

callboard

A Publication of the University of North Carolina School of the Arts for Alumni, Students and Friends

Chancellor Mauceri Appoints Six Alumni to UNCSA Board of Trustees

University of North Carolina School of the Arts Chancellor John Mauceri has appointed six alumni to serve as honorary members of the Board of Trustees.

These *ex officio* positions serve as representatives of the different areas of study at UNCSA, and were created by the UNCSA Board of Trustees to "allow the extensive professional experience and relationships of the Chancellor" to expand the outreach of the school. They will participate in all board committees, meetings and activities, contributing their knowledge and experience to the board in its role as an advisory body to both the Chancellor and the UNC Board of Governors.

"I can think of no better artists for these positions than UNCSA alumni, and these alumni in particular," Mauceri said. "Each of them will bring to our board a broad national perspective on the discipline or area they represent."

"I am committed to engaging alumni to a greater extent in the life of the school," he added, "and one of the ways we are doing that is by inviting members of our UNCSA family, our alumni, to fill these important new positions. I believe that this initiative fundamentally changes the balance of our board and creates a conduit between our current students and those who studied at the School of the Arts in the past. Together, and with the rest of those who serve on our board, they will forge a great future for our school."

The new trustees will serve a partial term through June 30, and then a two-year term, from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011. They are:

Dance: Jim Vincent '78, who was recently appointed artistic director of the Nederlands Dans Theater in the Hague. Jim will transition there in August from Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, where he has been artistic director since 2000.

Design & Production: Suri Bieler '71, founder of Eclectic/Encore Properties, Inc., a prop rental company specializing in antique, period

and theatrical furnishings and accessories. Prior to establishing her business, Suri was a freelance prop master for Broadway, off-Broadway and television.

Drama: Lynn Baber '81, artistic administrator at Northlight Theatre, and theatre arts director of the National High School Institute (the Cherub program) at Northwestern University. Lynn has worked professionally as an actor, director, costume designer, teacher, sketch writer, improv comedienne, and producer.

Filmmaking: Danny McBride '99, breakthrough actor with leading roles in the low-budget film "The Foot Fist Way" and the new HBO series "East Bound and Down," both of which he co-created with fellow alumni Jody Hill and Ben Best. Danny also appeared in "Pineapple Express" and "Tropic Thunder" and will star in the anticipated summer blockbuster "Land of the Lost."

Music: Sarah Colvin '96, director of sales for Multinational Strategic Finance, raising assets for private equity, venture capital, real estate and entertainment (film and music). Prior to this, Sarah worked for Brencourt Advisors, LLC in investor relations, and as a touring jazz musician and the founder of E-String Music.

High School Academics: José Ochoa '97, founding executive director of The Chicago High School for the Arts, scheduled to open this fall. Previously, he was the superintendent of Cultural Arts for the Metro Parks and Recreation Department in Nashville, Tenn. José is also a member of the Board of Trustees for the National Guild of Community Schools for the Arts.

These six alumni join renowned poet, scholar and autobiographer Dr. Maya Angelou, who was appointed last year as the honorary trustee for Undergraduate Academics/Graduate Programs.

Read more about the new trustees at http://alumni.uncsa.edu/alumni_on_board.

Gerald Freedman Receives North Carolina Award for Fine Arts, Honored with Gala Celebration, Endowed Professorship at UNCSA

During his nearly 20 years as dean, **Gerald Freedman** has developed UNCSA's drama program into one of the country's premier acting and directing programs, a place where young artists of exceptional talent hone their craft, learn the business, and most importantly, develop as human beings of integrity and character.

On November 18, 2008, Freedman was awarded the North Carolina Award for Fine Arts, the highest civilian honor the state can bestow, for "his continued dedication to North Carolina's students of the dramatic arts and in recognition of his remarkable career as a director and educator." Created by the General Assembly in 1961, the North Carolina Award is selected by an awards committee from nominations submitted by the public in the areas of fine arts, literature, public service and science.

