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

STRUCTURED BREATHING
By Catherine Fitzmaurice

What is it?

“Structured breathing” and the “focus line” are terms I coined in the early 70s as part of a vocal technique (“Destructuring/Restructuring”) which combines appropriate choice with spontaneity as well as focused attention. “Structuring” partially uses techniques taught as bel canto in singing, and brought into the field of speaking voice in the late nineteenth century by Elsie Fogerty at the Central School of Speech and Drama in London, England, where I learned it and later taught it. “Structured breathing” modifies the bel canto pattern in three main ways:

1. “Destructuring” exercises reveal “structuring” as the preferred pattern of a free torso when speakers are engaged in speaking from their own imagination. Through “destructuring”, awareness develops of the chemical and emotional needs of the body and mind to a.) breathe varying amounts at varying times, and b.) express desire and purpose. “Structuring” freely incorporates such requirements.

2. “Structuring” differentiates between the active exhalation of the transversus abdominis (which lifts the ribcage) and that of the rectus abdominis, the obliques, and inner intercostals (which squeeze the ribcage).

3. “Structuring” involves awareness of an imaged “focus line”, which assists with harmonic range and clear intentionality.

How does one do it?

(continued on page 3)
Dear VASTA Members,

As we wade through these difficult times, the Voices of reason, comfort, wisdom, compassion, strength, and faith are all the more crucial to our very existence. The eloquence, the tone, the very phrasing of our leaders’ words and thoughts become paramount in the communications that literally involve the lives of everyone on this planet. We, as voice and speech professionals, know how powerful, how inspirational, how life-changing verbal expression can be when it embodies the spirit of our highest selves, the wisdom of the ages, and the eloquence of heartfelt experience. Let us never underestimate the power of our Voices. And let us never give up trying to Voice the words and perform the actions that will bring peace and prosperity to ourselves and to our brothers and sisters around the world. With this said, I wish to extend my joy of being a part of this organization, and to let you know that VASTA is still healthy, positive, and strongly committed to its growth and progress, even in these disturbing times.

So let me up-date you regarding our currently existing new additions, our works-in-progress, and our visions for the future.

First, I am so very pleased to announce that, if you log onto our website www.vasta.org, you will discover that we now have an official VASTA Medical Advisor. Yolanda Heman-Ackah, M.D. has agreed to respond to any of our vocal health questions free of charge. She has even established a special e-mail address for this purpose. Further information regarding this appears separately in this newsletter and on the VASTA website. What a needed and wonderful addition Yolanda will be to our resources. Hurray!

And just as times are changing, VASTA must also change to meet the ever-increasing demand of creating a harmonious global community. Thus, I and VASTA’s Board of Directors are making plans to extend VASTA even further to begin to try and meet some of our global challenges, to expand our visions and ways and means, and to integrate more disciplines into our repertoires of teaching and practice.

As a result, many of you have recently responded to a survey that included some questions regarding a VASTA Conference on a foreign soil. A large majority of your responses were excitedly positive, expressing a strong desire to travel, and to commune and share with our foreign members and their cultures. Though there is always the issue of timing and cost, given enough notice, I hope you will all begin saving your pennies, for it appears that we will be in England in the summer of 2005. The plan is to piggy-back with a European voice-oriented conference, giving our members the opportunity to
participate in two back-to-back conferences for the cost of one plane fare, and to network even further with the European community.

This will be the first step in an even larger conceptual plan to rotate our VASTA conferences between foreign shores, and piggy-backing with more than just ATHE here in the States. Which brings us to another of the questions answered by many of you regarding other conferences you attend, and other organizations to which you belong.

As VASTA plans for the future of its members and for those we hope to inspire and influence, it behooves us to reach out to some additional groups that can enrich our understanding and skills, and can benefit from our expertise. There are several organizations that desire our presence beyond just a few of us. I am currently exploring these possibilities, and will soon propose a viable conference rotation to the Board that may evolve into a five-year cycle of sorts, with ATHE still being a major and majority player.

Additionally, VASTA is beginning to restructure its budget a bit. Now that our Journal is becoming a stable bi-annual presence, we are thinking more and more how VASTA can financially contribute to the youth of our profession, and to the further training of our own. Establishing a VASTA Endowment has been a prominent goal of our 2005 Initiative established at our retreat back in 1998. As a result, we are taking major steps towards these ends which include the already established Kennedy Center/American College Festival (KC/ACTF) VASTA Award for Excellence in Theatre Voice. Initiated last April, we are giving this $500 merit award to an Irene Ryan finalist at the Kennedy Center on an annual basis. I believe this link with KC/ACTF to be an important one. And the Kennedy Center seems to concur. In the future, once the formal endowment has been established, we hope to fund more opportunities for our members and our youth, both of whom are the future of our profession. The above, along with our fledgling Mentoring Program, an on-line bibliography, and more opportunities for our members to present their work for all to see and hear are major VASTA priorities to be further explored, contemplated, and

The inhalation in autonomic (ANS) silent breathing is dependent on a raised level of carbon dioxide in the blood to stimulate the phrenic nerve in the diaphragm. This causes an active diaphragmatic downward contraction, and a passive widening of the ribcage by the resulting slight enlargement of the diaphragm’s circumference, thus expanding lung tissue three-dimensionally. The abdomen is moved passively a little outwards by the viscera.

The “structured” inhalation in intentional breathing for speaking is activated by the Central Nervous System (CNS) and is primarily stimulated by ideas formed in the mind, so that the regular rhythm of respiration is altered to express the complex rhythms of thought. There is generally a quick intake in preparation for a sustained outflow which vibrates the vocal folds. In this inhalation the CNS effects the active contraction of the external intercostals, lifting and widening the ribcage, which pulls the now mostly passive diaphragm wider and down, thus expanding the lungs. The seventh through twelfth ribs, where the lungs are largest, are the most flexible, because they are not attached in front to the sternum but only jointed at the spine, so this inhalation focuses effort at the center of this tuxedo cutaway-like portion, but the entire ribcage may be somewhat involved. (When the intercostals are familiar with this action, I use an image of “separating the kidneys”.) As in silent breathing, the abdomen follows by being moved outwards, passively only, and not very far, as a result of compression of the contents of the stomach from above by the diaphragm, and not as a reaching for air. It may dip inward a little first, in a whiplash effect.

