

# VASTA



*Voice and Speech Trainers Association, Inc.*

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VASTA is a non-profit organization and also a focus group of ATHE (Association for Theatre in Higher Education)

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## **Images in Vocal Training: Scientific and Mind-Body Contributions**

By Lissa Tyler Renaud, Ph.D.

*Science News* reported a breakthrough in neuroscience in its November 2001 issue: simply thinking about a movement changes the functioning of the muscles used to perform the movement. They found that people were able to increase the strength of their biceps, for example, by 13.5% simply by visualizing a series of simple exercises. Related studies were also reported in a January 1995 issue of *Newsday*: researchers at London's Institute of Neurology had seen on brain scans that "visualizing a movement... turns on 80% of the brain circuits used in the actual movement." An article about this in the *Journal of Neurophysiology* noted that musicians and athletes often rehearse movements mentally to improve their performance.

This last reference to musicians is very apt, and might include singers and performing artists of all kinds as well. As the article implies, the sciences are working to prove what performers have known experientially for a long time. The notion that images in the mind can change muscles and improve movement is the basis of what have come to be called the "mind-body" disciplines. In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Europe saw an explosion of revolutionary, mind-body approaches to physical re-education, with particular application to performance. For many, the Alexander Technique and the Pilates Technique are the bodies of work that will be most familiar from that period, and there were other

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## THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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Dear VASTA Members:

This is the sixth and final letter I will write as VASTA President for our newsletter. This August I will preside over my final board meeting in San Diego. Does the breakneck pace of these 2 years seem as quick to you as to me?

I must admit to being ready to turn over VASTA's reins to President-elect Kate Ufema. I doubt that any of our organization's presidents left without breathing sighs of relief. The clerical aspects of the job have increased in the last few months, as have email communications. It was helpful several months ago to ask Kate Ufema to take over as eminence grise on Vastavox. I have lately asked Kate to take over a few more duties, and I think future presidents will need to actively cultivate the art of delegation.

There is much for VASTA to look forward to. We are celebrating two grants (totaling \$2500) recently received from the Association for Theatre in Higher Education, one to support putting the VASTA Combined Bibliography online and another to support the publication of our journal. Thanks to Kate Ufema and those who put the applications together. We are in the process of applying for more grant monies, and we have made the prudent decision to publish the journal (or book or serial monograph, as Applause Books likes to think of it) every other year. This rhythm takes the world's weight off the shoulders of our production staff and may lead to an even finer product.

In a recent appeal I asked, via Vastavox, for "VASTA success stories." It is truly heartwarming to read the replies, which are hard and fast evidence of the services and advocacy this beloved consortium of thinkers, feelers and doers has provided to practitioners of our discipline. It seems clear to me that one of my tasks as past-president will be to write an article or small volume which devines and preserves VASTA's history of advocacy and connectedness. What a labor of love it will be.

Having just returned from University/Resident Theatre Association auditions in Chicago, I am reminded of how CRUCIAL our work remains. So many would-be, self-styled, instinctively gifted actors are simply unable to express inner life. They stragulate, gasp, huff, bleat and blast, letting white noise (and black and gray noise) stand in for the flowing, resonant, articulate, passionate, syncopated, full-color spectrum of the spoken word. I have long felt that sentient human beings are rendered MORE articulate by their problems and conflicts, rather than less. At least in the theatre. Would that this were universally true in life. Then, of course, we would find ourselves out of a job!

For my sometimes-lacking organizational skills, missed

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### Images in Vocal Training

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exciting innovators as well.

Many of the pioneers and important practitioners of movement re-education have had a background in voice. One of the earliest mind-body techniques was developed around the start of WWI, by a Boston voice teacher named Mabel Todd. Todd's 1937 book, *The Thinking Body*, is a profound work on the application of the mental processes to movement, and it remains unparalleled in our time. The foremost teacher of Todd's work today is the incomparable Andre Bernard, who had early careers in both radio broadcasting and acting; he has been teaching body alignment at NYU since 1966. Currently on sabbatical, Bernard has entrusted his teaching to Lynn Martin, who is a devoted and published alignment teacher, as well as an accomplished singer. (It is interesting to note that Martin was a very long-time student of Bernard's friend, Carl Stough [d. 2000], who was originally a voice teacher and choir director. Stough went on to make definitive discoveries, far ahead of conventional medical science, on the role of the diaphragm in natural breathing coordination.)

I was fortunate to attend Bernard's most recent

advanced workshops in California, in 1999 and 2000. Bernard teaches *ideokinesis*—movement informed or facilitated by an idea or thought. He uses images to modify the message that is going to the muscle to change its pattern. As he said in a 1995 interview, "I along with others believe you are what you think." This also means that you move what you think—move how you think about movement.

This idea has proven enormously productive in my work with voice students. In that context, we might say that you sing or speak how you think. When someone uses his voice, we can hear what he believes or imagines about his voice. When we introduce new images to the mind's eye, we can hear the sound change. I often tell my students that the task is not to learn what to do, so much as to figure out what to think about—visualize—when they are doing it.

I was struck by how efficiently this approach worked at two workshops I gave recently. The December 2001 one was for radio anchors (National Radio Project), where the speakers work in the close space of the recording booth and want to achieve an intimate sound. The January 2002 one was for comics (MotionFest Physicality and Performing Arts Festival)—stand-ups working in loud clubs, for example, or street performers—all people who need to sustain a big, public sound for long stretches. Some of the images we used were skeletal: releasing a tense jaw by imagining the upper molars to be growing, or finding new resonance by watching the spine lengthen in two directions, or quieting the breath by "seeing" the expansion of the lungs behind the medial plane of the body. Some of the images gave a sense of freedom from the skeleton: releasing the tongue by shifting the mouth to the forehead, or improving vowel placement by changing the light in the "chamber" of the mouth, or (Bernard's image) thinking of the feet as tassels. We were able to give the enclosed radio people a sense of space with images such as rising escalators or growing trees; we were able to give the outdoor performers a new sense of physical release and vocal intimacy with images (continued on page 4)

#### Tell a friend about VASTA

##### Membership Categories

**1) Individual Membership:** Has voting privileges, receives the VASTA Newsletter, the *Voice and Speech Review*, the Membership directory, and upon request the Suggested Model for Evaluation for Tenure and Promotion and Guidelines for Training. Eligible for reduced VASTA Conference fee. Annual dues \$65 + \$6 p&h = \$71

**2) Student Membership:** Currently enrolled in a training program. Receives same benefits as above. Annual dues \$35 + \$6 p&h = \$41

**3) Organizational Membership:** Receives all publications listed above. No voting privileges. One person from the organization is eligible for reduced VASTA Conference fee. Annual dues \$65.00 + \$6 p&h = \$71

To join VASTA, log on to <[www.VASTA.org](http://www.VASTA.org)>; print out the application, fill out, and mail with dues (US currency only) to: Craig Ferre, P. O. Box 524, Laie, HI 96762.

VASTA membership year is dated from the date of receipt of dues to the same date of the following year.

**Images in Vocal Training**  
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towards them from above.

For nearly a century, there has been an enormous amount of cross-pollination between the fields of physical re-education and voice, and both have benefited. With the mainstream sciences now contributing their perspectives as well, perhaps these benefits will find their way to an ever-larger public.

