Brisbane was the perfect place for a Voice Odyssey. It feels like a city from outer space, with fantastic bridges, a winding river running through it, and an arts complex that is not to be believed! Residential areas reminded me of the northeastern United States, although houses were built on stilts to make them cooler and palm trees confused the setting. Relatively ancient walls built by prisoners are a rough contrast to modern banks, shopping centres and churches—“We have one of every kind.”

The people I met were warm, friendly, and incredibly gracious. They had an obvious pride about their country, their cities, and their work. An interesting fact kept presenting itself. In Australia, one tends to grow up, go to school, and work in the same city. The education system is excellent and you can train for most professions without leaving home.

Participants at the symposium were medical doctors, speech pathologists, singers and singing teachers, as well as theatre voice teachers and actors. Heading the distinguished faculty were: Greg Enriquez, stepping in for internationally famous vocal technician Seth Riggs, who was unable to attend at the last minute because of an illness; Dr. John Rubin, President of the British Voice Association and consultant laryngologist to the Voice Clinic at the Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital, London; Professor Moya Andrews, expatriate Australian Professor of Speech and Hearing Science, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculties at Indiana University; and Tony Knight, Director, Teacher and Actor, and Head of the Acting Program at the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA), in Sydney. The planning committee was well organized and every aspect of the program was handled with an amazing sense of STYLE.

The symposium opened with a reception I shall never forget. As we stood making small talk in the lovely foyer of the Conservatorium of Griffith University, we were interrupted by glorious sounds from the Music Department’s Brass Ensemble, as they played the Star Trek theme from a balcony above us. Our Captain, also on the balcony, in a red coat and magnificent voice, opened the symposium officially with Treky music from 2001. It was a thrilling moment.

There was an air of excitement in the room. I’d not noticed the Brass Ensemble behind us as we entered, and suddenly the opening music from 2001 rang through the hall. It was a thrilling moment.

One of the delightful features of the symposium was the inclusion of daytime meals in the tuition package. The arrangement was efficient and friendly, and went a long way toward balancing the social and business aspects of the conference.

Afternoons were filled with workshops, three or four concurrent sessions, followed by a general session in the theatre. The quality of workshops and papers was unusually high, and for me the most exciting presenter was Greg Enriquez. Greg worked virtual miracles with singers from every possible style, and handled questions with amazing expertise and sensitivity.

The focus of his work was on blending the “registers” of the voice. Seth Rigg’s book, Singing for the Stars, A Complete Program for Training Your Voice (1992), discusses the approach in detail. Greg is a very warm and accessible person, direct in the manner of Seth Rigg himself, and uncompromising in his convictions. His teaching is clear, positive, honest, and supportive, and the results we heard were astonishing.

The first morning’s program, Dr. John Rubin focused on various aspects of a team approach to voice care. Professor Moya Andrews discussed the relationship between the Voice Clinic and the Department of Music at Indiana University, and Tony Knight gave us considerable insight into the history and current program at NIDA. Tony spoke at 11:30 and as I was enjoying his delightful and engaging comments, what he was saying began to sink in. Voice, Movement, and Acting were integrated parts of a whole, and singing was understood to be a part of theatre voice training at NIDA and in Australia. Whoa! In two hours I was to present a workshop entitled, “Integrating Singing Technique into Theatre Voice Training.” Did I really have anything to contribute to this conference?

One thirty came and my workshop in “Opera Space” was standing room only. After sharing my revelation from the morning session, I opened the floor to a bit of discussion, then started to work. We moved, tremored, sounded, and sang. I had a great time and participants were very enthusiastic. Singing in the context of theatre voice was not new, but the particular approach I was using was different and connected immediately to other perspectives in the room.

On Day 3, Dr. Peter Stephenson presented a paper on “Gastroesophageal Reflux and its Relationship to Voice Disorders.” What was surprising to me about his report was his strong recommendation of surgery. From the program abstract: “In terms of individual treatments, both medication and surgery appear to be viable options. (continued on page 11)
Linda tries to modify and to enlarge her teaching methods in this way. A voice teacher should be open to re-evaluation of methods and philosophy. For Linda the most important element in voice training is the individual, not the method. She is passionately concerned that the voice is an essential aspect of personality. Voice training is seen as working on the entire personality and personal development. During the festival Linda will direct a 10-day voice workshop titled “Emotion: how to let it fly?” Let the voice fly in all the depths and heights between what she terms “the thrilling brilliance of the Queen of the Night seeking revenge, and the murderous revenge of Othello.” She aspires to direct voices into caves and over sunny hills, into demonic and delicious excesses. The voice will be central to the release of emotions and thus undertake an expressive and artistic adventure.