The exhalation in autonomic (ANS) silent breathing is simply a release, with the diaphragm and ribcage returning to a rest position.

The “structured” exhalation for speaking follows the quick inhalation almost instantly. The CNS effects an active quick contraction (and resulting inwards movement) of the transversus abdominis only, which holds this contraction steady throughout vocalization. Because of the relaxation and rise of the diaphragm the abdominal wall will move further inwards during phonation, but the
initial action moves inwards immediately as far as it comfortably can. (I use the image of a trapdoor, hinged at the end of the sternum, drawing inwards and upwards to create a floor for the thorax — the same action as when one tries to appear skinny if standing sideways and looking in a mirror.) One can see at the same time, in a whiplash effect, a passive continued outward movement of the ribs, if the inner intercostals and/or other abdominal muscles are not unnecessarily bracing them in place or starting a contraction to squeeze the ribcage inwards. The outer layer of the abdominal wall (the rectus abdominis) and the middle layer (the obliques) remain uncontracted, soft, and passive, but of course, as an integral part of the abdominal wall, they move inwards together with the innermost layer, the transversus. As the vocal folds adduct and partially engage and vibrate, the external intercostals “float” down slowly, in a delayed release, not a collapse, and not a squeeze. But the focus is on the action of the transverse.

The “focus line” then extends, as a mental image only, from the dynamic action at the abdomen down and around the pelvis and up the spine into the head and out of the “third eye”, so the attention is not on oneself, nor on the vocal tract, but on the point(s) of communication.

If speaking is to continue, one can restart the entire cycle immediately with another quick inhalation, or there can be a pause after the out-breath. In either case breathing for speaking is always activated by the CNS as the result of thoughts one wants to express, and its size and rhythm depend on the thoughts.

Why do it?

The above is a mechanical description of highly organic and fluid motion, which (once the specific actions have been identified and practiced sufficiently) is always available as a choice when there is need. Need may arise from physical effort, as, for example, when speaking with high volume or unusual pitches, or dancing or fighting; or in charged emotional speaking; or from stage fright; or when sustaining long thought patterns and complex sentence structures; or when the tone

STEMWERK
By Candice Brown

“In the course of our lives we develop a social voice which disconnects itself from its natural richness in sound, the primitive voice. This physical voice can be used as a tool for people with speaking problems, or in personal development to loosen blocks and to discover your own personality. In theater and singing the primitive voice allows one to discover all the possibilities for self-expression.” — Jean-Rene Toussaint

Jean-René Toussaint and Anne-Marie Blink are partners at Stitching Rondom Stemwerk® (Foundation Surrounding Voice Work.) Their foundation is located in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Stemwerk® is a protected name for the unique voice work, developed by Jean-Rene Toussaint.

Toussaint is a French actor, director, theatre and voice teacher. He has been developing his voice work for the past 20 years, and has served as founder and director of Stitching Rondom Stemwerk® since 1988. He has collaborated with many artists such as Jerzy Grotowski, Robert Wilson, Annick Nozati, and companies such as Festival d’Avignon, Theatre de Radeau, Theatre de Feu, The Living Theatre, Bread and Puppet Theatre and the Roy Hart Theatre to name a few.

Anne-Marie Blink is a Dutch singer, performer, and teacher. She gives about twenty performances a year as a singer. One of her more recent performances, Tangos, was based on Argentina (Carlos Gardell and Astor Piazzolla). She has also created performances and a recording based on the work of Edith Piaf and is currently the conductor of the female-choir “Elles.” Blink has been busy with her work surrounding the typical strength of women and voice since 1997.

Toussaint has traveled through parts of Asia and India studying diverse ancient vocal practices — from Afghan Sufi to Mongolian, Tibetan and Japanese vocal traditions.

The roots of his approach to are found in his extensive work with deaf children. Through

(continued on page 7)
this experience he discovered the importance of the physical experience of sound and became fascinated with raw sound (a primitive voice, unpolished by societal norms, values and culture).

Stemwerk® can be used as a tool for singing and also for speaking in the theater. The work is useful for expression, communication, pedagogy and personal development. All these have a place together and are centered in the Stitching Rondom Stemwerk®, where Toussaint and Blink and several guest teachers have a place. Toussaint is devoted to the aspect of the work in personal development, all the didactics and the Theater Department. Blink is the caretaker of both singing and children’s activities.

Over the past 10 years, Toussaint and Blink have had more than 4500 people actively working with the primitive voice. They are continually developing techniques relating to the body and the voice, and using them creatively, in expression, re-education and personal development.

In the summer of 2002 the foundation opened its doors in a new location in Turkey (Avanos-Cappadocia.) This location will continue to be used as a summer-residence of Stemwerk® and will be a part of the International Center for the Voice. In Toussaint’s words, “This is a magical place where you can meet your voice, and our culture surrounded by the beauty of wondrous mountains and dreamy landscapes.” Last year they began with three workshops under the direction of Toussaint and Blink. This year there will be at least 10 workshops, which will hopefully feature guest teachers such as Jonathan Hart and Kristin Linklater.

