A Note from the Chair

It is natural to have high expectations from those whom you care about most. UA Theatre & Dance is no exception. There is an expectation of greatness from our students, faculty and staff. As a faculty and staff, we are dedicated to pushing our students toward greatness and are rewarded when we see their genius.

Martha Graham stated: “All that is important is this one moment in movement. Make the moment important, vital and worth living. Do not let it slip away unnoticed and unused.” Every academic year we produce fourteen productions. Needless to say, every faculty, staff and student is in constant motion striving to be the best artist, technician and manager possible. As you read this newsletter, I hope you share in the celebration of the many accolades of our talented students, faculty and staff.

—William Teague, Department Chair
UA Dancers Accepted Into Prestigious Dance Program

After a rigorous audition process, five UA Theatre & Dance students received the opportunity to attend one of the country’s most prestigious dance centers. Miranda Rivas, Shaun Leary, Erika Davis, Ameen Burnett-Price and Endia Yates were accepted into the summer professional semester at Broadway Dance Center in New York City.

Broadway Dance Center (BDC) is an internationally renowned dance studio that opened in 1984. It boasts a state-of-the-art facility in the heart of Times Square. BDC is home to more than 80 faculty members and provides dance classes for those interested in jazz, ballet, hip-hop, contemporary and tap. Along with dance classes, the studio offers workshops and training programs.

The professional semester is a rigorous learning experience but the UA dancers feel prepared for the challenges ahead. “The UA Dance faculty definitely helped prepare me for Broadway Dance Center by exposing me to all different styles of professional dance theatre. From concert pieces to more performance based commercial works, having access to such a variety changes the way you train your body and your mind,” said Yates.

With the opportunities BDC provides, the dancers are excited by the possibilities that could develop from their time in the program. “In my time at the BDC professional semester, I hope to gain knowledge about what it truly takes to get far in the professional dance industry. I want to be able to explore myself as a dancer and create some new connections with influential choreographers and fellow dancers. I feel as if being a part of this program will help me mold myself into a professional dancer and I will be able to bring that knowledge with me when I come back to UA for my senior year,” said Price.

The students will begin the summer professional semester in June and will take 12 classes each week until the program’s end in August. Throughout their time at BDC, the students will not only take classes but will also be given a chance to participate in mock auditions, masters classes, receive professional feedback and engage in networking opportunities.
Faculty Highlights

William Martin

Dr. William A. Martin recently completed a 16-month contract with the National/North American tour of Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast*, playing Maurice, Belle’s father. The tour consisted of 410 performances over 54 weeks and was performed for over 500,000 people. He was joined on the tour by his former student Laura Douiciere, who was a member of the ensemble and Belle understudy.

Bill has also received a grant to present a concert and masterclass at the Federal University of Bahia in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. He will also be featured as a faculty guest artist in this summer’s All Shook Up with SummerTide Theatre and then performing in *A Grand Night for Singing* and Monty Python’s *Spamalot* (Sir Bevidere) with the Lees-McRae Summer Theatre in Banner Elk, N.C.

Allison Hetzel

Allison Hetzel recently published a review of *Voice and the Young Actor* by Rena Cook in the *Voice and Speech Review Journal*. A peer-reviewed publication published by Rutledge. This past summer Allison was a coordinator for an “Acting and Singing with Archetypes” workshop in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, led by Janet Rodgers and Frankie Armstrong, authors of *Acting and Singing with Archetypes*. Allison is currently working towards a teaching certification in Archetype work for actors. She will perform Archetype work this coming summer in London at the 2014 Voice and Speech Trainers Association Conference. Allison recently played the role of Flo Owens in the department’s production of *Picnic*. Allison continues her outreach and teaching locally with Arts N Autism, where she teaches drama and assists with photography and music classes.
Sarah Barry

The University of Alabama National Alumni Association awarded Associate Professor Sarah M. Barry with the University’s highest honor for excellence in teaching with the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award in November of 2013. Established in 1976, this award recognizes those who have shown exceptional dedication to the profession and have positively impacted the lives of their students. Barry was also awarded the Druid City Dance Educator of 2013 by the Arts Council of Tuscaloosa. The arts council gathered nominations to recognize individuals who were both talented and dedicated to the arts in Tuscaloosa County. Dean Olin from the College of Arts and Sciences attended one of the Barry’s Choreography classes after a student wrote to the Dean about why he should attend her class. The student wrote, “the Dean should come to my Choreography class with Sarah Barry. She is truly an inspirational teacher and she has personally inspired me in many ways. She has not only pushed me to a better person but also a better dancer. It has been with her help that I am the dancer I am today. Her endless support and guidance is so evident in all the work she does, and her love for her students goes beyond a typical classroom setting.”

