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LMDA Review

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LMDA Review, volume 10, issue 1

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Bronwyn Eisenberg

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Lue Morgan Douthit

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Highlights

- **Kugler Nominated for LMDA President; Ballot Enclosed**
- **Next Annual Conference, June 15-18, Washington, DC**
- **“a note to ourselves”: Where do we go from here?**

Inside

- **Conference Reports**
- **Douthit, Volansky and the Elliott Hayes Award**
- **First Person: Resing and Creamer**

the lmda review

*The Newsletter of
Literary Managers and
Dramaturgs of the
Americas
(10.1) fall 1999*

**literary
managers
& dramaturgs
of the americas**

"Theatre is the place which best allows me to figure out
how the world works."
Suzan-Lori Parks

SECTION I: IN REVIEW

Conference Participants, Annual Conference, 1999, Univ. of Puget Sound (photo by Ellen Mease)



SEND IN YOUR BALLOT

LMDA members will find enclosed with this copy of the *Review* a ballot asking them to ratify two items: 1. the

selection of **DD Kugler** to serve as the next president of LMDA (two year term to begin on July 1, 2000); 2. the decision to create an affiliation with the Association for Theater in Higher

Education. If your dues are up-to-date and you are an “active” member (per bylaws “student” and “associate” memberships are non-voting) and a ballot was not enclosed, please

contact the office immediately. Ballots must be postmarked by November 20.

The Executive Committee is extremely pleased to nominate DD for this position. For those who do not know him, the ballot includes a bio. DD has been active in Canada as a professional dramaturg and director for many years. He is a long-time participant in LMDA. Most recently, he was, as a conference chair, instrumental in organizing and running the Tacoma conference.

Item #2: Establishing an affiliate relationship with ATHE is part of an ongoing initiative to network with other theater organizations: professional and academic. The benefits and requirements of affiliate status are on the ballot. Members are asked to carefully consider this invitation from ATHE to work with them in a more formal way (LMDA members began ATHE's Dramaturgy Focus Group) and then cast their vote.

“A NOTE TO OURSELVES”

Enclosed with this edition of the *Review* is “a note to ourselves,” a document created over the course of the past year for the purpose of encouraging conversation about our shared values and beliefs as dramaturgs and literary managers, about what we are doing now as an organization and about what we want to do in the future to improve the environment for the field.

Please see **Gretchen Haley’s** account of our work on this document at the end of the “Special Section, Conference 1999” and send your comments to her or any member of the Executive Committee.

**NEXT ANNUAL CONFERENCE
THURSDAY, JUNE 15 TO**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 18
WASHINGTON, DC**

The next LMDA conference will be in Washington, DC, June 15-18. Given our west coast location last June, it seemed important to return to the midwest or east. Washington is also relatively easy to get to from a number of places. The location will encourage members, whether from the States or Canada, to think about the relationship between our field, theater in general, and government. LMDA Vice President, Jane Ann Crum, the conference chair, has lived and worked in the Washington area and is in the process of assembling a conference team. This will be our first conference in this city.

LMDA will hold this conference on a campus in the DC area, although the final choice has not yet been made. We will do our best to keep costs at or near last year’s levels.

If you have ideas or suggestions or would like to volunteer to help in any way, please contact Jane Ann or Geoff Proehl. Canadians members can also contact Brian Quirt who will be working on conference planning with Jane Ann.

**INCREASE IN DUES AND
NEW ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP
EXPIRATION DATE**

All LMDA memberships will now expire annually on the same date: May 31. The Executive Committee has been considering this change for several months and has decided it makes more sense to run an annual membership campaign each spring, rather than send out individual renewal letters to each member throughout the year. This change will also makes it easier for members to remember if their membership has lapsed and coincides with the general

pattern of renewals prior to the annual conference.

The exception to this change will be for new memberships processed between January 1 and the end of May. We will extend these memberships to May 31 of the following year.

As of January 1, 2000, dues will increase to the following levels: \$25 for students; \$45 for associate members; \$60 for active members; \$130 for organization (includes two individual memberships). The Executive Committee has authorized these increases, the first in many, many years, to cover the cost of rent for our New York office, to catch up with the long term effects of inflation, and to enable us to continue to support a wide range of member services.

Brian Quirt, Canadian Caucus Chair, notes that all changes in expiration dates and dues will apply to Canadian members as well, although by prior agreement, the above amounts will be paid in Canadian, not US funds.

LMDA ARCHIVE

The **LMDA Archive** is a new member service. Currently located on the “dramaturgy northwest” web site (www.ups.edu/professionalorgs/dramaturgy/) soon to be on www.lmda.org, the archive makes available to members a number of vital resources:

- **job postings,**
- **back issues of the *Review*,**
- **a guide to internships,**
- **first person narratives of dramaturgical experiences,**
- **the second volume of the *UCaucus Source Book*,**
- **lists of dramaturgy sites members have created for particular plays, and more.**

To access the archive, you will need to know the current username and password, which you will now find under the organizational address on the back page of the most recent edition of the *Review*. Between now and the next edition of the *Review*, the username will be *lmda* and the password will be *lmda*. This is a member service so please do not publish or distribute the username and password. Winston Neutel is also in the process of developing a way to assign members individual usernames and passwords that will make the site more secure.

**LMDA ADMINISTRATOR;
LMDA INTERNS**

A Note from Ginny about Ginny:

Ginny Coates is our new LMDA Administrator. She will be in the office taking calls **Tuesday and Wednesday mornings 8:00 to 12:00**. Ginny is a first year, MFA candidate in Dramaturgy at Brooklyn College and is a recent transplant from Philadelphia. Her background is in business and finance, holding a undergraduate degree in Marketing and has decided to pursue her studies in theater. She is thrilled to be at LMDA and looks forward to working with you. Her email address as administrator is *admin@lmda.org*.

Good-bye Celise, Congratulations and Thanks: Celise Kalke, our previous administrator, is now the dramaturg for the Court Theater at the Univ. of Chicago. Celise's work for the organization as administrator has been outstanding. We're sorry to see her go, but wish her the best in this new position.

Puget Sound Interns: LMDA is fortunate to have a number of interns working for the organization at the University of Puget Sound this

summer and fall: **Meghan Maddox, Louise Lytle, Kristen Proehl, and Laurie May**.

These interns work on keeping the membership database up-to-date. They also serve as copy and associate editors on the *Review* and prepare mailings. Their assistance has given the administrator more time to devote to direct member services.

**MID-YEAR MEETING
JAN. 9, NEW YORK CITY
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**

The Executive Committee is planning regional and mid-year meetings around the United States and Canada. (See **Regional Updates** below.) We will have a mid-year meeting in New York at Columbia University on Sunday, January 9 from 1 to 5 pm. We will confirm times and the location online and by Regional VPs later this fall.

If you don't hear from us by mid-December, contact Geoff Proehl or Allen Kennedy.

**ELLIOTT HAYES AWARD 2000
AMY WEGENER
MICHAEL BIGELOW DIXON**

The literary/dramaturgical staff at Actors Theatre of Louisville has again volunteered to administer the annual LMDA Prize in Dramaturgy. Updated guidelines will be available by October 15, 1999, and the application deadline will be moved to February 15, 2000. A new panel of LMDA-member judges will be announced this fall, and The Elliott Hayes Award will be presented at the 2000 LMDA Conference.

Applications will be available on the LMDA website, from the LMDA

Administrative Office in New York, and from the Literary Department at Actors Theatre of Louisville (502-584-1265; 316 West Main St., Louisville, KY, 40202-4218).

**EARLY CAREER DRAMATURG PROGRAM
BRONWYN EISENBERG**

The Early-Career Dramaturg Group is up and running. We've recently launched several new services for dramaturgs and literary managers. Here's a sampling of what we're currently offering and what we're in the process of setting up.

Our newest program is the "mentor bank," which matches an early-career dramaturg or literary manager with a more established dramaturg/literary manager for a one-time chat. If you're a dramaturg or literary manager interested in giving a little time to advise an early-career'er, or if you're an "early-career'er" (and LMDA member) interested in talking with someone in your field, please send an email message to Bronwyn at: *imogen@alumni.princeton.edu*. Be sure to include the following information about yourself, so that we can try to create good matches: 1. Your name. 2. Your email address. 3. Info about yourself. 4. (Mentors only) How often you'd be willing to be contacted, e.g. twice a year, etc.

We've just started a national/international email list called "earlycareer," which is for early-career members of LMDA. To sign up for this list, send email to *majordomo@dramaturgy.net* with the following information on the first line (not in the subject header but in the body of the message):

Mail to: *majordomo@dramaturgy.net*
Subject: [Leave blank]

subscribe earlycareer
your_email_address

The list will be a place to discuss ideas, get answers to questions, hear about internships and other early-career job opportunities, network, and get information on seminars of interest to early-careers'ers..

This past June's national LMDA conference marked the debut of a panel series that focuses on issues of concern to Early-Career Dramaturgs and Literary Managers. This year's panel focused on Production Dramaturgy for already-produced plays. Panelists Mark Bly, David Copelin, Shirley Fishman, Michael Lupu, and Paul Walsh spoke about their work and their collaboration with various directors. Next year's panel will most likely focus on Literary Management.

The comp ticket program is going strong. It gives members the chance to see shows for free in New York City. Recently, we've seen shows at BAM, Lincoln Center Theatre, Manhattan Theater Club, Playwrights' Horizons, Signature Theatre, the Women's Project, and WPA, among others. All you need is an email address and an LMDA membership. Info on ticket availability and how to get tickets for a particular show is sent via email as soon as possible after an offer is made. Sometimes we get only one day's advance notice, so checking your email every day is the best way to ensure that you can take advantage of this program. To get on the email list, send email to *lmda-nycmetro-request@netcom.com*. By the way, to the extent that there are enough tickets, comp tickets are available to all members of LMDA, not just early-career dramaturgs.

Right now, we're in the process of putting out a new, updated edition of LMDA's Guide to Internships in Dramaturgy and Literary Management. This guide covers

internships across North America. We've completed the first round of getting information from theaters. It is available as part of the LMDA Archive at the "dramaturgy northwest" web site: *www.ups.edu/professionalorgs/dramaturgy/*. Go to the bottom of the home page, click on Archive and for the username and password use the words found under the office address at the end of the most recent edition of the *Review*. (username: lmda; password: lmda) The second round of soliciting internship information from an additional set of theaters will start soon—the internship questionnaire is being included in a LMDA letter going out to all theaters in the TCG database. It's also included with this edition of the *Review*. If your theater would like to be included in the internship guide, you can get a copy of the internship survey at *www.ups.edu/professionalorgs/dramaturgy/*. For more info, please call Bronwyn Eisenberg at (212) 560-4883 (voicemail), or send email to *imogen@alumni.princeton.edu*. Canadian theaters—we also want to hear from you! Would you like to volunteer to help out on putting this publication together? Please contact Bronwyn.

Next winter, we'll be looking into the possibility of putting the resumes of early-career dramaturgs online. This resume page would be linked to the new LMDA homepage: *www.lmda.org*.

This year we're planning a few seminars or panels in New York City that will be of interest to early-career dramaturgs/literary managers.

Monday, October 18th, at 5:30 p.m., the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation (SDCF) and LMDA will jointly host a discussion on Director-Dramaturg Collaboration. The evening

will feature several Director-Dramaturg pairs, who will discuss their work.

The seminar will explore the relationship between directors and dramaturgs as they work on developing new plays or reviving classics. What makes for an effective collaboration and what are the pitfalls to avoid?

The panel will be moderated by David Diamond, Executive Director of SDCF, and will include the teams of Mark Bly/Doug Hughes, and Lenore Inez Brown/Woodie King.

If you have an idea for a future panel, please send email to Bronwyn at *imogen@alumni.princeton.edu*. We'd love to see panels in cities outside NYC too. Any volunteers?

Starting with this issue of the newsletter, we're including a short feature on an early-career dramaturg. The name of the section is "Spotlight on . . ." Please take time to read about an up-and-coming dramaturg.

We're also brainstorming for the future. Have an idea? Or have you thought of something that would help you as a new dramaturg or that you'd like to know more about? Please share your thoughts. We're very open to input.

Stay tuned for more news as we continue to expand and develop our programs.

REGIONAL UPDATES

REPORT ON CANADIAN CAUCUS BRIAN QUIRT

The Canadian Caucus had an excellent turn-out at the Tacoma Conference (Don Kugler noted that its attendance

was second only to the Northwest region.) Other activities up north include a sponsored dramaturgy discussion in Vancouver last May in partnership with the Playwrights Theatre Centre; a mini-conference on Dramaturgy at the Theatre Centre in Toronto in June; and a successful membership campaign that has seen our membership rise to 45 in the past six months. As well, LMDA members met in Toronto during the ATHE Conference in July and had a lovely evening on the town. Thank you to Jessica Maynard for organizing this event. Canadian newsletters have been published regularly; two issues will be distributed this fall. If you would like to be on that mailing list, please contact Brian Quirt at bquirt@interlog.com.

Dramaturgy Conference—June 28 / 29, 1999

Artists from across Canada (plus some visitors from the United States) gathered at Toronto's Theatre Centre to explore the dynamics of dramaturgy. Our focus was on the role of the dramaturg in new play development, as this is the principal activity of dramaturgs in Canada. Those in attendance ranged from experienced director/dramaturgs such as Bob White, Maja Ardal, Roy Surette, Peter Hinton, Ed Roy, DD Kugler, Gyllian Raby, and Jillian Keily to new dramaturgs like Vanessa Porteous, Joanna Falck and Henry Bakker.

Peter Hinton gave a passionate opening address in which he challenged dramaturgs to be practical, responsive and informed. Passion, collaboration, humility and responsibility are key to the dramaturg's role in the theatre. He advocated for the role as a very practical one, predicated on the dramaturg's commitment to excellence, and faith in his or her opinions and beliefs about the theatre.

He warned against an obsession with clarity, improving or fixing. Listen and tell the truth. Sarah Stanley, as a director, argued for the necessity of the dramaturg's work, and challenged us to approach all new work with the assumption that it works.