*Lissa Tyler Renaud, Ph.D. (UCB '87 summa cum laude) won five fellowships and three awards for her acting, including the prestigious Sturgess Prize. She is a recognized director, a published writer-scholar, and Program Director/Teacher (since 1985) of InterArts Training, which provides comprehensive, cutting-edge professional training and master classes in acting, voice and movement. Her students are working internationally in all media.*

[www.interarts-training.org](http://www.interarts-training.org)

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**President's letter**  
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deadlines and dropped stitches, I ask pardon. For the opportunity to serve, I give thanks. I conclude my presidency knowing that we are engaged in important work, fine work, work which empowers human beings to make joyful noise unto whoever has the ears to hear.

In gratitude and hope,

Kate Burke, VASTA President  
Kate Burke, Associate Professor  
University of Virginia  
President, Voice and Speech Trainers Association, Inc. <[www.vasta.org](http://www.vasta.org)>

**BREATHE**

**2002 VASTA Conference**

**San Diego State University, California**

**July 29 - August 1, 2002**

The VASTA Conference is very exciting this summer. Our theme this year is BREATHE, focusing on 3 differing applications of breath. Our three presenters are: Susana Bloch, who will present on Alba Emoting™ and Breath; Diane Elliot, with Body-Mind Centering® the Breath and Bill Helm, who will present Five Animal style Qi Gong: Breath, Qi and Movement.

The conference begins Monday evening, a whole day after ATHE ends and continues to Thursday evening, when participants have the option of staying an extra night and seeing a show at the Old Globe Theatre with the VASTA gang. Accommodations are available through SDSU's dorms, which are brand new and in excellent condition. The rooms are in suites which group 6 rooms around a central hub, with two bathrooms for each suite. (For those who cannot bear to share a bathroom, there are a very limited number of real singles available on a first come/first served basis.) We are also planning a small group discussion session around Things That Work, hosted by Kate DeVore, and an evening session with some doctors – a pulmonologist and an otolaryngologist. Don't miss VASTA's annual business meeting, too.

Applications for the conference, and more information about the presenters and their workshops, are available online at <http://www.vasta.org/conf2002/conf2002.html> Please note: the application deadline is JULY 1, 2002.

Got questions? Don't hesitate to call Eric Armstrong at (312) 341-4329 or email him at: [earmstro@roosevelt.edu](mailto:earmstro@roosevelt.edu).

**VASTAVOX**

VASTAVOX is a listserv owned by Dudley Knight at UC-Irvine, where members can discuss, via email, concerns about Voice and Speech. This open list allows anyone to join. VASTA members are encouraged to subscribe.

How to subscribe: Send an email message to [listserv@uci.edu](mailto:listserv@uci.edu); leave the "subject" field blank and write in the body of the message: SUBSCRIBE VASTAVOX First name, last name, as in the example: SUBSCRIBE VASTAVOX Dudley Knight. In short order you should receive a welcome message from VASTAVOX.

## Strangers in Paradise: The Summer Vocology Institute in Denver By Laura Ledford-Pearson

Since the summer of 2000, voice professionals from all over the world have convened in Denver for a series of graduate-level courses in “vocology,” the science and practice of voice habilitation, developed by Dr. Ingo Titze. Those familiar with the literature of voice science will recognize Titze as one of the world’s foremost voice researchers. The SVI allows voice professionals to earn nine credits of course work in an intensive, three-block program over about eight weeks in the summer. And Denver, in the summer, is a treat in itself.

The first course of the sequence is Titze’s “Principles of Voice Production.” The first day of class was a breeze. My friend JR (at tenor with a DMA in Vocal Pedagogy) and I met the other students, an international mix of singing teachers, speech/language pathologists, graduate students in voice research, and one other theatre

voice trainer. We settled in for three weeks of what we thought would be “review.” After all, we knew the anatomy and physiology of the vocal mechanism, and JR could even talk with relative ease about formants. We would probably be asked to be guest lecturers later in the week, once Dr. Titze realized how advanced we were. Then came the second day. Everything was going well until Dr. Titze, while writing an equation on the board, said “And then, of course, you must factor in the gravitational force of the earth.” JR and I gaped at each other. It must have been an audible gape, because Dr. Titze and many of our classmates turned to us, bewildered by our obvious lack of the most elementary knowledge. Clearly, we were morons who had no business taking this course. We rushed to Taco Bell, contemplated quitting, pulled ourselves together, and decided we’d just have to learn to be students again. We had a handful of degrees between us. We could do it.

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DUDLEY KNIGHT, PHIL THOMPSON, and the UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA—IRVINE DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA invite you to join them for a unique two-part, five-day speech workshop on the campus of UC Irvine focusing on:

### Dudley Knight’s Speechwork August 2 – August 6, 2002

This intensive workshop will explore the pedagogy of acquiring specific, defined articulation skills as a preparation to learning accent patterns. This approach equips an actor with the ability to vary speech actions with fluency, flexibility, and accuracy.

*The workshop will be structured in two parts:*

**PART ONE.** Three days, August 2 – 4: Awareness and practice of precise articulation action. The Detail Model—stage speech based on intelligibility and variety. The physical posture of accents. Morning voice warmups using Fitzmaurice Voicework. *No phonetic transcription will be used in this work.*

**PART TWO.** Two days, August 5 – 6. The application of IPA phonetic transcription to the process of speech and accent research. Using the entire IPA to research and teach speech.

Participants may register for either part of the workshop, or both.

*The University of California, Irvine, is a pleasant ninety-minute drive north from San Diego, the site of the 2002 VASTA Conference that concludes on August 1.*

*For information and registration, contact:*

**Phil Thompson (949) 824-9440, [pthomps@uci.edu](mailto:pthomps@uci.edu)**

### WHY BUZZ?

Putting Lessac's Y-buzz to work  
by Crystal Robbins

The Lessac Y-buzz should be a part of every voice teacher's curriculum. It cures a lot of ails. And it surprises me with new and original uses every semester that I teach. My students are an eclectic blend of nationalities and varied experiences. I often have theatre professionals from Los Angeles and students who speak little English in the same Beginning Voice Class. I routinely need to combat nasality, monotone speech, poor tonal quality, lack of projection, tension in the face and jaw, excessive nerves that lead to poor performances and inappropriate vocal placement, which leads to sore throats and strained voices. And it is just as likely that the theatre professional exhibits those qualities as the neophyte does.

