

# Friends of Niagara University Theatre

For those who love and support theater at Niagara University

Fall/Winter 2008

## 45<sup>th</sup> NU Theatre Anniversary Reunion Weekend a Hit!

By Ann Heuer, '78

For the nearly 125 NU alumni and friends who attended Niagara University Theatre's 45th Anniversary Reunion, Columbus Day weekend this year was all about rediscovering old friends and hearing about the exciting renovations on the horizon at Niagara University Theatre. Alumnus Joe Perrotta, '92, said about the weekend, "it was so wonderful on so many levels, truly like seeing family."

The three-day reunion was planned and coordinated over the past year by co-chairs Maureen T. Stevens, associate professor of theater and fine arts, and Marilyn Deighton, assistant professor of theater and fine arts, who were assisted during the event itself by a crew of theater studies students and by several theater staff members. The theater reunion was part of the university's annual Alumni Reunion Weekend, coordinated by the alumni relations staff in the Office of Institutional Advancement.

Attendees came from as far away as Switzerland and France and from as close to Monteaegle Ridge as Buffalo and Niagara Falls, N.Y. The weekend began with a high-energy cabaret evening in the Leary Theatre, followed by a welcome back party in "The Rat" sponsored by The Friends of Niagara University Theatre.

NU alumnus Armand "Army" Schultz, '81, was ideally suited for the role of master of ceremonies for

the cabaret evening. Relating nostalgic and humorous memories, he reconnected with his fellow alumni with such quips as, "How many of you were in 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' at NU? We did it 53 times on

campus. That's what paid for all the office furniture and some of Sharon's outfits!" Schultz also noted, "For those of us who started our careers here, we owe Sharon (Watkinson), Bro (Brother Augustine Towey, C.M.), Tim (Tim Ward) and all the faculty our thanks. And let's be sure to preserve that back wall in the renovated theater. That wall has cast signatures dating from what, 1972? But I'm not that old!"

The cabaret evening spotlighted the talents of Maryanne Kelly, '84, Alison Nusbaum, '03, Mary Beth (Drmacich) Romo, '84, Patrick Riviere, '88, Kim Schwenzer, '98, Michelle Shrimpton-Hidalgo, '89, Natalie Slipko, '93, Tony Sperry, '88, Michael Vargovich, '07, and Zak Ward, '04. Special guest performer was Elizabeth Ann Clune, a member of the Friends of Niagara University



*At the reunion's cocktail and cake reception, all the alumni enjoyed reminiscing with one another and the theater's co-founders, faculty and staff. Front row: Tracey Kent, '84. Back row, from left, Brother Augustine Towey, C.M.; Maryanne Kelly, '84; Dr. Sharon Watkinson; Mary Furlong, the first president of the Friends of Niagara University Theatre; Mary Beth (Drmacich) Romo, '84; Linda Saffire, '84; and Diane Presutti Cody, '84.*

Theatre. Elizabeth beamed as the audience gave her a standing ovation for her song from "Hairspray." The performers were accompanied by NU adjunct voice professor Elenora Seib and retired NU Theatre musical director Donald Shrimpton. The evening was directed by Doug Zschiegner, associate director of Niagara University Theatre, who was assisted by several theater studies students.

A beautifully produced "slide show" DVD presentation of vintage production photos interspersed with brief interviews with NU Theatre co-founders Brother Augustine Towey, C.M, director emeritus, and Dr. Sharon Watkinson, chair of the department of theater and fine arts, was also a highlight of the cabaret

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## What's New at NU:

*By the editor-in-chief, Gregory Fletcher*

First, let me express how much I enjoyed meeting so many of you at

our recent alumni reunion weekend. What a meaningful celebration of Niagara University Theatre and its 45 years of theater training. And what better way to celebrate than to publicly announce the renovation dates of the Leary Theatre. Construction will begin May 20 and as soon as the official re-opening date is announced, you'll be the first to know.

Best wishes to Eric Appleton, who has moved onto the next chapter in his life — Madison, Wis., to be exact. Eric was part of our design/tech faculty since the fall of 2005, teaching set and lighting design, stage-management and fundamentals of production. He designed the lights for everything between "Gypsy" ('05) and "Our Town" ('07) and he designed the sets for everything between "Gypsy" ('05) and "Cabaret" ('08). In August, Eric and his partner, Rick, moved to Madison where Eric began as assistant professor of set design at the University of Wisconsin at Whitewater. Eric loves being closer to his family as well as the bike riding that is commonly practiced in that area. Moreover, he loves how green the area is — not only in color but also in ecology. Happily surprised that his car insurance was cut in half, Eric laughs one beat at a time — his trademark laugh that we all know and love. Eric, thank you for all that you have given Niagara University Theatre — both on and off stage. And P.S., thanks for the cheese catalog!

Please help me welcome Troy Hourie, our new set designer and design/tech faculty member, as well as Glenn Bernardis, our new adjunct design/tech faculty member teaching sound design. As the design/tech program continues to grow and as

the renovation of the Leary Theatre becomes a reality, it couldn't be better timing to welcome these talented theater artists to our team.

Starting with this season, we have implemented a new box office system. Tickets may now be purchased directly from our Web site [[www.niagara.edu/theatre](http://www.niagara.edu/theatre)]. From the internal link PRODUCTION, go to BOX OFFICE and organize your tickets for individual and multi productions. Not only can you purchase tickets but also you can choose your seat locations and print your tickets. No longer are there high ticketing fees — most are the nominal fee of only \$1.50.

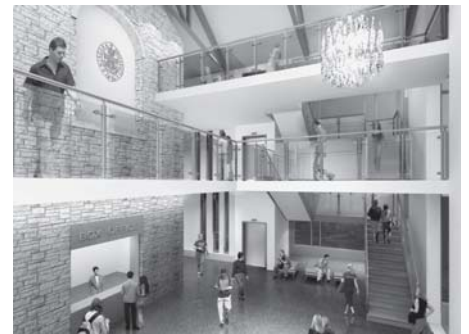
Please help me spread the word that we have lowered our ticket prices across the board, as well as implemented new discounts for Friends, alumni, seniors, NU faculty and staff, and a youth ticket for as little as \$7. We even have a new repeat viewing discount for returning family members of the cast and crew in a particular production. Check your new NU Arts Calendar, which all members of the Friends have received as a small token of our thanks for your continued support, and we look forward to seeing you in the audience as often as possible.

I am very touched to hear that so many of you have expressed a desire to do more for the department but are limited due to the reality of financial times. As much as we are profoundly grateful to those of you who donate your hard earned income, let me remind the rest of you that there are many ways to give of yourself without dipping into your bank account. First, help us keep our name in the public eye. For all of you with bios in theater playbills across the country, please mention that you are a proud theater graduate of Niagara University. Mention NU Theatre in your Web site, recommend our




*Above: An updated architectural rendering of the exterior of the Elizabeth Ann Clune Center for Theatre in Clet Hall. Renovation on NU's theater is scheduled to begin in May of 2009.*

*Below: This new architectural rendering shows the theater's lobby which will provide easy access to the renovated theater and offices via a stairway and elevator.*




productions to your circle of friends, add potential patrons to our mailing list and we'll send them season brochures. Finally, join Friends of NU Theatre. We offer a new lower priced membership of \$25 for struggling artists under 30 years of age. Or you could give of yourself as Neil Casey gave in December, when he performed the one-man play "This Wonderful Life." Not only did all the ticket sales benefit the new theater 100 percent but also Neil was able to get all the royalties waived. Perhaps we can continue to highlight other alumni performing theater fundraisers once or twice a year? Please do not hesitate to contact me with any ideas or suggestions you may have.