Newfoundland's Jillian Keilley gave a fascinating demonstration of her play creation process which involves huge casts, elaborate choral and staging notation and, at times, extreme audience involvement. Playwright Judith Thompson spoke about her commitment to language. She wants a dramaturg to prevent her from destroying her play as she rewrites it. She felt that the dramaturg is there to ensure that the writing maintains its link with the gut, with the unconscious.

Vanessa Porteous, Henry Bakker and Joanna Falck spoke about the challenges of entering the field of dramaturgy. Don Kugler outlined his excellent theatre program at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver. I urge you all to talk with Don about his work there, as it is not only an excellent model for performance studies, but also a smart and elegant act of structuring what is in essence a small experimental theatre company. Peter Hinton described his recent work on Tom Cone's new music opera, *The Gang*, and the role of the dramaturg in the opera world.

Bob White took us on a retrospective tour of his work at Playwrights Workshop Montreal in the 1970s; Factory Theatre in the '80s; and Alberta Theatre Projects and the Banff Centre Playwrights Colony in the '90s.

The contributions of all who attended were substantial and I want to thank all the speakers as well as those who joined us for a superb two days of conversation about the art of dramaturgy. Our fourth annual conference will be held next July.

Please contact Brian if you would like to be sent information about that conference when it is available.

SCRIPT EXCHANGE

If you have submissions, contact
Sonya Sobieski, Playwrights
Horizons, 416 42nd St., New York,
NY 10036; smsobieski@aol.com;
212-564-1235.

NEWS FROM THE SOUTHWEST REGION

LIZ ENGELMAN

Nakissa Etemad has had a really busy year at home at San Diego Rep and away. For the last two years she has been working with Joel Lippman on *Celebration of the Lizard*, a theater piece inspired by and using words

and images from the poetry of the Lizard King himself: Jim Morrison. A recent reading at San Diego Rep brings Nakissa and Joel one step closer towards production, which they hope will be at the end of the Rep's 2000 season. In February, Nakissa traveled to Arizona Theater Company to dramaturg David Ira Goldstein's production of *How I Learned to Drive*. It was such a fruitful collaboration that she'll be returning to dramaturg their production of *Side Man*. And in September, she'll be heading to San Francisco to work with Garret Jon Groenveld on his play *The Blood Winter*, which is being worked on as part of the Bay Area Playwrights Festival. Robert Menna is working

from Ojai, CA on some freelance dramaturgical research for the Denver Center Theatre's educational program. It's a program that enables actors to go into area schools as characters from different time periods. Elizabeth Bennett just opened the musical version of *Jane Eyre* at La Jolla Playhouse, which was a real eye-opener into the world of putting together a commercial, Broadway-bound musical. She's about to go into rehearsals with fabulous Chay Yew for his new play *Wonderland*, which opens at La Jolla in September.

REPORT ON THE DRAMATURGY FOCUS GROUP

ATHE, 1999

GEOFF PROEHL, FOCUS GROUP REP.

The Dramaturgy Focus Group works closely with Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas. This fall, LMDA will vote on whether or not to affiliate officially with ATHE, but regardless of the outcome, a community of dramaturgs regularly meets at both conferences. As a community we support the work of dramaturgs and literary managers in all its variety in terms of age, level of schooling, nationality, length of career, institutional (or non-institutional) affiliation, theatre size or mission, and so forth.

As a relatively new focus group, we deeply appreciate the space that ATHE makes possible for us to gather and work. We are keenly interested in collaborating with other focus groups on creating conference sessions. We feel that one of dramaturgy's most important functions is as a meeting space for people and ideas.

Geoff Proehl, Focus Group Rep.
(term expires Aug. 15, 2000)
253-756-3101; gproehl@ups.edu
Theatre, U. of Puget Sound, 1500 N. Warner, Tacoma, WA 98416

Cindy SoRelle, Conf. Planner
(term expires Aug. 15, 2000; Cindy will then become Focus Group Rep, 2001-2002 Conf.)
254-299-8903; cms@mcc.cc.tx.us
McLennan College Theatre Department, Fine Arts Division, 1400 College Drive, Waco, TX 76708

Klaus van den Berg, Conf. Planner Elect
(term expires Aug. 15, 2002)
423-974-8972; kvandenb@utkux.utcc.utk.edu
Department of Theatre, U. of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN 37996

Brian Flannagan, Grad. Student Rep.
(term expires Aug. 15, 2001)
212-932-2431; BFlan1@aol.com
Columbia Univ.
530 Riverside Dr. Apt. 6H, New York, NY 10027

Kevin Trudeau, Member at Large

(term expires Aug. 15, 2001)
815-726-7405; ktrudeau@elnet.com
Lewis University
622 N. Raynor #3B, Joliet IL 60435

DD Kugler, Member at Large and Debut Panel Organizer; (term expires Aug. 15, 2000)
604-291-4688; ddkugler@sfu.ca
SCA, Simon Fraser Univ., Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6

John Lutterbie (immediate past Focus Group Rep); Chair, Nominations
(term expires Aug. 15, 2000)
516-632-7279; jlutterbie@ccmail.sunysb.edu
Theatre, SUNY Stony Brook, Stony Brook, New York 11794-5450

**SPECIAL SECTION: CONFERENCE 1999, LITERARY MANAGERS AND
DRAMATURGS OF THE AMERICAS
JUNE 17 TO JUNE 20; UNIV. OF PUGET SOUND, TACOMA, WASHINGTON**

ELLIOTT HAYES AWARD WINNERS: LUE DOUTHIT AND MICHELE VOLANSKY
(photo by Ellen Mease)



THE ELLIOTT HAYES AWARD

One of the highlights of this year's conference was the first presentation of the Elliott Hayes award. (See related story above.) We asked the presenters and recipients to forward us their remarks and we publish them here as they were delivered. This award would not have happened without the work and initiative of **Ken Nutt, Alycin Hayes, Michael Bigelow Dixon, Amy Wegener, Liz Engelman, Harriet Power, and Bob White.** Thank you!

**ELLIOTT HAYES AWARD PRESENTATION TO
LUE MORGAN DOUTHIT FOR *LES BLANCS*
HARRIET POWER**

I am honored to announce one of our two recipients of the 1999 Elliott Hayes Award—Lue Morgan Douthit, literary manager of The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, for her dramaturgical work on Lorraine Hansberry's *Les Blancs*, produced in the 1997-98 season under the direction of Tim Bond.

The scope of Lue's work on *Les Blancs*, from project conception to process to production, offers us an inspiring model of dramaturgy. Lue's long term interest in Lorraine Hansberry helped catalyze *Les Blancs*' inclusion in the season, inspired Tim Bond to choose her as production dramaturg, and informed a central goal for the production: to introduce to the OSF community a playwright both

Tim and Lue regard as one of America's most brilliant. In Lue's words, "Tim and I wanted to celebrate the bravery Hansberry exhibited through her short life to speak her mind. I have my own theory of geniuses: I think we don't have them for long—perhaps they just burn brighter and faster and farther than the rest of us—but we had one in her. Our production was a tribute to that spirit."

Lue's work over the year-long research, rehearsal, and production process was striking in its breadth, scholarship, imagination, and sensitivity. *Les Blancs* is one of the most complex and least produced of Hansberry's five plays. Left incomplete at her death from cancer at age 34 (a mere 6 years after *A Raisin in the Sun* played on Broadway), Lue discovered through her research that Hansberry worked almost continuously on *Les Blancs* in the last year and a half of her life, carrying the script from one doctor's office to the next and discussing every character choice and structural moment with her former husband and literary executor Robert Nemiroff, who completed the play after her death on the basis of these discussions. The normal, always rigorous dramaturgical task of textual analysis became, with *Les Blancs*, a critical, intuitive, uncharted dramaturgical journey: three published versions, significantly different, of an unfinished play challenged Lue as dramaturg to synthesize research and textual analysis. Out of this synthesis came the organic, exploratory process from which a production text eventually evolved—one that honored Hansberry's intentions and her power, with *Les Blancs*, to move and engage the audience.

So how did they get there? On a practical level, Lue copied each page of the Viking, Samuel French, and Arena stage versions of the script side by side, and scheduled detailed, painstaking script meetings with Tim Bond, lead actor Derrick Lee Weeden and vocal/text coach Nancy Benjamin. One of Lue's dramaturgical gifts—coalescing a creative team—was to prove invaluable to the OSF production, especially her instincts for choosing key support personnel. The correspondence she began with the executor of the Hansberry estate, Jewell Gresham Nemiroff, guided a number of important interpretive decisions . . . and also created one of the great eleventh hour fax-and-tech chases of 20th century theatre. At OSF, where plays run in rep, each production gets only a few days of stage time, and during tech must share the space with three other shows, all of which open over the course of a single weekend. While onstage for the first time, Lue, Tim, and lead actor Derrick had the radical idea to reverse the first two scenes. The clock was ticking. Lue articulated in writing seven key reasons for the change (a most compelling document, we judges concurred), faxed it to literary executor Jewell with the caveat WE NEED YOUR RESPONSE IN TWELVE HOURS, AS WE ARE ONE DAY FROM THE FIRST TECHNICAL REHEARSAL—and Aha!!—received Jewell's blessing to make this significant structural change. As Lue reported, "Before we made the final decision, we sat the cast down and asked their opinion. After extensive discussion, they tried out the new version that afternoon, and the switch in the emotional rhythm in the story was clear to everyone." Jewell Nemiroff, who later attended the production, was so impressed with the impact of this text change and the integrity of its process that the new Samuel French version of *Les Blancs* will incorporate it. The dramaturg makes history . . . and perhaps most importantly, demonstrates the power of research, intuition, and effective communication.

Lue's passionate, critical mind and heart also enhanced her research and outreach for this project. *Les Blancs*, the first major work by a black American playwright to focus on Africa, asks a compelling and painfully timely question: Can the liberation of oppressed peoples be achieved without violent revolution? Given the dizzying breadth of material on Africa, Amy, Bob, and I were especially impressed with Lue's idea to locate the sources available to Hansberry herself as she was working on the play, in order to best understand Hansberry's influences. Lue discovered uncanny resonances between the play's dialogue and source material such as John Bunche's theory of race, which deepened the work of director and actors. She shared her research, poetry, music, and visual materials not only with the director, actors, and designers but with audiences through lobby displays, articles, in house and post show discussions, and, in cooperation with the Education Department, an educational weekend entitled "Unfolding *Les Blancs*." Tim Bond, the nominator for this project, described Lue's dramaturgical contributions as "nothing less than astounding," and cited her partnership as invaluable to the success of the production, which won the Back Stage West/Dramalogue award for Best Production along with three other awards. In Tim's words, "Lue's presence through rehearsals and her notes and suggestions on character development, storytelling, and dramatic action were invaluable. Her approach to dramaturgy is invigorating, challenging, supportive, and pushes the envelope of the entire role dramaturgy must play if the American theatre is to advance."

Congratulations, Lue.

**ACCEPTANCE SPEECH
LUE MORGAN DOUTHIT**

Harriet asked me why I haven't spoken yet today. A word of advice: if you only can come to one day of the LMDA conference, don't make it the last one. I have been overwhelmed by the build up of ideas and emotions which have transpired over the course of these several days and I just couldn't start spouting off without feeling very presumptuous. For all my bravado, it is always daunting to speak to a group of my peers so I thank you in advance for your empathy.

First of all, I'd like to thank LMDA for organizing this award. It always shocks me when actors actually want to look at my dramaturgy protocol—I've often wondered, "why do I bother?"—so it was great fun to put together something to share with colleagues. I'd also like to thank the "reading" committee—well, what would you call them?—of Harriet Power, Amy Wegener, and Bob White who did the bulk of the work by reading all the submissions. I can't imagine choosing between apples, oranges, kiwis and tomatoes—they are all great fruits. I must confess I harbor a slight envy because they got to learn about 11 productions. I am always curious how other people approach their work. Lastly, I would like to publicly express my gratitude to Douglas Langworthy, my colleague at OFS who encouraged me to document our production and to director Tim Bond who understands the benefits of the director/dramaturg collaboration and allowed me in at every step of his process.

I never met Elliott Hayes. His untimely death happened before I got into this business. I have been to Stratford, however—it was in January—needless to say there is nothing going on in Stratford in January—but I wasn't there very long before the name Elliot Hayes came up. He is still remembered with great love, respect, and joy. I have to say, from reading about his theatrical interests as

described by David Prosser in the spring edition of the LMDA Review, I wish I had such energy and talent. I am honored to be associated with him if only for a brief moment. I have often expressed the wish of our work to be discussed at these conferences. I had no idea what a benefit to me personally such a suggestion would be.

I hope what I am about to say comes as no newsflash to you, but: it is hard to document what we do. Who would guess that a chance encounter with Derrick Lee Weeden, the actor playing Tshembe Moteshe in our production of Lorraine Hansberry's play *Les Blancs* during a rehearsal break in the lobby of our theater would lead to a radical re-structuring of the play? Which ironically was to revert the play to its original structure as envisioned by Hansberry. But that's how our role works: it's a comment after rehearsal perhaps, or an arm reaching out, or a late-night coffee. Well, I do live in the Northwest, after all. Mostly our contributions are intangible.

At first, I found it highly ironic that I would receive recognition for work on a play already-written, for my interest and passion are with new plays. Hence why I didn't show up until today. I was attending the 2nd annual Pacific Playwrights Festival sponsored by South Coast Repertory Theatre. Of course it is highly ironic that I work at a Shakespeare Festival dedicated to the classics, but that's another conversation. I came to this work because I was a playwright. My advocacy and the passion I bring to the work always comes from the standpoint of the playwright. *What occurs to me now about my dramaturgy work is what working on new plays has contributed to my working on already-established texts and vice versa, what I bring to new plays from my work on older texts.*

On one level, *Les Blancs* was a new play to me, as I suspect it is to most of us. I had never read it. I had "bought" the assumptions about it: it was unfinished and it didn't work theatrically. I had even written a chapter in my dissertation on Hansberry but never bothered to read this work because of what I had assumed about it. Well, haven't I learned a valuable lesson? We should never assume that we know a play before we work on it. Plays should always be new to us—regardless of when they are written, 400 years ago or 4 minutes ago. New plays have a "now-ness" which we must subscribe to older plays as well. All plays are always new because of the context—when (and by that I mean, time and place) they are produced or re-produced, in the case of already-established texts, is always different. And we must remind our fellow practitioners to address that.