What is the Y-buzz exactly? If you don't have your Lessac book "The Use and Training of the Human Voice – A Biodynamic Approach to Vocal Life" handy, then let me share. Put your lips in a gentle "sh" position. Think of a slight yawn and hum on y. You are now humming on the Lessac French Horn. Play with it. Stay in the lower third of your register. Now invigorate that Y with a true EE. Keep feeling the sensation of yawn in your mouth and place the sound behind the two front teeth on the hard palate. The buzz should start behind the front teeth. Then you'll feel it in your nose bone, and cartilage, up into the forehead and perhaps even in your head. After you've experienced that yummy buzzing for a while you even become sensitized to it in your head and neck and down the spine. Feel constantly the quality of YYYYY and the quality of EEEE. Let the sounds marry and create a wonderful vibration unique unto them. If I were there, I'd coach you so that you had the right mixture of yawn and Y and E and gentle forward facial posture. I would make sure you placed the sound behind those front teeth so that when you pinched your nose to check, the sound remained the same. Getting it right might indeed require

that an experienced Lessac teacher observe you and help you shape it and feed the Tonal Energy. . . . but one thing is for sure, once your BODY recognizes the vibration, it commits it to memory and seeks it out and begs for you to do it again. It's downright addictive, that seductive Y-buzz. The body tingles, it buzzes, it sings. It is alive and the cells dance.

There is a whole chapter in Lessac's book, which gives many wonderful opportunities to identify and play with the Y-buzz and to put it into practice in your life. I encourage you to check it out. Why? The benefits of this little exploration are awesome.

1. Once a sense of forwardness is fully experienced (as is necessary in creating the buzz), nasality disappears easily, comfortably and is instantly recognizable to the student.
2. Once the spot of vibration behind the two front teeth can be identified and easily felt in the student, all full speech (or CALL) can be accomplished without any strain or stress on the throat. With continual exploration and experimentation, even the smallest, quietest voice distinctly improves from physically experiencing where sound is best placed.
3. There is a natural relaxation that occurs when the body is in "gentle turbulence" from the vibrations used in Y-buzzing. The mind relaxes, the heart stops racing, the nerves are calmed. My students have reported using it in times of severe trauma and stress and in feeling a sense of ease and control. This makes it an excellent tool before scene work, auditions and performances.
4. The Y-buzz has actually helped several students each semester with sinus

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**Strangers...(continued from page 5)**

Well, voice science is all about physics. And physics is spoken in a foreign language called “math.” I knew enough math to calculate a tip, and JR had one of those credit-card-sized calculators you get when you open a checking account. “Bring it!” we said. Soon we were studying viscosity tables, learning fluid mechanics (there’s more than Bernoulli at work, folks) and making stress/strain measurements with duct tape and a scrunchy. We were in Voice Science Boot Camp, trying to soak up as much as we could, and loving it. JR and I successfully completed “Principles,” then left Denver and the rest of the students, planning to return the following summer to complete the remaining two blocks. After “Principles,” how hard could it be?

Over the course of the next year, I found my enhanced knowledge of the vocal mechanism paying off every day. Now I understood, with remarkable clarity, exactly why the exercises I did with actors worked, how they worked, and how to modify them to work more effectively. I could hear voices in ways I hadn’t been able to hear before, and I could identify usage problems before they had a chance to cause damage. I couldn’t wait to get back to Denver to learn more.

Block 2 consisted of two courses: “Instrumentation for Voice Analysis” and “Voice Habilitation.” “Instrumentation” meant gadgets, software, and cutting-edge technology. We recorded, analyzed and even scoped each other while learning everything you ever wanted to know about the norms and perturbations of vocal fold vibration. We sat over lattes discussing electromyography, open quotients, spectrographic analysis, and my personal favorite, videokymography (a new method of observing actual fold vibration using television technology). In “Habilitation” we learned a variety of therapeutic techniques used by clinicians to assess and improve usage. Along with the work of noted scientific speech/language pioneers and singing pedagogues, we also covered the work of Les-

sac, Berry, Linklater and Rodenburg (I was smart again!). At the end of Habilitation, Dr. Titze gave us a rare treat by showing us one of his latest research projects, an amazing voice synthesis program and its performing ambassador, “Pavarobotti.” Both courses were challenging and rewarding, although my lack of math fluency caused a few cold sweats during homework and exams.

Block 3 was “Singing Pedagogies.” I had the option of taking “Voice for the Actor,” but I thought it would be good for me to venture out of my comfort zone. I’m an actor who sings a little, and I confess I was a bit intimidated by the depth of talent and teaching experience among the singers in the class. But I managed to hold my own, and learned a tremendous amount of singing vocabulary and pedagogy both in theory and practice. I think I was even able to make some contributions to the singers regarding acting pedagogy and how it relates to vocal performance.

JR and I completed the courses successfully and began to fantasize about opening our own shop, where we would have all the latest gadgets and a roster of clients ranging from “normal” folks with usage disorders to actors and singers who would flock to us for instruction and habilitation. We knew our limits: we were not equipped to offer medical diagnoses of disorders or pathologies, but we could hear and analyze many usage problems, and we could teach exercises to enable improvement. Our fantasies soon confronted fiscal realities, but we still knew the incredible value of our training at the Summer Vocology Institute. JR continues to teach singing and pedagogy and I continue to teach voice, dialects, and acting, but now we teach with more depth, precision, and confidence than ever before. And I don’t feel uncomfortable using the phrase “the laws of physics” anymore.

If you consider yourself a voice professional, you owe it to yourself and to your students and clients to take advantage of the Summer Vocol-

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**Why Buzz? (continued from page 7)**

problems. One student reported to his astonishment that he could now breathe through his nose for the first time in twenty some years. His doctor contacted me for information on what I'd been doing in class work, which would allow for such movement of con

5. In that same vein, I personally have seen great results when I have had a cold. Recently, I was scheduled to film on a day when I was suffering a severe head cold. I concentrated on placing sound forward, even though I couldn't hear myself and was clogged and nasal. I knew, however, the distinct FEEL of the Y-buzz. Through the Y-buzz work, I knew intimately how tone felt on the hard palate. I guided my tone to those well-known buzzy areas and the playback of my scene sounded clean and crisp and clear. No evidence whatsoever of a cold.
6. The Y-buzz grounds the voice and keeps the spiraling excitement of the scene, or the natural inclination for nerves in check. It is impossible to allow emotions to create a shrill or unpleasant voice with the Y-buzz firmly in one's grasp. The consummate actor and user of the Y-buzz always has the necessary tools easily at hand to rein in the voice when in danger of losing all good tone.
7. In life, too, good command of the Y-buzz allows the user to stay fully in charge. Indecision, despair and uncertainty are kept under control. After learning Y-buzz, one of my students had the "voice" (as she called it) to fire her unproductive manager who had been manipulating her and sexually harassing her.

I like the fact that a tool used in my class can become a tool for life, that a student finds power in her voice and discovers the power within.

But don't just take my word for it. Check it out

in Arthur Lessac's *The Use and Training of the Human voice*, (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, McGraw-Hill publishing.) I'll be growing and maturing my own Y-buzz at the Lessac Workshop Intensive this summer. Master Teachers Sue Ann Park and Nancy Krebs are running the show and they can Buzz!

*Crystal Robbins teaches three classes in Beginning Lessac Voice Development for the Stage at Santa Monica College in Los Angeles. She is an actor in film, television and theatre, writer and poet, director and producer. She holds a BFA from University of Memphis, studied at BADA in Oxford, the Lessac Summer Workshop Intensive and privately with Arthur Lessac. She is currently pursuing her certification in Lessac Voice, Speech & Bodywork.*

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Requires PC with sound card, speakers, and microphone

**Strangers in Paradise**  
(continued from page 7)

ogy Institute's unique offerings. It's a challenging program with world-class instruction in a great location. Buy some hiking boots and a real calculator. And to spare you some humiliation, here's a hint: the force of the earth's gravity is 9.8 meters per second, squared.