Niagara University Theatre has accomplished so much during its first 45 years for which there is so much to be grateful. May we continue to prosper, grow and serve in the next 45 years. 

Anniversary, cont.

evening. The reunion itinerary also included a Saturday matinee of the dramedy “The Cripple of Inishmaan,” a cocktail and cake reception, and a Mass.

The reunion’s success is testament to the enduring friendships enjoyed by those who experienced NU’s theater program in its youth. To view photos from the weekend, visit [www.niagara.edu/theatre](http://www.niagara.edu/theatre) and follow the link to “NU Family” and the “Alumni” page. 



*Department of theater and fine arts administrative assistant Brother Martin Schneider, C.M., right, enjoyed catching up with Patrick Riviere, '88, left, Steve Hasley, '87, second from left, and Tony Sperry, '88, third from left.*



*Before the curtain rose on the cabaret evening, these alumni shared memories and laughter. Front row from left: an expectant Michele Marie Roberts (Benzin)'99, and Mindy Ferraraccio, '98. Back row from left: Karen Colville, '98, Kimberly Schwenzer, '98, Andrea (Campagna) Mango, '98, and Cindy (Argona) Burnett, '98.*



## Niagara University Theatre Names First Recipient of the Julie Burdick Memorial Scholarship

*Niagara University theater studies student Preston Cuer, '09, of Alexander, N.Y., was awarded the first Julie Burdick Memorial Scholarship, established by the Burdick family of East Amherst, N.Y., in honor of their daughter, alumna Julie Burdick, '03. Here, Cuer is congratulated by Dr. Sharon Watkinson, chair of the university's department of theater and fine arts. The newly established scholarship will be given to a theater performance major who excels on stage and academically and who shows extraordinary care and concern for others, including the less fortunate.*

Dr. Sharon Watkinson, chair of Niagara University’s department of theater and fine arts, announced in October that theater studies senior Preston Cuer is the first recipient of the Julie Burdick Memorial Scholarship, named after alumna Julie Burdick, '03.

Burdick passed away unexpectedly

on Jan. 27, 2007, and her parents, Dr. James Burdick and Mrs. Sharon Burdick of East Amherst, N.Y., established the scholarship as a result of thousands of dollars of contributions


made to Niagara University Theatre in honor of their daughter. The Burdick family has requested that one sophomore, junior or senior who is an outstanding theater performance major be chosen by the administrators and faculty of the theater program to receive the scholarship, which will last for the duration of the student’s undergraduate years at Niagara University. Once the student has graduated from NU, new recipients for the scholarship will be selected and announced.

Any student selected for this honor must not only excel on stage and in the classroom, but also they must model a Vincentian-like interest in caring for and helping others.

“We are delighted to select Preston Cuer as our first recipient of the Julie Burdick Memorial Scholarship,” noted Dr. Watkinson. “When we thought about how extraordinary Julie Burdick was as a ‘triple threat’ performer, as a student who loved to learn, and as an extraordinarily generous and caring human being, we thought of Preston Cuer. Very simply, Preston excels not only in

theater but also in all of his academic studies. And, like Julie, Preston is humble, genuine, sincere — hallmarks of an authentic human being.”

A resident of Alexander, N.Y., Cuer has a double major in theater performance and computer information sciences.

Cuer has played roles in “Chicago,” “Fiddler on the Roof,” “Company,” “Cabaret,” “Night Train to Foggy Bottom” and every short play festival the department has held during the past four years. After participating in the department’s study-abroad program at Schiller International University in London last summer, he volunteered to teach math in a mountain village of Romania with a team of volunteers from his parish, the West Middlebury Baptist Church. With the assistance of translators, Cuer and four other math instructors spent two weeks teaching students who “are normally ignored in schools due to ethnic differences.” He noted that the mission experience was a “wonderful opportunity” that he would gladly volunteer for again. 

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## Neil A. Casey Plays 32 Roles in Holiday Classic at Leary Theatre

By Ann Heuer, '78

Out of his mind. That's exactly what NU Theatre alumnus Neil A. Casey, '91, thought he would be if he turned down the opportunity to play every man, woman and child in "This Wonderful Life" at Boston's Lyric Stage Company last December. The production is playwright Steve Murray's faithful retelling of the beloved Frank Capra film, "It's A Wonderful Life" (1946). For Casey, the chance to play George Bailey (portrayed in the film by Jimmy Stewart), Mary Hatch Bailey (Donna Reed), Old Man Potter (Lionel Barrymore) and the 29 other characters from the classic movie — plus a narrator — was irresistible. To top it off, the Boston critics and audiences loved him.

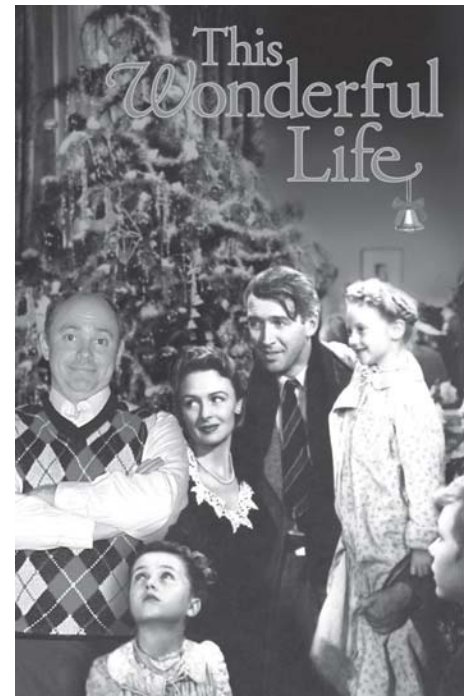
This December, Niagara University Theatre audiences had the opportunity to experience this holiday treat since Casey graciously offered to perform "This Wonderful Life" as a fundraiser for a new theater on campus on Dec. 8 and 9. "It's my way of giving back and getting to see everybody at NU," Casey recently said during a phone interview.

"This Wonderful Life" is a slightly abbreviated retelling of "It's a Wonderful Life" which playwright Murray describes as "a beautifully written movie that goes to dark places and earns its happy ending." When The Lyric Stage Co. decided to present "This Wonderful Life," producing artistic director Spiro Veloudos thought of casting Neil A. Casey and no one else. Directed by Jack Neary, last year's New England premiere of "This Wonderful Life" was critically acclaimed by The Boston Globe, the Boston Herald, and Boston's NPR news radio station, WBUR 90.9 FM.