As for the vice versa part, what working on older texts brings to my work with new scripts. *Older texts are given the presumption of "working," that somehow, at some time, somebody made them work theatrically. We rarely give that presumption to new plays. Which is not to say that all new plays come out of the word processor fully realized—that's definitely another conversation—but I would like to propose that by the time someone chooses to produce a brand new play, we must give it the same presumption we would to all plays; we must enter the rehearsal process assuming that it works. For only then, can playwrights really assess what they have. We must give them that gift.*

I'm looking for a theatre world where practitioners have been taught how to read plays, to value the "form" as meaning, to understand that their job is not as originators, but as interpreters, and that interpretation is based on textual evidence, not on some momentary whim or some attempt to make the text fit a personal world view. Where I work, 99% of my work deals with plays in the old-fashioned way—they start with a singular playwright. We must always enter the text to find its organic world view, not fit the play to our fashion. As Tom Stoppard puts it, *"You don't write a la carte when you write a play. One writes set menus. Take it or leave it."* At the moment, I don't see that ideal world. I have been through 3 graduate programs myself and I know that directors and actors are not being properly trained to do "close readings" of texts, nor are they able to appreciate the formal structure of plays in terms of how to enliven them in 3-dimensions. They are taught technical and performance elements, which are important to be sure. But I find myself continually dismayed at the lack of respect for text that I see around me.

Of course, I work at a place where authorship is always in question. Thank you, Shakespeare, for not paying attention to the printing of those plays. So sometimes we forget our responsibilities to modern and contemporary writers. *But I don't think my theatre is the only one where directors have been given total authority where the text is concerned.* I believe the play's the thing and that is all too frequently forgotten. I don't often win the argument where I work, but somehow that fuels my sense of purpose all the more. To my academic colleagues, I urge you to fight for and retain script analysis and dramatic structure classes on your curriculums. *To my professional colleagues, I propose that our job is to be the playwright's friend, sometimes the only ally a playwright has. And whether they are still living and available for comment, or long in the grave, they all need protecting.* I know that I have my work cut out for me. I hope you will join me.

Thank you LMDA for the recognition and the forum to speak.

**ELLIOTT HAYES AWARD PRESENTATION TO
MICHELE VOLANSKY FOR *SPACE*
AMY WEGENER**

The Elliott Hayes Award also goes to Michele Volansky for her highly inventive, intensely collaborative, long-term dramaturgical work on Tina Landau's *Space*. Michele is the Dramaturg/Literary Manager at Steppenwolf Theatre Company in Chicago, and *Space* is a new play written and directed by Ms. Landau that premiered in Steppenwolf's 1997-98 mainstage season.

From conception to development to production, it's clear that Michele's generous support was instrumental to Landau and the Company's journey into *Space*—that she was there "from the ground up." In the beginning, Michele played a key role in encouraging Landau to go forward and develop this risky new play, having weathered a long search and discussion process to find the right piece for Landau to direct: work that would be driven by the artist's passions and would stimulate Steppenwolf audiences intellectually and emotionally.

Space was a project begun in a workshop at the American Repertory Theatre, and had "haunted" Landau for several years. It's a play fueled by her obsession with the night sky and inspired by the story of a brilliant psychiatrist at Harvard who came forward to say that he was investigating the reports of people who claimed they'd been abducted by space aliens—a study which forced him to delve into a difficult re-examination of the very foundations of his science and beliefs. When the script first reached Michele's hands, it was a bare-bones rough draft—in the author's words, "an outline with several scenes, here and there."

I could say that Michele "had her work cut out for her," but that wouldn't be true to the way Michele works, for one of the things that so impressed us about Michele's dramaturgy was her ability to gauge the unique needs of this project and this artist's vocabulary, and to respond with great creativity and flexibility. In the months of development that would follow the decision to nurture *Space*, Michele would provide extensive research and access to various experts, moral support, probing questions, and vital attention to the play's "heartbeat" through many drafts, a workshop, and a full production process. Like space itself, the ideas in the play about science, faith, astronomy, psychology, and extraterrestrial life had the potential to expand exponentially outward, and Michele's dramaturgy was essential to the ongoing struggle to find and keep the focus of the piece.

Michele's specific contributions to *Space* are so numerous that I hope I don't accidentally leave something out while attempting to recount them. Throughout the writing process and into rehearsals, Michele collected, read, and shared books, articles, and visual materials. She talked through the first draft of the play with Landau every step of the way. Their close collaboration continued during a summer workshop with company actors, and through the rewriting process that followed. When rehearsals finally began, Michele's impact was, as Landau puts it, "tremendous," both in terms of providing information about the world of the play and her observations on how things were taking shape . . . all the way through previews. She even brought three members of an abductee support group into rehearsal. From thinking deeply about character relationships to implementing script changes to leading post-show discussions, there is a real sense in Michele's application that she truly did, as she describes it, "throw herself headfirst" into the project. In Tina Landau's words, Michele "expands the field of dramaturgy by being so much—an analyzer of text, a researcher, a resource, a critic, a full support system, a nudge, an inspiration, a friend, a challenge, a guide."

With her work on *Space*, Michele demonstrates just how important the personal element of dramaturgical work—namely, trust—can be. And for this project, that meant also trusting the play's unique style and structure, fully understanding Landau's impulses, and being willing to stand behind risky choices, even amid institutional pressures. Rather than saying, "That's not working," Michele would ask, "How can we make this work?" We judges very much admired this commitment to a highly individualized dramaturgical process. I'd like to conclude by again quoting the nominator for this project, Tina Landau, who writes, "When I think of the piece, from its early conception to its life in its current form, I think of Michele—how she was there, how I couldn't have done it without her support, her comments, her guidance, her inspiration."

Congratulations, Michele.

**ON THE ELLIOTT HAYES AWARD
MICHELE VOLANSKY**

I wasn't entirely sure if a thank-you speech was appropriate, so I didn't write one. (But Geoff coerced me into writing something for this issue of the newsletter.) What this is, I guess, is one of those impromptu things like at the Oscars.

First of all, it is a huge honor to be receiving this award from my peers and colleagues. Since both of my parents are teachers, it is amazing to me that I am sitting in a room with four of my mentors: Geoff Proehl, Lynn Thomson, Lee Devin and Harriet Power. The fact that they participated in my receipt of this award makes it that much more special. I also think that this room is somehow appropriate: we can look upward to the stars that were so much a part of my participation in *Space*.

I'd like to thank Tina Landau for her encouragement not only on *Space*, but for six years of wonderful collaboration. Our work together on this project represented some of the most rewarding and challenging work I've ever had to do as a dramaturg. Together, we created a piece of which I am enormously proud. The fact that two other theaters, the Taper and the Public, are doing it this season is incredible to me. I believed deeply in the piece a year ago, and I maintain that feeling even now. Not a day passes that I am not reminded of some aspect of that production. For that I will always be grateful. And I look forward to my next project with Tina. I'd like to thank my parents for their support and encouragement. Not every parent would know what to say when their nineteen-year-old daughter proudly announces, "I'm going to be a dramaturg." I'll always treasure my father's response; "I've never seen a want ad in the Philadelphia *Inquirer* looking for a dramaturg." My husband David deserves a very special thank you. There were times during *Space* that he noted that he often felt as though I had married either Tina or the stars or both, but he spent every moment we had together being kind and supportive and wonderful. And, he likes to look up with me. Without my husband and my dogs, I probably would have gone insane.

Finally, I need to thank both Actors Theatre of Louisville and Steppenwolf for nurturing me in such a terrific way. Michael Dixon at Louisville showed me that a dramaturg could be a thousand different things, depending on the hour and the amount of caffeine one had in one's system. I also thank Steppenwolf for recognizing my contributions to the institution as a whole. Not everyone is lucky enough to like going to work every day—I am a lucky dramaturg.

I was an intern at Louisville when Elliott Hayes passed away. He was a friend of Michael's and I remember watching Michael go through this intense grief. I thought at the time that Elliott must have been a very special person to impact my friend this way. And the more I got to know about Elliott Hayes and his work, the more significant this award is to me. I am truly honored.

Space is a play about looking upward, about looking inward and about making connections. I urge you all to take a moment out of our incredibly busy days and nights and look up, at the stars. It's not only beautiful, but also illuminating in so many ways.

I am honored, touched, emotional and overwhelmingly grateful for this honor.

CONFERENCE, DAY BY DAY

**DAY ONE OF THE CONFERENCE, THURSDAY, JUNE 17: CELEBRATING COLLABORATION
LEE DEVIN**

This year, because the conference itself so fitted the normal UCaucus agenda, we devoted our time to the theme of collaboration.

Morgan Jenness gave a keynote address, a broad outline of dramaturgy as a congregation of functions. I'd like to consider one especially interesting point she made as a departure for conversations next year: When does collaboration as a dramaturg become co-authorship? When does a dramaturg become (in her words) "really creative"? When does the dramaturg become a poet?

The first panel, *How do we teach dramaturgy?* Included Harriet Power, DD Kugler, Adrienne Wong, and Lynn Thomson.

Harriet described her course, "The Dramaturgy of Solo Performance," which begins with the assignment to "perform the story of your life in three minutes without using any language." She reports that comments and discussions among the class members helped develop projects to an amazing level of skill and interest.

DD Kugler gave an overview of “Black Box,” and Adrienne Wong described the semester in detail: 12 weeks of bi-weekly performances, 30 to 100 minutes in length, chosen, dramaturged, and produced every two weeks by class members. The formula for evaluation: RICE. Risk, Investment, Choice, Ensemble.

Lynn Thomson, talking about “Models of Collaboration,” suggested *conversation* as the main process of dramaturgy, itself a process. Conversation, she said, always involves a change; conversation is very like an action and conversing much like improvisational acting, so that you can discuss it using Aristotle’s terms and categories. She also pointed out that conventional classroom arrangements present a difficulty, not to say an hypocrisy, when studying and practicing true conversations (among equals). She prefers the style, Led Collective, which she takes from George Cram Cook and the Provincetown Playhouse.

Liz Engelman and Gretchen Haley continued on the topic of conversation. They’re planning an anthology, a published conversation about collaboration. They’re looking for stories and discussion. The session responded with plenty of definitions and pronouncements. To make a contribution, contact Liz or Gretchen.

After a break for dinner we gathered again for a session with *Mark and the Collaborators*.

Mark introduced reports from two pairs of collaborators by reminding us that collaboration is about labor, not consensus. It involves a tolerance for ambiguity and requires conscious effort: it’s not a natural state. The most important element of a good collaboration is time for uncertainty; curiosity, not schedule, should lead us.

K.C. Davis and Leslie Swackhammer spoke about a translation of *Yerma* they managed to keep “in progress”; they set up a situation in which they had no obligation to come up with a producible work. They took time with exercises, and KC wrote off rehearsal. They found acting to be the key to invention, a kind of echo of Lynn’s point that conversation and acting can be treated similarly. Collaboration for them means trusting each other to do the assigned job.

Vanessa Porteus and Bob White told a cautionary tale, a collaboration on a developing script that didn’t work out. Bob adduced plenty of causes, including the high stakes of production and the dreaded pre-conceived notions. Dramaturgy here may have intimidated writing.

If you have an idea for a UCaucus conversation you’d like to initiate for next year, please write to or talk with me as soon as you can. My email address is ldevin1@swarthmore.edu; or telephone at 610-328-0425. Big thanks to all who contributed to a fine opening day.

DAY TWO OF THE CONFERENCE, FRIDAY, JUNE 18: THE STATE OF THE PROFESSION DD KUGLER

Friday, June 18th had three sessions of small breakout groups, three meetings-of-the-whole, a couple unstructured meals, and some serious entertainment.

Eight 10-person groups (balanced geographically & experientially) met twice (morning and afternoon) to introduce themselves, and to discuss the famous blue handout on **values and beliefs** (“defend the function, explore the practice, promote the profession”) entitled “a note to ourselves.” [Geoff notes that the document is included in this mailing; he encourages you to respond to it by mail, or in regional meetings.]

Sandwiched between these sessions, inspirational keynote speaker George Thorn described the current arts environment (“volatile and hostile”), told us why he’s positive (“art-making is problem-solving”), and profiled service organizations moving from a homogeneous to a heterogeneous membership (“maintaining a dynamic balance—the tight-rope walker is never static”).

In an afternoon forum, the breakout groups shared both micro (word-smithing the blue handout), and macro (diverse and provocative) responses to the values and beliefs statements. As an exercise, this is less about hammering out a document we can all sign off on, than taking advantage of our gathering at conferences to discuss what holds LMDA together and “**where we** (a collective of diverse individuals) **want to go.**”

The forum was followed immediately by the first business meeting (a too brief hour) comprised solely of reports from the executive officers and committee chairs about the on-going work of LMDA. An impressive list of volunteer member-driven activity that profiled “**what we are doing now.**”

Lunch (the one disappointing meal—in an otherwise exceptional food experience at UPS) doubled as the one scheduled meeting of the LMDA regions. Breakfast & dinner, as usual, were a series of impromptu get-togethers.

That evening we were treated to an intimate 4-hour *Uncle Vanya* presented by Art Theatre of Puget Sound, and directed by Leonid Anisimov, Artistic Director of the Vladivostok Chamber Drama Theatre. Response to the work was deliciously divided—fodder for the late-night Engine House No. 9 brew-sampling and table-hopping.