For more information about the SVI, go to the website of the National Centers for Voice and Speech at <[www.ncvs.org/vocinstitute](http://www.ncvs.org/vocinstitute)> or contact John Nix, the SVI administrative coordinator:

John Nix, M.M., M.M.E.  
Associate Director of Administration and Education, Gould Voice Center  
Coordinator, Summer Vocology Institute  
1245 Champa Street  
Denver, CO 80204  
303-446-4887 phone; 303-260-7471 fax

*Laura Ledford-Pearson, MFA, is an Assistant Professor of Theatre at Millikin University in*

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**to update your Professional Index Listing go to: <http://www.vasta.org/dir/updateframe.html>**

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**Vastavox Archives**  
**By Eric Armstrong**

To access the Vastavox Archives: go to: [http://listserv.cwis.uci.edu/archives/vastavox/past\\_archives/](http://listserv.cwis.uci.edu/archives/vastavox/past_archives/) and systematically choose dates for archives (they're roughly monthly). Once in an archive, you use the "Find . . ." command in your browser (command F on a mac), and search by title or person.

**VASTA SPONSORED WORKSHOPS  
AT ATHE 2002**

***'Taming the Enemy' How to make Shakespeare Scansion a Useful Working Theatrical/analytical Tool.***

Discussion and demonstration of helpful ways of using the scansion of Shakespeare's verse as a working theatrical and analytical tool. Beneficial for teachers, actors, and directors. Neil Freeman. 7/28/02 9:45-11:15

***Experiential Anatomy for the Actor's Voice***

Using exercises adapted from contemporary movement disciplines and touch therapies, this session viscerally explores the major muscular and skeletal aspects of anatomy relevant to vocal production for the actor. Jeff Morrison. 7/26/02 7:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

***Carryover: From Voice Class to Rehearsal and Performance***

Strategies to facilitate our students' abilities to carry new knowledge and techniques they have learned in the voice and speech classes to their work in rehearsal, in performance, and in their lives. Liz Carlin-Metz, Bonnie Raphael, Claudia Anderson, Jan Gist. 7/26/02 1:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

***Back to Basics: Taking the Mystery Out of the Breath Body Connection***

Revisiting basic breathing fundamentals to encourage a "demystification" of the integral relationship between breath, body awareness, release of tension and the support of a resonant vibration. Judylee Vivier, Joanna Cazden, Chuck Richie. 7/27/02 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

***More Practical Voice and Speech Exercises for the Theatre Teacher and Practitioner***

Janet Rodgers, Elizabeth Carlin-Metz, Erica Tobolski, Jan Gist. 7/25/02 1:00 p.m. - 4:45

***You/Me: Giving and Receiving, Breath & Meisner Technique***

Marlene Johnson, Janet Wilson. 7/26/02 9:45 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

***Sculpting the Voice***

Creating extreme voices for animation, cartoons and radio dramas. Jacqueline Rowen, Erica Tobolski, Barbara Backer. 7/27/02 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

***VASTA Business Meeting***

7/27/02 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

## NEWSLETTER REGIONAL EDITORS

Your regional editor should contact you at appropriate times to invite you to submit your professional and personal news for publication. Feel free to contact her or him at any time. Our two deadlines for news submissions are **September 1** and **February 1**. Please help out your overworked regional editor by submitting your news formatted as you see it below (note use of CAPS, **bold**, and *italics*.)

### NEW ENGLAND (ME, VT, NH, CT, MA, RI)

Peter Jack Tkatch  
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### MID-ATLANTIC (NY, PA, NJ, DE, MD, D.C.)

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### WESTERN (MT, ID, UT, CO, NV, AZ, NM, WA, OR, CA, AK)

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### WEST CENTRAL (MN, IA, ND, SD, NE, KS)

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### EAST CENTRAL (OH, MI, IN, WI, IL)

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### SOUTHERN (MS, LA, MO, AR, OK, TX)

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### MEMBER NEWS

### INTERNATIONAL

**MERIBETH DAYME** (London, UK) will be on the voice faculty for a music summer school in Spain during July and, in late August, will be on the faculty

for the Nelson Song Fest in Canada.

**GILLYANNE KAYES** (London, UK) is delighted to give notice of the “birth” of her second book, *Successful Singing Auditions*, co-written with husband Jeremy Fisher. This book (A&C Black, ISBN 0-7136-5807-X) will be on the shelves from April this year. Gillyanne has also newly completed a distance learning CD called *Basic Vocal Functioning*, which is non-singer friendly and consists of narration and audio examples of some of the basic routines described in *Singing and The Actor*. She is thrilled to be presenting on *Singing and The Actor* this June for the International Centre for Voice at the Central School of Speech and Drama (CSSD). The workshop subtitle is “the challenge of singing text” and will explore the differences and similarities between delivery of spoken and sung text and how this impacts on acting choices. Gillyanne is grateful to VASTA for sponsoring her trip to ATHE last summer. A return trip in the shape of a mini-tour is planned for the fall and Lisa Wilson’s department at Tulsa University is expected to be the first host. Thanks, too, to Rena Cook who is helping to co-ordinate the venture.

**FLOORTJE NIJSSEN** (Belgium) is the European Associate for the Gorey Arts Event running from 1st to 11th August in Gorey, Ireland. The event will be a multi-arts festival for all ages, with all arts represented. There will be performances and workshops in music, dance, drama and visual arts. The workshops will be for children, adults and semi-professionals. Floortje will direct a drama workshop for 6-7-8-yr old children. At the end of the Arts Event, the play will be presented. As well as acting in it, the children will be responsible for the set, costumes, etc. They will use a script based on a brand new fairytale written by 9-year-old children in Belgium. In Belgium this work will lead in a monthly storytelling time based around traditional fairytales, with Floortje as narrator. During March, the young Belgian authors of the tale will use the Dutch version of the script to work on a theatre project in their school. Floortje will be involved in this project also.

**LISE OLSON** (Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, UK) coached *Fiddler on the Roof*, directed Bock and Harnick’s *She Loves Me* and *Celebrating the Gypsies*, is teaching a second “Vocal Violence” seminar for Vocal Process Ltd and presented at the International Voice Conference at Central School of Speech & Drama on “The Moment of Speech”. She will be assisting on the second annual LIPA-British Academy of Dramatic Combat workshop and work-

ing with Cameron Mackintosh’s casting director in the spring, in addition to co-directing the LIPA London showcase at the Criterion Theatre.

#### **CANADA**

**DAWN MARI McCAUGHERTY** (York University) was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor at York in the summer of 1991. This year she is teaching at the University of Calgary, where she is currently coaching *The Cherry Orchard*, and in the fall directed *In Transit*. Last summer she taught at the Voice Intensive in Vancouver, before participating as an actor in PlayWorks 2001 at the ATHE conference in Chicago.