"I'd never done a one-man show before," Casey said, "and when Spiro called me to ask if I'd be interested, I thought I'd be crazy not to do it." To prepare, Neil had to memorize a 60-page script and he watched the movie about 200 times so he could get every scene, voice and mannerism exactly right. "Jack Neary and I agreed we needed to re-create the movie as closely as we could," Neil explained. "If a character was looking in a certain direction in the film, we'd stage it the same way. We knew people would notice if the scene looked completely different."

A native of Waltham, Mass., Casey started his college career at Framingham State. A year later he transferred to Niagara University's theater department at the recommendation of a friend, NU alumnus Patrick Riviere, '88, whom Casey had worked with while doing summer stock in Maine. From his sophomore through senior year, Casey was cast in 18 productions at NU Theatre. His time at NU, he said, was transforming. "I learned discipline and technique from Brother Augustine Towey, C.M., Tim Ward, Renee Baillargeon, Steve Vaughan, Miss Bev (Beverly Fletcher), Mildred Paella and all the faculty and adjuncts," he said, adding, "I could always sort of do it — but I learned *how* to act at NU, and learned about myself and how to be an adult."

During high school, Casey wasn't "a sports guy or a bookworm" but he knew "how to get a laugh" and he enjoyed the theater. His parents taught him, though, that in order to pursue a career in theater, a person needed to be "gifted." Since his Mom was battling cancer throughout Casey's grade school and high school



years, she was unable to attend a number of his performances, including "A Glass Menagerie" during his senior year of high school. However, his Dad and one of his brothers came to see that production on opening night. No words were exchanged about the show during the drive home, but the first thing Casey's Dad exuberantly exclaimed to his wife as he and his sons walked through the door was, "He's gifted!" Two simple, life-altering words. At that moment, Casey knew he had his parents' blessing, and it made all the difference. Sadly, though, his Mom passed away shortly after his high school graduation, but her love, courage and wonderful sense of humor still inspire him, his Dad and his brothers and sister.


Following his graduation from NU's theater department in 1991, Casey spent five years in New York City and then he returned to Boston to work with the Reagle Players and the Publick Theatre. He later honed his comedic timing as a company member of "Shear Madness" in Washington, D.C., Boston, and Pittsburgh — a production he has now been involved in for eight years.

He has also worked in numerous other productions throughout the northeast, from "Take Me Out" to "Love's Labour's Lost," "Enchanted April" to his current role in "The Mystery of Irma Vep" at Boston's Lyric Stage Co. from Nov. 28 – Dec. 21, 2008.

Throughout his career, he has devoted over four years to teaching acting classes at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, which he hopes to do again next spring. He also taught acting as an interim professor at Niagara University Theatre during academic year 2006-2007. "I love teaching," Casey said, "it's a great feeling to impart knowledge to students and you can see the light bulb go off when they've got it — it's fun."

"Acting is just something I have to do, I don't know why," Casey added. His advice for NU's theater students is this: "Keep plugging away, don't give up, continue your studies after you graduate, see as much theater as you can, talk to people in the industry, and don't burn bridges."

Having talent and a superb work ethic has enabled Casey to soar in a competitive industry, but so, too, has his warm Irish Catholic upbringing. "Our family is very close and we share a wacky sense of humor," he said. "We understand that life is short and we believe in the golden rule: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.'"

No wonder Casey is perfect in "This Wonderful Life." He knows what matters most. 


## Lost and Found at Leary Theatre

Did you lose a ring at the Leary Theatre over the past year or two? If so, please contact Peg Lacki at (716) 286-8483. Thanks!

## Save the Date for Gala 2009

The 24th annual Friends of Niagara University Theatre Gala will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2009. This business-casual event begins with a 4 p.m. matinee of Kurt Weill's and Bertolt Brecht's musical, "The Threepenny Opera," at the Leary Theatre on NU's campus. Guests will then proceed to the Castellani Art Museum on campus for a cocktail hour, silent auction, elegant dinner, live auction and a visit from the cast and crew of the musical. Auction items include travel packages, paintings, entertainment and sports memorabilia, gift baskets, gift certificates and more.

This year's gala co-chairs are Patricia Orzetti and Arthur and Barbara Traver, while auction co-chairs are Pamela LeCuyer, Lori Presti and Adair Saviola. Funds raised benefit the theater program and its students, from needed theater equipment and supplies to workshops provided by guest artists.

For tickets and information, or to donate gift baskets, certificates, paintings, antiques or collectibles valued at \$100 or more, contact gala coordinators Peg Lacki at (716) 286-8483 or Ann Heuer at (716) 286-8480. 



*The co-chairs of the 24th Annual Friends of Niagara University Theatre Gala include Patricia Orzetti, left, Barbara Traver, third from left, and Arthur Traver, back row. Co-chairs of the gala's live and silent auction include Pamela LeCuyer, second from left, Lori Presti, right, and Adair Saviola, who was unavailable for the photo.*



*Jonathan Klatt, '08, who played the Master of Ceremonies in "Cabaret," congratulates his friend Elizabeth Ann Clune at the Friends of Niagara University Theatre Gala in April. Miss Clune and her parents, Robert and JoAnn Clune, are longtime supporters and fans of Niagara University Theatre. Pictured here behind Klatt and Clune are preliminary architectural drawings of the Elizabeth Ann Clune Center for Theatre which will encompass the Leary Theatre, lobby, box office, theater offices, classrooms, costume shop and scenery shop.*

# Ragusa's star rising on Broadway

## Mix of patience, humor lands 'Frankenstein' role

By Anne Neville, News Staff Reporter  
(Copyright 2008 The Buffalo News, from Sept. 24, 2008)

*Editor's note: The following is an excerpt reprinted with the permission of The Buffalo News. To read the entire article, please visit the following website and type "Ragusa's star rising on Broadway" in the "search" box at the top of the homepage:  
[www.buffalonews.com](http://www.buffalonews.com).*

Speaking by phone from her New Jersey home, the effervescent Michele Ragusa said she's "had my eye on this role (Elizabeth Benning in the Mel Brooks Broadway show, "Young Frankenstein") right from the beginning." But when it was originally cast before the play opened in November 2007, she heard through the Broadway grapevine that the play's producers wanted a celebrity for the role. "I wanted to be seen for this initially, so badly," she said. "But believe it or not, after 19 years of being in this city and working, I could not get an audition."

When she heard that (Megan) Mullally had gotten the role, Ragusa said she thought ahead to the day when Mullally might want to leave to pursue other interests, "because so many people have said to me, 'You remind me of Megan Mullally!'"

Ragusa kept working, most recently in New Jersey's Paper Mill Playhouse production of "Kiss Me Kate." In the spring, she and her husband Thomas Richter, who met when they were doing "Guys and Dolls" in Dallas, assembled a flier with photos of Ragusa and some updated reviews from that role.

"I think it just happened to land on the casting director's desk at the perfect moment," said Ragusa. But she still had a few challenges — the audition was in "basically a day and a

half, and I had two songs to learn that I didn't know."