Stacy Alley

Stacy Alley has performed her improvisational tap piece A Conversation at the Festival Internacional de Teatro y Danza in Iquique, Chile, and for the Darkroom series for New Light Theater Project in New York City. The piece, a collaboration with her jazz trumpeter husband, Rob, explores the collaboration and melding of two art forms. They have been invited to perform at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland in August 2014. She is currently directing Urinetown, the final production of the 2013-2014 mainstage season, and will be directing All Shook Up for SummerTide Theatre in June. She is the Alabama state representative for the SAG-AFTRA Miami Local. She also serves as the Chair of the Musical Theatre Committee for the Southeastern Theatre Conference and as the Southeastern representative for the Musical Theatre Educators Alliance International.
Alumni Focus

John O’Connell

What year did you graduate? 1998

What degree did you receive? M.F.A.

What was your area of study? Directing

Where are you now? I am Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts at IPFW.

How do you feel the University prepared you for what you are doing now? It prepared me for my professional directing career as well as my academic career. Most notably, my teaching career because UA allowed me to teach for 3 years and build a college teaching portfolio.

What advice would you have for current students about to enter the field? Network, Network and Network. Get to know LOTS of people in the Biz and keep in contact. Also, you have to ASK for the job, you have to go after it with all ya got! It does NOT come to you in this biz or in academia.

Did you have a favorite production during your time at UA? Yes, my production of Angels in America, Part II: Perestroika.

Do you have a favorite story from your time at UA? Yes. About three months into my time at UA I was assistant directing an awful production of Dark of the Moon and I was charged by Ed Williams with arranging all the set changes; for which there were MANY. Well apparently in the process I irritated Bill Teague and he went to Ed to complain about the new guy. Ed asked me to join him in the Johnson room where he proceeded to counsel me about my NYC behavior which he said was not appropriate for the south. I had just moved to Tuscaloosa from NYC and Ed said I needed to lose my NYC ways and move south. By that he meant, slow down, don’t push so hard, and go with the flow more. NONE of which I am remotely programmed to do, then or now. The next year my dear friend, scenic design student Mark DeLancey, would nickname me “Johno, the hard charger!” A name that has stuck with me as Mark teaches in my college. That being said, Ed was right and today I am always hearing his words as I charge through my professional life….but with a little more southern charm than I ever would have if it hadn’t been for Ed Williams and The University of Alabama!
Jamarious Stewart

What year did you graduate? December 2011

What degree did you receive? B.A. Dance

What was your area of study? Dance Performance.

What are you doing now? I am a Action Engineer for STREB Extreme Action Company.

How do you feel the University prepared you for what you are doing now? UA Theatre & Dance prepared me by offering different dance opportunities through projects and programs that exposed me to a variety of dance styles. Through these programs and projects I was challenged as an artist physically and mentally. Physically, by promoting the need for strength in the field and mentally by grasping different styles and being able to pick up and remember the choreography in various styles. As a member of ARDT, the expectations of the dancers in the company was to perform, rehearse and act like professionals. These high expectations from the faculty taught me maturity, which allowed me to achieve more in the profession because I was taught professional work ethic in a pre-professional environment.

What advice would you have for current students about to enter the field? Be committed. Everyone has a place in the dance world. Our job as an artist is to find that place. The dance industry can offer limitless possibilities, but you have to be committed to yourself, the dance form and your dreams. Your body is your instrument and you are the owner of your body. So, the only thing standing in the way of you achieving your dreams is you. Once you commit to yourself, the dream will follow because you, the owner of the instrument, controls the amount of success.

Did you have a favorite production during your time at UA? Yes, my favorite production was Jose Limon’s: There Is A Time. With support from The Jose Limon Foundation; 13 selected individuals worked for 5 weeks, with the infamous Clay Talliferro to produce this amazing modern dance based on the third chapter of Ecclesiastes.