**DAVID SMUKLER** (York University) is currently preparing for the 16th year of the Voice Intensive in Vancouver, which attracts people from all over the States, Europe, Asia as well as Canada. This is his second year as faculty of the Training Programme for the Ontario Association of Jungian Analysts. In addition to the two year MFA Programme in Acting with the Voice Teacher Diploma offered at York, David recently coordinated the addition of a one year Stand Alone Voice Teacher Diploma. This Diploma is available to people who already have an MFA in Acting or Directing, and those from associate fields with an MA or Ph.D. in Speech and Language Pathology, Linguistics or Education.

**SUSAN STACKHOUSE** (Dalhousie University) is presently enjoying a 6 month sabbatical from Dalhousie University and is looking forward to supplying more Canadian samples to Paul Meier’s International Dialects of English Archive. Last October-November she performed as Nana in *For The Pleasure of Seeing Her Again* at the Neptune Theatre in Halifax, Nova Scotia while continuing to teach/coach at Dalhousie.

#### **MID-ATLANTIC**

**MARY BAIRD** (freelance) Currently Acting at the Orlando Shakespeare Festival in *I Hate Hamlet*. Doing Linklater Voice workshops with interns. Will return in the spring to act in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

**SUSAN BLUMERT** is currently coaching a Down East New England accent for a production of *Our Town* at Montclair State University in Upper Montclair, NJ. She will be coaching their forthcoming production of *Steel Magnolias*. She

would also like to let people in NJ and elsewhere know, that if they are seeking a dialect coach, she is available to work on their projects.

**ADELE CABOT** (University of Maryland, College Park) served as voice and speech consultant for *Of Mice and Men* and *True West* both at Arena Stage, Washington, DC. She will direct *Polaroid Stories* at UMD this spring. Last summer, Adele was one of 13 professional actors who made up the International Fellowship of Actors at Shakespeare's Globe in London, where she performed Iacomo in *Cymbeline*

**CATHERINE FITZMAURICE**, with master and associate teachers, will be teaching the third Certification Program this summer. For information and workshops see [www.fitzmauricevoice.com](http://www.fitzmauricevoice.com)

**EVAMARII HJOHNSON** (New York City), taught and coached for the 2001 California State Summer School of the Arts (on the Cal Arts campus), and has coached and taught in January/February for the Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre, Blue Lake, CA.

**CHRISTINA KEEFE** (adjunct lecturer voice/speech and acting at DeSales University, Center Valley, PA and Artistic Associate of the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival) directed *Charley's Aunt* for The Warehouse Theatre in Greenville, SC, and taught master classes for their resident company during the month of October, 2001. She will be vocal coaching for the Festival this summer and playing Gertrude in their production of *Hamlet*.

**NANCY KREBS** has been very busy since last summer; teaching at the Lessac Summer Institute held at the University of New Hampshire in June and July; dialect coach for Everyman Theatre's productions of *Watch on the Rhine* and *The Waverly Gallery*, releasing a third album of original music called "Come to the Stable". She will be teaching an introductory workshop in the Lessac Approach at the University of North Dakota, coordinated by Dr. Pamela Chabora in March, will be acting in scenes from Chekov's *The Cherry Orchard*, and will be once again on the faculty for the Lessac Summer Intensive, to be held at Mercersburg Academy June 23-July

19,2002. She still teaches at the Baltimore School for the Arts, and continues with her own private studio The Voiceworks.

**ELLEN O'BRIEN** (The Shakespeare Theatre/Academy for Classical Acting) served as voice and text consultant for *Oedipus*, *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* at the Shakespeare Theatre. She also offered a weekend intensive for the cast of *The Merchant of Venice* at the People's Light and Theatre Company, Malvern, PA. Her essay "Dancing the Meter" has been published in [Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare's Hamlet](#).

**LUCILLE SCHUTMAAT-RUBIN**, Ph.D., (Dir, Professionally Speaking and Voice Faculty Circle in the Square Theatre School NYC) contributed "Ten Stage Fright Smashers for the Speaker" to *The Voice Foundation Website* [www.voicefoundation.org](http://www.voicefoundation.org); Her chapter, "Training the Professional Voice" appears in [La Voz Patologica](#) by M.C.A.Jacson-Menaldi (ed.) and is available on line at [medicapnamericana.com](http://medicapnamericana.com); [Reader's Digest](#) (Feb 02) recaps Lucille's [Oprah](#) magazine interview of Dec 00 ; Her clients appeared this season on Broadway in *Hedda Gabler* and *Major Barbara*, in the films *Ocean's Eleven* and *Final* and on TV's *CSI* ; Dr. Rubin is a member of the Scientific Advisory Board of The Voice Foundation and will present her 21st workshop for the Care of the Professional Voice Symposium June 8 in Philadelphia.

**ELIZABETH VAN DEN BERG** (Western Maryland College) served as dialect consultant on *The Real Thing* at the Olney Theatre Center for the Arts in Maryland and *Hambone* at the Studio Theatre in Washington DC. The Studio has also contracted with her to serve as vocal consultant for *Prometheus*, opening in March. She directed *Children of Eden* for Western Maryland College this past fall. At the American College Theatre Festival Region II she was a preliminary Irene Ryan judge, responded to several productions, and offered a workshop on pictures and resumes. This coming spring she'll be vocal coach for *Escape from Happiness* at WMC.

**JUDYLEE VIVIER** (Brooklyn College) served as vocal consultant on the 2001 Fall production

season at Brooklyn College in New York, where she heads the MFA Acting Program and teaches voice and acting. The season included *Anton in Show Business* by Jane Martin, *Romeo and Juliet*, *My Sister in this House* by Wendy Kesselman, *Fool for Love* by Sam Shepard. This spring she organized an intensive three-day acting workshop with Olympia Dukakis for the MFA and BFA actors.

**LYNN WATSON** (U. of Maryland, Baltimore County) coached *On The Jump* at Arena Stage and did dialect work on *Far East* at Studio Theatre in DC. At UMBC she coached *Crimes of the Heart* and *Good Woman of Szechuan*. She attended a mastery workshop in Fitzmaurice Voicework in NYC. She also attended a "Joy of Phonetics" workshop with Louis Colaianni. The workshop was sponsored by DelMarVa regional VASTA members and held in the Baltimore area (special thanks to BettyAnn Leeseburg-Lange and Natalie McManus). She also presented an introductory session on Fitzmaurice Voicework for the DelMarVa group. Looking ahead, she is organizing and will host a 5-day Fitzmaurice workshop at UMBC in January 2003.

**SUSAN WILDER** (Arcadia University, PA), a graduate of The Academy for Classical Acting in DC, teaches Voice & Speech and Acting at Arcadia University near Philadelphia, where she also served as Voice and Text Coach on *Othello* and *As You Like It*, and directed *Parallel Lives*. She also directed a radio play, *In The Native State* at Germantown Friends School (Philadelphia) and will be teaching a course there this spring on 'The Actor's Shakespeare', and then will be playing Titania in Philadelphia in April.

**KATE WILSON** recently coached *Othello* at the Public Theater and *Twelfth Night* at Juilliard. She is currently coaching the Broadway productions of *The Graduate*, *Oklahoma*, and *The Man Who Had All the Luck*, as well as a new production of *Don Juan*, adapted and directed by Stephen Wadsworth, to be performed at Seattle Rep and the McCarter Theatre.