DAY THREE OF THE CONFERENCE, SATURDAY, JUNE 19: THE WORK WE DO AND THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH WE DO IT
LIZ ENGELMAN

Looking back (not in anger but in pride) on the final full day of the conference, I can fairly say that a lot of what we hoped to achieve with this conference did indeed occur. Focusing on specifics and bringing together colleagues in round table discussions gave everyone a chance to speak from his or her own area of knowledge, helped keep the focus on practice more than just theory, and proved how personal experience can reveal universals . . . or not. And both were equally useful.

Since I floated from session to session, I cannot speak to all that was covered in each. But I can give some highlights: *LM in the DA*: The difference between activity created and actions taken. Being information managers. *NYPD Blues*: The dangers of institutionalizing or systematizing a new play development system. The importance of writer driven readings. *Thinking Outside the Box*: Which box? There are oh so many boxes! How theatres must account for change, and remain amoebas rather than becoming dinosaurs. Dramaturgs as real bridges from theatre to audience. *Dramaturgy Facts and FAQs*: Picking your moments, choosing your battles, addressing the given situation.

The important thread in all of these was that we were no longer asking to define what we did or why, but discussed how we did it. We got to share the nuts and bolts, and no longer questioned their purpose. It was reassuring, forward moving, and ultimately enlightening.

The afternoon session on advocacy is being covered elsewhere, but I want to extend my congratulations to Shirley Fishman, Lynn Thomson, Maxine Kern, Laura Castro, for their diligent work over the past two years, and Michele Volansky for adding her experiences and opinions to this caucus group.

We couldn't have ended the conference on a better note: the presentation of the LMDA Prize in Dramaturgy: The Elliott Hayes Award, conceived and implemented by Michael Bigelow Dixon at Actors Theatre of Louisville. The first prize of its kind, the Elliott Hayes Award honors the exemplary achievements in the field of dramaturgy over the past two years. More about this award is covered elsewhere, but here I want to acknowledge the two distinguished winners: Lue Douthit and Michele Volansky. Their projects were outstanding—and it was no easy competition, as judges Harriet Power of Villanova, Amy Wegener of ATL, and Bob White of Alberta Theatre Projects can attest.

And NONE of this could have happened without Geoff Proehl at the helm. I attribute the success of this conference to the participation of all of our members, but first and foremost, a big thanks goes out to our President. And so I end with HAIL TO THE CHIEF!

DAY FOUR OF THE CONFERENCE, SUNDAY, JUNE 20: THE NEXT YEAR'S WORK BEGINS
GEOFF PROEHL

Throughout the morning we said good-byes and caught shuttles to the airport.

At the same time, all those who could gathered after breakfast in the Rotunda of Wheelock Center. Jane Ann Crum, next year's conference chair, introduced Liz Lerman's six step process for post-show discussions:

Step One: Affirmation

Step Two: Artist As Questioner

Step Three: Responses Ask The Questions
Step Four: Opinion Time
Step Five: Subject Matter Discussion
Step Six: Working On The Work

(See Liz Lerman, "Toward a Process for Critical Response" in *High Performance*. Santa Monica. No. 64, Winter 1993 p. 46-49.)

We used these steps first to analyze the performance of *Uncle Vanya* we had seen on Friday night, and then to debrief the conference as a whole. In doing so, we were trying to use one of the ideas George Thorn has suggested in his key note: applying the skills we develop in rehearsal and performance to the work we do together as an organization and community.

The session ended with an extended brainstorming session of ideas for the next annual conference: Washington, DC (June 15 to 18).

**THE ADVOCACY CAUCUS PRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE:
WHAT DO WE WANT, TO COLLECTIVELY BEG OR TO COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN?
SHIRLEY FISHMAN AND LYNN M. THOMSON**

Members of the LMDA Advocacy Caucus: *Shirley Fishman, *Lynn M. Thomson, *Maxine Kern, *Laura Castro, Patricia McLaughlin, Lisa McNulty, Julie Bleha, Lenora Inez Brown. (*At the conference.)

OPENING REMARKS: Shirley Fishman

My opening remarks to the conference centered around an essay entitled "On Advocacy" that Lynn Thomson wrote for the *LMDA Review* in the fall of 1998. One line in that essay particularly stuck with me. "If the organization is to thrive, it must address the quality of the membership's professional life because if we remain isolated from the realities of 'labor' problems facing dramaturgs then we will, as a group, be isolated from due recognition, due compensation and new opportunities."

In listening to the deeply felt values and beliefs expressed by the participants both at the conference and George Thorn's New York sessions about being dramaturgs and literary managers, and the need they expressed for LMDA to explore, advocate and promote the profession both internally and externally, I knew that the work that the Advocacy Caucus had been doing all year long and the needs of LMDA are "well met" and that it is a propitious time to be moving forward to serve our profession.

The afternoon was organized as follows: Survey Distribution (led by Maxine Kern), Oral Histories (led by Lynn Thomson), Organizational Structures (led by Laura Castro) and the presentation of recommendations by the Advocacy Caucus.

SURVEY, led by Maxine Kern

The question addressed was: what does a literary manager's or dramaturg's professional life consist of? The Caucus revised and expanded the LMDA questionnaire/survey that had been circulated in the past to make it more user friendly and to include new issues. Maxine Kern distributed the survey and time was allowed to fill them out. The survey will go out to the entire membership and follow-ups will be conducted by the Caucus and, hopefully, Regional VPs. The results will be used as a baseline to identify trends and patterns in the profession and can also be used for public relations, marketing, fundraising and educational purposes. Surveys will be conducted on a periodic basis thereafter to track the development of the profession. All dramaturgs not at the conference are urged to complete the survey: the goal is 100% participation.

ORAL HISTORY, led by Lynn M. Thomson

In order to further understand the conditions under which we work, and to establish common ground, the membership was urged to present oral histories—their individual experiences in the workplace with regard to production dramaturgy, play development, publication or any other endeavor. We solicited the full range of experience, from the most joyful and meaningful to the most difficult and troubling. We want to put in the room conversations that have been marginalized in order to move to constructive action. Compensation and credit were among areas considered.

Lynn Thomson read the statements of Tom Creamer, Dramaturg at The Goodman who worked on the *Death of a Salesman* production that moved to Broadway: he did not receive title page credit; and Lenora Inez Brown, Literary Manager and Dramaturg at Crossroads Theater, who wrote she did not receive the promised title page credit for her substantial contribution to the restructuring and development of the book for the musical *Ain't Nothin But The Blues*, which transferred to Lincoln Center Theater and then to Broadway. Michele Volansky, Literary Manager and Dramaturg at Steppenwolf Theater described how her extraordinarily heavy and stressful workload in the past season led her to demand, and receive, a month-long sabbatical. Mark Bly, among many others, responded to Michele's moving affirmation with their own stories. This led to a discussion of working conditions, model contracts and job security, as well as other incidents related to credit and compensation.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES, led by Laura Castro

In December 1997, when the Caucus began to discuss issues of credit and compensation, we realized that ultimately LMDA had no power to enforce contracts, arbitrate grievances or collectively bargain. We began to explore organizational structures in 1998 in an effort to find a model that corresponded to ours that has the powers that we currently do not.

Laura Castro reported to the conference her conversations with various unions, i.e., SSD&C, Director's Guild of America, etc. and the ways in which they differed from ours. She reported on our thought-provoking meeting with Leonard Liebowitz, an attorney who represents the American Federation of Musicians and many other theatrical unions, who said that the most important question we have to ask ourselves as an organization is whether we want to collectively beg or to collectively bargain—individually we're begging, collectively we're bargaining. An excerpted transcript of the meeting with Liebowitz was distributed. The very energetic discussion of unionization emerged with pros and cons presented by various participants. Further examination of this issue will be conducted in the upcoming year and will be presented at next year's conference. One concept was clear: unions ARE NOT formed according to a single mold but are tailored to the needs of each group. Unions can accommodate the idiosyncrasies of individual styles and beliefs. An exhilarating mood of solidarity emerged as the dialogue fashioned the common ground that no one dramaturg wants to enforce his/her choices, such as working for free, on others and in the belief that a structure can be found to support and protect all members.

A transcript of the afternoon's events is presently being transcribed and will be made available to the membership.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Caucus offered the following recommendations for the record. During the following business meeting, the first recommendation was offered as a motion by Lynn Thomson. There followed a remarkable, collaborative discussion leading to adjustments (including an especially helpful "friendly amendment" offered by John Lutterbie) The proposition is stated elsewhere in the newsletter (see below) in the official language adopted by the membership present at the Business Meeting. A second motion noted that the first motion was passed UNANIMOUSLY with one abstention. As part of the motion, the Caucus was officially charged with the mission of proposing at next year's conference particular ways in which LMDA can support and advance the professional lives of its members. The proposals will be available for the membership to review approximately one month before the next conference.

THE RECOMMENDATIONS WERE:

1. We recommend that LMDA actively pursue improvement of the working conditions of dramaturgs and literary managers.
2. We recommend that literary managers, dramaturgs and directors of play development be routinely credited on the title page of all programs.
3. We recommend that, if the dramaturg is a true collaborator, s/he deserves to participate in the future life of a project in ways to be negotiated.
4. We believe that there are exceptions to the work for hire rules and we recommend that the Advocacy Caucus develop a contract that defines those exceptions.
5. We recommend that producers be responsible for compensation of dramaturgs.
6. In order to protect its members, we recommend that LMDA needs to change its organizational structure.
7. We propose that LMDA take the first steps toward becoming a union.

In actuality, only the first recommendation (as modified at the Business Meeting) was made into a motion, adjusted by discussion, and ratified.

[**Editor's note:** The motion passed by LMDA members in attendance at the conference as taken from the initial draft of the minutes, is as follows: **LMDA charges the Advocacy Caucus to explore ways to commit to improving the working conditions of dramaturgs and literary managers; the Advocacy Caucus is charged to offer recommendations for accomplishing that goal by March 30, 2000 to be discussed at the 2000 conference.**]

FINAL THOUGHTS

"A NOTE ON 'A NOTE TO OURSELVES':

THINKING ON VALUES, BELIEFS & CONVERSATION: AN INVITATION

GRETCHEN HALEY

What can this organization accomplish together that we would not be able to do as well individually?

Around coffee tables and in conference corners, in small groups and as a whole, over the four days in June in Tacoma, as with all of our correspondence since, we ask ourselves this same fundamental question. George Thorn reminded us Friday morning, at the University of Puget Sound, this is the point of an organization like LMDA, to do together what we would not be able to do, or not do as well, alone. And so, what does LMDA mean and what does it want to do? As Geoff Proehl notes in his Prologue to the conference program, "We want to ask why LMDA exists as an organization and what it must do to make itself useful to theater and its practitioners in the years ahead."

We continually articulate our mission to each other, to ourselves, and to those we affiliate with—the theatres and universities we work in daily, our collaborators, our colleagues, our friends. In fact, the *articulation* of the answer to this question is just as vital as the question itself. The words that we choose to communicate our mission dictate at the least, the tone of our values and beliefs, if not the content itself. The clearer we are in communicating our intent, the more successful we are in our accomplishments. It is a broad, far-reaching question, one that must be approached and re-approached over time.

Friday afternoon at the conference, a few hours after George Thorn has spoken to us, an hour or so after our second "break-out" session of the day, a while after lunch, mid-third round of coffee: we reconvene. Our goal is to "give feedback" on the smaller sessions that occurred earlier in the day, but the implicit mission is to bring our thoughts together, share our small-group conversations with the larger whole, specifically, to share our thoughts on the blue handout entitled "a note to ourselves." (See enclosed.) Within this document, lay the challenges of the past year, the conversations of who are we and the frustration of not quite knowing and not quite knowing how to say this nearly-not-known.

Conversations are much more difficult/meaningful, messier/cleansing when done in person than they are over email or the phone. The benefit and the frustration of meeting with 50 other people in the same room to discuss values, beliefs, goals, dreams, is the working through/around/in the various personalities. No longer are there "simple" words to stare into and dissect, but instead eyes and ears, hair color and eyeglasses, and stories written into these faces, telling age, experience, winnings, losses. The question of *What can this organization accomplish together that we would not be able to do as well individually?*, although simple in impulse, is quite complicated in actual real-time conversation.

A broad and optimistic generalization (a few, actually): Dramaturgs are good at words. Good at conversation. Good at listening. Good at knowing the timing of conversation. The rhythms of necessary and difficult communication. Pouring over a text, carefully, exhaustingly, thinking about its implications, its subtext, the subtext's subtext, thinking about words the way that we think about scenes, their individual meanings, their meanings as they make up a whole. Dramaturgs are also wonderful dreamers. Philosophizing, theorizing, intellectualizing. Foreseeing, foreshadowing, forbearing. These are things that dramaturgs do constantly, naturally, before play reading and subscription counting, before artistic producers or academic deans: consider and reconsider the big sweeping ramifications, the broad ideals, the overall goals of making theatre and making life.

But in this afternoon's "feedback session," as we talk together, learn and laugh together, we also struggle.

The first difficult moment occurs over the word "defend" on the second page of the document. "Defending the function." There is a consensus that we don't like the word "defend." Why assume a defensive position automatically? Suddenly, alternative words fly out from around the room—articulate, examine, educate, reflect, refine, enhance, promulgate, legitimate, assert, sustain, affirm—and then one person says, quite clearly, *let's not get stuck on words*.

While everyone agrees that the idea of "defend" is not a "value" we want to include specifically, what seems to both captivate and alienate is the specific choice(s) of specific word(s). It is a dramaturg's catch-22. We cannot help but laugh at ourselves—we are caught in the limits of the very things which feed us, nourish us. The specific choice of a single word means something. The small choices define the ongoing larger conversation. The scene work that will bring the piece together as a whole. We all know this. But,

as the voice from the crowd reminds us, they do not mean everything, words are not finally the intention behind them. It is a careful balance. We struggle not because we lack the desire to articulate, but because our desire is so great, precision so important.

