

THE Theatre Lab Behind the Scene

SCHOOL OF THE DRAMATIC ARTS

Serving the DC Area Since 1992 | Winter 2006 Volume 12 Issue 1

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HOME AT LAST!

Theatre Lab Moves to New Space in Late January

Roll out the red carpet because the moment has arrived. The finishing touches are being put on The Theatre Lab's new home at 733 8th Street, NW in anticipation of a grand opening in late January (just in time for our winter session of classes!). From the grandeur of the 250-seat theatre space in Woodward Hall to the sleek interior of the brand new classrooms, we can't wait to show you our new digs. Best of all, Theatre Lab staff, faculty members and students will all be in one place—so we hope you'll drop in to say hello!

Many thanks to the Calvary Baptist Church for providing us with the space to build a lasting home for The Theatre Lab.

FAQ: What's the best way to get to The Theatre Lab's new space?

Take the Metro. Without a doubt.

Our new home is just a short block from the Gallery Place Metro stop, a hub for the Red, Yellow and Green Lines. The neighborhood, which includes the MCI Center, a new mega-movie complex, and many of Washington's hottest restaurants, is well-lit and well-trafficked, so walking to and from the Metro is a breeze.

Parking can prove more of a challenge, unless you time your arrival just right. There are many lots in the neighborhood but they can be pricy, especially on MCI event nights. Rush hour restrictions on street parking, however, are lifted at 6:30pm, which means parking momentarily becomes available on 9th, H and G Streets. These spaces fill quickly though, so if you want to nab one, you'd best be squatting by a spot at 6:25pm. Then you can catch a quick bite at Five Guys burgers or one of the countless other neighborhood joints and still make it to class by 7pm!

The newly renovated classroom spaces are large and filled with light. In addition, there are two small performance spaces perfect for cabaret and experimental productions.



Our new space is in the area's most happening entertainment district. A short walk from the Gallery Place Metro and MCI Center, you can see the National Portrait Gallery from our front door.



Woodward Hall is a historically preserved 250-seat theatre complete with wooden balconies. The Theatre Lab administrative offices are adjacent to the theatre.



Winter Classes at The Theatre Lab

'Tis the season to sing, study scenes and, of course, scrutinize Stanislavsky. And, happily, you can do it all at The Theatre Lab this winter.

Two of the area's most beloved musical theatre divas are back on our teaching roster: Helen Hayes Award winner Sherri Edelen will improve your casting prospects with **Auditioning for Musical Theatre** (Monday evenings, Jan. 16 – Feb. 20) and cabaret performer nonpareil Judy Simmons brings back **Solo Performance** for beginning singers and beyond who are looking to start taking center stage (Thursday evenings, Jan. 19 – Feb. 23). Musical theatre folks should also note that our next **Creating a Musical Role** class, directed by Deb Gottesman and Buzz Mauro (which begins early March), will result in a full-scale production of *Fiddler on the Roof* in June. Lead roles will be cast by audition; ensemble roles are open by permission of the instructors to anyone who can carry a tune.

Jeremy Skidmore, Artistic Director of Theater Alliance and one of the busiest directors in town, is offering **The Stanislavsky Method** (Wednesday evenings, Jan. 18 – Feb. 22) in which students will read the writings and apply the acting principles of Constantin Stanislavsky (frequently credited with being the "Father of modern acting"). A must for anyone serious about the acting craft.

Those looking to refine their performance skills shouldn't miss **Mastering the Craft** taught by Craig Wallace—a

classically trained actor who is equally adept at handling Shakespearean texts and the way-out new works of Woolly Mammoth. This intermediate scene study class, training the actor to make strong physical and vocal choices, doesn't come around very often, so mark your calendars (Saturday mornings, Jan. 21 – Feb. 25).

If tickling the funny bone is what you're about, consider **Comedy Improv**, taught by improv specialist Renee Calarco (Tuesday evenings, Jan. 17 – Feb. 21) or **Comedy Sketch Writing** with David Toney, a Helen Hayes Award-winning actor and former writer for TV's *In Living Color* (Monday evenings, Jan. 23 – Feb. 27).