### **SOUTHEAST**

**CYNTHIA BARRETT** (University of North

Carolina at Greensboro) Closed out 2001 playing Mrs. Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol* for the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival and started 2002 playing Eliante in *The Misanthrope* for Charlotte Repertory Theatre. She is slated to coach *A Raisin in the Sun* and *The Visit* for UNCG Theatre during the spring semester.

**KATE BURKE** (University of Virginia) is spending her spring coaching *Our Country's Good* and *Cabaret*, attending U/RTA Auditions in Chicago and NYC to audition prospective graduate actors and tending to VASTA administrative tasks preparatory to handing over the presidency in August. She also taught a workshop called "An Overview of the Speaking Voice" for University of Virginia faculty.

**RICHARD GANG** (Elon University) directed *Marvin's Room* at Elon University which opened January 17 and at the same time played a principal role (Avram) with the students in the BFA Musical Theatre program which opened on February 7.

**DAYDRIE HAGUE**: (Auburn University) served as a preliminary rounds judge at the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival and plans to present a workshop with Lynn Watson at SETC in current trends and resources in dialect acquisition. She will be dialect coach for *Our Country's Good*, and has been accepted into the Fitzmaurice Certification Training Program in New York this summer.

**MARY IRWIN** is in her seventh year teaching at the School of Drama, North Carolina School of the Arts. This year she was asked to serve as acting Head of Voice. Mary is concurrently coaching *Streamers* and *Miss Julie* at NCSA, and, during the Spring Term, will be voice and text coach for *As You Like It*, directed by NCSA Drama Dean Gerald Freedman. She continues to administer the VASTA Scholarship that was created to honor her teacher and mentor, Clyde Vinson. Mary is also working with Master Linklater teacher Andrea Haring toward certification in the Linklater technique.

**ELISA LLOYD** married over the summer and is now Elisa Lloyd Carlson. She continues her

teaching work at Emory and coaching for Theater Emory, the Alliance, Actor's Express, Theatrical Outfit and the Georgia and North Carolina Shakespeare Festivals. She coached *One Flea Spare* and *The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek* in the Atlanta-wide Naomi Wallace Festival last fall. The film of *Hamlet* that she coached, directed by and starring Campbell Scott, was just released on video/DVD.

**CHRISTINE MORRIS** (Duke University) traveled to Alabama in November for a week-long residency at Alabama Shakespeare Festival, working with the MFA company on extended voice. Her major spring project is performing at Duke in a new adaptation of Don DeLillo's novel *Mao II*, playing opposite Frederick Neumann of Mabou Mines; adaptation and direction by Jody McAuliffe.

**FRED NELSON** is associate artistic director for Shenandoah Shakespeare located in Staunton, Virginia. He continues to be resident voice coach and most recently directed *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. This past September Shenandoah Shakespeare opened their resident theatre, The Blackfriars Playhouse, a re-creation of the indoor theatre used by Shakespeare.

**CAROL PENDERGRAST** (University of North Carolina at Wilmington) acted and sang in an adaptation of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, the inaugural production of a new professional theatre company in Wilmington, Theatre Exchange (transplanted from Los Angeles) in December. She will attend the Voice Symposium in Chicago, March 21-23 and hopes to see other VASTA members there.

**JEFFREY SMART** just finished work as vocal coach on *Romeo and Juliet* at Virginia Commonwealth University and attended Louis Colaianni's pillows workshop in Maryland with many Delmarvans. Jeff just helped a friend on her production of *The Stronger* and is looking for other productions to help out on this spring. Mostly, he's polishing his thesis and looking forward to being on the trail of a good job this semester—any leads?

**ERICA TOBOLSKI** (University of South Carolina) coached *The Merry Wives of Windsor*,

*Antigone*, and *Hay Fever* and played the role of Gin Chance in Naomi Wallace's *The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek* at the University of South Carolina. She taught a one-day master class on the Standard British Dialect for the Warehouse Theatre in Greenville, SC.

**TERRY WEBER** (University of Tennessee) As of June 2001, Terry was tenured and promoted to Associate Professor at the University of Tennessee. His one-man show, *Killing Lincoln* (by Amy Russell), will be presented at SETC in Mobile on March 7. This hour-long show is available for bookings to colleges and universities, beginning Fall, 2002. As part of the package for booking the show, Terry is available to teach workshops in voice, speech, and/or acting Shakespeare.

**ELIZABETH WILEY** (Head of Acting at College of William & Mary) in 2001: Coached *Twelfth Night* at Cape Fear Regional Theatre in NC; performed "The Woman Who Liked to Make Vaginas Happy" (the moaning piece great for voice people!) in W&M's V-Day production of *The Vagina Monologues*; coached *The Passion* for William & Mary Theatre; produced and performed in *Oh Dear, We Don't Know Where We Are!*, an evening of songs and monologues by British comedienne Joyce Grenfell; taught Voice for Violence with the Nordic Stage Fight Society in Skene, Sweden and in Parnu, Estonia. Elizabeth took a one-semester leave from W&M so that she could spend Fall 2001 teaching voice (with Mira Kehoe!) for the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theatre BFA Actor Training Program, where she also coached and played piano for their production of *The American Clock* by Arthur Miller.

#### **EAST CENTRAL**

**CHRISTINE ADAIRE** (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee) directed *King John* at Shakespeare & Company this past summer. It was chosen as one of the TEN BEST PRODUCTIONS in the Bershires in 2001. This season she dialect coached three plays at the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre: *Magic Fire*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Lovers And Executioners*. In December she taught voice workshops in Spain: at the

Escuela Eolia in Barcelona and the Guindalera Escena Abierta Teatro in Madrid. In mid-February she leaves for China to teach voice at the Shanghai Theatre Academy in Shanghai. When she returns to Milwaukee, she will begin rehearsals of *Fen*, which she will be directing with her students at the UW-Milwaukee.

**ERIC ARMSTRONG** (Roosevelt University) continues to be busy with coaching in the Chicago area, including the premier of *Rosa Lublin* for Piven Theatre and *Some Voices* for Profiles. Plans continue for the VASTA conference in July (see elsewhere in this issue for more details). Eric is also working on developing dialect analyses with Flash, which have been very successfully used in his dialects class. Baby number (a boy!) two should be by the end of April, so it's a busy and exciting time.

**KATE DeVORE** has joined the Voice Center at University of Illinois at Chicago as a voice/speech pathologist specializing in professional voice. She continues to teach theatre voice and speech at Columbia College and The Audition Studio as well as privately. She will serve as dialect coach this winter for a new play called *Stripped* at Circle Rep, and in March will present three talks/workshops at the Midwest Voice Symposium on Voice Disorders in Chicago. In June she will co-present (with Kate Ufema) a workshop on "Safe Screaming" at the Voice Foundation Symposium.

**LINDA GATES** presented a vocal workshop for international participants "The Use of Heightened Text in Vocal Pedagogy and Therapy" at the Pan European Voice Conference (PEVOC IV), Stockholm, Sweden, in August. The English text was Michael Alexander's translation of *Beowulf* with some of the verses in the original Anglo-Saxon. This fall she was the dialect and English diction coach for the Lyric Opera of Chicago's productions of *Street Scene* and *Billy Budd* and the dialect coach for *No Man's Land* and *Top Girls* for Remy Bumpo Theatre Company in Chicago.