After this, we continue to work through the document, digging in, here and there—one point of interest occurs over the possible inclusion of theatre's role as entertainment. In the original document, this idea is not included. Many people believe that this is an oversight: *theatre entertains*. From there we ask, *Where does audience fit into this document?*

Who we are and what can we do? We discover as we write, as we talk, we uncover: What are the things we can do, as an organization, what are the thing we can do together that we cannot do as well on our own? These are the things we think on—to, as one participant put it, "assuage loneliness," (appreciative laughter) or to "create contexts where conversation can take place about individual action." What are the things we can do externally, internally, what are the things we *want* to do? We talk about our advocacy for the arts as a whole, for dramaturgy as an artform, a craft; we discuss our commitment to playwrights, to directors, to theatre-makers in general. We list our specific explorations of the practice of dramaturgy: publications, conferences, online services, regional meetings, script exchanges. We note our ongoing promotion of the profession: our early-career program, mentorships, internships, dramaturgy training programs, acknowledgements and awards. We brainstorm around future projects, asking what existing programs or projects to we want to deepen and what new ones do we want to develop?

This review of this conference moment, as with the document itself is an attempt at continuing the always-continuing process of self-articulation. In addition, it is perpetuating the call for conversation. We invite your letters, your emails, your phone calls and your personal visits—between now and the next conference we hope to bring this document, "a note to ourselves" to a state that we can all agree feels an accurate description of our values and beliefs, where we want to go, and what we want to do.

[Editors Note: Send your feedback on this working document to Gretchen Haley or any member of the Executive Committee; contact info at the back of the Review.]

CONFERENCE, 1999: MANY THANKS

- ◆ Thanks to our keynoters: **Morgan Jenness**, Creative Director at Helen Merrill Ltd., and **George Thorn**, Arts Action Resources.
- ◆ Thanks to the conference chairs: **Jane Ann Crum**, The Drama League; **Lee Devin**, Swarthmore College and The People's Light and Theater Co.; **Liz Engelman**, A Contemporary Theater; **DD Kugler**, School for Contemporary Arts, Simon Fraser University.
- ◆ Thanks to **Louise Lytle**, Univ. of Puget Sound, conference coordinator.
- ◆ Thanks to the conference committee: **Lenora Inez Brown**, Crossroads Theater; **Celise Kalke**, LMDA Administrator (now at the Court Theatre); **Tony Kelly**, Thick Description; **Allen Kennedy**, The Dalton School; **Maxine Kern**, George Street Playhouse; **Brian Quirt**, Director, Nightswimming; Dramaturg, Factory Theater, Toronto; **Tricia Roche**, Associate Producer, The People's Court, **Lynn Thomson**, Brooklyn College; **Paul Walsh**, American Conservatory Theater.
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- ◆ Thanks to the **New York State Council of the Arts** for its ongoing support of the organization.
- ◆ **Thanks to everyone who did so much to make this conference a success!**

SECTION II: ESSAYS AND ARTICLES

**PROFILES IN AMERICAN DRAMATURGY:
ARTHUR BALLETT AND THE OFFICE FOR ADVANCED DRAMA RESEARCH
TERRY STOLLER**

[Editor's note: This is the first in what we hope will become a series of pieces on individuals who have helped shaped the fields of dramaturgy and literary management.]

In the early 1960s, when the Guthrie Theater was being launched, the Rockefeller Foundation expressed interest in contributing to its development. Tyrone Guthrie, focused on doing the classics in repertory, suggested to Arthur Ballet that he use the funds to help foster new playwrights. Ballet, then a full-time professor at the University of Minnesota, accepted the challenge and created the Office for Advanced Drama Research. OADR was in existence for close to 15 years (1963-1977), during which time Ballet single-handedly ran the organization. To launch the program, Ballet contacted established theater people like Alan Schneider, telling them that he was interested in submissions from promising young playwrights. Very soon scripts poured in, and the deluge never let up. By the time he closed up shop, Ballet had read 12,000 scripts and seen about 125 of them produced.

At first OADR's mandate was to promote relationships between the new playwrights and theaters in the Twin Cities area. Such plays as Terrence McNally's *And Things That Go Bump in the Night* and Megan Terry's *Ex-Miss Copper Queen on a Set of Pills* were debuted at the Guthrie Theater. In time, theaters outside Minnesota became interested in the program as well. Ballet traveled around the U.S. visiting theaters that might participate in the OADR project. Playwrights like Richard Nelson and Mark Medoff were produced at such places as the Mark Taper Forum and the American Conservatory Theatre. OADR paid for the playwright's transportation, along with a per diem and an honorarium; it gave the theatre a modest sum toward production costs. As the program expanded, additional funding was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Andrew Mellon Foundation. To disseminate the works even further, many of the produced plays were published in a thirteen-volume series called *Playwrights for Tomorrow*. In 1966 Ballet and his OADR won a Margo Jones University Award.

Ballet made an effort to give each writer a prompt and fair evaluation. He says he is a slow reader, but, mindful of the hours, days and months the writer spent on his work, Ballet read each play from beginning to end. He eschews the practice of judging a piece's merit within the first ten pages. There is something in every play, he says: even the awful ones hold a certain fascination. "Everyone was writing Beckett at that time," says Ballet. But he was in search of fresh material—a character, a moment that stuck in the memory, a voice that seemed unique. The works that haunted him were those that got a second reading. Each year he circulated 40 to 50 plays. Unfortunately, however, not all the ones Ballet recommended were produced.

With the growing regional-theater movement (at the outset of the OADR, the Theatre Communications Group consisted of about sixteen theaters), in-house programs to read new plays were instituted. But such a program would necessarily focus on its theater—its space, its company. What was singular about Ballet and the OADR is that the playwright was foregrounded; the theater company was chosen to suit the writer and his work.

Finally exhausted by his one-man operation, Ballet needed to dissolve the OADR. Besides acting as a dramaturg at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, he has also served as program director for the National Endowment for the Arts and, among other activities, continues to be an advisory editor of *New Theatre Quarterly*. When Ballet first joined up with Tyrone Guthrie, Guthrie turned to him and said, "You're a dramaturg." Ballet claims he didn't know what the word meant and had to look it up in a dictionary. But he is very clear about how he thinks a dramaturg should approach his job. In his keynote address at the LMDA conference in 1992 in Seattle, he urged dramaturgs to preserve the joy and excitement of theater. For Ballet says that above all he loves the theater and wants to make it accessible to the audience.

SPOTLIGHT ON: EARLY-CAREER DRAMATURGE VANESSA PORTEOUS

Vanessa is going into her second season as Assistant Dramaturge at Alberta Theatre Projects, a mid-sized regional theatre company in Calgary Alberta. Although she runs the script reading service and performs sundry tasks as assistant to Artistic Associate Bob White, Vanessa's responsibilities are primarily to new play development. She is production dramaturge of at least two new plays in PanCanadian *playRites*, ATP's Annual Festival of New Canadian Drama, and curates and co-ordinates several of the ancillary events. She is also assistant dramaturge at the Banff *playRites* Colony, a three week long writer's retreat in the Rockies.

Over the last year she was a guest director at the Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre's Spring Festival of New Plays, and a Tutor Delegate at Interplay International Young Playwrights' Festival in Townsville Australia, where among other things she led a workshop on punctuation for performance. Last summer she was assistant director of the world premiere of Andrew Toovey's opera, *Spurt of Blood* at the Banff Summer Festival of the Arts.

Before ATP no one would have called Vanessa a dramaturge. She worked as an actor, director, dramaturge, team-dramaturge, box office manager, archivist, drama teacher, assistant director, co-curator, producer, and schlepper of heavy objects for various Fringe shows. She has also gigged as a coffee jerk, tour guide, hostess, buser, phone-surveyor, and has even sold *Phantom of the Opera* souvenirs.

Vanessa is a graduate of the University of Alberta's BFA in Acting program and has an English degree from the University of Toronto.

A WORKING HISTORY OF LMDA: THE EARLY YEARS
PANNILL CAMP-LMDA INTERN

[Editor's note: as Pannill writes, this is a work in progress, a first, rough draft. We welcome corrections/additions.]

I call this document a "working history" and halt the account at 1992 because the final word on LMDA is still years down the line. This is not a story about LMDA so much as it is a story for the benefit of LMDA, and so member input is still called for. Some accounts are in conflict and some lists are incomplete, so if anyone notices omissions or errors, let me welcome you to this process by inviting you to contact me personally. Send your suggestions to Pannill_Camp@yahoo.com. Big thanks to Vicky Abrash, Anne Cattaneo, David Copelin, and Alexis Greene for giving their time to this project.

In the late seventies the first rumblings of the modern American dramaturgical movement began to be felt in New York City. Theatre makers from various projects began to network in order to share scripts, leads and narratives that were springing up around a new approach to play development. This movement was spurred in part by a fresh desire to develop new plays at spaces like the Manhattan Theatre Club and the Circle Repertory Theatre. The early dramaturg meetings were ad-hoc affairs: small groups met at restaurants like Phebe's on East 4th Street and La Rousse on 42nd Street, or brown-bagged at New Dramatists' offices in Manhattan. Among the pioneering dramaturgs involved in these informal happenings were Anne Cattaneo of the Phoenix Theater, Steve Carter of the Negro Ensemble Company, Andre Bishop of Playwrights Horizons, Jonathan Alper of the Manhattan Theatre Club, David Copelin, Morgan Jenness, Alexis Greene, Cynthia Lee Jenner and Rod Marriott.

The movement gathered steam and began to diffuse through the continent, making the job title of "dramaturg" an increasingly visible marker in American and Canadian theatre. Universities soon began to train dramaturgs, and Theatre Communications Group held dramaturgy conferences in 1979 and 1981 to answer the burgeoning interest in the field. The informal gatherings continued, but the growing traffic of correspondence and the geographical spread of interested dramaturgs demanded a more formal context for the exchange of information. The urge to organize was perhaps dampened by dramaturgy's marginalized place within professional theatre. David Copelin recalls mentioning the notion of a literary manager's union to a manager at the Mark Taper Forum in the late seventies. The manager responded, "You'll all get fired."

Nonetheless, in early 1984 Alexis Greene and C. Lee Jenner, both dramaturgs, critics, and scholars, conceived of a service organization that could meet the burden of keeping dramaturgs in frequent and fruitful communication. Over dinner one night the pair decided to try to form this organization themselves. Greene and Jenner, in conversation with interested colleagues like Alisa Solomon, a free-lance journalist, Elizabeth Solomon of TCG, Susan Gregg of New Dramatists and Rod Marriott of the Circle Rep. began to form an image of how the organization would work, and soon generated the initial bylaws for what would soon be called Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of America.

It seemed appropriate for LMDA to exist as a non-profit organization, so Greene and Jenner began to work with Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts toward incorporation. After some delays they were fortunate enough to gain the services of pro-bono lawyer Theodore Striggles, who guided them through the steps toward attaining 501c3 not-for-profit corporation status.

During a large gathering at Jenner's 9th street apartment, Striggles gave a candid warning to the dramaturgs. "He told us that non-profits were formed every day," recalls Alexis Greene, "but that the test would be whether we could last for five years without dissolving." The challenge was taken head on.

On the 26th of March, 1985 LMDA's incorporation papers were filed, and its 501c3 status was approved by the federal government on July 19th. Thomas Dunn, Susan Gregg and Bonnie Marranta served as the initial board of directors and Alexis Greene was elected the first president of the new corporation. The legitimacy on paper was encouraging, but much remained to be done toward forming

LMDA into a material resource for dramaturgs and literary managers. The first priority was office space, a need generously met by Dunn, who as Executive Director of New Dramatists was able to secure a free room in the building with a desk and a telephone. The next logical pursuit was in generating publicity: promoting membership, keeping members informed about the profession, and gathering ideas for ways LMDA could help. Most of the early publicity work was done at the New Dramatists office and at Greene's home. She enlisted Larry Maslon to help lug bulk newsletter mailings to the main branch of the New York City Post office. LMDA was in business.

There was also a gathering to plan. Dramaturgs liked meeting face to face, and the days when informal lunches could accommodate everyone who wanted to join in were long past—a national convention was the best solution. The first conference was held, quite appropriately, at New Dramatists. The two conference topics reflect the state of the profession and its interests at the time: The organization mulled over "What is a Dramaturg?" and "Ways of Working with Playwrights." Susan Gregg was instrumental to the conference's success, and the yearly tradition of nationwide LMDA gatherings was precociously begun.

After a year of effort getting LMDA off the ground, C. Lee Jenner was elected to take over Greene's position as president. The need for increased membership and visibility was addressed with more mailings, announcements, newsletters and pluck. In order to reach out to members outside Manhattan, Jenner organized the second LMDA conference at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. In the Spring of 1987 Alexis Greene was elected to a second term as president. It was during the following year that LMDA made its move to the Center for Advanced Study in Theatre Arts at the City University of New York. Greene convinced Dan Gerould at CUNY and Ed Wilson at CASTA to provide more office space for the now very active non-profit.

David Copelin was elected to serve as LMDA's president between the summers of 1988 and 1989, and made a task of broadening LMDA's horizons. The push for membership continued, and the 1989 conference was planned for San Francisco, where dramaturgs who worked in television and film lent their insights on the shape of the profession. Discussions of professional ethics and the boundaries of dramaturgy sprang up at the first of LMDA's West Coast ventures.

During her three years as LMDA president (beginning in July of 1989) Anne Cattaneo guided LMDA through one of its most dynamic periods. Perhaps the most important innovation Cattaneo brought was the advent of regional vice-presidents. The regional VP's were intended to make LMDA more responsive to the field by bringing a cross-section of dramaturgs from various regional theatres into direct contact with the president. Many of LMDA's most valuable service programs and publications were born out of these conversations because, as Cattaneo's vice-president Vicky Abrash puts it, LMDA was now better able to cultivate the ideas and energy of its membership. As LMDA trucked past the critical five-year mark outlayed by Ted Striggles, it was becoming more diverse and productive. The LMDA Job Phone, a hotline which tracks dramaturgy job openings, sprung from brainstorming at a New Dramatists meeting in 1990. Soon after, Lynn Thompson created the LMDA *Script Exchange* and operated it voluntarily until organizational funds could be channeled for its support. Similarly Mark Bly's *Production Notebooks Project* sprang from personal initiative and organizational support. Other important developments followed. LMDA received its first grants from the NEA and the New York State Council on the Arts for the 1991-92 year. LMDA's membership elected at the 1990 Chicago conference to change LMDA's name officially to Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas. As explained in the following *LMDA Review*, the change was intended to reflect the growing number of Canadian dramaturgs in LMDA's ranks and to open the organization up to the rest of the hemisphere as well. The change also cleverly allowed all the old stationary to be kept and used. As if to reinforce LMDA's new identity, designers Shelley Rena and Patrick O'Neill donated the familiar thumbprint logo to the organization in the same year.

