab.org](http://www.theatrelab.org). Ω

*Visit [www.theatrelab.org](http://www.theatrelab.org)*

**Art & Soul**

Contemporary wearable art,  
jewelry & crafts  
—202.548.0105—

## Where Are They Now?

As always, Theatre Lab students and alumni are hard at work in the Washington theatre and film communities. Here's who's who and what's what this summer:

**Babar Ahmed**, whom you may remember from last year's Beginning Scene Study and Principles of Comedy classes, is currently directing the movie *Princess* (which he

*Read how our students are putting their Theatre Lab training to good use.*

also wrote), starring Oscar nominees Pat Morita and Eric Roberts (yes, you read that right!); **Karen Beriss** has just finished playing the monster in the horror movie *Crazy Eights* produced by Ikoya Films; **Tina Ghandchilar** and **Randy Lindgren** are appearing in a staged reading of the musical *One Touch of Venus* with American Century Theater through the end of July; **John Lim** joined the cast of the internet-based sci-fi series *Star Trek: New Voyages* which will be released in early '06 (more info can be found on the internet movie database <http://imdb.com/title/tt0458122/>); **Bea Judge** is in rehearsal for the premiere of Horton Foote's *The Beginning of Summer* with Quotidian Theatre opening this fall; **Craig Klein** will be appearing at MetroStage in *The Sandstorm*—a collection of monologues from ten Marines who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom—opening late August; **Louis Levy** played the Mayor in the 48 Hour Film Project's *The Weed of Deceit: A Love Story*; **Nia Medina** is playing Maria in *Twelfth Night* with the Mobtown Players in Balti-

more opening August 11; and **Manolo Santalla** appeared in Euripides' *Ion* with Natural Theatricals.

We're pleased to report that our younger students are no less busy: Musical Theatre Institute alum **Andy Tonken** appeared in *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* at Adventure Theatre in the early part of the summer; and Summer Acting Institute for Teens graduates **Constance Ejuma** and **K.C. Wright** are currently in American Century Theater's production of *The Emperor Jones*. Ω

## Faculty Spots

The Theatre Lab has never ascribed to the philosophy that those who can't do, teach. In fact, we believe that those who do it best, teach it best. That's why our faculty is comprised entirely of artists who work consistently in the professional theatre world while at the same time imparting their wisdom as top-notch teachers. Since they're always working, it's easy to find your favorite Theatre Lab faculty members walking the boards somewhere in town. Here's some of what you can look forward to in the fall:

**Sherri Edelen** (Acting a Song) and **Donna Migliaccio** (Musical Theatre Workshop) will perform together in the Washington premiere of *Urinetown* at Signature Theatre opening mid-August (you can also catch Sherri in *Frog and Toad* at Round House Theatre in November); **Rick Foucheux** (Great Ideas in Acting), fresh from his resounding success in Studio Theatre's *Take Me Out*, will appear in *Born Yesterday* at Arena Stage opening late September; long-time faculty member **Dot Neumann** (Explorations in Scene Study) is directing *Top Girls* for Fountainhead Theatre at Theatre on the Run in September; **Michael Russotto** (Cold Reading, Auditioning) will be playing Richard in *You are Here* at Theatre

Where are YOU now?  
Contact us about your  
theatre exploits and we'll  
include you in the next  
*Behind the Scene.*

**Jim Tetro Photography**  
Professional Portraits & Headshots  
(703) 876-0686

Alliance in September and October; **Jeremy Skidmore** (Dramatic Improv) is busy directing *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* for Theater Alliance opening in August, producing *You Are Here* for Theater Alliance in October, and directing *Draft Day* for the African Continuum Theatre Company (ACTCO) in November; **Deidra Starnes** (Summer Acting Camp for Kids) will be performing in ACTCO's, "*I have before me a remarkable document given to me by a young lady from Rwanda*" in mid-September and Rep Stage's *The Violet Hour* in October; you can see **Craig Wallace** (Mastering the Craft) in *Starving* at Woolly Mammoth Theatre opening in November; and **MaryBeth Wise** (Drama Workshop) will be playing Annie Sullivan in *The Miracle Worker* at Olney—the inaugural production of the new theatre—which opens August 12.

Our teachers also have a lot of winter and spring gigs lined up. We'll keep you posted! Ω



### Beginning Scene Study

An intensive introduction to scripted work through preparation and performance of scenes and monologues. Emphasis on learning effective rehearsal techniques and expanding the actor's range.

Instructor: Buzz Mauro

Saturdays, 10am - 1pm Sep. 17 - Oct. 22

Location: DCAC

Tuition: Non-Members \$230/Members \$207

### Cabaret Class

See course description at end of Cabaret article on page 7.