Do you have a favorite story from your time at UA? My favorite story is one that I think about every time I dance or attend an audition. I was in ballet class with Quaping Guo doing barre work. We ended the combination and Ping approached me and said, “Jamarious, your hands, they look like forks. You know what I’m talking about, forks, like what you eat with.” I could do nothing but join the class in laughter. From that day on, I’ve been very cautious as to the positioning of my fingers and made sure that they did not look like forks and disrupt the ballet “line”. With that little analogy I have always payed attention to finishing my lines. I refuse to be a considered utensil.
SummerTide Theatre Presents *All Shook Up*

For its 11th anniversary, SummerTide Theatre will be shaking things up this summer in Gulf Shores, Alabama. The University of Alabama’s professional summer theatre, SummerTide, will present *All Shook Up* by Joe DiPietro this June. The show is inspired by and features the tunes of Elvis Presley®. The production centers around a mysterious stranger who rides into a small, midwestern town and teaches the residents about life, love and power of rock and roll.

Assistant Professor, Stacey Alley is directing the production. “This is not your typical jukebox musical,” said Alley. “The music is interwoven into the plot of the show and helps drive the story line forward.” The show features classics the audience will recognize such as “Jailhouse Rock,” “Don’t Be Cruel,” Heartbreak Hotel, ”Let Yourself Go,” and “Blue Suede Shoes.”

Alley said the energetic musical is sure to appeal to all ages. “I love Elvis music. I think the show has great music, a wonderful message and well written characters who you genuinely care about.”

*All Shook Up* will run June 6 to July 4, 2014 at the George C. Meyer Performing Arts Center. Tickets will be available for purchase May 1 on SummerTide.org or by calling UA Theatre & Dance box office at 205.348.3400.

“It’s fun,” said Alley. “It is just fun.” Plan to lace up your blue suede shoes, have some fun and shake things this summer with the cast and crew of *All Shook Up*. 
Panitch Wins Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award

The University of Alabama prides itself on the quality research produced by the institution each year. While the arts might not be at the forefront of the research world, Seth Panitch is doing his part to change that image. It should come as no surprise that this outstanding member of our faculty was selected as the 2013 recipient of the Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award.

According to the Office of Academic Affairs, "The Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award is "awarded annually to recognize and promote excellence in research, scholarship and teaching. The recipient will have demonstrated superior scholarly or artistic achievements and a profound dedication to the art of teaching, all of which are distinctive and bring credit to the academic community."

As an invaluable member of the UA Theatre & Dance family, Seth constantly works to develop the talents of his students while making numerous contributions to the department. Aside from receiving rave reviews for productions like last year's Othello or this year's Seven Guitars, he has maintained the ability to offer his students the individual attention they need to succeed.

"He creates a supportive but challenging environment where I have always felt comfortable working openly and honestly with my fellow actors; my own sense of professionalism has grown enormously from watching his interactions with his students. His positive and insightful classroom critiques have consistently helped me identify areas where I need improvement without ever making me feel as though my work were being disparaged in any way," said David Bolus, a student of Panitch.

While Seth’s contributions to the University and to the department are apparent, he has achieved much outside of the realm of the The Capstone. Recently, he worked with the Cuban National Theatre in a cultural exchange between Cuba and the university students. Seth is constantly expanding his list of accomplishments and connections as he continues to seek new work and opportunities for himself and the University.

"It's both a very humbling and terrifying thought to win this award," Panitch noted. "As an assistant professor you hear these names as the pillars that uphold the university's ideals. Many people don't see that Music, Dance, Theatre and Art has as much time and effort as scientific research, but our dividends are in a different currency."

This summer, Seth will direct The Merry Wives of Windsor at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. He is also working on a film he wrote called Service to Man, based on the Harry Medical School in 1960, which is supported by both the UA Telecommunications and Film Department and the College of Arts and Sciences.
Alumni Highlights

Rachel Boring (‘12) works with Arova contemporary dance company.

JJ Butler (‘13) is participating in the Broadway Dance Center professional semester.