"These awards are our most prestigious civilian honor and are given to those North Carolinians whose contributions to the state are enduring and truly significant," said Governor Mike Easley. "We are fortunate to live in a state with so many outstanding individuals who, through their leadership, their talents and their time, have helped make North Carolina a better place to live."

On February 25, 2009, the UNCSA community gathered to celebrate Freedman's many contributions to the School with a gala celebration in his honor. The evening began with a cocktail reception

and dinner with some of Freedman's closest friends, including longtime colleague and former student, Tony award-winning actor Mandy Patinkin; Academy award-winning actress Olympia Dukakis; and UNCSA alumna **Missi Pyle (Drama '95)**, recently seen on Broadway in *Boeing-Boeing*. After dinner, guests were treated to a special performance of Stephen Sondheim's *Sunday in the Park with George* by Studio IV, under Freedman's direction. A dessert reception and auction immediately followed the performance.

All proceeds from the celebration and auction went towards the creation of the new Gerald Freedman Endowed Professorship in the School of Drama, which will be awarded to a faculty member who has extensive experience as a master teacher, inspired and motivated students and alumni alike to become disciplined and creative artists, and served the university at large with exceptional dedication.

Through the generosity of approximately 300 donors, the school successfully raised more than \$300,000 for the Professorship, which will be matched by a private donor and the state of North Carolina to create the largest endowment currently established for the School of Drama. Read the story about Gerald Freedman in *Dramatics* magazine at http://www.edta.org/pdf_archive/undirector633741709830781250.pdf.





2009 New York Alumni Achievement Celebration

On Sunday, March 8, 2009, UNCSA once again honored four New York-area alumni for their accomplishments, their contributions to society, and their efforts on behalf of their alma mater.

The Alumni Achievement Awards were presented at an evening reception at The Michelangelo Hotel. This new tradition began in New York last March and was noted as a favorite event by alumni and Giannini Society members who attended.

The 2009 New York award winners

J.T. Rogers (Drama '90) is the author of *The Overwhelming*, *Madagascar*, *White People*, *Murmuring in a Dead Tongue* and other plays. His works have been produced in London by the National Theatre, toured the UK with *Out of Joint*, and been heard on BBC radio. In New York, his plays have been seen at the Roundabout Theatre and the SPF Summer Play Festival. Regionally they have been presented by the Philadelphia Theatre Co., Next Theater (Chicago), The Source Theater (D.C.) the Road Theatre (L.A.), New Theatre (Miami), Contemporary American Theater Festival (WV), the Adirondack Theatre Festival (NY), and many times at the Salt Lake Acting Co., where he was an NEA/TCG playwright in residence. *White People* is currently running off Broadway, directed by his longtime collaborator **Gus Reyes, '90 (Drama)**. *Blood and Gifts*, his newest work, opens this month at the Tricycle Theater, London. His plays have recently won the Pinter Review Prize for best play in the English Language, the American Theatre Critics Association's M. Elizabeth Osborne Award, the William Inge Center for the Arts New Voices Award, and the Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation's Theatre Visions Award. He is a two-time playwrighting fellow from the New York Foundation for the Arts (2004 and 2008) and is currently writing new plays for The National and Lincoln Center theaters. J.T. lives in Brooklyn with his wife **Rebecca Ashley '87/'90 (Dance)** and their son Henry. They have consistently supported the UNCSA Schools of Drama and Dance with annual gifts. From 1990 to 1998, J.T. founded and ran The Next Stage Company, a multidisciplinary performing arts company, founded on the UNCSA model, with Rebecca, Gus, and **Perry Townsend '86 (Music)**.