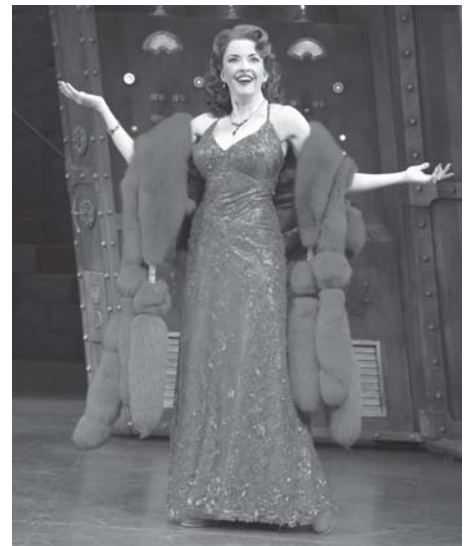
With the help of a quick iTunes download and her conductor from "Kiss Me Kate," Ragusa prepared for the audition — which turned out to be before "oh, about 20 people, with Mel Brooks in the center seat at the table."

She started with "Deep Love," the tune a starry-eyed Elizabeth sings after her romantic encounter with the monster. The song opens with the famous spoken line slyly lisped by Madeline Kahn in the movie: "Penny for your thoughts!"

"I said the line, and the entire table started screaming with laughter," said Ragusa. "There's nothing better than that! I kept going and the conductor was playing the piano and laughing, we finished and they applauded — it was really, really something. I found out later that Mel Brooks just flipped out, 'Where has she been?' It was one of those great perfect things." Needless to say, she got the job.

Ragusa had barely become comfortable in the role when she was sidelined by a freak accident — a collision with a coffee table in the middle of the night left her with a broken toe on her right foot. After a week of rest, she returned to the stage and has made every show since then.

"There was a change of shoes, obviously," she said, "and certain changes of choreography where I had to turn on my right foot. That Tuesday night, when I returned, I thought, 'I'm never going to make it through the weekend,' but I did — I kept icing it, and I'm doing pretty good, though I'm still not back in my 3-inch heels."




*Alumna Michele Ragusa, '87, in the Broadway role she always wanted: Elizabeth Benning in Mel Brooks' "Young Frankenstein." Photo courtesy of Paul Kolnik.*

But even in scaled-down heels, Ragusa is loving every minute in the Broadway spotlight, a place she's been shooting for since Holy Angels. After high school, she enrolled at Erie Community College to study business, thinking she could never have "a real life" as an actor.

At ECC, she auditioned for a part in a production of "Godspell," directed by English teacher Jack Saviola, with the assistance of musical director Jimmy Sapienza. Ragusa now credits both Saviola and Sapienza for recognizing her talent and encouraging her to pursue acting as a career.

Saviola pulled Ragusa aside and recommended she apply to Niagara University's rigorous and highly respected theater program under the direction of Brother Augustine Towey. Saviola called Towey and recommended his star actor.

When Ragusa met Towey and stepped into the small campus theater, she said, "I just knew this is where I had to be. I thought, 'I'm home.' I think I had three classes left to get my (ECC) degree, and I left! I basically went (to Niagara) and got my BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts degree) and it was one of the best decisions I ever made!" 



## Touched by the Spirit of Stella Adler or How I Spent My Summer Vacation


By *Nicholas Cocchetto, '09*

I hate the sound of my heartbeat. Some people find it comforting. Not me. I hate it because it reminds me that I am going to die. This past summer at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting, it was confirmed that I am going to die someday and that the beating of my heart is not just the insignificance of my life. I could win countless awards, be a lead on Broadway or even, by some miracle, become insanely rich. But I'll still die. I'll barely be a moment in the history of the universe. This may sound strange or even depressing but let me put it into perspective. As a student, I was enrolled in 10 classes at the Summer Conservatory including scene study, two different movement classes, character study and others. My typical days started at 8 a.m. and ended around 1 a.m. and were full of classes, memorization, partner work and script analysis. I seldom had time to do or even think of anything other than acting. I was constantly trying to keep up with all of the assignments, maneuvering my way around New York City, and excited about training at the school where Marlon Brando studied his craft.

Before the conservatory, I had no idea how much I thought I was terrible. In my own mind I thought I was just being humble. In reality, I was just trying to squeak safely by without a sound and whenever I felt I did well, I mentally gave myself a gold star. I constantly checked myself and my progress with a correlating grade on how talented I was. However, this didn't work very long because all my work was for my own grading system, and the teachers caught that. One day my Shakespeare instructor simply asked me what the line was my scene partner had right before mine. With a blank face I told her I didn't know. I had never really heard anything he had said in the scene. I was too wrapped up in my own scene to worry about my partner, let alone the playwright. I hadn't listened.

Patrick Quagliano, the modern equivalent of Stella Adler and my teacher of the Adler technique class, demanded that all actors "Turn their work into service of the work." He taught that actors shouldn't be in it for their own fame and fortune, they should be there to serve the playwright and their fellow human beings. I was more concerned about playing the character "right." I was failing to serve others. I learned that great actors don't "become" someone else, they simply tap into the humanity that we all share. They can step out of their own selfish needs and truly see what others need, including what their characters need. In the end, we all want something and do things to get it.

Now, I am learning to embrace the human experiences we all share and to push against myself into the courageous unknown where I don't know where to go, where I might fail. Patrick reminded us all that we live too briefly to not be brave. I am human as well as an actor; I must be bold, brash, confused, vulnerable, courageous and fearless. I must go where my acting characters ask me to go.

How did I spend my summer vacation? I learned to lift my head up, open my body and my heart and be brave though I don't know what to do. Now I know my courage comes from victory in the face of fear, not fear being absent altogether, and the sound of my beating heart reminds me that I am alive. And I am beginning to like this sound. 

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**Deadline for submissions for the spring/summer issue is March 15, 2009.**

## Let's Get Physical (Theater, That Is)

By Kelly Konecko, '09

For several years the NU theater department has required courses in physical theater and mime as part of the performance curriculum, but has never presented a full-length physical theater production on the NU stage. However, that all changed this September when NU kicked off its 45th season with "Night Train to Foggy Bottom," a physical theater piece written and directed by NU adjunct professors Robin Patterson and Terry Judd.

As with most physical theater, "Night Train to Foggy Bottom" relied on nontraditional storytelling methods as opposed to conventional dialogue to bring its tale to life. Through the homogenous mixture of masks, shadow and hand-held puppets, music and multimedia, audiences were guided on a journey into the subconscious of an artist who searches through his dreams and memories for the source of his artistic inspiration.

The play was originally presented in 1990 by Patterson and Judd's company, Theatre Beyond Words, in collaboration with Coad Canada Puppets, and it has undergone several revisions since. Patterson reflected on the show's journey: "'Night Train to Foggy Bottom' was conceived over dinner with Harro Maskow and Arlyn and Luman Coad in 1988 as a reaction to our mutual frustration with the general North American perception that puppets and physical theater were only for children. So the show was devised as a complex dream, a visual narrative told with surreal images and adult humor. The play was revised and condensed to showcase the work of NU students and to continue the struggle to change the public's perception of the art forms."