Bruno Dizien will direct another 10-day workshop. He will embark on a very specific artistic journey, combining dance experiment with rock-climbing techniques, and setting up an event open to the public based on Guy de Maupassant’s Fou.: “Am I mad? Or only Jealous?” Joan Schirle will conduct a workshop with roots in a contemporary form of Commedia based on masks and movement to find comic prototypes.

Liza Mayer will direct a shorter workshop on voice. She has worked with voice pioneers Alfred Wolfsohn and Roy Hart. She has moved beyond pure methodology. She will bring together voice, breath and movement in her “Carmen For Beginners,” a back-to-basics approach. She has created a workshop specifically for those who lament, “I sing out of tune, I don’t dare to sing, as a child they told me to shut up,” with a view to instilling confidence by the simple route of a gentle warm-up, moving on to simple spoken or sung syllables, and to songs the participants choose for themselves. The objective will be a voice that is made to explode with the fireworks of Carmen or a voice that radiates the modesty of Cinderella.

Jealousy will host a number of thinkers, academicians, writers, psychologists: Ginette Paris, Connie Rodriguez, Stephen Karcher, Patricia Berry, Cindy Sebrell, Jay Livernois, Cliff Bostock, and Nor Hall. David Miller and Sonu Shamdasani are projected to attend as well. All of them bring a common interest in myth and theater. They will contribute to the festival in lecturers, tribunal, and discussions with participants. Most of them will stay the run of the festival, where last-minute improvised events abound. All this gives the festival its unique raison d’etre. Sonu Shamdasani summarizes it tersely, but also very poetically as “a dance of ideas.”

In 2000 I was a participant in Waterford and, like Zeus did Methis, I was sucked in. I found the experience disconcerting and invigorating. It was impossible to be indifferent. I found the symposium gave me a different view on the approach to everything: voice teaching, acting, directing, writing, singing, or dancing. Euclid believed there is a parallelism in eternity. Perhaps the true value of The Myth and Theatre Festival is its presentation of multiple realities in theater that in turn engenders a point where they merge.

summer. The incident led to several gossip stories and a good deal of wild speculation on the part of the press. The main incident was Ken Follet, a millionaire backer of Tony Blair’s accusing him of running a government based on gossip.

(continued from page 5--Melton)

However, regardless of the symptoms with which patients present, surgery has emerged as the optimum choice.”

One of the most interesting papers I heard was Kate Foy’s “Working in Mask: The Vocal Challenge.” Dr. Foy’s presentation was especially vivid because of the colorful slides she used to demonstrate and enhance her descriptions. We saw the terrain in which she was working as well as some of the masks she used in performance.

On the evening of Day 3, there was a gala dinner at one of the most beautiful hotels I’ve ever seen. The food, wine, and service were all first class. In addition, a member of the planning committee, Irene Bartlett, has a band, which played throughout the evening—beautiful, danceable music!

On Day 4 I did a workshop entitled “Integrating Pilates into Voice Training.” One of the participants at that session was Carmel Moore, a yoga teacher and speech pathologist who uses yoga principles in her hospital practice. Carmel had presented an excellent paper and demonstration of her work earlier in the day.

At the last general session, on the afternoon of Day 4, there were awards and thanks, and each of us who presented was recognized and given a gift. Our goodbyes were mixed with emptiness of leaving new friends and the excitement of planning future collaborations. This journey was at an end, but there would surely be other installments.

S P E E C H  C O M M U N I C AT I O N S /  T H E A T R E:
Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pennsylvania.
Tenure Track Assistant Professor position beginning August 2001. Reopening search. Teach multiple sections of an all-college oral Speech Communication requirement as well as Theatre performance courses including Voice and Diction, Advanced Voice Production, and Oral Interpretation. Ph.D. in an appropriate field required. ABD (near completion) will be considered. The ability to teach performance courses in Broadcast Communications or direct one of the on-stage productions as well as prior college teaching experience is a plus. Westminster College is a coeducational, liberal arts institution with historical ties to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). With a full-time undergraduate enrollment of 1,400 students and 100 full-time faculty, the College is located in a beautiful rural setting within close proximity to both Pittsburgh and Cleveland. Selection process resumes April 16, 2001. Submit vita, statement of teaching philosophy, and three references to Dr. David L. Barner, Chair, Communication Studies, Theatre, and Art Department, Box 162, Westminster College, New Wilmington, PA 16172-0001. EOE