Jonah Bokaer (Dance '00) is an award-winning choreographer and media artist, and the founding director of Chez Bushwick, an adventurous artist-run organization dedicated to the advancement of interdisciplinary art and performance with a strong focus on new choreography. Chez Bushwick was recently awarded a grant from the Rockefeller New York City Cultural Innovation



Fund, in recognition of its vital contributions to the Brooklyn arts community and programmatic innovation in the cultural arena. Jonah was recruited for the Merce Cunningham Dance Company at the unprecedented age of 18, and has also danced with John Jasperse, David Gordon, Deborah Hay, Tino Sehgal, and many others. His own choreography has been presented widely throughout venues in the United States and abroad, including Cornell University, Dance Theatre Workshop, Danspace Project, Dixon Place, La Mama ETC, and P.S. 122. He has collaborated with, among others, sculptor Daniel

Arsham, writer Anne Carson, surveillance designer Liubo Borissov, and theater artist Robert Wilson, on four large-scale operas. Jonah was named a 2008-09 Young Leader of the French-American Foundation – the first dance artist to be selected in the 27-year history of this cultural exchange program – and has been honored with a Human Rights Award for Public Volunteerism, a fellowship from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, the inaugural Gallery Installation Fellowship from Dance Theatre Workshop, one of four national Dance Access Scholarships from Dance/USA, and the Special Citation at the New York Dance & Performance/BESSIE Awards. His latest choreography "The Invention Of Minus One" was also awarded a BESSIE, for its original lighting design by Aaron Copp. Jonah has often served as guest contemporary faculty at the UNCSA School of Dance, and has supported the school financially since 2001.

We are also honored to give special recognition for their service and dedication to the school to **Gerald Shaprut (Music '95) and the late Jean DePasquale Shaprut (D&P '96)**. Jean and Gerry came to Winston-Salem together in 1992 to enroll at UNCSA. Gerry, a trombonist, performed around the state with various orchestras and brass quintets, while Jean excelled in the costume design program, creating renderings for the drama, opera, and ballet productions, and constructing hundreds of fine costume pieces that are still in use today. She designed



costumes for *Christchild* and *Assassins*, and in 1996 was given the distinction of designing the all-school production of *Brigadoon*, a responsibility never before given to a student. She also created the principal advertising for the show, the UNCSA Christmas Card, and hundreds of private fine arts portraits for friends and customers with then-professor Mikhail Dimov. She was beloved by students, staff and faculty alike, especially professors Christine Turbitt, Diane Berg, Dean John Sneden, and Dean Gerald Freedman. After graduation, Jean worked briefly for the North Carolina Theater in Raleigh as the staff designer. She received a national advertising award for her work with Impact Photographic and was a prize winner at South Carolina's Founders Festival. Later, she and Gerry moved to Hartford, CT to be closer to her family. Gerry continued to perform for several Connecticut orchestras, and was principal trombone and concert soloist for the New Britain Symphony during this period, while Jean worked as an assistant at the Hartford Stage Company and in the costume shop at the Hartt School at the University of Hartford. Her fine arts work was displayed in three private galleries and the Farmington Valley Arts Council, and she continued her studies at the Old Lyme Arts Academy. All of this output of fine arts work was tragically shifted in 2003 when Jean was diagnosed with stage 4 ovarian cancer. Gerry gave up all performing in order to tend to Jean's healthcare. Always optimistic and creative, Jean continued to produce watercolor-based illustrations of her cancer experience, designed a premier independent

production of *I Married Wyatt Earp* at the Hartt School, and even taught a beginner painting class for the Rocky Hill Parks and Recreation Department for a group of very grateful adult and child students. After a long and valiant battle, including full surgery, round after round of chemotherapy treatment, alternative healing, and many hospitalizations, Jean passed away in her home on January 28th, 2006, surrounded by Gerry and her family. She was and is so loved by so many for her sweet, generous spirit and continued contributions to the arts. In the three years since Jean's passing, Gerry has reluctantly returned to performing, giving private non-profit recitals for Ovarian Cancer Awareness in Jean's memory and displaying her artwork, and also performing for select friends and groups on occasion. With the help of Jean's friend and former classmate **Tonya Ricketts (D&P '96)**, Gerry has been working to establish the Jean Mary DePasquale Shaprut Endowed Scholarship at UNCSA, for third and fourth year costume design students who demonstrate outstanding talent and scholastic merit, to which all monies raised at the trombone recitals and elsewhere are donated. He continues to live in Hartford making a modest living as a trombonist and a U.S. Postal Worker.