Ronnie Chamberlain (‘07) has recently taken a new position as Assistant Professor of Theater/Dance at Northern Kentucky University where she heads the BFA Costume Design and Technology program. She is the founder and faculty advisor for Norse Offstage, the only USITT student chapter in the tri-state region.

Kelsey Ebersold (‘12) is a company member with Atlanta Ballet.

Alexandra Ficken (‘11) has guest starred on TV in The Vampire Diaries and The Originals. She is currently performing in Love and Warcraft at the Alliance Theatre.

Holly Gray (‘13) is a Dance Caravan teacher, PULSE intern and is participating in a Broadway Dance Center professional semester.

Hannah King (‘13) is with Project 7 Contemporary Dance in Atlanta.

Tori Lee (‘13) works in the UA admissions office.

Jerrilyn Lanier (‘12) designed for the film Blunt Force in 2012 and the film Dance in 2013. She was the wig artist for Dickinson College in 2012.
Christina Leinicke (’12) recently designed for the Utah Shakespeare Festival’s educational tour as part of the National Endowment of the Arts, Shakespeare in American Communities Initiative for 2013 and 2014. Tourd France and North America as an Assistant Wardrobe Supervisor with Lord of the Dance. Christina is currently the Assistant Cutter/Draper at the L.A. Opera.

Michael Luwoye (’13) recently starred in Witness Uganda at the American Repertory Theatre.

Alyssa Marks (’13) is participating in the Broadway Dance Center professional semester.

Sonequa Martin-Green (’07) is continuing her run (and not getting eaten) on The Walking Dead.

Alicia McGinty (’12) is employed with Norwegian Cruise Lines.

Mary Jane Mitchell (’13) is participating in the Broadway Dance Center professional semester.

Desmond Nunn (’13) is employed at Huntsville Ballet.

Kristen Plant (’11) is an administrator for the PULSE (NYC).

Allison Pohlman (’12) is with Project 7 Contemporary Dance in Atlanta.

Caroline Schmidt (’12) recently made her TV debut on Redrum.

Jack Schmitz (’12) is working at the Broadway costume shop, Parsons-Meares. Most recently his team made all costumes for Laura Benanti (Baroness) and Audra McDonald (Mother Superior) in The Sound of Music for NBC, and a large portion of the clothing for Aladdin.

Will Scott (’12) just joined a ballet company in South Carolina.

Anne Sorenson (’12) is currently the draper at the Paramount theater in Aurora IL.

Shey Thorn (’13) is with Huntsville Ballet and Norwegian Cruise Lines.

Tory Turello (’11) is with Project 7 Contemporary Dance in Atlanta.

Collins Goss (’13) is the Development Manager for Horizon Theatre Company in Atlanta.
UA Theatre & Dance Welcomes New Faculty

Melissa Panzarello  
*Costume Production Specialist*

Ms. Panzarello is a graduate of Florida State University with a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Costume Design. Her technical credits include: Cutter on the Broadway shows *Mama Mia!* and *Noises Off* for Tricorne NY, First Hand at the Alley Theatre in Houston, Costume Shop Manager, Draper, First Hand and Stitcher over several years at New Harmony Theatre and Assistant Shop Manager and Draper at Barrington Stage Company.

Jeffrey Tangeman  
*Head of MFA Directing, undergraduate Directing and Stage Management*

The former Producing Artistic Director of Black Box Productions in NYC and Artistic Director for the New Play Developmental Series (also in NYC). Mr. Tangeman has also directed regionally with such companies as The Source Theatre (D.C.), Nebraska Repertory Theatre, The New Theatre (Miami), Huntington Rep., Orpheus Theatre, and Heartland Theatre. He is a proud member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC).

Dominic Yeager  
*Head of MFA Theatre Management*

Mr. Yeager is a graduate of Southern Utah University’s MFA program in Arts Administration. Dominic has had the opportunity to work for both not for profit organizations and corporations in various locations throughout the United States. His most recent work as a consultant offered services to not for profit organizations and municipalities in the areas of Human Resources, Public Relations and Board Governance. He has worked with Mark Morris Dance Group, Utah Shakespeare Festival and the Cincinnati Art Museum, among others.
Dr. Burch Records the Focus Theatre’s 50-year History

It’s not every day an author celebrates a book launch at the Áras, the Irish equivalent of the White House. However, Dr. Steve Burch has experienced the feeling.