Instructors: George Fulginiti-Shakar and Judy Simmons

Saturdays, 10am - 1pm Sep. 17 - Oct. 15

plus Sunday evening, Oct. 23

Location: Wesley

Tuition: Non-Members \$230/Members \$207

### Cold Reading

Students will learn how to connect quickly and powerfully with unfamiliar scripts and scene partners, improving cold reading skills for general auditions, call backs, staged readings, early rehearsals, and film and television work. This course will cover all types of cold reading, using scripts encompassing a wide variety of styles and periods. Instructor: Michael Russotto

Tuesdays, 7 - 9:30pm Sep. 20 - Nov. 1 ☒

Location: Wesley

Tuition: Non-Members \$200/Members \$180

### Creating a Role

See course description on page 3

Instructors: Deb Gottesman and Buzz Mauro

Double Session Course

Mondays, 7 - 10:30pm Sep. 19 - Dec. 19 ☒ + Tues., Dec. 20

Location: Wesley

Tuition: Non-Members \$460/Members \$414

### Drama Workshop

Recommended as an intensive first course for beginners or a refresher for those with experience, this is an exciting exploration of the actor's process through a series of improvisational exercises and theatre games. Great for loosening up your body and voice, building self-confidence, and unleashing your creative spirit.

Instructor: MaryBeth Wise

Saturdays, 11am - 2pm Sep. 17 - Oct. 22

Location: Wesley

Tuition: Non-Members \$230/Members \$207

### Great Ideas in Acting

See course description on page 3

Instructor: Rick Foucheux

Saturdays, 10am - 12:30pm Sep. 17 - Oct. 22

Location: Wesley

Tuition: Non-Members \$200/Members \$180

### Intensive Character Development

See course description on page 3

Instructor: David Toney

Mondays, 7 - 10pm Sep. 19 - Oct. 31 ☒

Location: Wesley

Tuition: Non-Members \$230/Members \$207

### On-Camera Scene Study

An intensive course in acting for the screen. Students will rehearse scenes from plays, teleplays, and screenplays with special attention to what makes acting work well on camera. Work will be videotaped and playbacks will be analyzed. Some outside rehearsal required. Instructor: Brenna McDonough

Wednesdays, 7 - 9:30pm Sep. 21 - Nov. 2 ▲

Location: On-Camera Training Studio

Tuition: Non-Members \$200/Members \$180

### Playwriting Workout

See course description on page 3

Instructor: Paul Donnelly

Wednesdays, 7 - 9:30pm Sep. 21 - Nov. 2 ▲

Location: Wesley

Tuition: Non-Members \$200/Members \$180

### Stand Up Comedy

See course description on page 3

Instructor: Eddie Sarfaty

Section A Section B

Mondays, 7 - 10pm

Tuesdays, 7 - 10pm

Sep. 19 - Oct. 31 ☒

Sep. 20 - Nov. 1 ☒

Location: DCAC

Tuition: Non-Members \$230/Members \$207

### Voice and Speech

This course helps you find greater comfort and power in the use of the voice through training in posture, breathing, body awareness, stress reduction, and self-confidence. Develops habits of healthful vocal production and effective communication.

Instructor: Michael Rodgers

Sundays, 4 - 6pm Sep. 18 - Oct. 23

Location: Wesley

Tuition: Non-Members \$180/Members \$162

#### Class locations:

DCAC— 2438 18th St. NW, DC

Wesley UMC—5312 Connecticut Ave. NW, DC

On-Camera Training—4275 Howard Ave.

Kensington, MD

☒ No class Oct. 3-4 (Rosh Hashanah)  
▲ No class Oct. 12-13 (Yom Kippur)

# Registration Deadline: September 12

# REGISTRATION FORM - September/October 2005

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make me a Member (\$50) so I can save 10% now!**

I'd like to make a tax-deductible contribution in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Total payment enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

MC/V \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 3-digit Security \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

- Beginning Scene Study** (Non-Members \$230/Members \$207)
- Cabaret Class** (Non-Members \$230/Members \$207)
- Cold Reading** (Non-Members \$200/Members \$180)
- Creating A Role** (Non-Members \$460/Members \$414)
- Drama Workshop** (Non-Members \$230/Members \$207)
- Great Ideas in Acting** (Non-Members \$200/Members \$180)
- Intensive Character Development** (Non-Members \$230/Members \$207)
- On-Camera Scene Study** (Non-Members \$200/Members \$180)
- Playwriting Workout** (Non-Members \$180/Members \$162)
- Stand Up Comedy—Sect. A** (Non-Members \$230/Members \$207)
- Stand Up Comedy—Sect. B** (Non-Members \$230/Members \$207)
- Voice and Speech for Teens** (Non-Members \$180/Members \$162)

**TUITION MUST BE PAID AT TIME OF ENROLLMENT.**



### Registration Options:

1. Register online.
2. Fax the registration form with your credit card info.
3. Mail check with completed registration form
4. Register by phone with your credit card

**The Theatre Lab, Inc.**  
 PO Box 21400, Washington, DC 20009  
 Phone: 202/588-8113 Fax: 202/588-0176

### Become a Theatre Lab Member

and receive a 10% discount on classes and services, invitations to Member Night events and receptions with local theatre stars, plus dozens of discounts and special privileges at area theatres.