**LAURA LEDFORD-PEARSON** (Millikin University) completed the Summer Vocology

returned to Millikin to direct Brian Friel's *A Month in the Country*. At the beginning of this year, she participated in a staged reading of Sandra Lindberg's *A Breach in Autumn* with colleagues from Illinois Wesleyan University, Illinois State University and Bradley University. Currently, she's coaching dialects for Stoppard's *The Real Inspector Hound*.

**SANDRA LINDBERG** (Illinois Wesleyan University) provided dialect coaching for *Pieces of the Sky* at Heartland Theatre in Bloomington, IL, as well as *Three More Sleepless Nights*, *Vagina Monologues*, *Lucky Stiff*, and an original play by John Ficca called *Afraid of Frankenstein*, all at IWU. She also learned a lot from a staged reading of her original play, *A Breach in Autumn*, read at IWU with a cast of professional actors and theatre faculty from IWU, ISU, Bradley, and Millikin. Currently, she is directing a production of *The Winter's Tale*, that opens in late April. Her article "Archetypal Image Work in Shakespearean Performance Training" will be read at the International Federation for Theatre Research Conference in Amsterdam this June.

**BETH MCGEE** (Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University) was appointed the Faculty Diversity Officer within CWRU's Office of the President in January, 2002. She is still part-time in the theater department, teaching voice.

**SUSAN MURRAY MILLER** returned to Chicago from teaching theatre at Principia College where she also directed *Into the Woods*. She is delighted to be a VASTA rejoin. She also rejoined the Jeff Committee, seeing and judging some 135 plays a year. In 2000-2001 Susan coached dialects for two productions for Senachai Productions and Timeline Theatre in Chicago. In May, 2001 she served as assistant dialect coach to Brendan Gunn of Belfast for Irish Repertory's production of *By the Bog of Cats*. In June, she performed the role of Mrs. Kilbride in the final week of that play's run at Victory Gardens Theater, Chicago. **CHUCK RICHIE** continues to teach full time in the School of Theatre & Dance at Kent State,

Institute last summer (see article this issue), then this past fall. In December, he played the role of the father in *A Child's Christmas in Wales* at the Actor's Summit Theatre in Hudson, Ohio. This spring he is dialect coaching Stephen Sondheim's *Saturday Night, A Memory of Water*, and *Dancing at Lughnasa* (again) at local theatres, guest dialect coaching with the third year MFA students at Case Western Reserve University/Cleveland Play House and dialect/voice coaching *Look Homeward, Angel* at Kent State. Meanwhile, he is working on an article for the next issue of the VASTA journal tentatively titled "The Natural Recorded Voice", still laboring to put together a group of nine Ohio dialect samples for IDEA, and looking forward to co-presenting at next summer's ATHE Conference with fellow VASTANs Judilee Vivier and Joanna Cazden.

### WEST CENTRAL

**JOHN STANIUNAS** (University of Kansas) and **MANDY REES** (University of California—Bakersfield) have collaborated on a book, entitled *Between Director and Actor: Strategies for Effective Performance*, due out in fall of 2002 from Heinemann Press.

### SOUTHERN

**MICHA ESPINOSA** coached *Agnes of God*, an original play *The Medeas*, *The Impossible Marriage*, and *Death of a Salesman*. She brought in Broadway Star Marc Kudicsh and Second City's Keegan Michael Key for guest workshops at Southwest Texas State University. Micha presented two workshops this year at the Texas Educational Theatre Association Conference. Check out her new web-site for workshop information at [www.yogaforactors.com](http://www.yogaforactors.com) and always feel free to contact Micha with any membership needs. On a fun note, Micha recently returned from New Zealand where she jumped out of a perfectly good plane at 12,000 feet, repelled into a cave 350 feet deep, and walked over 50 miles!

where he dialect coached *Dancing at Lughnasa*

**JOE FALOCCO**, Micha Espinosa, Phyllis Griffin, and Michele Cuomo have proposed a panel for the 2002 ATHE conference in San Diego entitled "Yoga, Embodiment, and the Voice: Pedagogy in the New Age".

### NEW ENGLAND

**CANDICE BROWN** is currently living in Boston, MA and teaching Voice & Speech, Movement and Intermediate Acting at Wheaton College in Norton, MA. In the fall she taught Voice & Speech, Movement, and Masks and Puppets, and also vocal coached a production of Paula Vogel's *How I Learned To Drive* at Wheaton College, as well as directed a production of *The Wake of Jamey Foster* by Beth Henley at Brandeis University. She was absent from VASTA last year as she did some parttime teaching (Movement and Acting) at Brandeis and at Wheelock College (Masks and Puppets and an interdisciplinary course cooperative.) Her temporary sabbatical from fulltime work was a response to return to a more aggressive pursuit of her professional acting voice.

Last May she premiered Adam Rapp's new play entitled *Nocturne* at The New York Theatre Workshop. The play was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and had its premiere at ART in Cambridge in the fall of 2001.

**NANCY HOUFEK** (A.R.T., Harvard) has coached *Othello* (dir. by Yuri Yeremin & David Wheeler) in the fall, *Marat/Sade* (dir. by Janos Szasz) in the winter, and *Lysistrata* (adapt. by Larry Gelbart, dir. by Andre Serban, starring Cherry Jones) in the spring for the American Repertory Theatre at Harvard University. In addition to teaching the first and second year graduate level classes in voice, speech, dialects and Shakespeare text, she is mentoring three students in the new M.F.A. program in voice which the Institute for Advanced Theatre Training is now offering. Nancy has continued her work with the Derek Bok Center for Teaching & Learning working with Harvard faculty; the film of her work, *The Act of Teaching*, is now available

through Anker Publishing (www.ankerpub.com). **MARYA LOWRY** (Brandeis University) presented a three day workshop exploring the ancient act of lamentation at the International Giving Voice Festival in Wales, April '02. The theme for Giving Voice 7 was The Voice Politic and the workshop title: "Lamentation: Voices from the Ashes." Additionally, she is the voice of Mary Baker Eddy for the new Mary Baker Eddy Library currently being developed in Boston. **DAVID ALAN STERN** was recently named Associate Head for Graduate Programs in the Dramatic Arts Department at the University of Connecticut. After eight years of being the sole voice-speech-text-dialect teacher in the Department, he is celebrating the January UConn arrival of his new colleague, Karen Ryker, and looks forward to many joint explorations of vocal violence. Recent dialect-coaching assignments for David have included Joe Moore as Oscar in *The Odd Couple* at the Hawaii Theatre Center and the productions of *Translations* at the Connecticut Repertory Theatre and *Awake and Sing* and *My Fair Lady* at the Berkshire Theatre Festival.