Anne Cattaneo left the office of president in the summer of 1992, handing the reins to Vicky Abrash, who continued to support and build the numerous programs that had arisen in the past few years, and actively pursued pushing LMDA's borders well into Canada and other parts of the continent. Future international conferences would be held in Seattle, Montreal, Atlanta, and Los Angeles to meet this end. Though Cattaneo's term was over, her influence on LMDA's leadership remains obvious. Various member-spurred programs continued to flourish, and the presidential term was immediately expanded to two years in order to give each leader enough time to learn the ropes and follow through on new initiatives. Cattaneo's term brought LMDA to maturity, and determined the organization's course for years to come.

FROM ACADEMIA TO ARENA, A DRAMATURG'S EDUCATION IN THE REAL WORLD

MARY RESING, WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY

(Paper presented at the 1999 ATHE Convention in Toronto, ON)

In 1998, I served as dramaturg on the world premiere production of *Lovers and Executioners* at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. *Lovers and Executioners* is a loose adaptation of *La Femme juge et partie* by the French playwright Montfleury. Kyle Donnelly, Associate Artistic Director of Arena Stage, and playwright John Strand decided to adapt it following their successful collaboration the year before on John's translation of *The Miser*.

On the face of it, *Lovers and Executioners* seems like the ideal dramaturgical experience. It was a high-profile project at a large and well-respected theatre and the development process was both sustained and intensive. It was also, however, a pivotal experience in my education as a dramaturg. The year before I had begun teaching dramaturgy with a largely academic understanding of the function of the production dramaturg. The paradigm I taught had not been tested by me in the professional theatre. Thus, the title of this talk, "From Academia to Arena: A Dramaturg's Education in the Real World," is all too appropriate. With it I will give a brief chronological accounting of two years of dramaturgical life lessons.

July, 1996. Gary Williams and Gitta Honegger of The Catholic University of America call me in for a job interview. They are, they say, looking for someone to teach theatre history and serve as resident dramaturg at C.U. They say my C.V. indicates that I am an experienced dramaturg and an unusual scholar. Am I interested in the job? At this point, I am A.B.D. and desperate for a job so I reply, "Sure" and rush home to look up the meaning of the word dramaturg. I then look at my resume to try to figure out why they think I am one.

January, 1997. I begin teaching my first course in dramaturgy. In the intervening months since July, I have realized that my somewhat sporadic history of directing readings of new plays and developmental workshops, my twelve years of experience as a script reader and literary consultant, and my graduate course work with two well-known dramaturgs, Carl Muller and John Russell Brown, probably more than qualifies me as an "American" dramaturg. Further, having read every article and book I could find on contemporary American dramaturgy, particularly the excellent compilations, *What is Dramaturgy* edited by Bert Cardullo, and *Dramaturgy in American Theater: a Source Book* edited by Susan Jonas and Geoff Proehl, I now feel reasonably confident that I know what the word dramaturg means. As I tell my class on the first day, a dramaturg is someone who selects and prepares playtexts for performance, advises directors and actors, and educates the audience. Although I project authority to my class, I am still a little shaky on the details of how dramaturgy works in production. I am sufficiently insecure to want backup in the classroom. As a result, I schedule three guest speakers, Keith Parker, Literary Manager of Source Theatre company; Lloyd Rose, playwright, head critic for *The Washington Post*, and former literary manager of Arena Stage; and Cathy Madison, current literary manager/dramaturg at Arena Stage.

Early May, 1997 After speaking to my class, Cathy Madison calls me to see if any of my dramaturgy students are interested in a year-long paid internship in literary management and dramaturgy at Arena Stage. Eventually she hires one of my graduate students, Ken Cerniglia. She also asks me if I am interested in working as a freelance dramaturg at Arena Stage. I tell her I will get back to her with an answer. Meanwhile, I ask everyone I know, including my boss Gitta Honegger, what the going rate for freelance dramaturgy is. No one has the foggiest idea. I decide to accept the job anyway.

Late May, 1997. When I tell Cathy that I will dramaturg at Arena, I think she is going to assign me to Arena's upcoming production of *Uncle Vanya*. After all, I am a Chekhov scholar who reads Russian. In an academic setting, dramaturgs are frequently matched with their area of scholarship. For example, a scholar from the Irish Studies Department might be brought in to dramaturg *Juno and the Paycock*. Instead, Cathy asks me to dramaturg a new adaptation of a French neoclassical play. I am appalled. I do not speak or read French and have never done any in-depth research into the French neoclassical period. When I mention this to Cathy, she laughs and says something like this: "Oh, you academics are all the same. You always want to work in your very narrow area of expertise. Professional dramaturgs can't be that picky or they would never work. I have to dramaturg a wide range of productions every year, and I can't afford to limit the subjects or type of plays." "But I don't speak French!" I say. She assures me that the playwright, John Strand, is fluent in French and will be happy to translate anything I need. In addition, she is confident that I know more about French neoclassicism than anyone else at Arena and probably 99% of the audience.

Before I leave, she gives me a copy of the script such as it is at that point. It consists of a treatment of the play and the first couple of scenes. The plot of the play is as follows: The lady Julie, wife of a merchant named Bernard, is abandoned to die on a desert island by her husband who believes her guilty of adultery. Julie, who is innocent of any crime and ignorant of her husband's suspicions, is rescued by pirates, befriended by a powerful duke, and makes her way back home disguised as a man. She then becomes a judge and, still in disguise, tries her husband for the murder of his wife. There are various subplots involving lovers and servants. Although playwright John Strand claims he is writing a comedy, the plot does not seem very comic to me.

June 9th, 1997. I ride my bike down to Arena for a read-through of the first draft of the script. I still have not met the director or playwright. When I arrive at the rehearsal room, it is obvious that neither of them knows that I am the dramaturg. It's all very awkward.

I am a little apprehensive anyway because the play is being written in an end-rhymed, loosely Alexandrine verse and, to me, on the page it reads like a cross between *Madeline* and *The Cat in the Hat*. However, I am no expert in the Alexandrine. The verse plays that I am most familiar with are those by Shakespeare and this is definitely not Shakespeare. Thus, I am pleasantly surprised by the reading. The verse with its heavy reliance on masculine and end-stopped rhyme apparently requires that the dialogue be spoken at a very quick pace. This is good. Furthermore, in the comic scenes, particularly the wooing scenes between the Spanish soldier, Don Lope, and the French woman of the world, Constance, the versification is frankly hysterical.

At this point the play is sketchy in parts and has no ending but even in its rough state, it is very funny. Given the plot, the laughs surprise everyone. The reading ends with a collective sigh of relief.

June 17th, 1999. I meet for the first time with director Kyle Donnelly. It turns out that the meeting is a sort of dramaturgical audition. We discuss our reactions to the reading and I am relieved to discover we took many of the same notes. She puts me on the hot seat and asks me for my opinion of the play. I have come to the meeting deliberately unprepared. I don't want to pontificate. Following the rules I set up for my student dramaturgs, whereby the first meeting with a director should be about her ideas about the play and not the dramaturg's, I say that before I give my comments, I want to hear about her vision for the play: what attracted her to it, and what she sees as its tone. She replies in helpful detail. She mentions that she was attracted to the project because of the strong and unusual female protagonist and because it is an unknown play from a well-known period. Clearly, she also wants to work again with playwright John Strand. Her primary concern seems to be the characters. The original play by Montfleury borrowed heavily from the commedia dell arte with its stock characters and Kyle is interested in finding ways of making the stock commedia characters more complex and believable for a late 20th century audience.

I guess I have passed the audition because we move on to procedural matters. We decide that because Kyle and John have worked together twice before and because they have already been working on this project for six months, Kyle will be John's primary contact. I will give my notes to Kyle who will review them and pass them on to John if she feels they are helpful. The exception will be my notes on the verse. Kyle feels I should convey them directly to John.

Although I instruct my dramaturgy students that they and not the director should be the primary contact for the playwright, I am happy to let Kyle be John's primary contact. I am well aware that she is a much more experienced and skilled director than I am a dramaturg. I am hiding the fact that I am seriously out of my league.

After the meeting, literary manager Cathy Madison and I sit down to finalize my contract. For a set amount, I am to do preproduction research for the director, put together an actors' packet, prepare a study guide, and consult on the script with both the director and the playwright. Whether or not I will participate in rehearsals is still to be negotiated.

July 1997. Kyle gives me an extensive list of research topics she wants me to investigate. Over the next few weeks I make multiple trips to the library and spend an additional 30 hours analyzing the text. In my analysis, I focus on action and character development as well as propose several endings to the play. I do some research on the Alexandrine and then parse the verse according to the methods taught me by John Russell Brown. I call John Strand to pass on my observations about meter and rhyme. John then explains to me his ideas about the verse. He feels that its poetic aspect is the least important. The most important thing is that it must work on stage. Thought should lead rhyme and not vice versa. He informs me that Moliere himself was a mediocre poet as was Montfleury. Since I don't read French, I take his word for it.

I prepare a written analysis of the script for Kyle and bring it down to Arena. I also give her a packet of articles and pictures put together from my research. We talk about my observations. She is pretty impressed by the thoroughness of the analysis which she says she has never gotten from any other dramaturg. She suggests a half-dozen more topics for research.

Mid-October, 1997. There is a reading at Arena of John's third draft. Following the reading, I analyze the draft and give my notes along with another packet of research materials to Kyle and John. After receiving the material, Kyle suggests further topics for research. I return to the library.

November, 1997. I have prepared an actors' packet very similar to the one I assign my own dramaturgy students. It consists of short essays which provide background material on the play and its author, notes on the style of the play, historical information on the people and social customs of the time, and a short essay on French theatre of the 17th century. As I recommend to my students, I give it to the director to review, to make sure it covers all the areas she wants it to and leaves out anything that she feels is distracting. Kyle has a few suggestions but is basically happy with the packet. She does, however, have a few more areas she would like me to research.

December, 1997. I find out that the study guide has exploded and become a major project. Historically, it has consisted of Xeroxed and bound copies of a slightly altered actors' packet. Instead, it will be a splashy souvenir playbill of seventy pages to be sold in the lobby of the theatre. I am to write all of the articles except two. In addition, John has completed another draft of the play. I need to log in the changes and theorize about how they effect the script as a whole. Yikes! All this and Christmas too. Luckily, John is writing the program notes for the show so that is one thing I don't have to do.

I sit down and do my calculations and learn that I have already spent 167 hours or four full-time weeks on dramaturgical work for *Lovers and Executioners*. Rehearsals are still two months away and I have not yet begun to write the study guide. At this rate, I will not even make minimum wage on this project. In desperation, I reveal my predicament to Cathy Madison. Arena rarely hires freelance dramaturgs, and never before for a project of this scope, so she is not sure what she can do. No one seems to agree whose budget is paying me. Am I a production expense, a literary management expense, an education and outreach expense? A combination of all three?

I realize that as a teacher of dramaturgy I have been a dreadful failure. I never taught my students the importance of contract negotiations. In an academic setting, it is generally accepted that a dramaturgs' work will be done within the confines of a semester and will involve no more work than can reasonably be expected of a student in course work or a working scholar. Overworked student dramaturgs complain to their professors and generally their workload is adjusted. Many faculty dramaturgs are volunteers from other departments such as French literature or Polish history, and their work load is dependent on the extent of their interest in the project. But finances are important, for the amount a dramaturg is paid reveals the respect she is accorded and her relative worth within the production as a whole.

Apparently I am worth a little more than Arena first thought. Cathy comes back to me with an amended contract, promising me at least double what was in the first but adding rehearsal and production dramaturgy to the mix. The money is to come from the production budget.

January, 1998. Finally, I have the actors' packets finished and the study guides written. Kyle, of course, has a few last-minute research questions but by the time the first rehearsal begins, I am relaxed and newly confident. The actors seem to love the packets and come to me with truly interesting and provocative questions. I take this as a good sign.

February, 1998. Rehearsals continue and I thoroughly enjoy them. Kyle's direction is a revelation to me. She is a skilled, subtle and catalytic director. I sit in on the first week, taking notes for Kyle and John and fielding research questions. John also sits in, taking notes and making on-the-spot changes to the script. To my surprise, both Kyle and John seem happy to have me in rehearsal and repeatedly turn to me as an expert on the script and the period. Finally, something is happening the way I taught it in my dramaturgy class.

After the first week, I stop attending every rehearsal. Instead, I come to act-throughs and run-throughs and continue to research questions such as "Were cigars smoked during the period?" and "How would an Arabian potentate bow?"

March, 1998. Preview week arrives. After all this time we are still fiddling with the beginning and end of the play. The first laugh is not coming until the middle of the second scene and the end seems to confuse the audience. John, Kyle and I consult and worry. Both scenes are eventually almost completely reworked. In addition, John cuts lines from the script after every performance. I scramble to figure out what the cuts mean to the play as a whole and sometimes argue that they need to be put back in. Sometimes I even argue successfully. During the intermission of the second preview, a tense Kyle and an equally tense I exchange words. She says some of my notes have nothing to do with the text of the play. I say, at this point, everything has to do with the text of the play. By the third day of previews, the audience is laughing everywhere we want it to and actually clapping at the end of the play. This is a good sign. Kyle and I make up.