**Membership is just \$50 per year!**

## Special Announcement

### *Auditions for...* **The Honors Conservatory at The Theatre Lab**

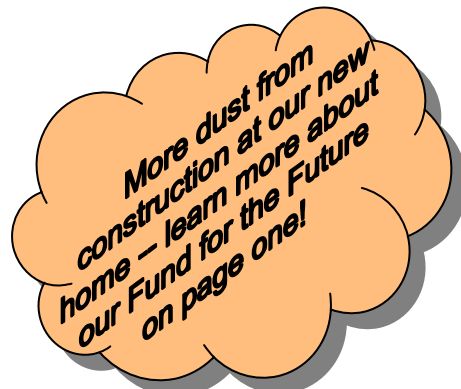
*Spend a year focusing on what you love.*

The Honors Conservatory at The Theatre Lab is a comprehensive one-year acting program beginning in January 2006. A small group of serious acting students will study intensively under distinguished faculty on evenings and weekends—so it's not necessary to abandon career and other commitments. Students will finish the year with a solid grounding in all acting disciplines, an increased appreciation of theatre history and criticism, and all the tools necessary to live the life of a professional actor.

**Auditions: Saturday, October 22 and Saturday, October 29**

Call 202-588-8113 or visit [www.theatrelab.org](http://www.theatrelab.org) for more information and an application.

Refunds (minus a \$20 cancellation fee) are permitted only if notified of withdrawal at least 24 hours before start of first class.



## DC Cabaret

(Continued from page 2)

cabaret stars at the Barns. In August The Atlas Performing Arts Center will produce a showcase series. Blues Alley in Georgetown features local cabaret artists. The Warehouse is the venue where the DC Cabaret Network holds their open mikes each month.

Another major force in the cabaret world is the Cabaret Conference at Yale, now in its third year. This is excellent training for the aspiring cabaret performer. You work with nationally known cabaret artists and reap the benefits of excellent instruction and accompanists during the intensive ten-day conference.

There is no time like the present to start working on your own cabaret show.  $\Omega$

*Looking for something closer to home? Check out The Theatre Lab's class **Cabaret: Getting Your Act Together and Putting It on the Stage** this fall. (See Course Update on page 5) Taught by Judy Simmons and award-winning Musical Director George Fulginiti-Shakar, this course covers everything from selecting the right songs to polishing your patter to making the most of your mike.*

*Culminating in a performance of mini-sets developed in the class, this course is a must for singers wanting to break into the cabaret scene.*

### More About...

#### the DC Cabaret Network

The mission of the DC Cabaret Network is to increase the opportunities for cabaret events and performances and build audiences who appreciate cabaret. The Network is also connecting local cabaret artists and creating a "home" for performers where they can share information and grow

*Life is a Cabaret ole chum!*

artistically.

The activities that the Network sponsors include: open mikes, showcase evenings, a bi-monthly email update, and master classes and seminars taught by established local and national cabaret artists. Benefits of membership include the opportunity to support and participate in the growth of the Network, a valuable cabaret resource and information packet, a subscription to the bi-monthly email update, The DC Cabaret Network Newsletter, which lists upcoming performances and news from the DC cabaret scene, free advertising for your cabaret performances, access to the DC Cabaret Network mailing list, discounted admission to Network events (performances, master classes and seminars), a membership directory and an invitation to the annual "Champagne and Chocolate" party. The dues are \$35 a year. To join please send your check and contact information to: The DC Cabaret Network, P.O. Box 6259, Washington, DC 20015-0259.  $\Omega$

## News from Life Stories

The Theatre Lab's *Life Stories* program, which teaches people from typically marginalized populations to create original movies and other works of dramatic art from their real life experiences, is in full swing this summer. A film featuring the work of incarcerated youth housed in the Montgomery County Department of Corrections has just wrapped and is now being edited for a public screening and "talk back" session with its young creators. E-mail Deb@theatrelab.org if you'd like information on the screening dates and times. The Theatre Lab has also begun a new eight-week *Life Stories* project in partnership with Youth Court, a diversion program for first-time offenders authorized by the DC



Combined Federal Campaign

We've made it easier for federal employees to give to  
The Theatre Lab!

Support us through the  
Combined Federal Campaign

**Designate #7837**



Superior Court.

In other *Life Stories* news: We recently concluded an improvisational workshop for elementary school girls from recently arrived immigrant families and, in fall 2006, we will return to Food and Friends for a project resulting in scenes and monologues created by people living with HIV/AIDS and other life-threatening illnesses. Our *Life Stories for Seniors* program, which takes place at assisted living facilities across the region, will also resume in the fall.

The Theatre Lab is pleased to announce a three-year grant from the Weissberg Foundation in support of our *Life Stories* initiatives.  $\Omega$