If what you really want from Santa this year is a good role, then get yourself ready by taking one of our popular auditioning classes. **Auditioning for the Camera**, taught by film and commercial director Paul Awad, is offered on Sunday nights, Jan. 22 – Feb. 26, and **Cold Reading**, an invaluable skill for theatre auditionees, will meet Monday evenings, Jan. 23 – Feb. 27 under the instruction of award-winning actor/director Michael Russotto.

And, as always, if you've never taken a Theatre Lab class, the best place to start is **The Drama Workshop** (Tuesday evenings, Jan. 17 – Feb. 21) for an exploration of the actor's process or **Beginning Scene Study** (Saturdays, 10am – 1pm, Jan. 21 – Mar. 4) for an intensive introduction to scene work.

Where Are They Now?

Here's what some of our students and alumni have been up to this fall:

Chrissy Barnett appeared in Kensington Arts Theatre's production of *Company*; **Ashley Edmiston** played Elaine in *The Last of the Red Hot Lovers* at the Greenbelt Arts Center; **Steven Haber** appeared as Dr. Watson in the Aldersgate Church Community Theater's production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*; **Stephanie Hammel** appeared in *The Women* with the Providence Players; **Millie Langford** played an evil Stepsister in Imagination Stage's *Cinderella*; **John Lim** appeared in the docudrama "Collapse" on the National Geographic Channel; **Jase Parker** appeared in *The Pirates of Penzance* directed by Jane Pesci-Townsend at Catholic University; **Jane Petkofsky** just finished a run of *Once Upon a Mattress* with The Arlington Players; **Manolo Santalla** understudied *Yemaya's Belly* at Signature Theatre; **Anne Stuecker** made her small screen debut in *The Cole Conspiracy* on the History Channel; and **Dana Hunt**, a 2004 Summer Acting Institute for Teens graduate, has just begun her studies at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts for Drama.

➤ Summer is Just Around the Corner

All The Theatre Lab's popular acting camps for kids and teens will be back this summer and located in our Gallery Place home. We've got unique programs for young people ages 6-18 all summer long. Many of our camps fill early. For more information or to receive a 2006 youth brochure call (202) 588-8113.

For Members Only!

**Mrs. Bob Cratchit's
Wild Christmas Binge**



Holiday Cheer
Free Show!
Dessert
Fun!

MEMBER NIGHT! Join us December 19th—curtain at 7:30pm—for this hysterical take on Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*! After the show, stay for delicious desserts, a chat with the cast, a few carols and even play Holiday Bingo!

Don't miss the fun...

Fellowship Hall, Wesley United Methodist Church 5312 Connecticut Ave. NW
Call 202/588-8113 and RSVP by December 15th!

➤ Honors Conservatory Takes Off

Our physical plant isn't the only thing that's new at The Theatre Lab this year. In January 2006 The Theatre Lab launches the intensive Honors Conservatory, a year-long certificate program for students preparing for a professional acting career. Directed by Theatre Lab Co-Directors Deb Gottesman and Buzz Mauro and longtime faculty member Kim Schraf, the program features a highly structured curriculum including courses in theatre history, acting theory, and performance skills as well as advanced courses in voice and movement for the actor, taught by legendary voice coach Margaret Riddleberger (many of whose students have gone on to leading roles on Broadway and in Hollywood) and Helen Hayes Award-winning actor Rick Foucheux.

We appreciate the many applications we received for the program and the many fine auditions we saw, and wish to congratulate the ten students chosen to be the inaugural class of 2006: Echika Agugua, Kelly Cronenberg, Sarah Holt, Jair Kamperveen, Craig Klein, JoAnn Mangione, Jane Petkofsky, Brian Razzino, Charles St. Charles, and Matthew Shapiro.