Eventually, press night arrives and seems to go well. I am still afraid that the verse is not good enough and that I, as the dramaturg, am going to be blamed. Perhaps this will be my dramaturgical swan song, I think. But although all my friends on the Arena staff pick the play to shreds, audiences love it. The reviews come out and many are unqualified raves. *The Washington Post* review, which is the make or break review in D.C., is titled "A Stormy Delight" and begins "Funny, grim and pretty much superb, *Lovers and Executioners*, which opened last night at Arena Stage is another triumph for the director/adaptor team of Kyle Donnelly and John Strand." Later in the review, the critic, Lloyd Rose, states that Strand has "dared to translate Montfleury's 17th century poetry into 20th century verse and the language rollicks along." So much for my fears of *Madeline* and *The Cat in the Hat*.

In Conclusion: My work on *Lovers and Executioners* relied heavily on an untested academic paradigm for production dramaturgy. Although I had worked for many years in the professional theatre, I had never worked in a dramaturgical capacity for a theatre of Arena's caliber on a project of this scope. My inexperience made the whole thing take on a surreal paint-by-numbers quality where I could never quite see the edges of the canvas. The surprise and the miracle was that for some reason, the academic paradigm worked. This success, I think, had to do with the intensity, single-mindedness and analytic skills, combined with a healthy dose of fear, that theatre historians and theorists bring to all scholarly projects. Painstakingly, I discovered that the skills, talents, and training which serve a scholar and teacher well, can work equally well in a professional theatre context.

TOM CREAMER AND *DEATH OF A SALESMAN*

This is a short account of my involvement with the Goodman Theater's production of *Death of a Salesman* and its transfer to Broadway.

Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* began rehearsing at the Goodman the third week of August last year. My preparation for rehearsals included gathering reviews of past productions, researching the economics of the periods the play covers, figuring out a timeline of events in the Loman family, finding pictures of the kind of 1928 Chevrolet Willy Loman might have owned, gathering as much as I could of what Miller has written and said about the play and its creation, gathering other critical material on the play, comparing the various published scripts for textual differences, preparing the script for rehearsal, and learning to play casino. My interns Ken Kaissar and Maya DiMova helped me in these preparations.

When rehearsals began several cast members had copies of the Samuel French edition of the play, which I had not thought to compare with the standard published versions. After another Goodman intern, Jennifer Shook, did a line-by-line comparison with the French edition, we reported a number of substantial text differences to director Bob Falls. Several lines in our text were changed as a result.

During rehearsal I got additional research questions from the cast. The most involved came from Brian Dennehy, who asked that I find out how Willy Loman's mental condition would be diagnosed today and what behaviors would be associated with his state. I contacted a psychotherapist and interviewed him about Willy. Using the standard diagnostic manual, he suggested a couple of alternative diagnoses, which I relayed to Brian along with a number of pages out of the diagnostic manual containing details of the kinds of behavior people with these psychic disorders display.

The remainder of my work on the production consisted of watching run-throughs of acts or the whole play and giving Bob Falls notes on what I saw.

The play opened at the end of September and won mostly excellent reviews. After Arthur Miller came to Chicago to see it, rumors began to float that he would approve a move of the show to Broadway. Commercial producers began arriving in Chicago. By the time the show closed on November 7 it looked like there would be a New York production. The next week it occurred to me to wonder what my part in the transferred production would be. My thought was that my work for Bob was done, so that there was virtually no chance that I'd be heading to New York for more rehearsals. Since my salary had paid me for the work I had done on the show, I wasn't expecting any more financial remuneration. But I did want to be recognized for my work. At the Goodman, dramaturgs are listed on the title page along with the designers and other artistic staff. I wanted the same credit in New York—my name listed as dramaturg on the title page of the Broadway *Playbill*.

I talked to the Goodman's executive director, Roche Schulfer. He said he didn't know what the status of my credit would be, but that he would look into it. Two weeks later he told me that he had spoken to the producers and that it looked bad for my getting the credit I wanted. The producers were apparently uncomfortable about listing a dramaturg on the title page because it might offend Arthur

Miller through suggesting that Arthur Miller needed help with his play, with this great classic. They didn't want to do anything to upset Miller. It was suggested that the *Rent* case had caused alarms to go off in the producers' brains when they encountered the word "dramaturg." I was taken aback at this news. Roche said he would continue to pursue it but that he couldn't promise much.

Two days later I talked to Bob about the situation. He was very supportive and praised my work on the show and said he felt my name deserved to be on the title page. He promised he would talk to the producers. When he got back to me some time later, the news was not what I wanted. I would be listed as dramaturg in the back of the Playbill, but not on the title page. The producers had told Bob the same thing they had told Roche. One story had it that when Miller came to Chicago to see the show, the agent sitting next to him saw my name on the title page and said to Miller something to the effect of "Since when does Arthur Miller need a dramaturg?" Bob said that he felt he couldn't push the matter further. He was just getting to know Miller and to establish a working relationship with him, and he needed to step lightly, and not spend his ammunition on this particular fight. I understood and accepted what Bob was saying; at least I did in my head, if not in my heart.

The Goodman flew me to New York for the opening and I was able to bring my wife, my brother, and my father to the big occasion. It was an extraordinary evening, made more so by having my dad and brother there with me to watch Willy Loman and his boys. I was immensely proud of the show and the cast and everybody who worked on it, and I was proud of the contributions I had made, and proud that I had been part of it. But the issue of my credit hurt deeply. I knew this was one of the peaks of my career as a dramaturg, but I was not getting the credit I felt I deserved.

Since the opening of *Death of a Salesman* I have thought about how I may protect my credit as a dramaturg when similar situations come up down the road. I am presently at a loss. What I want ideally is to have a clause in my contract saying that when a Goodman production for which I have received title page credit as dramaturg moves to another venue, I will be given similar credit in the new venue's program. But the Goodman's producer, Roche Schulfer, says that he couldn't guarantee that—he could press for the credit I want, but if the playwright doesn't want such a credit included in the program, there's nothing anyone can do, because the play belongs, finally, to the playwright. To fight the playwright for the credit would essentially become a fight over authorship of the play. Playwrights are already under enormous pressure to cede bits of their authorship rights to producers and others in return for the promise of a production. Recently I heard that the SSD&C is considering a clause for their next contract that would allot directors a 10 to 20% share of a new play author's royalties. Fighting playwrights is not something I want to do.

Part of the problem is the paradox of our job: we take part in the creation of a production, yet to be at our best we must remain outside it.

Perhaps one long-term solution is to keep fighting to make dramaturgs part of the atmosphere, to better educate the powers-that-be in the commercial theater world about what dramaturgs do. Our contributions are fairly well understood in the regional theaters, but in New York commercial theaters the name of dramaturg is mud. One playwright friend suggests that we forget about the title dramaturg on Broadway and ask to be credited as "Artistic Consultant" or "Production Advisor." Can we make clear to producers (and certain playwrights) what it is we do? That we too work for the success of the production? Our contributions are not similar to that of designers who create objects and light and sound, they are not as tangible, but our degree of influence on a production is on a par with designers'. It may be hard to convince commercial producers of that.

In further discussions with Roche Schulfer, he has made the argument that essentially I was asking for credit for part of the authorship of the play, and/or credit for part of the direction of the production. Therefore, I needed to come to my own arrangements with the playwright and/or director to get them to bargain with the new producers of the show to include a clause in their own contracts guaranteeing my dramaturgy credit. My point is that a dramaturg works for the entire production, and in my case, as a resident dramaturg, is given credit and paid by the institution producing the play. Why can't the institution, when it "sells" the production to a new producer, include a clause guaranteeing my credit?

The argument against that is that the institution only sells tangible things to the new producer: sets, props, costumes. The new producer must re-hire the director, designers, and actors to recreate the production—and often in this process there are replacements on the artistic team.

Since the dramaturg's contributions to the production—the research and criticism that informs the direction, design, and acting—are the least tangible of all the artistic team members, why would a producer pay for something he or she will possess anyway once they sign up the other members of the original artistic team?

That's as far as I have gotten in this debate. Are there other advocates willing to argue the case further?

TWO MOMENTS
GEOFF PROEHL

#1

It's the third day of the annual conference, late in the afternoon. We are in the second of two business meetings, about sixty of us sit in a tight semi-circle on the stage at the University of Puget Sound.

A motion is on the floor. There's confusion about just what the motion is, about how to proceed, about wording, about what it means if passed. Our collective sense of Robert's Rules of Order is not too strong. We know that any official action will come from a polling of the entire membership, but still this moment is important as we try to think carefully about where we are and where we need to go in the months ahead. The discussion centers around recommendations from the Advocacy Caucus. (See related story above.) Members express a variety of views. We are doing some collective editing, some collective dramaturgy. We are having a conversation and it feels like an important one.

In the middle of all this, Mark [Bly] stands to speak. During the break before this session I had just mentioned to him how happy I was that he was here, that he continued to actively support LMDA and mentor emerging dramaturgs. He mentions my comment when he speaks to the group to make a point about who is *not* here today, about members of the profession he's worked with in years past who are no longer working as dramaturgs or literary managers. He speaks with passion about these absences, these losses. In particular, I'm struck by the connection between our desire to support, defend, promote, assert, advocate for (we're always trying to find the right word) the role and function of the dramaturg/dramaturgy (on the one hand) and our desire to explore the practice of dramaturgy (on the other). When job conditions will not allow individuals to remain in the *profession*, we lose experience vital to the growth of the *practice*.

Dramaturgy is not alone in this. The theater loses actors and designers and writers, has lost them for years, because they have not been able to make a life in the theater. But the shared-ness of this loss does not make it any less significant nor should it make us accept it as inevitable.

LMDA, just by existing now for almost a decade and a half, speaks to these issues. In "a note to ourselves," (see insert and related story by Haley above) we try to further articulate the role of the organization in improving the environment for the field. As a small, grass roots organization, we provide a place for members to develop initiatives and carry them out, with effects far beyond our small annual working budget. The continuing challenge is to maintain our basic infrastructure (database, membership directory, newsletter, annual and regional conferences, web pages, listservs) while pursuing specific long and short term projects that allow us to do work as a community that we cannot do on our own.

One of the most useful elements of the Advocacy Caucus's outstanding presentation on the final afternoon of the conference was the *first person* narratives from individuals working in the field, working through questions and problems that many of us encounter at one time or another in our work experience in academic and professional theater, pieces like those by Tom Creamer and Mary Resing in this section. We need to continue telling these and similar stories to each other about every aspect of our work. I know that some members are concerned that this will just turn into dramaturgical griping, but there is no reason at all for the stories to be only negative: our successes are as important as the difficulties we encounter. The issue here is not difficulty or success (both are important), but the possibilities for learning, especially for early-career dramaturgs who have much to gain from others' experiences. Members entering the profession want to know, for example, about how much money to ask for on their first freelance job, about how to become included in weekly production meetings, about how to work out arrangements for the future use of materials they create for study guides and programs, about how and where they should be credited, about how to work out the hours they will be expected to work and the range of jobs they will be asked to do, about how to negotiate final approval for the words they write, about how to establish good working relationships with the stage manager and cast members, about what to ask for or about in advance if they do a translation or adaptation for a theater, and much, much more.

We can tell Beckettian stories, Chekhovian stories, Shakespearean chronicles, surrealist interludes; expressionist, lyrical, epic, Brechtian, Steinian, Artaudian, Cixousian tales. We are not limited by style or genre or convention. As dramaturgs, we're freed by them. But **in the next year or so (in regional and mid-year meetings, online, in the *Review*, for the web), let's layout before ourselves at least a hundred different images or anecdotes or tales about the environments in which we work.** And then, let's work collectively to improve those environments.

Perhaps in time these stories will speak to the absences Mark brought to our minds on that Saturday afternoon.

#2

I'm in a restaurant (Annabelle's) in San Francisco during the TCG Conference about a week later. Around the table are dramaturgs, literary managers, and writers. **Todd London** (Artistic Director, New Dramatists) had contacted LMDA earlier in the year to suggest that we open up more of a dialogue between dramaturgs and playwrights about the work we do together and new play development in general. At this meeting, we are just trying to lay out some questions to pursue in future conversations.

Toward the end of our time together, one writer who had done some work with dramaturgs asks this question: "What do dramaturgs get out of this experience of working with playwrights? I know why I'm there and I know why the director's there, but I don't really know why you are there? What's in it for you?"

I'm paraphrasing here. With my memory, the question might have been how do you get across the Bay Bridge, but something like this was asked.

The question frustrated me a bit at the time. Few writers, for example, would ask this question of an editor at a press that was publishing one of their novels or a collection of short stories and to an extent, this sounded like another variation of the "What is a dramaturg?" question and eventually this question gets old, even for the most patient among us. But it was asked honestly and without malice and finally it does go beyond "What is a dramaturg" to another level: "What moves us? What drives us? Where does the impulse to do the work we do come from and what is that impulse responding to? What's at stake for us when we come to the table?" Answers to this question will vary, but they are not the point of this note. I'd like instead to let this question, whether I got it right or not, stand as a invitation to continue and intensify our dialogue with fellow theater makers, to gather and listen and speak with care and gentleness and ferocity and all the good will we can find. **LMDA has done this work well in the past; we need to continue it now.**

At ATHE this last summer, **Judith Royer** and **Cindy SoRelle** brought writers and dramaturgs together for a series of conversations. Those conversations and the writing they inspire will continue during the coming year and over the course of next summer in a variety of forms. **Des Gallant**, Literary Manager, Florida Stage and **Vanessa Porteous**, Assistant Dramaturge, Alberta Theatre Projects are working together with **Paul Slee**, Executive Director, New Dramatists on interviewing playwrights and dramaturgs to gain a better understanding of our collaborative processes and ways in which we can improve them. This last summer, Paul also asked interns at New Dramatists to write profiles of successful dramaturg/playwright collaborations that will soon be posted on our web pages, even as we continue to collect more. This January, **New Dramatists and LMDA will co-sponsor a colloquium in New York** on new play development and collaboration. Liz Engelman encourages Regional VPs to plan similar events in their areas.

Storytelling and making dialogue.

We can do this. We can do this well.