"Night Train to Foggy Bottom"




*Above: As the character of Delaney the sculptor, NU theater studies student Preston Cuer, '09, seated at right, imagines artistic inspiration in his dreams during "Night Train to Foggy Bottom." Here, his muse, played by Rachel Baron, '10, far right, and his sculpture, left, played by Jessica Bill, '10, enchant him and his subconscious, played by Will Hicks, '11, seated at left.*

*Below: "Night Train to Foggy Bottom" gave NU theater students the opportunity to hone their physical theater and puppetry skills. In the foreground, Devan Corcoran, '11 (the sculptor's mother dressed as an old-fashioned girl), left, interacts with Candace Hall, '11 (kiddie clay/blue moan art critic). Back row from left, Kurt Erb, '09 (father), and Mary Boatman, '12 (grandmother), share a dream sequence with Carolyn Wendel, '09 (geezer clay/green buddy art critic), Maria Nicole Held, '11 (beastly clay/pink snit art critic), and Jessica Bill, '10 (sculpture).*



offered a broad and varied opportunity for both students and the theater-going public. The show served as an outlet for students to put skills learned in the classroom into practice on stage and challenged audiences to actively engage in the artistic process. "Night Train to Foggy Bottom" was

presented in the Leary Theatre and featured 14 cast members and puppeteers, including Preston Cuer as the sculptor. Student design work, including puppets, was by Kelly Konecko; multimedia was by Jared Hoyt; and additional sound editing was by Steven E. Sitzman. 



## A Puppet Journey

By Kelly Konecko, '09

When I was little, I sat for endless hours in front of my TV, mesmerized by the puppets on “Sesame Street.” Little did I know that 15 years later that fascination would be far from extinguished, and I’d be embarking on a career in puppetry.

After my first few puppet endeavors, I started devising a way to study abroad and learn more about puppets. This sent me to the University of Hawaii at Manoa last fall with performance major Carolyn Wendel as part of its Semester Almost Abroad program. In Hawaii, I enrolled in puppetry and Asian theater classes and both Carolyn and I were lucky enough to be cast in the world premiere of a new children’s theater play called “Kraken Ka: the Komodo Dragon,” which featured shadow and mouth puppets. I also



*Kelly Konecko, '09, studied at the Jim Henson Workshop in New York City last summer. Here she poses with one of several versions of the “Sesame Street” icon, Grover.*

worked on the show as the assistant puppet designer, which provided me

with my first experience designing and making shadow puppets.

Then in January, thanks to our persistent costume technologist Marilyn Deighton, I got to tour the Jim Henson Workshop while on our theater tech trip to New York City and pass off my portfolio. This contact resulted in my getting called back for an interview and eventually landing a summer internship. I performed various tasks at the workshop such as making accessories and performing repairs on several “Sesame Street”

characters like Grover, Big Bird and Abby Cadabby. It was absolutely amazing to experience hands on all of the laborious work that is involved with the maintenance of these icons from my childhood.

Returning home, I have been working on puppets nonstop for NU’s summer children’s theater production “Goldilocks, The True Tales” and this fall’s “Night Train to Foggy Bottom.”

When asked what I plan to do when I leave NU, I don’t have a very good answer other than, “Something with puppets.” It’s hard to know what lies ahead when I could have never predicted years ago that I would be studying in Hawaii or working at Jim Henson’s. I guess I’m just as curious as everyone else as to what’s next on my puppet journey. 🎭

## Goldilocks, The True Tales: A Children’s Summer Delight

By Ralph F. Donatelli III, '09

This summer the Friends of NU Theatre presented the perfect answer to children’s entertainment needs — a charming fun twist on the story of “Goldilocks and the Three Bears” entitled “Goldilocks, The True Tales.” From June 27 until Aug. 10, the world premiere of this children’s play was presented at the Church in Lewiston with five performances every weekend. The play was written, directed, and choreographed by Terri Filips, associate professor of theater and fine arts, and one of 17 distinguished professors who were awarded summer research grants from the NU Research Council. Terri received the grant to write a children’s play.

It’s not often that a new play gets a full-scale production so quickly after completion; however, with the help of the Friends of NU Theatre, the play was swiftly put on its feet.

The production was performed by N.U.R.T., a group of NU’s theater studies students who toured children’s stories around the area Tuesdays through Thursdays and then performed Terri’s play Fridays through Sundays.

The story follows Jimmy as he searches for a finale to the Enchanted Woods Elementary School talent show. He tries to bring together the dancer Goldilocks and the Bear Necessities, a local band made up of the three bears. Unfortunately, the bears refuse to work with Goldilocks, who they call a “home-wrecker,” “ruffian,” “burglar,” and many other names. Jimmy tries to reconcile their differences by letting each side explain what happened on that infamous day. Needless to say, the play delivers a happy ending and a big musical finish.

After seeing the show, children of all ages left the theater with smiles across their faces. Many of them were experiencing theater for the very first time and were excited about the opportunity to meet the cast and ask for autographs. 🎭

*The cast and crew of “Goldilocks, The True Tales,” left to right, front row: Cait Holland, '10, JennaBeth Stockman, '09, and the Goldilocks Puppet and its creator, Kelly Konecko, '09. Back row from left: Matt Kindley, '10, Ralph F. Donatelli III, '09, and Nick Lama, '10.*



# A Summer Showcase of Niagara University Talent

By *Ralph F. Donatelli III, '09*

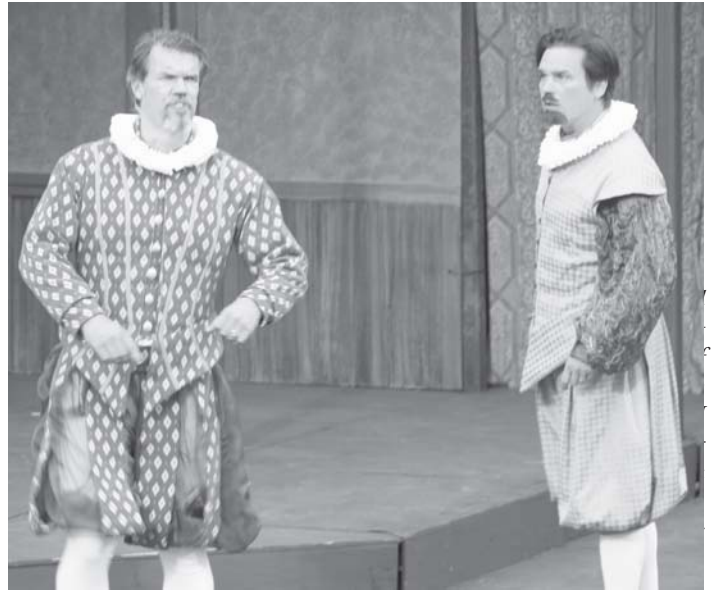
From July 24 until Aug. 17, Buffalo's Shakespeare in Delaware Park put on one of Shakespeare's lesser-known works, "The Merry Wives of Windsor." Directed by NU Theatre's artist-in-residence, Steve Vaughan, the comedic play follows Falstaff as he attempts to seduce two married women, ending with a hilarious resolution.