Toussaint made his U.S. debut in December of 2000, offering both professionals and non-professionals an opportunity to explore the potential of their own voices. I met him during a workshop in Boston and was inspired to continue investigating his primitive voice work. I joined Toussaint and Anne-Marie Blink, as their guest, for ten days of intense voice work that consisted of daily private sessions with each of them and a three-day group workshop with non-professionals entitled, Being Nomad Again. It was honestly some of the most

VASTA CONFERENCE 2003, NEW YORK
by Judylee Vivier, Conference Planner

The Voice and Speech Trainers Association will hold its annual conference this year in the Big Apple at Marymount Manhattan College directly following the ATHE conference. Our theme, VOICE & RITUAL: BEYOND THE SPOKEN WORD focuses on the extension of the emotionally connected voice beyond the spoken word into song and other vocal expression. VASTA brings three voice experts who apply a hands-on interactive approach to explore the extension of the emotionally connected voice beyond the spoken word into song and other vocal expression.

The presenters include: Richard Armstrong, actor, director, and master teacher, will present his organic and physically rooted approach to the extended voice. Marya Lowry, an actress and voice teacher at Brandeis University, brings us her research on lamentation. Dr. Wendy DeLeo LeBorgne, a voice pathologist and singing specialist, will focus more on a traditional approach to singing and the integration of the speaking and singing voice.

The conference begins on Monday August 4th and runs until Thursday August 7th. The official VASTA hotel is The Franklin Hotel on East 87th.

Vastavox Archives
By Eric Armstrong

To access the Vastavox Archives, go to: 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.
USING THE JOURNAL IN THE CLASSROOM
by Rocco dal Vera

Recently we have had a few requests from teachers interested in using articles from the Voice and Speech Review in their classes. There are some excellent reasons for doing this. Since this is the only journal specifically addressing voice and speech issues for actors, the topics discussed are current and relevant. Many programs are requiring a writing component for all classes and these articles stimulate good responses. And the selection of articles allows the teacher to either select several articles around a theme or to let students choose from something that piques their individual interest.

Before the VSR came to be, it was difficult to find good, short pieces to send home for students to read and then discuss or write about. Typically, the only available material came from whole books and it seems that Voice and Speech teachers rarely used outside reading as a component of their classes.

Now that may be changing – and the logistics are not at all difficult to work out. If you are interested in making copies of a particular article or set of articles, have your campus copy shop contact the VSR editor and make the arrangements. You will tell them your class enrollment and when you need it. Then we can either supply them with a clean electronic copy of the pages requested or they can use your copy. These will be photocopied and a royalty (usually from 5 to 10 cents a page) is

VOCAL COACHING IN BROADCASTING
By Lissa Tyler Renaud, Ph.D.

Voice professionals can make an important contribution to clear communication between radio and television producers and their anchors. In broadcasting, the producer may find himself called upon to give voice-related direction (though, depending on budget, this responsibility may also fall to camera technicians or managers). Not surprisingly, producers often feel that anchors cannot follow their direction; anchors in turn often feel that producers cannot explain what they want. Currently, neither producers nor anchors typically have the benefit of the vocabulary that a voice professional uses as a matter of course.

Since 1975, many clients in broadcasting have turned to my business, Voice Training Project. In this context, I have developed a kind of “equivalency chart” for producers and anchors to use when they are rushing to work out a problem and need some useful language. In other words, the vocal coach’s tools can offer efficient solutions, translating the producer’s general requests into practical things the anchor can do. Some of these are far from obvious or even counter-intuitive, but over the years, other vocal coaches have also found my guidelines useful in broadcasting studios and booths.

For radio, the list looks something like this:

If the producer complains of A, then suggest B for the anchor:

A. Sounding unnatural
B. Mark the words that are being emphasized and cut them down to as few as possible
A. Sounding monotonous
B. Vary repetitive intonation patterns, especially towards ends of sentences
A. Sounding wooden
B. Vary the starting pitches. Even when the sentence which follows has great variety, repetitive starting pitches make a poor impression

VASTA Medical Advisor Announced
Yolanda Heman-Ackah, M.D. has agreed to be VASTA’s medical advisor for a two year period. Dr. Heman-Ackah is willing to respond to any medical questions that are voice related. Yolanda Heman-Ackah is a laryngologist/voice specialist with the Chicago Voice Institute and The Voice Center, University of Illinois at Chicago.
E-mail VASTA’s Medical Advisor at: vastamd@hotmail.com.

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POST-ATHE WORKSHOP
(Sponsored by ATME)
“Inner Sources for Out-Write Expression”
Suzan Zeder & Jim Hancock

For over fifteen years Jim Hancock, and Suzan Zeder, have developed a unique mind/body approach to accessing creative awareness and expression for writers, actors, choreographers, directors, and teachers. Combining Hancock’s extensive experience as a teacher of movement in professional actor training with Zeder’s work with playwrights, they have synthesized an innovative psycho-physical approach to help artists get in touch with their own inner resources for creative expression. They have shared this “Inner Source” work with students and professionals in summer institutes, teaching residencies, workshops, and master classes throughout the United States.

In this post-conference, one-day workshop, Zeder and Hancock will provide an introduction to the Inner Source work though specific activities and exercises designed to involve participants as thinking, feeling, sensing, moving beings. To do this they will work with bodies in motion, explore memory, stimulate sensory awareness, and challenge participants to move beyond the surface of their everyday perceptions into the deeper places within themselves where truly original thought and expression are possible. Writing exercises will be explored as process rather than product. Self-use approaches to movement will be used to free the body and mind of inhibitions and tensions and to allow for greater ease and economy of motion. In a safe and intimate environment, participants will learn ways to weave the threads of their own minds and memories into new configurations. The day will address the possibility for more open channels of self awareness and will encourage participants to find the confidence, courage and joy to express themselves creatively. All participants should wear clothes for movement and expect to MOVE!

The workshop will take place from noon (continued on page 17)

(Structured Breathing, contd. from page 4)

of the voice may be intentionally altered as a result of physical tension — for character work, for instance; or the body may have chronic poor breathing habits. Or, finally, the simple act of standing upright and speaking can in some people cause so much tension in the back, the shoulders, the chest, the neck, and/or the abdominal wall that the breathing is compromised — either held, hindered, or helped in unhelpful ways such as gasping or squeezing.