California Alumni Form UNCSA Alumni-West

This past fall, four Los Angeles-based UNCSA alums – **Shawn Tolleson (Drama, '96)**, **Stewart Carrico (Drama, '02)**, **Chandler Parker (Drama '02)** and **Logan Fahey (Drama, '08)** – formed the group "UNCSA Alumni-West," in order to reconnect with fellow West Coast alumni and "create anew the experience of community and creative exploration that we all share from our time at School of the Arts." "Our mission," the group writes, "is to provide opportunities to grow both artistically and professionally, including educational, networking, creative and performing events."

In addition to building a database of contact information for all UNCSA alumni who currently reside on the West Coast, the group hosted a well-attended holiday party on December 9th in Los Angeles, followed by a Q&A with **Catherine Dent (Drama '93)** on February 19th as part of a new series called "In The Trenches of Business."

They have also created a networking site (www.ncsala.ning.com), a MySpace page (www.myspace.com/422189023) and a Facebook profile (search for "UNCSA West") to help alumni stay in touch.

To submit your contact information to the group and stay informed of upcoming events, please send an email to uncsawest@gmail.com with your **full name, year of graduation, school and discipline, email address, phone number and place of residence.**

Ethan Stiefel Wins Dance Magazine Award

UNCSA School of Dance Dean Ethan Stiefel, a principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre, was awarded the prestigious Dance Magazine Award, an annual recognition of leading dancers worldwide.

Stiefel was presented the award by Damian Woetzel, a former principal dancer with New York City Ballet, at a ceremony at New York City's Florence Gould Hall on December 8, 2008. Awardees are also feted with a brief performance or film. Stiefel chose to have two UNCSA School of Dance students, **Nathaniel Darst (Dance '09)** and **Billy Morgan (Dance '11)**, perform "Jockey Dance" by August Bournonville.



In a story about the award recipients in the November 2008 issue of *Dance Magazine*, writer Hanna Rubin writes of Stiefel, "For a generation of American male dancers, he has been an icon, not only as a principal at ABT but as the star of the cult ballet movie *Center Stage*, and then as the glamorous lynchpin of Kings of the Dance, an international touring company of some of ballet's biggest male names. With his Harley-Davidson motorcycle, his pride in his Wisconsin roots, and his ballerina girlfriend Gillian Murphy, Stiefel at 35 seems the epitome of American cool, a regular guy who strolled into the spotlight and just started turning."

Past recipients of the award include Jacques D'Amboise, Mark Morris, Alvin Ailey, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Rudolf Nureyev, Robert Joffrey, Lucia Chase, Agnes de Mille, Martha Graham, Jerome Robbins, and late UNCSA School of Dance faculty member Melissa Hayden.

UNCSA's Jodi Burns in Metropolitan Opera National Council's National Semi-Finals

Soprano **Jodi Burns (Music '09)**, an A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute Fellow at UNCSA, represented the Southeast Region in the Metropolitan Opera National Council's (MONC) National Semi-Finals in New York on February 15. A student of UNCSA School of Music faculty-artist Marilyn Taylor, Jodi won the MONC Southeast Regional Finals in Atlanta on January 25. To advance to the Southeast Regionals, Jodi was one of four winners at the North Carolina District Auditions, held January 10 in Charlotte. **Marvin Kehler (Music '09)**, tenor, also won at that audition and competed in the Southeast Regionals with Burns. In Atlanta, Jodi and Marvin competed against other winners from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.



A second-year graduate student from Columbus, OH, Jodi graduated with honors from the Ohio State University in 2007, where she received the 2007 OSU School of Music Undergraduate Outstanding Achievement Award in the Vocal Performance Area.