The talent of NU actors both past and present was most definitely on display. Theater alumni Paul Todaro, '87 (Ford), Zak Ward, '04 (Fenton), Susan Drozd, '02 (Mistress Ford), and Chrissy McDonald, '82 (Mistress Quickly), all played roles in the production. Also, associate director of NU Theatre Doug Zschiegner had a major role in the show as Page, and theater student William Vaughan, '10, played Simple, a charming character who delighted all audiences. Steve Petersen, a philosophy professor at NU, also held a major role as Slender. Acting alongside these talented performers as Nym, a follower of Falstaff, was such a phenomenal experience

for me.


Since this was an outside production, there were many uncontrollable variables that factored into every show. On top of the pressure of performing and sharing a small trailer as a dressing room and the public porta-potties, there were some extremely humid nights that led to an exuberant amount of sweat.

Also, out of the 22 scheduled performances, six were cancelled due to the rain (including opening night!). Considering that more than one-fourth of the performances were rained out, the performances that withstood the



*Theater alumnus Paul Todaro, '87, right (Ford, a gentleman of Windsor), interacts with associate director of NU Theatre, Doug Zschiegner (Page, a gentleman of Windsor), in "The Merry Wives of Windsor."*

unpredictable summer weather really thrilled the audiences.

In the end, this summer was a taste of a professional career in performance that truly showcased the talent of Niagara University. I am truly proud to have been a part of this experience that entertained audiences of Western New York. 



*Theater studies student Ralph F. Donatelli III, '09, center, enjoyed his role as Nym in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" at Buffalo's Shakespeare in Delaware Park. Here, he shares a plan with fellow actor Peter D'Angelo (Pisto), while Norman Sham (Sir John Falstaff) listens.*

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## Updates!

*Editorial Note: In each issue of the Friends of NU Theatre newsletter, we will feature current news from alumni, faculty and staff in this column.*

**Chris Arnau, '06**, wrote "Sharp Enough," a one-act play that was performed at the Manhattan Repertory Theatre Summerfest in June. He directed Disney's "Hercules" at Camp Taconic in Hinsdale, Mass., and was in the National Theatre for Arts and Education national tour for "Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry." Earlier, he was in the cast of the Nightmare Haunted House in New York City. He can be reached at [NUBrooklyn7@yahoo.com](mailto:NUBrooklyn7@yahoo.com).

**David Autovino, '03**, played Lord Fancourt Babberly in Buffalo's Irish Classical Theatre Co.'s "Charley's Aunt" this spring.

**James Becton, '97**, was in a show entitled "Thoroughly Stupid Things" in the New York Fringe Festival this summer. For more information, visit [www.fringenyc.org](http://www.fringenyc.org).



**Rebecca Berowski, '06**, of New York City, has made several commercials, including one for VH1, and she was recently in "Peter and Vandy," a film starring Jason Ritter and Jessie Martin. She was also in commercials this spring for [myfuturespouse.com](http://myfuturespouse.com) and Raymour and Flanigan, as well as the TV shows "Gossip Girl" and "Law and Order: Criminal Intent." She will play a basketball player this fall in the film "Winning Season" and recently booked another day on the soap, "One Life to Live." Her Web site is [www.rebeccaberowski.com](http://www.rebeccaberowski.com).

**Sara Caliva, '06**, is director of the St. Clare Theater in Syracuse, N.Y. She has also started a community theater company, the Synergetic Players, whose members will perform

in the theater and work in production and business aspects of the theater. Anyone interested in learning more about the theater can contact Sara at [scaliva@gmail.com](mailto:scaliva@gmail.com).

**Derek Campbell**, adjunct acting professor, directed "Miss Fozzard Finds Her Feet" and "Nights in the Gardens of Spain" for Buffalo's Irish Classical Theatre Co. this summer. For Buffalo's Shakespeare in Delaware Park, he directed "King Lear," while artist-in-residence/stage combat instructor **Steve Vaughan** directed "The Merry Wives of Windsor." NU Theatre alumni who played roles in "King Lear" included **Joseph Wiens, '04**, and **Paschal Frisina III, '00**. Also, former NU Theatre students **Tom Zindle** and **Adam Rath** were in the production. Alumni **Susan Drozd, '02**, **Paul Todaro, '87**, and **Zak Ward, '04**, were in the cast of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," along with **Doug Zschiegner**, associate director of NU Theatre and theater students **Will Vaughan, '09**, and **Ralph F. Donatelli III, '09**.

**Brendan Cataldo, '08**, has been performing at The Roxy Regional Theatre in Clarksville, Tenn., in "All Shook Up," "The Robber Bridegroom," "The Crucible," and "A Christmas Carol."

**Anise Celano, '12**, **Kara Connors, '12**, **Erin Daley, '11**, **Joanna Farrell, '09**, **Cait Holland, '10**, and **Carolyn Wendel, '09**, were in Opera Sacra's production of "Suor Angelica" this fall at St. Joseph's Collegiate Church of Buffalo. This Puccini opera was directed by **Brother Augustine Towey, C.M.** Celano and **Candice Kogut, '08**, were recently in Buffalo's Alt Theatre production of "LIT401: A School Shooting in One Act."

**Matthew Chavez, '08**, is attending Drexel University Law School in Philadelphia for a law degree.

**Louis Colaiacovo, '99**, starred in

Buffalo's MusicalFare Theatre's production of "Mid-Life, The Crisis Musical!" this summer.

**Devan Corcoran, '11**, **Joanna Farrell, '09**, **Susan Laxton, '08**, **Steven Sitzman, '10**, **JennaBeth Stockman, '09**, and **Courtney Weather, '10**, were in the cast of "42nd Street" for the Niagara Fine Arts Program, Inc., in Niagara Falls this summer. The production was directed by alumna **Maureen Pusateri, '00**, and choreographed by **Gracie Schupp**.

**Kevin Craig, '08**, has been working with Mill Mountain Theatre of Roanoke, Va., and the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival.

**Marilyn Deighton**, assistant professor of theater and fine arts, costume technology and design, attended the United States Institute for Theater Technology Conference in Houston in March. She was one of 30 presenters in the Costume Design and Technology Commission's poster session with a presentation on "Adjustable Petticoats." Her display included patterns and examples of petticoats made by NU's theater studies students. She distributed a handout with instructions on how to assemble petticoats to the more than 400 attendees at the session.

**Bryan Eckenrode**, adjunct music professor, was named Educator of the Year in Chautauqua County for his work with the Chautauqua Regional Youth Orchestra.

**Paschal Frisina III, '00**, is a drama instructor at St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in Buffalo. He recently played Richie Valens in "Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story" at Buffalo's MusicalFare Theatre and the Bookseller and Cheese Grater in Artpark's production of "Beauty and the Beast." He will play George in "Sunday in the Park with George" at MusicalFare from March 4 – April 5.