### **WESTERN**

**DUDLEY KNIGHT** (UCIrvine) reports that during the 2000-2001 academic year he was fortunate enough to be able to provide vocal and accent direction at South Coast Repertory for three world premieres of plays by major American playwrights: *Everett Beekin*, by Richard Greenberg, *Kimberly Akimbo* by David Lindsay-Abaire, and *The Beard of Avon*, by Amy Freed. He also played Big Daddy in *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof* at UCIrvine. During the summer of 2001 he taught two five-day workshops with Catherine Fitzmaurice for two splendid groups of voice teachers and actors: the first, at UNC-Greensboro, focused on the use of Fitzmaurice Voicework in Shakespearean performance, and the second, at Depaul University in Chicago (right after the VASTA Conference) focused on his approach to speech and accent training. He is looking forward to being one of the teachers in Catherine

Fitzmaurice's certification session in New York this summer, and also teaching at The Actors Center for several weeks. He is also looking forward to teaching another five-day speech and accent workshop in August at UCIrvine, again in August right after the VASTA Conference in San Diego. He will be teaching with his estimable new colleague in voice and speech, Phil Thompson. **ARTHUR LESSAC** and **SUE ANN PARK** take great pleasure in announcing the appointment of **NANCY KREBS** as Master Teacher of the Lessac Body, Voice and Speech Work. A Certified Lessac Trainer for over a decade, Nancy has devoted the past two years to private and special studies with Lessac and Park to qualify for Master Teacher status. She is the fourth person to reach the level of Lessac Master Teacher. She has been teaching the work for twenty years including five years with the Lessac Summer workshops.

**JOAN MELTON** coached *Picasso, How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying, The Fantasticks* and *Arcadia* for Cal State Fullerton during the fall term and did two workshops with Catherine Fitzmaurice in New York City in December. In January, she did workshops in England and Wales, at the Central School of Speech and Drama, London, and Trinity College, Carmarthen, respectively, and did Roy Hart work with Noah Pikes in Zurich, Switzerland. In February she coached Dylan Thomas's *Return Journey* for guest director, Kevin Matherick at CSUF and presented a Fitzmaurice workshop at the American College Theatre Festival in Hayward, CA. In June she'll present the first VASTA-sponsored workshop, "The Singer Speaks," at a NATS (National Association of Teachers of Singing) conference, in San Diego, and in August she'll do a workshop, "Speaking and Singing with the Same Voice," at the Vth International Voice Symposium, in Salzburg. **KATHY MAES** returned from a medical/dental leave last spring and continues at Chair, at the University of Colorado-Denver, Department of Theatre, Film and Video Production. She is currently in production of a new translation and adaptation of *Lysistrata*, in collaboration with

**Members' news****(continued from previous page)**

Suzanne Coley a Master of Humanities student at the University of Colorado-Denver.

Edited by Christine Morris, Associate Newsletter Editor.

## MAILING SURCHARGE

There has, understandably, been some confusion about the origins, and administration of the mailing fee assessed along with our annual dues. A couple of years ago the Board noticed that one of the organization's biggest expenses was in mailing materials to the members. Each year VASTA sends out newsletters, conference announcements, dues reminders, bibliographies, tenure and training guides, advocacy materials and (bi-annually) the journal. These materials are sent to our members all over the globe. The board observed that if we didn't recover these mailing costs we would soon drain our resources, so we decided to add a materials mailing fee of \$6 to the annual dues. Why didn't we just raise the dues by that amount? It is a bookkeeping and tax issue. Separating the fees allows us to avoid showing the additional money as income. Does part of the fee go to offset the mailing expense for international members? Yes. Sending material to our international members is particularly expensive. The board felt that VASTA needs the support of its members all over the world. We want to make it as painless as possible to belong to VASTA, regardless of where one lives, and since we all benefit from the diverse skills and knowledge gained from our international members, it makes sense to spread the mailing cost among all members.

## Innovations in Voice Training: Exploring Additional Tools by Erica Tobolski

Many methodologies are employed in voice training. Some of these approaches remain relevant while others are merely transient. Time reveals which methods resonate with the greatest number of people relative to our experiences, cultures and philosophies. An approach or "system" may serve as a foundation for training, or be part of a larger whole, playing a supporting role with a particular function. As voice practitioners, we are constantly weighing the merits of this approach or that, choosing to employ one primary methodology or incorporating many viewpoints in order to express a set of beliefs that naturally shift over time. My own quest for knowledge has led me to explore two additional tools: The Jo Estill Voice Training System and the computerized feedback programs of Kay Elemetrics. While it is unclear whether or not these two particular approaches will emerge as primary systems for theatrical voice training, without a doubt they are on the leading edge of innovative techniques. Only time will tell if they will become integrated into our training procedures or are but a brief stop on the continuing quest.

Over a year ago, I met Dr. Julie Fortney, Professor of Music in Voice at Mars Hill College in North Carolina. She and her colleagues in the Voice Performance and Musical Theatre programs include in their curriculum the Estill Voice Training System (EVTS) in conjunction with a computerized speech lab. An on-site visit to the speech lab and a Level 1 Workshop in EVTS, supported through a grant from the University of South Carolina, introduced me to these innovative approaches to voice. The Estill system, designed primarily for singers but applicable to speech and voice, teaches voice production and how to move the structures of the vocal mechanism (e.g. retracting the false vocal folds in order to avoid constriction). This simple but profound

technique does not in itself make one a better singer or speaker, but reproducing the movement consistently and accurately is the craft. Artistry and Performance Magic are the next level, as craft is applied to artistic expression through a song or piece of text.

The computer programs used in the speech lab are from Kay Elemetrics, a New Jersey company who designs and builds speech analysis and feedback hard- and software. At the 2001 ATHE Conference, Dr. Fortney and I co-presented a session called “Computers, Speech & Singing: Speech Science Meets the Artistic Voice.” The presentation demonstrated features of the Multi-Speech software program, such as the real-time pitch capture and the IPA Vowel Chart. Both of these interactive features can be customized for a particular task, and allow the speaker to see as well as hear changes in their speaking patterns. The computer program assists the student in learning a specific skill, such as matching the IPA symbol to it’s coordinating sound, by providing a structured opportunity for self-remediation.

These latest experiences have reinforced my philosophies about teaching voice and speech, and what role technology might play in future training. Many of us have strong opinions of the use of, or even validity of technology in what is arguably an artistic expression. Given that technology has a reputation of being cold, analytic, even robotic, it’s not surprising that those involved in celebrating the human experience would distrust its encroachment. In light of this distrust, we may be prone to dismiss the use of technology when in fact it may be complementary to our current methods.

Computers alone cannot train a voice, but they may be extremely useful in supporting integrated, wholistic training. As a supplemental tool, they offer a way to practice specific skills (e.g., learning the IPA symbol or Lessac number by seeing the symbol, hearing the sound, and reproducing the sound both by ear AND by

feeling the shape of the oral/pharyngeal cavity and the articulators). The interactive computer programs accommodate all types of learning modalities, especially important with individuals whose primary orientation is visual. In a similar vein, EVTS merges knowledge of anatomy with natural behaviors, “prompts” such as laughing or crying, which produce a particular vocal quality. Estill’s methodical research and pictures of the vocal mechanism in action allow us to see what we’ve been hearing.

Although we may have differing views on which means to employ, our curiosity continues to lead us into ever-new territory. The research and technology being generated by speech scientists and analysts today is certain to influence voice professionals as they conceive of future training practices.

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