Established in 1954, the National Council Auditions is a program designed to discover promising young opera singers and assist in the development of their careers. Last year, UNCSA's **Rene Barbera (Music '08)** won at the district level and went on to win the Met's national competition, appearing in the Grand Finals Concert.

"Shotgun Stories" Tops Critics' Best Films of 2008 Lists

Shotgun Stories, a film written and directed by **Jeff Nichols (Filmmaking '01)** and largely a product of UNCSA School of Filmmaking and School of Drama alumni, was named one of the top films of 2008 by long-time *Chicago Sun-Times* film critic Roger Ebert and *New York Magazine's* David Edelstein.



"Shotgun Stories" tracks a feud between two sets of half brothers following the death of their father. Set in southeast Arkansas, these brothers discover the lengths to which each will go to protect their family. For more information, visit www.shotgunstories.com.

"You'll have to search for it, but it's worth it," said Ebert on his web site, www.rogerebert.com. "Written and directed by Jeff Nichols, it avoids the obvious and shows a deep understanding of the lives and minds of ordinary young people in a skirmish of the class war. The dialogue rings true, the camera is deeply observant."

"Few saw Jeff Nichols' mournful tragedy in which two sets of Arkansas brothers who share a father begin a deadly feud," Edelstein wrote in the December 15 issue of *New York Magazine*. "It's set against a landscape of isolated farms and dilapidated main streets, and the rhythms are languid. But the lines that pop out of these stuporous characters' mouths have the bitter tang of real life. The movie makes you empathize with the rage that drives these men to violence – but also shows how manly action weakens them, wipes out their individuality, and turns them into automatons."

The film was produced by **David Gordon Green (Filmmaking '98)** and former UNCSA faculty member **Lisa Muskat**. The film features **Doug Ligon (Filmmaking '01)**, **Michael Abbott Jr. (Drama '00)**, **Travis Smith (Drama '00)**, and **Cosmo Pfeil (Drama '00)**, who was also the first assistant director. UNCSA alumni also comprised much of the crew, including **Adam Stone (Filmmaking '99)**, director of photography; **Steven Gonzales (Filmmaking '98)**, editor; **Paul Skidmore (Filmmaking '02)**, unit production manager and associate producer; **Stephen Olsen (Filmmaking '02)**, gaffer; **Ryan Nelson (Filmmaking '02)**, key grip; and **Brian Sides (Filmmaking '97)** and **David Briggs (Filmmaking '00)**, grips.

Shotgun Stories premiered at the Berlin Film Festival in February 2007 and went on to play at the London, Chicago and Tribeca international film festivals in 2007. It won the New American Cinema Grand Jury Prize at the 2007 Seattle Film Festival, the Narrative Feature Jury Prize at the 2007 Austin Film Festival, and the Fipresci Prize at the 2007 Viennale Film Festival. It also was a John Cassavetes Award nominee for Best Picture at the 2007 Film Independent's Spirit Awards.

USITT Honors UNCSA's Franco Colavecchia with Distinguished Achievement Award



Franco Colavecchia, a faculty member in UNCSA's School of Design & Production, was chosen to receive the Distinguished Achievement Award in Scene Design from the U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT). He was presented with his award at USITT's 49th Annual Conference & Stage Expo in Cincinnati, OH, March 18-21, 2009.

"Franco Colavecchia has had a long and successful career as a designer and educator," said UNCSA School of Design & Production Dean Joseph P. Tilford. "As a master teacher and artist, he shares his experiences and knowledge with our students every day. And our faculty love him. He is a wonderful colleague. This award from USITT is going to a very deserving artist."