➤ Seeking New Life Stories Partners

The Theatre Lab is actively seeking organizations serving severely at-risk youth and children aging out of the foster care system with whom to partner for its award-winning *Life Stories* program, which trains people from extremely disadvantaged populations to create original dramatic works for the stage and screen from their real-life experiences. The six-to-ten week course is offered free of charge to our partnering organizations (which currently include the Montgomery County Department of Corrections, Potomac Job Corps, and House of Ruth) at their facilities. Partnering organizations must have a youth population that can attend weekly classes for the full term of the program. If you or someone you know works with an organization that might benefit from our *Life Stories* program, please contact Deb Gottesman at Deb@theatrelab.org. We also offer *Life Stories* programs for seniors and people living with HIV/AIDS and are always happy to hear from potential partners for those programs, too.

➤ A New Look (and a New Name)

The new banner on the cover of this newsletter reflects another exciting change for The Theatre Lab: we've updated our look in conjunction with the move to our new home. You may notice that we've not only changed our logo but tweaked our name as well: The Theatre Lab will henceforth be known as "The Theatre Lab School of the Dramatic Arts." With more than 1,000 enrollments in over 75 classes each year, we are now the largest theatre school in the Metropolitan area—a reality we hope our new name will reflect.

Many thanks to the COMPASS Marketing Team, particularly team leader Roy Morris, for the logo guidance.

➤ Snow Biz

If there's snow on the ground and you're wondering if your class will meet, call our office before you leave the house. If classes are canceled, we'll leave a recorded message on The Theatre Lab line letting you know. (202) 588-8113

➤ Funding Update

The Theatre Lab is pleased to announce major gifts from area foundations: **Clark Charitable Trusts** has awarded The Theatre Lab \$10,000 in support of our *Life Stories* programs and **The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts** has pledged The Theatre Lab \$28,500 to support educational programming in 2006. These foundations join the Beech Street, Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz, Clark Winchcole, Philip Graham Fund, Gilbert and Jaylee Mead, Eugene and Agnes Meyer, Sanford and Doris Slavin, and Weissberg foundations as major supporters in the coming year.

The Theatre Lab's **Fund for the Future** is also nearing its goal of \$200,000 to support our relocation and sustain growth in our education and outreach programming over the next three years. It's not too late to make your contribution and help put us over the top. Please visit our website at www.theatrelab.org and click The Fund for the Future link to receive a pledge form. Or you can simply call a pledge in to our offices (202-588-8113).



"If your eyes like this... Wait till you see what we can do for your taste buds"

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

Support us through the Combined Federal Campaign.



DESIGNATE #7837

Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge

By Christopher Durang

December 17-20
Curtain at 7:30pm
Tickets: ONLY \$10

Wesley United Methodist Church
5312 Connecticut Ave. NW
(entrance on Jocelyn Street)
Plenty of street parking!

Call (202) 588-8113
to reserve tickets today!

Don't miss



CAST:

Glenn Cadoret, David Crowley, Pat Douglass, Victoria Fortune,
Eileen Garner, Kay Hankins, Angela Jemison, Bruce Kaplan,
Deborah Kieffer, Ana Vanessa Ploumpis, Guy Swope,
Annmarie Swope, William Taylor

Faculty Spots

As always, Theatre Lab instructors are walking the boards all over town. Here's where you can find many of them this winter (when they're not teaching a class, of course):

Sherri Edelen is currently appearing in *A Year with Frog and Toad* at Round House Theatre and will open in *Lift: Icarus* at Theatre of the First Amendment in January; you can catch **Craig Wallace** in *Starving* at Woolly Mammoth through December and then *Measure for Measure* at the Folger in January; **Dot Neumann** is directing *Death of a Salesman* for Keegan Theatre, a production that opens January 19; **Rick Foucheux** and **Michael Russotto** will perform together in *The Velvet Sky* at Woolly Mammoth in late January; **Jeremy Skidmore's** production of *Draft Day* is currently running at the African Continuum Theatre; and **Deb Gottesman** will appear in *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* with Theatre Alliance opening late February.

Register for Classes Today!
www.theatrelab.org



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