*At the College of Arts and Sciences Recognition Day in May, Cassie Gorniewicz, '08, center, was awarded the Players' Award by NU Theatre administrators and faculty. Here she is congratulated by Dr. Sharon Watkinson and Doug Zschiegner. Gorniewicz received the annual award for academic excellence, leadership, exemplary work ethic inside and outside of the classroom, and Vincentian-like interest in always helping others. In addition, outstanding theater student awards were given to the following seniors, now alumni: Matthew Chavez, Charlotte Colby, Kevin Craig, Lindsay DiBartolomeo, Gorniewicz, Candice Kogut, Margaret Lane, Lisa LeCuyer, Emily Pici, Jessica Stahr, Lia Sumerano and Elizabeth Warden.*

**Cassie Gorniewicz, '08**, was in Western New York this fall for the role of Nuala in Buffalo's Irish Classical Theatre production of "The Cavaliers," directed by Derek Campbell.

**Cristen Gregory**, adjunct voice professor, is now executive director of the Lancaster Opera House in Lancaster, N.Y.

**Candice Kogut, '08**, directed "Godspell" for the West Seneca Youth Theatre in West Seneca, N.Y. in May. The production was choreographed by **Holly Lowden, '08**.

**Sara Kovacs, '06**, **Nick Lama, '10**, and **Emily Pici, '08**, appeared in the musical revue/fundraiser "Broadway in the Mist" for Lewiston's Theatre in the Mist in June.

**Lona Geiser LaChiusa, '93**, starred in the musical revue "I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change" presented by Buffalo's Kaleidoscope Theatre Productions this summer at Canisius College.

**Mary Beth Lacki, '09**, spent the summer working as an acting assistant to choreographer **Gracie Schupp** and alumna **Maureen Pusateri, '00**, with Niagara Fine Arts Productions in Niagara Falls, N.Y.

**Sarielys Matos, '04**, performed in Buffalo's Theatre of Youth production of "If You Give a Pig a Party" this summer.

**Brian Mysliwy, '96**, received the prestigious Artie Award from Buffalo's theater community in June in the category of "Outstanding Actor in a Play" for "Servant of Two Masters."

**Elizabeth Oddy, '03**, is in her second year of service with the Peace Corps as a senior-level educator, training future teachers in Uganda. A fascinating diary of her experience can be found on her Web site, <http://elizabethoddy.blogspot.com>.

**Denise Payne, '99**, is in the national tour of "Jersey Boys," which recently played in Toronto from August through early October.

**Emily Pici, '08**, worked with the touring dinner theater company Enchante Cabaret of Bradford, Pa., this summer and relocated for a new job in Albany, N.Y., this fall.

**Brendan Powers, '96**, directed "Six Dance Lessons in Six Weeks" and performed in "Meet Me in St. Louis" for Flat Rock Playhouse in North Carolina. He returned to Florida Repertory Theatre in Fort Myers, Fla., in September and will be there through February performing in "The Glass Menagerie," "Born Yesterday," and "Dancing at Lughnasa."

**Patrick Riviere, '88**, recently directed "The Wizard of Oz" for KJK Productions and gave seminars on applying for theater schools at The New Jersey State Drama Festival. In March, he promoted his poetry books at the Buffalo Small Press Book Fair and in May he performed in the pre-Broadway reading of "The Really Big Pirate Show" in New York City. For information on his books, visit [www.lulu.com/parplaywright](http://www.lulu.com/parplaywright).

**Michele Marie Roberts (Benzin), '99**, played the role of the young Judy Garland in Buffalo's MusicalFare Theatre's springtime production of "Beyond the Rainbow." NU alumnus

**Marc Sacco, '00**, was also in the musical. Sacco received the prestigious Artie Award from Buffalo's theater community in June in the category of "Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Musical" for "Altar Boyz." He will star in Buffalo's Kavinoky Theatre production of the musical revue, "Hot 'n Cole: A Cole Porter Celebration" from March 6 – April 5.

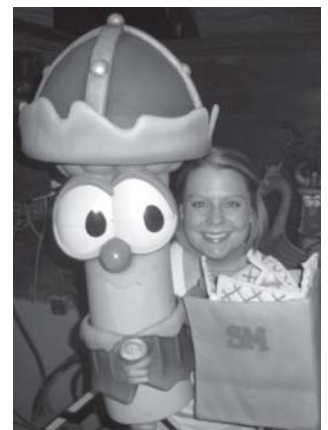
**Derek Roland, '00**, performed in and co-choreographed a show, "Cut to the Chase," which has been nominated for a Drama Desk Award in the category of "unique theatrical experience." Derek and his physical theater company, Parallel Exit, are thrilled for the exposure and are working on a new tap show, "Time Step." He recently completed a choreography observancy with Randy Skinner on City Center Encores' production of "No, No, Nannette" starring Sandy Duncan, Beth Leavel and Rosie O'Donnell. He also filmed several instructional videos for Dance Teacher Magazine, available at [www.dancemedia.com](http://www.dancemedia.com).

**David Ryan, '07**, works for the Thin Air Theatre Co. in Cripple Creek, Colo., where he recently performed in a melodrama and worked as the understudy and as part of the ensemble for "Oklahoma."

**Lauren Sale, '06**, was recently in "Cut to the Quick" at The Side Project in Chicago. She also has done

*Lisa LeCuyer, '08, and the "Jr. Asparagus" puppet at Dollywood in Tennessee where she played the lead performer in "VeggieTales" this summer.*

*She is now playing the role of Martha Cratchit in the national tour of "A Christmas Carol" with the Nebraska Theatre Caravan.*





*Patrick Moyer, '07, was in The Old Creamery Theatre Co.'s production of "A Christmas Carol" last December in Amana, Iowa. Patrick is a co-director for Camp*

*Creamery, a theatrical workshop for children aged 7 – 14, for the Old Creamery Theatre Co. in Iowa. He and his colleagues teach the students about performance techniques, stage production, memorizing, and about "responsibility and sticking to commitments."*

several readings, including "Last Daughter of Oedipus" with Babes and Blades and "Orestes/West" with Greasy Joan & Co.

**Nicholas Santasier, '04**, performed recently in Phare Play's springtime one act plays, a 24-hour project, and "Arcadia." He is writing a play entitled "Notches."

**Jennifer Schoch, '04**, appears in several videos for Toshiba on [buytv.com](http://buytv.com).

**Michelle Shrimpton-Hidalgo, '89**, was recently nominated for "Teacher of the Year" for the second year in a row in the Commack School District of Commack, N.Y. Hidalgo is a sixth-grade math teacher and former reading language arts teacher who also directs theatrical productions for her school. Many of her students have performed in commercials, on TV, and in community theater, and two were chosen for roles in "The Grinch" on Broadway.

**Kristen Smiley, '07**, spent the summer leading performance workshops at the Lexington Children's Theatre in Lexington, Ky. This fall, she is company manager/actor for a tour that includes "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and "Katerina the Clever." In the spring, she will star in LCT's

productions of "Jack and the Wonderbeans" and "Keeping Mr. Lincoln."

**Lawrence Gregory Smith**, adjunct acting professor, spent the summer performing at the Michigan Shakespeare Festival. He played Parolles in "All's Well That Ends Well" and several roles in "Julius Caesar." This fall, a staged reading of his play, "You Can't Do This to Me, I'm an American!" was presented at the Road Less Traveled Theatre in Buffalo in October. **Susan Drozd, '02**, was one of the nine actors who presented the reading.