SECTION III: RESOURCES

JOBS AND PROJECTS

The **Builders Association** is a New York-based multi-media performance company which works extensively in Europe.

Members include Marianne Weems, director; Jennifer Tipton, lighting designer; Chris Kondek, video

designer; John Cleater, architect/designer, and others.

Our next project will draw on early performance technologies from 1890-1910, including American 'extravaganzas', revues, and theatrical spectacles.

Director Marianne Weems currently seeks a researcher familiar with this era to identify film and theatrical sources—to begin immediately. Fee negotiable.

Please contact (212) 995-1896 or mweems@compuserve.com. For more info about the company: www.thebuildersassociation.org.

Literary Manager: **Geva Theatre** seeks an experienced literary manager to work with artistic director Mark Cuddy as a senior artistic staff member, involved in all artistic planning. Literary responsibilities include directing new play development programs—American Voices and Hibernatus Interruptus; liaison with writers and agents; providing production dramaturgy on selected plays; coordinating dramaturgical materials for production and education; writing selected articles for Geva publications. Candidate must have proven experience in new play development with a solid network of writer relationships, especially on the East Coast. Geva Theatre has experienced a major renaissance over the past four years in both artistic appetite and audience growth. With the opening of the 180-seat Nextstage this season, Geva will have LORT B and D theatres producing a total of ten full productions plus new play workshops and readings each year. Start date is January 1, 2000. Salary commensurate with experience. EOE.

Letter, references, and resume to Mark Cuddy, Artistic Director, Geva Theatre, 75 Woodbury Blvd., Rochester, NY 14607.

ATHE's Playwrights Program is seeking directors, dramaturgs and actors to work with the eleventh New Play Development Workshop at the ATHE Conference in Washington, D.C., August 2-5, 2000. Directors, dramaturgs and actors are invited to submit applications to work with the six to seven short (10 minute) scripts which will be selected for this event. Each playwright will be assigned a director, a dramaturg, and a group of actors; these creative teams will work on the scripts throughout the four-day conference for an average of two to

three hours per day (attendance at the rest of the ATHE conference is possible and encouraged). The Workshop will culminate in public, script-in-hand reading of the plays in a **SHOWCASE OF SCRIPTS** on Saturday afternoon.

The New Play Development Workshop affords playwrights, actors, directors and dramaturgs the opportunity to work with artists from all over the country who are experienced in dealing with original material and to have their work presented at the conference. Actors, directors and dramaturgs should send letters of application, along with a two-page resume which indicates, in particular, the applicant's experience with original scripts; actors should indicate age-range and include a photo. The letter of application should indicate the applicant's willingness to attend all sessions of the workshop, from Wednesday morning, Aug. 2, through Saturday afternoon, Aug. 5; the letter should also include mailing address and telephone/fax/email numbers. The **DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS** is December 1, 1999.

Director, actor, dramaturg applications should be sent to Judith Royer, 7847 Flight Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90045. Phone, (310) 670-0362; FAX (310) 215-0967; jroyer@earthlink.net.

Assistant Professor of Theatre with concentration in Theatre for Young Audiences and Drama in Education. **San Diego State University Department of Theatre** invites applications for a tenure track position starting Fall 2000. Ph.D. or M.F.A. required plus minimum of two years college teaching experience. We seek a dynamic educator with strong intercultural interests and collaborative skills. Assignment includes teaching undergraduate courses in creative drama and theatre

for young audiences to non-majors preparing to be teachers, directing theatre for young audiences productions, working on annual international festival of plays for children, assisting in developing innovative theatre education curriculum at graduate and undergraduate levels. Review of applications begins October 29, 1999 and continues until position is filled. Salary commensurate with credentials and experience. Send resume/vitae and three recent letters of references to Chair, Search Committee, Department of Theatre, San Diego State University, San Diego CA 92182-7601. SDSU is an EO employer. Email: mkulikow@mail.sdsu.edu

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The deadline for submissions for the Winter-Spring 2000 ScriptLab Reading Series is **OCTOBER 31, 1999**. Readings will take place at the York Quai Centre of Toronto's Harbourfront on Sunday afternoons from January to May, 2000.

Consideration will be given to scripts for all media, including plays, musicals, television, radio and film. Selected scripts will be given a public reading by professional actors. Following the reading, there will be a discussion moderated by one of ScriptLab's Co-Directors. The writers receive a small honorarium. The plays chosen for the Reading Series will be announced by the beginning of December.

Unfortunately, while we are open to reading scripts from anywhere, ScriptLab does not have travel funds for writers from outside the Toronto region. But if your script is chosen and you can get here on your own, the wonderful pool of Toronto actors awaits!

ScriptLab began public readings of scripts in 1990. Among projects which have been developed through the series are the film *Hurt Penguins* (Myra Fried), the musicals *The House of Martin Guerre* (Leslie Arden) and *The Last Resort* (Norm Foster and Leslie Arden), and the plays *Who's Under There?* (Doug Hughes and Marcia Kash) and *Babe Ruth Comes to Pickle River* (Nelles Van Loon). Readings have included one-act plays and the popular "Bits and Pieces" event, which is an afternoon of segments and fragments of works-in-progress.

Send script to David Copelin at 958 Carlaw Avenue, Toronto, ON M4K 3M1. Please include SASE if you want the script returned. By the way, professionally unproduced Canadian plays only.

ScriptLab also announces the sixth year of its highly successful Scriptwriters' Intensive. The 10-week Fall session is offered Sunday evenings from 6pm to 9pm, beginning September 26, 1999. The sessions will be held in the Guild Room at Equity Showcase, 651 Dufferin Street (just north of Dundas) in Toronto.

The Scriptwriters' Intensive brings together writers of scripts for all media—theatre, film, television, radio and performance art. The session will focus on oral reading and discussion of its members' work-in-progress, plus occasional exercises geared to the particular needs of the writers. Over the years, the Intensive's participants have brought in work in every phase of development, including outlines, treatments, first drafts, "final" drafts, dialogue fragments, scenes, and character studies.

The fall 1999 Intensive will be facilitated by ScriptLab's new Co-Director, writer and dramaturg David Copelin. Participation is limited to eight writers, in order to ensure

individual attention to each writer and project.

The fee for the Fall Scriptwriters' Intensive is \$295.00, or \$260.00 for ScriptLab Associates. For further information and registration,

CONTACT: David Copelin
(416) 696-8742 or copelin@istar.ca

SCRIPTSEEKER.COM

Scriptseeker.com, is a listing resource for playwrights and screenwriters, a cyber-catalog of scripts that is easily searchable by title, author and category. It was designed with the help of producers, playwrights and screenwriters to make life easier for everyone involved. We are currently online now at www.scriptseeker.com with our official launch happening Oct. 1, 1999.

We are trying something new with scriptseeker.com that hasn't really been done successfully in that we are compiling a vast database (over 2,000 contacts in the film and theatre industries) and then marketing our registered writers and their scripts directly to these producers, theatres and production companies. So far the results have been excellent, with our listed writers receiving interest on their work from as far away as Australia. To cover the cost of marketing and maintaining the site, writers pay a monthly maintenance fee of \$9.95/mo. for three individual script listings and an author page with their bio and links to each of their registered scripts.

The scriptseeker site also has free resources for writers and we are adding an "Interview" section, a "Links" section and a "Callboard" section.

LMDA ONLINE LISTSERV INSTRUCTIONS WNSTON NEUTEL AND GEOFF PROEHL

LMDA runs several email lists for its members. Four of these are discussion lists: the longstanding Discussion List (subscription instructions below), two regional distributions lists—one for New York members (to subscribe, send email to lmda-nycmetro-request@netcom.com); the other for Canada, (to subscribe, send email to bquirt@interlog.com)—and a list for early-career dramaturgs.

LMDA also has an email Announcement List. This list distributes announcements and job postings of general interest from the LMDA Executive Committee or Administrator to LMDA members. You cannot reply to it, as with a regular listserv. Mailings are limited to one a week or so, but there are often only one or two a month.

If, as a member, you don't want to receive any email at all from LMDA, send a message that says, "Please remove my name from the Announcement List" to gproehl@ups.edu or better yet, follow the directions below for unsubscribing to a list.

To take part in discussions of issues related to dramaturgy and literary management (including queries from members about projects on which they are working), follow the directions below to join the Discussion List. **You will not be added to the Discussion List unless you subscribe yourself.**

Here are some of the basics of belonging to a list server mailing list, including directions for subscribing and unsubscribing to the Discussion List. They are not as complicated as they may at first appear. Please try them before asking LMDA to subscribe or unsubscribe you.

There are two addresses to remember. Mail to be distributed to the discussion mailing list should be addressed to the list address: **discussion@dramaturgy.net**; while commands (e.g. joining or leaving the list) should be sent to the list server at **majordomo@dramaturgy.net**.

Commands sent to the "majordomo" address should be in the body of a message with no subject. To join a list, you would send the command *subscribe [list name goes here] [your email address goes here]* e.g. *subscribe discussion winston@dramaturgy.net*. This should be alone on one line. Additional commands, if any, should be on separate lines. To leave a list, you would use the word *unsubscribe* instead of *subscribe*.

To subscribe to the Early-Career list or to the Announcement List, the commands would be *subscribe earlycareer <your email address>* or *subscribe lmda-announce <your email address>*.

To get a list of the various commands, send the word "help" alone in a message to **majordomo@dramaturgy.net**. There is a **digest version** of the discussion list, for those who wish to receive all the list discussion in one message every day or so, rather than receiving each message when the author sends it. To subscribe to the digest, follow the directions above, but use "discussion-digest" for the list name, instead of "discussion.": *subscribe discussion-digest <your email address>*. For a response from a human regarding these lists, send email to *discussion-owner@dramaturgy.net*. If these options do not work, contact Geoff Proehl at *gproehl@ups.edu*.

NOTED WITH PLEASURE

Writer/Producer (and LMDA member) **Dmae Roberts** and MediaRites, a multicultural arts producing organization in Portland, Oregon, received the Heart of America award from the American Legion Auxiliary for *Legacies: Faith, Hope and Peace*, three one-hour radio documentaries aired on more than 70 National Public Radio stations across the country. The award honors media that celebrate stories about American women and families. Roberts will be flown to Anaheim, CA to present the award-winning series to the national convention in September.

NOTE FROM JAMES MAGRUDER

Dear Colleagues:

I would like to announce a departmental change at Center Stage. After seven seasons as Resident Dramaturg, I am reducing my time commitment to three days a week in order to spend more time writing. Charlotte Stoudt, an Associate Dramaturg here for the last four seasons, will succeed me. I will still act as production dramaturg on specific collaborations, as well as help with season planning, long-range institutional planning, and the generation of artistic boilerplate. Jill Morris will also still be working for Center Stage as an Associate Dramaturg and Curator of our Off-Center performance festival.

So, in the months and years to come, if any of you have co-production ideas, new plays to recommend, scandal to share, or wonder how many actors we used in our *Pericles* and which *Cherry Orchard* translation we used, I refer you to the new Resident Dramaturg of Center Stage, Charlotte Stoudt.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS

If you have a book or article that has been recently published, please send us the information so we can tell members about it.

LITERARY MANAGERS AND DRAMATURGS OF THE AMERICAS: BIBLIOGRAPHY, 1999

Send citations of recent publications in the field to the *Review* and we will reprint them here.

LITERARY MANAGERS AND DRAMATURGS OF THE AMERICAS: EXECUTIVE OFFICERS, PROGRAMMING AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE

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Literary Managers And Dramaturgs Of The Americas

Internship Questionnaire (Detach, Complete, and Send to the Address Below)

Theater or Organization:

Mailing Address:

Street

City

State

Zip

Country

Staff Dramaturg (if applicable)

Staff Literary Manager (if applicable)

Other Literary and/or Artistic Staff

Contact Person for Internships:

Phone:

Email:

Fax:

Web address:

Part I: Internship Questions:

The following will be used in the creation of the next edition of *the LMDA Guide to Internships*.

Does your theater have a pre-existing dramaturgy/literary management internship program?

Yes No

If no, would your theater/organization be willing to take on a dramaturg on an internship basis?

If your theater has an internship program, please indicate the type of internship:

- Literary/Script Reading
- Literary Management/Administrative
- Dramaturgy/Production work
- Other - Please describe:

Please describe the specific duties of any of the type of internships check above:

Time Frame: Full Time Part Time

Hours per week:

Pay/Stipend:

Transportation:

Housing:

Other Information:

Season Duration: Sept-May June - August Three-month Six-month Other

We are also interested in creating a job bank for short-term internships. These internships could be for just one production, or just for a month or two. Would your theatre be interested in participating?

Short-term Internship Available: Yes No

Hours per week:

Pay/Stipend:

Transportation:

Housing:

Other Information:

PART II: GENERAL QUESTIONS

Do you currently employ a dramaturg? Full Time Part Time Per Production

Do you currently employ a literary manager? Full Time Part Time

If not, would you be interested in hiring someone to fill either of these positions as a staff member?

Dramaturg Literary Manager Full Time Part Time Per Production

Would you be interested in hiring a free-lance dramaturg? Yes No

If yes, please indicate projects that you would consider hiring in a freelance dramaturg/literary manager:

Research for specific production

Biographical information on playwrights

Newsletters

- Casebooks (Production Diaries)
- Rehearsal Observation/Evaluation
- Translation/Adaptation Research and Evaluation
- Production Histories
- Program Notes
- Study Guides
- New Play Development
- Exhibits/Audience Displays
- Organizing a reading festival

Does your theater need script readers? Yes No

Is there any remuneration for this service? Yes No

If yes, what is the fee per script? \$10 \$15 \$20 \$25 \$30 Other \$ _____

In what other areas do you envision your theater needing dramaturgical assistance

Please complete and return to:

**Bronwyn Eisenberg
Early Career Dramaturg Program
P.O. Box 1865 - Lenox
New York, NY 10021
or via fax: 212-879-5758**

lmda_nycmetro_owner@netcom.com

Please call Bronwyn Eisenberg at 212-560-4883 with any questions.