Franco has been a member of the UNCSA School of Design & Production faculty since 1996. Previously, he served as head of scenic design at DePaul University, director of design and production at Opera Company of Philadelphia, and was resident designer and faculty member for 25 years at The Juilliard School. He also has taught at Harvard, State University of New York-Purchase, Carnegie Mellon, Colgate, and University of California-San Diego. He has designed more than 100 opera productions for companies including New York City Opera; Lyric Opera, Chicago; Los Angeles Opera; Den Norske Opera, Oslo; Monte Carlo Opera House; Wolf Trap, Washington, D.C.; Glimmerglass Opera; Brooklyn Academy of Music; and Pacific Opera, Canada. He has designed productions on and off-Broadway and in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Ireland as well as for PBS-TV: *Carmen*, "Live From Lincoln Center" and "La Boheme, Great Performances," for which he was honored by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Five UNCSA Students Receive USITT Honors

Five students of the School of Design & Production received honors last month at the United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT) Annual Conference & Stage Expo. This year's conference was held in Cincinnati, March 18-21 at the Duke Energy Convention Center.



Ming-Yen Ho '09 was selected for the Makeup Design Award sponsored by Kryolan Corporation. This is the third consecutive year in which a UNCSA student has received this award. **Ryan Wineinger '09** was selected for the W. Oren Parker Undergraduate Scene Design Award sponsored by Stage Decorations & Supplies, Inc. **Ryan** and **Dwayne Burgess '09** were both selected to compete in this year's Young Designers Forum, a juried exhibit of the nation's top 15 emerging designers; and **Angela Friedman '09** and **Holly Griffin '09** were selected for the Young Technicians Forum, a similar exhibit for the top 8 emerging technicians in the nation. The students selected had the opportunity to display and discuss their work with established professionals in their fields.

In addition, the **UNCSA Tech Olympics Team** successfully defended its national championship from last year's conference. The Tech Olympics competition offers students the opportunity to display their skills in stagecraft, lighting and costume, competing individually and in teams.

"This is an overwhelming level of recognition for a single school," commented Joe Tilford, Dean of the School of D&P. "These are the big deal awards and honors for students in our industry. There is nothing bigger or more important."

UNCSA has enjoyed considerable success at the USITT Annual Conference in the past as well. For more on past winners, visit www.uncsa.edu/designandproduction/studentspotlight6.htm.

Show Your Support

In difficult times, artists will always persevere, stick together, and stand up for the things that are important in life. And, in this climate, what is more important than improving everyone's quality of life through the arts, and the training of young artists who will lead the way?

As the state of North Carolina works to determine its funding priorities for the next two years, our priorities and our message need to be clear, as a school and as a community of artists. Strong alumni support, as represented by the number of alumni who give to the school, shows our students, our donors and our state legislators that we are *all* committed to helping the school maintain its high standard of excellence as a training ground for professional artists. **It's more important to show your support now than ever before.**

Fortunately, it's also easier than ever – you can now make a gift to the School of the Arts online, at www.uncsa.edu/donate (while you're there, be sure to keep up on the latest budget news, and other news about the school, at www.uncsa.edu/visitorscenter/inthenews.htm). **On top of that, gifts from new donors and selected donors who renew their support will be matched in scholarship endowment funds by the William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust's \$1 million challenge grant.**

It doesn't take much to make a difference. Consistent, thoughtful, and meaningful support, big or small, is enough to show your love for your alma mater.

"Onward, Pickles... Sling 'em by the warts!"

Alumni Notes Online

In an effort to think green and keep *Callboard* affordable, we've decided to again make the alumni notes available on our website. This entire issue (notes included) can be viewed at www.uncsa.edu/alumni/periodicals.html, along with other past issues of *Callboard*. You will not need to sign in to the Online Community in order to read these; however, we do still encourage you to join the Community, in order to keep both the Alumni Office and your fellow alumni updated on your most recent news and contact information. You will need to request your "Verification ID" in order to join – please do so by emailing us at alumni@uncsa.edu with your **full name while you were a student**, your **year of graduation** (or years of attendance), and your **school and major area of study** at UNCSA (Example: John Smith, 1980, Dance-Ballet).

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School of the Arts

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Please mail alumni updates and address changes to:

UNCSA Office of Alumni
1533 South Main St.
Winston-Salem, NC 27127

or telephone (336) 631-1203,

or email alumni@uncsa.edu.

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