**Dawn Smith-DeLuca, '96**, and her husband Scott DeLuca were blessed with a baby girl, Ainsleigh Lane DeLuca, born on May 5.

**Katie Sorice, '03**, writes for Buffalo Rising, a news and entertainment guide, and she acted in several productions in the Buffalo Infringement Festival this summer. She is also in a television commercial for "My Health Counts," a Western New York health-care campaign.

**Jessica Stahr, '08**, is working as an actor with Hampstead Stage in Center Barnstead, NH through next June.

**Lia Sumerano, '08**, worked this summer with the company "The Lost Colony" in Roanoke, N.C. She returned to Western New York this fall and was in the musical "Buddy" at Buffalo's MusicalFare Theatre. Future plans include a move to New York City to further her acting career.

**Brother Augustine Towey, C.M.**, director emeritus, has authored six volumes of poetry and now, a seventh, his complete poems, "The Poem You Asked For and Other Poems" was just published by Arthur McAllister Publishers of Harpswell, Maine. This contains almost the entire body of his previous work, plus several new poems. The book may be ordered by e-mailing [Orders@amcpub.com](mailto:Orders@amcpub.com) and writing "Towey" in the subject line. Instructions will be emailed to those who place an order.



*Alumni Lia Sumerano, '08, and Joe Wiens, '04, in Buffalo's MusicalFare Theatre's recent production of "Buddy, The Buddy Holly Story."*

**Charles Wahl, '08**, is working with Great Plains Theatre in Abilene, Kan. and Abingdon, Va.'s Barter Theatre.

**Courtney Weather, '10, Steven Sitzman, '10** and **Devan Corcoran, '11**, all worked as singers/dancers at Darien Lake Theme Park and Resort in Darien, N.Y., this summer. Sitzman was the lead male vocalist in the theme park's "Rhythmicity" show.

**Nina Angela Williams, '12**, played Jane Marie Vega in the television show, "Jr. Lab Ratz," a humorous pilot about high-achieving high school students. The show will air on WCNY-TV 24 on Jan. 25, 2009.

**Jessica Young, '07**, dropped by the Friends of NU Theatre Gala in April while home for a vacation before returning to her job as an actress with Disney Magic Cruise Lines. Alumna **Cassie Gorniewicz, '08**, booked a cruise this spring so she could see Jessica portray Cinderella.

**Stacy Zawadzki-Janusz**, adjunct dance professor, and members of Stacy Zawadzki's Performing Arts Center presented a theatrical production, "Follow Your Dreams," in Amherst, N.Y., this summer. The show included dance, acrobatics, acting and voice.

**Doug Zschiegner**, associate director of NU Theatre, directed a reading of "Murder Squared" by Gary Earl Ross for Buffalo's Road Less Traveled Productions in October. The reading included alumni **Candice Kogut, '08, Lisa LeCuyer, '08, and Zak Ward, '04**, among other actors.

## In the Spotlight



*Left: Kander and Ebb's hit Broadway musical "Cabaret," directed by Brother Augustine Towey, C.M., director emeritus, ended the Niagara University Theatre 2007-2008 season. From left, several of Berlin's pre-World War II Kit Kat Klub entertainers welcome patrons to the cabaret with song, dance and innuendo. From left, Lia Sumerano, '08, Mary Beth Lacki, '09, Nicholas Cocchetto, '09, JennaBeth Stockman, '09, and Jonathan Klatt, '08.*

*Right: The Kander and Ebb song, "Tomorrow Belongs to Me" sung by many of the cast members of "Cabaret" eerily foreshadowed the coming Nazi regime in Germany. Front row from left, Greta Bowers, '09, and Kurt Erb, '09. Back row, clockwise from left, NU student Geoffrey Redick, '11, Sara Ball, '10, Trevor Hibbard, '09, Ross Donatelli, '11, Jared Hoyt, '09, Nicholas Gnacinski, '11, and Nicholas Cocchetto, '09.*



*Left: Paige Allison Mingus, '09 (Angel), left, and Courtney Weather, '10 (Anna), portrayed daughter and mother in Kander and Ebb's bittersweet musical, "The Rink," directed by Brother Augustine Towey, C.M., director emeritus, at the Leary Theatre in November. Composer John Kander, a good friend of the theater program at Niagara, attended the preview of the production. He graciously provided a talk back session for the university's theater students about working in the entertainment industry.*



## In the Spotlight

*Right: The dramedy “The Cripple of Inishmaan” by Martin McDonagh, was presented at the Church in Lewiston in October. Directed by Gregory Fletcher, director of NU Theatre, the bittersweet tale examines the hopes and dreams of Billy Claven when Hollywood comes calling in 1934. From left, Mallory Allen, '09 (Eileen Osbourne), Mary Beth Lacki, '09 (Kate Osbourne), Justin Krall, '11 (Dr. McSharry) and Dino Petrera, '12 (Cripple Billy Claven).*



*Left: There was plenty of comic relief in “The Cripple of Inishmaan” to lighten its darker moments. Here, Justin Krall, '11, as Dr. McSharry, prescribes abstinence to whiskey-loving Mammy O'Dougal, played by Emily Clare Boudreau, '09.*

*Right: Set in an aging roller rink that's about to be demolished in 1977, Kander and Ebb's musical, “The Rink,” featured lively song, dance and roller skating with flashbacks dating back to 1945. Here, several cast members perform a skating number filled with high energy twists and turns. From left, Geoffrey Redick, '11 (Wrecker Lucky), Joseph N. Liolos, '11 (Wrecker Buddy), Nicholas Lama, '10 (Wrecker Ben), Ross Donatelli, '11 (Wrecker Tony), Steven E. Sitzman, '10 (Wrecker Lino), and Nicholas Cocchetto, '09 (Wrecker Guy).*





*Left: In May, Noelle Wright, '09, right, was awarded the Tara Laurie Memorial Scholarship, open to NU's theater studies students who participate in the university's study-abroad program at Schiller International University in London. Noelle, who has a double major in theater studies and English, enjoyed her study-abroad courses this summer as well as the chance to see such beautiful landmarks as Edinburgh Castle, Edinburgh, Scotland, pictured here. Noelle poses with her friend and fellow NU theater studies student Emily Clare Boudreau, '09. The Laurie family established the Tara Laurie Memorial Scholarship in 2005 in memory of their daughter, Tara, a theater studies/hospitality student who passed away unexpectedly in 2004, several months after participating in the study-abroad program. The Laurie family said, "The Tara Laurie Memorial Scholarship" is our way of keeping our daughter's song alive and her spirit of joy and love soaring."*



*Right: NU theater studies students who participate in the department's study-abroad program at Schiller International University in London have the golden opportunity to enjoy a variety of theatrical productions and to sightsee. Pictured here at Mary Arden's farm in Stratford-Upon-Avon are a group of theater studies students and a nonmajor who participated in last summer's program. From left: Noelle Wright, '09, Kurt Erb, '09, Mallory Allen, '09, Amber Dawn Hohman, '09, Jared Hoyt, '09, Emily Clare Boudreau, '09, psychology major Rachel Ward, '10, and Greta Bowers, '09.*



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