“Structured breathing” — in constant interplay with varying breath patterns arising from any such situations — is also useful when no extraordinary demands are placed on the voice, as in speaking with a microphone, or in small spaces, or quietly, or on the telephone. The inhalation with the lower third of the external intercostals is simply the fastest and most efficient way of taking in the appropriate amount of air needed for vocalization, because it directly expands the lungs where they are largest. The exhalation when speaking, using the described abdominal action, engages the speaker at the center and expresses authenticity, with directed focus.

All of these actions are economical, become automatic as a response to choice or need, and can happily work together with individual breathing habits and vocal requirements of all kinds.

(See my article “Breathing is Meaning” available at www.fitzmauricevoice.com)

(NB: my teachers, including Cicely Berry, used to refer to the upper part of the abdominal wall as the “diaphragm”, and the diaphragm proper as the “internal diaphragm”. The way they described the bel canto version of this abdominal action — as pulling in the “diaphragm” to exhale — would otherwise be impossible to accomplish.)

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Not listed in the Professional Index?
Entry out of date? You may be making yourself hard to find -- missing valuable professional opportunities!

Go to:
http://www.vasta.org/dir/update-frame.html
ADVERTISING

SEE: www.vasta.org/newsletter.html#ads

The VASTA newsletter is published twice a year, with submission deadlines of September 15 and February 15.

Ads are $75 for 1/4 page; $125 for 1/2 page; and $250 for a full page. The upper half of the back page is priced at $150. Please remit in US dollars.

The printable area of the page measures 9.5 inches tall and 6.75 inches wide and articles are printed in a two-column format. The inside pages, where ads are printed, are black and white. As long as your ad is consistent with this layout you may choose your own orientation and request where on the page you would like it placed.

Camera-ready copy or a digital file in one of the commonly used formats should be sent with your check to:

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Offshore advertisers may remit online by credit card at the newsletter section of the VASTA website.

VASTAVOX

VASTAVOX is a web-based email discussion list administered under the auspices of VASTA by Dudley Knight at UC Irvine to promote discussion of voice, speech, dialect, and text issues. VASTAVOX currently serves more than three hundred subscribers around the world. Anyone may subscribe to this list, but only subscribers may post messages. VASTA members are encouraged to subscribe.

How to Subscribe: On your web browser, go to https://maillists.uci.edu/mailman/listinfo/vastavox/ and follow the instructions. If you have difficulty subscribing, email Dudley Knight at dknight@uci.edu.
VASTA AT ATHE
By Rena Cook

Explore Dynamically: Improvisation as a Tool to Open the Voice Workshop
8/01/03
Mandy Rees, coordinator, Cynthia Blaise, Matt Bliss, Ellen Margolis, Kate Ufema,
1:45 pm - 3:15 pm

Towards Teaching an Integration of Body and Voice in the Classroom
08/02/2003
1:45 pm - 3:15 pm
Ruth Rootberg, Leslie Ann Timlick, Marth Munro

Exploring Vocal Gesture in Speech & Song
08/01/2003
3:30 pm - 6:45 pm
Gillyanne Kayes

Daring to forget our borders: The primitive voice sings the scream of “being”.
08/02/2003
5:15 pm - 8:30 pm
Candice Brown, Ann-Marie Blink, Jean-Rene Toussaint

Busy tongues at work in heightened text: Liberating the voice to match high levels of energy
08/03/2003
9:45 am - 11:15 am
MavourneenDwyer

Singing and Speaking with the same Voice
08/02/2003
11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Joan Melton

Avoiding the Shakespeare Sag: Finding your way through the big speech aria: Demonstration Double Session
08/03/2003
9:45 am - 1:00 pm
Neil Freeman/Craig Ferre

Outer Voice/Inner Life: Vocal Variety and Moment-to-Moment Acting Workshop
08/01/2003
7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
David Allan Stern

VASTA Hospitality Meeting Other Single Session
08/02/2003
7:00 pm - 8:30 pm
Rena Cook/Eva Breneman

VASTA Business Meeting
08/03/2003
8:00 am - 9:30 am
Kate Ufema

(realized. And all are in the works, alongside the maintenance and growth of our numerous other projects. As VASTANS, we must always remember that even though we are a relatively small organization, our members impact literally thousands of students, performers, clients, and audience members on a daily basis. And as our needs, and the needs of our constituency change, the organization must adapt accordingly.

SOOOOOOO . . . expect more surveys! We need YOUR input, as YOU are VASTA.

In the words of Neil Simon’s Eugene Morris Jerome, even in the midst of looming war — “Onwards and upwards. . .!”

VASTAVOX ARCHIVES
By Eric Armstrong

To access the Vastavox Archives: go to: http://listserv.cwis.uci.edu/archives/vasta/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.
The Voice And Speech Trainers Association, Inc.

Expect the following of its members:

1. Offer instruction, advice, and guidance based on their ongoing pursuit of the best information, thought, and practices available in their respective specialization.

2. Acknowledge teachers and colleagues who have contributed to their work.

3. Present accurately the nature and duration of their training and experience.

4. Respect the right of colleagues to advocate approaches with which they may not agree and allow students freedom to choose practices which may best meet their needs.

5. Take responsibility for the emotional climate in their classrooms, fostering an atmosphere conducive to their students’ optimal growth.

6. Refer a student to a specialist (physician, psychologist, speech pathologist, singing teacher, voice and/or speech teacher, body alignment expert, etc.) whenever the need arises.

7. Maintain confidentiality regarding their students, except in cases where doing so could be detrimental.

8. Give students ongoing, objective assessments, as well as informed opinions of their abilities and progress.

9. Acknowledge the primacy of the director in matters of interpretation and addressing any questions or differences with the director in private.