Irish President Michael D. Higgins and First Lady Sabina Coyne welcomed Burch and co-editor Brian McAvera to the Áras to celebrate the launch of Burch’s books Stanislavski in Ireland—Focus at Fifty, a history of Ireland’s Focus Theatre co-edited with McAvera, and Breaking Boundaries—An Anthology of Original Plays.

Deirdre O’Connell, the American-born daughter of two Irish immigrants, moved to Ireland to open the Focus Theatre in 1963. This was the first theatre in Ireland to use the acting techniques Constantin Stanislavski taught, techniques that teach a series of exercises to help an actor portray believable emotion night after night. The original acting company trained for four years before producing its first work.

“The critics and audiences were blown away. It was the first time an Irish audience had seen a piece that was so emotionally true, and the first time they had seen this type of ensemble work,” said Burch.

O’Connell shook up the Irish theatre world. She introduced plays by Anton Chekhov and Tennessee Williams that had never been performed in Ireland. For 40 years, O’Connell directed, acted and managed the theatre until her death in 2001.

“[Deirdre O’Connell] is the greatest single influence in Irish theatre since the 1960s,” said Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland.

Burch co-edited Stanislavski in Ireland—Focus at Fifty with McAvera, a long-time friend and colleague. The book details how Focus sustained its place at the forefront of Irish theatre through the stories of the people who built the theatre. The accompanying anthology Beyond Boundaries—An Anthology of Original Plays is a collection of original scripts produced at Focus. Burch says that he wanted to gather a collection of plays that best represents the breadth of performance at Focus.

“Irish theatre has been a lifelong pursuit. I am part Irish, and I grew up in Boston. When I was 14, I went to the public library and read The Plough and the Stars by Sean O’Casey. Irish theatre has been a part of my life ever since,” said Burch.
The Dining Room
by A.R. Gurney
Sept 29–Oct 5
The New York Times calls it “an overlapping and amusing anthology of vignettes about family and food, inherited and disowned values.” Nominated for the Drama Desk award, 18 scenes play out across time at one Dining Room table.

Lend Me A Tenor
by Ken Ludwig
Oct 7–12
The Cleveland Grand Opera Company will welcome Tito Morelli for one night only as Otello. But after Morelli is presumed dead, the General Manager has only one choice: Send in his assistant?!

Merrily We Roll Along
Nov 10–14 and 16
Book by George Furth; Music & Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Based on the 1934 play of the same name, we meet Franklin Sheppard and get his life story from starting lyricist to famous motion picture maker, in reverse! One of Sondheim’s most acclaimed scores!

Twelfth Night
by William Shakespeare
Nov 18–21 and 23
A shipwreck separates brother and sister. Both are looking for each other in a land that’s looking for love. Mistaken identity and more live in one of Shakespeare’s greatest and most beloved comedies.

Alabama Repertory Dance Theatre
Sept 23–2
Dance Alabama!
Nov 4–8
Dance Collection
Nov 20–21

UA Theatre & Dance 2014–
-2015 Season

Eurydice
by Sara Ruhl
Feb 16–22

When Eurydice falls into the depths of the underworld her love, Orpheus, must make a pact with a “mysterious man” to get her back. But when Eurydice finds her lost father she must make a choice to go back with her love or stay with her father.

Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike
by Christopher Durang
Feb 24–Mar 1

Vanya and Sonia have never left their childhood home, while their sister Masha has become a successful actress. A surprise visit from Masha and her boy toy, Spike, throws the quiet household into utter upheaval.

An Evening of One Act Plays
by Joe Pintauro
Apr 6–12

Ever want an evening of random entertainment? Here is your chance! You will probably laugh, possibly cry. You may even laugh so hard you cry. Any way you look at it, prepare to be entertained.

42nd Street
Mobile, AL: April 9; Tuscaloosa: April 14–19
book by Michael Stewart & Mark Bramble
lyrics by Al Dubin, music by Harry Warren

A story of hard work, being in the right place at the right time, talent and love, 42nd Street is a celebration of Broadway and the people involved in shows.

Alabama Repertory Dance Theatre
Feb 10–14

Dance Alabama!
April 7–11

Dance Collection
April 23–24