10. Dedicate their teaching and practice to enhancing the art of communication, nurturing individual creativity in all its differences, developing empathetic abilities as an essential component of voice teaching and going beyond facile standards of right and wrong, correct and incorrect in assessing the human voice.

Your regional editor should contact you at appropriate times to invite you to submit your professional 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 editor by submitting your news formatted as you see it below (note use of CAPS, bold, underline, and italics.)

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

LINDA CARTWRIGHT (New Zealand). Having worked extensively as additional dialect coach on The Two Towers pick-up shoot and ADR last year, Linda is getting ready for the final onslaught — the pick-up shoot for The Return of the King.

KATE FOY (Australia). Kate is directing a production of The Heidi Chronicles by Wendy Wasserstein for the Performance Centre, University of Southern Queensland. Kate has also been appointed as Director of the Performance Centre for USQ from March 1st this year and continues to serve on the Board of Directors of Queensland Theatre Company and in a new appointment to the
Empire Theatre in Toowoomba. Bernadette Pryde has taken up a new position as Associate Lecturer in Voice for the Department of Theatre at USQ. **LISE OLSON** (Liverpool, U.K.) has been working at the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester, on *Mandela’s Land, The Dead Wait, The Birthday Party* and Judith Thompson’s *Habitat*. She also directed *The Wars of the Roses* and *A Little Night Music* and continues as Senior Lecturer at the Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts, where she has been named Head of the new one-year Postgraduate Acting Programme.

**CANADA**

**PAMELA HAIG BARTLEY** (University of Saskatchewan) had a busy autumn directing Moira Buffini’s *Loveplay* for the Greystone Theatre at the University of Saskatchewan, in addition to teaching four other classes (acting or voice). She is gearing up to direct the U. of S. Summer Stock (in association with Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan) down at the big tent on the riverbank, and, in the meantime, teaches her classes, does some freelance production work for CBC, acts in the occasional commercial (stern librarians seem to be her forte), and drives her son Alexander to various soccer games and swimming lessons. Best wishes to all for a healthy, creative spring.

**BETTY MOULTON** (University of Alberta) was made a full Professor this year at the University of Alberta! Feels good. Onward! She coached a madcap production of *Lysistrata* directed by Leah Cherniak at the U of A’s Studio theatre in February, and is working on a CD of poetry for choreographers. She presented two workshops on Shakespeare at Freehold Studio in Seattle and a panel “Recipe for Analyzing and Animating Shakespeare” at the Southeastern Theatre Conference in Arlington in March. Betty will be coaching young opera hopefuls again in the NUOV A opera workshop this spring in Edmonton.

**MID- ATLANTIC**

**ADELE CABOT** (University of Maryland, College Park) directed *The Laramie Project* at University of Maryland, which was chosen to participate in Region II’s American College Theatre Festival. She also offered a workshop with Carey Upton at the festival entitled “A Psycho-Physical Approach to Acting Shakespeare”.

**GERRY KASARDA** enjoyed an unusual interlude from her usual work with corporate clients — as a story-teller for the Smithsonian Institution. Gerry and two colleagues (one Pakistani, one Indian) researched and created their own stories, which each performed over 100 times for visitors to the Sackler Gallery of Art from June to October. The stories were inspired by (and performed as part of) the “The Adventures of Hamza”, a special exhibit in conjunction with the Silk Road theme of last summer’s Folk Life Festival. The Smithsonian is considering recording the stories for sale. In the meantime, Gerry continues her work with corporate clients — coaching individuals in voice and speech preparation as well as working on team presentations in legal affairs, testimony, and oral bids.

**CHRISTINA KEEFE** (adjunct lecturer voice/speech and acting at DeSales University, Muhlenberg College, Lehigh University) has been teaching voice and/or acting at Lehigh University, Muhlenberg College and DeSales University. She will be the vocal coach in residence for The Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival again this year, working on *The Importance of Being Earnest, Comedy of Errors* and *Love’s Labours Lost.*

**NANCY KREBS** taught the Lessac Intensive Workshop this past summer as a Master Teacher in the Lessac Approach. She was voice coach for the Baltimore School for the Arts production of Dylan Thomas’ *Under Milkwood*. She participated in the five-day Fitzmaurice Workshop held at UMBC from Jan. 10-14, and enjoyed it very much. Her upcoming jobs include serving as the dialect consultant for *Brigadoon* at Montgomery College, coach for *My Children, My Africa* at Everyman Theatre and Brian Friel’s *The Aristocrats* also at Montgomery College, as well as serving as vocal coach for the spring production at the Baltimore School for the Arts. She has also released two songbooks to accompany her newest two albums of original music, *Simple Gifts* and *Come to the Stable.*

**BETTYANN LEESERBQ-LANGE** as the
Resident Vocal Coach at REP Stage, Columbia, MD, has dialect coached Katia for the Kennedy Center Prelude Series, Faith Healer and The Italian Lesson, both the play and the opera. She is also the Dialect Coach for the HBO Series, The Wire, for its second season. BettyAnn, as of Jan. 03, holds the new position of Adjunct Professor of Voice for the MFA in Acting program at Catholic University in Washington, DC and continues her teaching of voice and diction and performance for the camera at Howard Community College.

STEVE SATTA (Towson University) coordinated a workshop for DelMarVa VASTAns with Richard Armstrong in November at Towson University. A good time was had by all including Richard who says he is very open to coming back down when his schedule permits. Also a Towson student production of Shakespeare’s R&J which Steve supervised and coached was invited to perform at ACTF Region 2. The production netted three Irene Ryan nominations, one Irene Ryan finalist, the award for best student direction and is being considered for inclusion in the national festival at the Kennedy Center. In addition, Steve led a workshop in Joy of Phonetics for both students and faculty at the Regional Festival.

LUCILLE SCHUTMAAT-RUBIN, Ph.D., (Coach: Professionally Speaking; Voice Faculty: Circle in the Square Theatre School NYC) In her private practice Lucille trained 1) students seeking positions as corporate voice & speech coaches, 2) speech-language pathologists refocusing their work on the professional voice and, 3) speech coaches needing vocal techniques to prevent voice loss while conducting all-day seminars. She coached clients appearing in Vagina Monologues (stage) and Law and Order (TV); Her current and past students and clients appear or appeared on Broadway in Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune and Dance of the Vampires, on film in About Schmidt and Stuart Little 2, off-Broadway in Comedians and The Butter and Egg Man, on TV in The Search for Kennedy’s PT 109 and All My Children. In February Reader’s Digest picked up her interview (“The Voice Squad”) from Oprah magazine.

ELIZABETH VAN DEN BERG (McDaniel College- formerly Western Maryland College) served as dialect consultant on Secret Garden at the Olney Theatre Center for the Arts in Maryland and Privates on Parade at the Studio Theatre in Washington DC, and What the Butler Saw at Signature Theatre in Arlington VA. She is directing The Threepenny Opera for MacDaniel College this spring, and will be appearing as Solange in Follies at Signature. At the American College Theatre Festival Region II she was a preliminary Irene Ryan judge, responded to several productions, and offered a workshop on auditioning for a singing role.

LYNN WATSON (U. of Maryland, Baltimore County) coached The Misanthrope (directed by Penny Metropulos) and Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom (directed by Tazewell Thompson) at Arena Stage. At UMBC she coached Blue Window and two Shaw one-acts—Poison, Passion & Petrification and Overruled. She gave a presentation on Fitzmaurice Voicework at the “Voice Therapy for Singers” conference held at the Greater Baltimore Medical Center, and in January at UMBC hosted a 5-day intensive workshop taught by Catherine Fitzmaurice and Nancy Houfek.

KATE WILSON (Juilliard) is currently coaching Nine on Broadway, A Little Night Music at New York City Opera, Bexley, OH (!) at New York Theatre Workshop, and Sir Patient Fancy at Juilliard.

SOUTHEAST

CYNTHIA BARRETT (University of North Carolina at Greensboro) is currently organizing her life so she can take a leave of absence from UNCG for the 03-04 academic year to focus on professional acting and coaching. This winter she coached The Tempest and played Mrs. Cratchit in A Christmas Carol at The North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, coached Shakespeare’s R & J at The Alliance Theatre Company in Atlanta and A Midsummer Night’s Dream at UNCG.

KATE BURKE (University of Virginia) was awarded a University of Virginia Sesquicentennial Associateship (fancy name for a sabbatical) during the spring 2003 semester. She will write a play about the old Woolen Mills neighborhood in Charlottesville where she lives, as well as an article comparing coaching methods at major
Shakespeare-producing theatres in North America. She also coached *Ah, Wilderness!* for Live Arts Theater in Charlottesville.

**JEFFREY CORNELL** (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) is teaching voice and speech in the Professional Actor Training Program while Bonnie Raphael is away on sabbatical this spring semester. He is also doing the vocal coaching for Playmakers Rep productions of *Dinner With Friends, Uncle Vanya* And *Salome.*

**RINDA FRYE** is the vocal coach for the new Kia Corthron play, *Slide Glide Down the Slippery Slope,* for the Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville.

**BEN FUREY** (North Carolina School of the Arts) has escaped from Texas and joined the permanent faculty of North Carolina School of the Arts as a Voice and Text teacher, with a specialty in Accent and Dialect. Outside of teaching, he has coached *Invention of Love* at the Guthrie Lab, *Macbeth* and *Much Ado About Nothing* for the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival, and *Inexpressible Island* at the Dallas Theater Center. He has also taught an accent workshop at the Laura Henry Studio in LA and taught workshops and coached a production for the Working Classroom Theater Company in Albuquerque, NM. He returned to the Guthrie to work with Andrew Wade for a week this fall, observing, assisting and discussing the workshop one-on-one with Andrew. This summer, he is off to Boulder to coach at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, teach an accent workshop again in LA and has been asked to return to Albuquerque. This is, of course, if he survives coaching *Nicholas Nickleby* at NCSA this April: 5 1/2 hours, 7 accents, 24 actors and over 100 characters.

**RICHARD GANG** (Elon University) produced, directed and acted in the first annual presentation of *An O Henry Christmas* by Howard Burman. He was in the original cast in 1993 at the CalRep Company at Cal State Long Beach — and thought since he was now in NC -- what better place to produce it than in O Henry’s hometown of Greensboro. It was sponsored by and performed at the Greensboro Historical Museum and was a great success. In the spring he directed an all-female version of *Comedy of Errors* at Elon University’s Professional Actor Training Program.

**DAYDRIE HAGUE** (Auburn University) received her certification as an Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework this winter, and is presenting an introductory Fitzmaurice Voicework Workshop in Savannah, Georgia at the Kennedy Center ACTF Festival with fellow associate Michele Cuomo. She will be presiding over “A Physical Approach to Dialects” Workshop at SETC along with Jane Geer, Richard Gang and Michael Barnes. Daydrie is currently rehearsing *Trojan Women,* functioning both as Voice/ Speech coach and playing Hecuba. The production is a collaboration of artists from Actor’s Theatre of Louisville, U. Mass at Amherst and Auburn University School of Architecture.

**JACK HORTON** continues to deliver the G. B. Shaw message that the arts are “didactic” to an ever-wider audience. Groundwork is being laid for a voice workshop to be underwritten by a regional CPA firm. Jack just finished a special project for the Public Relations Department of the Regional Airport Authority and his teaching is on-going with cultural-professional voice/presentation private lessons for members of the National Speakers Association.

**CHRISTINE MORRIS** (Duke University) directed *Gint,* Romulus Linney’s adaptation of *Peer Gynt,* at Duke in the spring, and was a guest teacher at the Mid-Atlantic Region American College Dance Festival, teaching several workshops in voice for dancers.

**JUDITH SULLIVAN** (Communicating Voice, Inc.) is going to be featured in a new series, *Faking It,* for The Learning Channel. Judith was chosen as the performance coach for a Harvard grad “faking it” as an Atlanta Falcons Cheerleader. The program is scheduled to air sometime in March. In addition, Judith worked with the Alliance Theatre last fall on a production of *The Music Lesson.* The actors had to speak Serbo-Croatian and English with a Serbo-Croatian accent.

**PHIL TIMBERLAKE** will complete his MFA in Voice and Speech Pedagogy at Virginia Commonwealth University in May. This spring Phil is finishing his thesis, teaching, presenting at SETC with Michele Cuomo, and coaching *Play* by Sam-
uel Beckett. In January, Phil was certified as an Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework.

EAST CENTRAL
ERIC ARMSTRONG (Roosevelt University) landed a coaching job on the HBO film Normal, starring Tom Wilkinson. He has written an article on those experiences that will appear in the Voice and Speech Review in August 2003. Following that experience, he taught at Roosevelt’s Fast Track Program MFA in Directing for High School drama teachers. That led to final preparations for the VASTA 2002 Conference: BREATHE, which was a big success. (Surfing was the highlight for Eric!) In Fall ’02, Eric was back in Chicago, coaching for Profiles Theatre’s Jump to Cow Heaven, Piven Theatre’s Mad Forest, Court Theatre’s Phèdre (directed by Joanne Akalaitis), and Steppenwolf’s I Just Stopped by to See the Man. Eric participated in the Teaching Breathing monograph edited by Ruth Rootberg, and had his exercise published in the Complete Voice and Speech Workout Book and CD. He recently modified the navigation elements on the VASTA Website <vasta.org> and redesigned Paul Meier Dialect Services <www.paulmeier.com>. Spring 2003 will see Eric directing KATE DEVORE’s production (a supporting role, naturally) was the birth of the Board of Directors in spring 2002. Finally, his biggest Girls, Paul Meier Dialect Services and redesigned navigation elements on the Speech Workout Book and CD.

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Visit <vasta.org>, the VASTA website. The site is laid out in a series of areas: News & Updates, Resources, Communication & Publications, Professional Index, & Membership.

Recent additions to the site include:

- updates to the Internet Links to Voice by Amy Stoller.
- details of VASTA’s Conference 2003 “Voice & Ritual: Beyond the Spoken Word” to be held in New York City, August 2003. An application is available online too!
- how to contact Dr. Yolanda Heman-Ackah, VASTA’s newly appointed Medical Advisor.
- information on the VASTA mentor program.
- a means for International VASTA members to pay membership/renewals via credit card over the internet through PayPal.
- A link to the VASTA Online store where you can buy a VASTA logo t-shirt, or mug!

All links are accessible from http://www.vasta.org/

submitted by Eric Armstrong, VASTA Director of Technology/Internet Services.

Deeply satisfying voice work I’ve ever experienced or witnessed. It was especially powerful for me to work so deeply and primitively with my singing voice. The demand for this work is growing steadily; and I am pleased to announce that both he and Anne-Marie Blink will be offering a workshop sponsored by VASTA at ATHE this summer in New York City. The workshop is entitled Daring to forget our borders: The primitive voice sings the scream of being. The workshop will be a double session held on August 2nd from 5:15 pm - 8:30 pm.

Jean-Rene Toussaint and Anne-Marie Blink will also be offering the following workshops throughout the spring and summer months:

12-13 April, Choir Festival Aberystwyth (Wales-UK) Anne-Marie Blink guest teacher
07-11 July, Orvieto - Fordham University (Italy) Jean-René Toussaint workshop leader

For more information visit their website at http://www.stemwerk.com

Street, a bus or subway ride to and from Marymount Manhattan College. The registration fee will be $120.00 for members, $60.00 for students, and $200.00 for non-members. More information is available on the VASTA website at http://www.vasta.org/. Judylee Vivier, the Director of Conferences for VASTA 2003-2004, expects to mail out brochures in March 2003 to those who have requested information or are on the VASTA mailing list.

There are some real advantages to this system: it is a fast and easy solution, you never have to deal with collecting the money, the charges are reasonable and not a burden on the students, and royalties are fairly managed (so you won’t be suffering from “copy machine guilt” from copying something you shouldn’t). Once you place the order, the copy shop staff and the VSR staff, handle all the rest of it. This can be done before the term starts or even with just a few days notice.

Most importantly, you’ll be connecting your students with material that is current, interesting and relevant.
lary organic to their practices. In my experience, such guidelines have dependably brought relief to tense broadcasting situations, giving non-expert parties an easily accessible language for achieving a good product – at least in vocal terms.

**WEST CENTRAL**

**ELISA CARLSON** is enjoying her work as the new resident Voice and speech consultant for the Guthrie Theatre. This season she is coaching *Mrs. Warren’s Profession, Six Degrees of Separation, Wintertime, and The Chairs* for the Guthrie. She also coached *Waiting to be Invited* for the Illusion Theatre in Minneapolis. She is the voice and speech teaching specialist for the University of Minnesota/Guthrie B.F.A. actor training program.

**PAUL MEIER** (University of Kansas) ends his 2-year term as newsletter editor with this edition and, with great pleasure, hands the reins over to Christine Morris. His sabbatical research will take him to Stratford-Upon-Avon for a month with the RSC in May. He plans several articles on Shakespeare performance and voice. Also, look for further British dialect samples to appear on IDEA ([www.ukans.edu/~idea](http://www.ukans.edu/~idea)) as he continues to gather recordings throughout Europe this summer. Paul Meier Dialect Services, at [www.paulmeier.com](http://www.paulmeier.com), newly redesigned by Eric Armstrong, has resulted in many interesting commissions recently, with a particular

**VASTA Reinstatement Fee**

If membership dues are delinquent less than 6 months, you will be renewed from your membership anniversary date and your membership will not be cancelled. If you are more than 6 months late you will be charged a reinstatement fee of $20, and the receipt of the dues and late fee will mark a new membership anniversary.
run on Irish drama. As a result he now has dialect-design CDs available for leasing for *Wonderful Tennessee* by Brian Friel, (joining *Translations* and *Dancing at Lughnasa*), *By the Bog of Cats* by Marina Carr, and *The Cripple of Inishmaan* by Martin MacDonagh. His text-book *Accents and Dialects for Stage and Screen* is now in revision for a new fall edition. His recording of the *Bhagavad-Gita* continues to be the number-one selling book-on-tape for Quest Books, while, from the sublime to the ridiculous, he is currently the voice of the Wal-Mart icon, Smileyface, in the super-store’s 2003 US national television ad campaign!

**CHRISTINA J. WILCOX** has been working on her website [http://www.chrissysmusicstudio.com](http://www.chrissysmusicstudio.com) She reports that she has also taken it upon herself to introduce music technology to York, NE, and it is proving to be a bumpy ride. Please visit the website if you have any questions.

**WEST**

**JAN GIST** (University of San Diego) was in Ashland, Oregon for nine weeks as Voice and Text Director at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, working on Noel Coward’s *Present Laughter*, and David Edgar’s *Mothers Against* (one of two new plays by Edgar, under the comprehensive title *Continental Divide*). While she was away, MARY CORRIGAN taught her MFA classes at USD, and JEFF MORRISON coached the MFA production of *The Misanthrope*. In the spring, Jan coached The Globe Theatre’s *Knowing Cairo* and David Edgar’s *Pentecost*.

**JOEL GOLDES** recently helped Mike Meyers be sure his Canadian accent didn’t color the New York dialect he’s using for the feature film *The Cat in the Hat*, a Universal/Imagine release. He dialect coached the Las Vegas production of *Mamma Mia*, the ABBA musical, and is currently coaching *O Pioneers!* at A Noise Within. Joel recently helped an English actor get a producer’s callback as an American character for a television pilot, and helps a young Texan actor sound more neutral for the CBS series *Still Standing*. He taught actress Emily Bergl a German dialect for the independent feature *Final Draft*, and consulted for Opera Pacific on a Cockney dialect for their production of Mozart’s *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. His clients have appeared on *CSI: Miami* and will be heard in Pixar’s upcoming animated feature *Finding Nemo*.

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**ARTICLES NEEDED**

Your new editor, Christine Morris, needs your articles and ads. Call or write her at cmorris@duke.edu; phone +1 (919)660-
system, rather than conservatory instructors and professional coaches who are seen as the principal constituents of the Guild.

All those interested in knowing more about this fledgling organization are encouraged to contact:

Elizabeth Pursey
Acting President
Voice Guild of Great Britain
c/o 275 Kennington Rd
London
SE11 6BY
Phone/fax: 44 (0)1323 647399

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**YOUR NEW EDITOR**

by Paul Meier

This is the last newsletter under my editor-ship. I have enjoyed immensely the challenge of learning the job under the mentorship of Craig Ferre, whom I served as assistant editor. He introduced me to the PageMaker program that I would eventually have to master in order to compose the newsletter, and, under his superb direction, worked with the regional editors who collect, edit and format the members’ news. One of them, Christine Morris, was such a standout that I was thrilled when the board, at my suggestion, nominated her as my successor.

So, starting right now, Chris is your new editor and will be looking to receive your news, articles and advertisements. She, in turn, has nominated Erica Tobolski as her assistant editor, so it will be to Erica that the regional editors send your professional news by the September deadline.

It’s a great way to learn about VASTA, to become involved in the fabric of this great organization, to learn a new skill, and to clock up a significant service credit (important for those of us who are on the tenure treadmill). I highly recommend it.

The traditional way to start is as I did -- as a regional editor. So, in saying goodbye, I urge you to consider putting yourself forward as a regional editor with a view to becoming associate editor, and possibly editor in due course.

Many thanks to all who have made this such a fun job.

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**MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**

**Categories:**

**Full Member:**
Has voting privileges, receives the VASTA Newsletter, Membership Directory and VASTA Guidelines. Eligible for reduced VASTA conference fees. Annual Dues: US$71 ($65+$6 materials shipping and handling fee)

**Student Member:**
Currently enrolled in a training program. Receives same benefits as Voice/Speech Professional. Annual Dues: US$41 ($35+$6 materials shipping and handling fee)

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** - VASTA Treasurer,
P. O. Box 524
Laie, HI 96762
W: 808-293-3903
Fax: 808-293-3900

Off-shore members may remit on-line by credit card directly from the website.

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

**NOTE:** *The Voice and Speech Review*, VASTA’s Journal is supplied free to all members in good standing on August 15 of odd numbered years, e.g. 2003, 2005, 2007, etc.
The two-day weekend focuses on Fitzmaurice Voicework, taught by Catherine Fitzmaurice; and KinesPhonetics, a kinesthetic exploration of phonetics, using elements of Dudley Knight's Detail Model and exercises that Pamela Prather and Beth McGuire have developed in building the speech curriculum at the Yale School of Drama and NYU's Playwrights Horizons.

The next three days will be taught by Dudley Knight and Phil Thompson from the University of California-Irvine, and by Catherine Fitzmaurice.

Participants will experience a renewed connection to their vocal instrument, a working understanding of phonetics, a deeper physical awareness of shaping sound (speech/IPA) and methods of applying this work directly to text.

These techniques are suitable for beginners as well as more advanced students, teachers as well as performers.

For information and registration please contact:
Fitzmaurice Workshops  fitzmaurice@hotmail.com