Summer Conferences Promise Outstanding Programs

This summer offers two outstanding conferences for VASTA members or others who are interested in voice/speech training. They are the Association for Theatre in Higher Education Conference, July 27-30 in Chicago, IL and the 8th Annual VASTA Conference, July 30-August 2 at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

Patti Raun, VASTA conference planner for the ATHE convention, has coordinated diverse and exciting offerings for this yearly event. The following is a list of the 11 sessions sponsored by VASTA for the ATHE conference in July:

Enabling Women to Raise their Voices in Theatre--Marian Hampton, Robert Wills, Ann Kilkelly.

Theatre and Music: Collaborations with Composers--Lynn Babcock, Shiresh Korde, Bun Chang Lam.

Destructuring/Restructuring the Breathing: Release and Focus--Catherine Fitzmaurice and students.

Cartoon Voice Recording Session Workshop--Kathy Devecka, Patrick Fraley


Biofeedback Training for Vocal Quality--Barbara Acker, Kate Uferna.

(R)evelopment of Women and Girls: Creating Change Through Freeing Voices--Patti Raun, Kristen Linklater, Fran Bennett, Maureen Shea, Sue Clark

Application of Learning Modalities to the Teaching of Voice--Kathy Maes.


I Am Not An Island: Teaching for Integration and Synthesis--Claudia Anderson and Colleagues.

President's Letter

This is my last opportunity to address you as President. Marian Hampton will succeed me at the close of the next VASTA Conference in Chicago. I wish for her the same support I have received from the Board of Directors, Officers and the members-at-large.

I feel sincerely honored to have served the association of my profession as an executive officer and have felt proud to represent my professional colleagues when called upon to do so. The most pleasurable experiences have been when I was able to say, "yes, do it" to an individual who wished to initiate a project for the good of our profession. As I think back over the last two years, I never had to say no or discourage anyone who came forward with an idea or project.

Holding this office has given me a view from the top, a better sense of the needs of all of our members. Through our constitutional revisions, we have established a firmer foundation from which to work. We have set a precedent of providing our members introduction to the best training opportunities of the voice/speech field. We continue to adapt strategies for the advocacy of the voice/speech professional. However, the pattern of this activity has been circular, spiraling inward. We must move up and out.

Many of our members need VASTA to call the shots, for VASTA to establish the condition under which we work and are retained. As I move on from my position as overseer of the association, I intend to captain a project related to those goals. I look forward to a more intense focus on a task and seeing it through.

Again, thank you for giving me this opportunity and I look forward to seeing you in Chicago.

Barry Kur

Letters to the Editor

The Editor has received and expects to receive letters on important issues, both brought up in the Newsletter and introduced by the membership. When you write, please know you are giving permission for the letter to be printed or cut for inclusion as the Editor deems necessary. This is traditional with newspapers and newsletters throughout the country and VASTA will abide by these standards.

Letters can be sent to: Letters to the VASTA Editor, Susan Conover, Communication and Theatre Arts, Texas A&M-Kingsville, Kingsville, TX 78363.
This year I am stepping down from the VASTA Board of Directors. This will mark a major transition in my life--this will be the first time since the founding of VASTA that I have not held office or had an official responsibility. I want to say thank you to all the members. VASTA has meant so very much to me, and will continue to be a vital part of my life, personally and professionally. I treasure the years with VASTA, the friendships, the mentorships, and the exciting opportunities for growth that VASTA has given me. I am honored to have received a leadership and service award. I look forward to serving in new ways, and I thank you all.

One of the jobs I have loved best has been that of special conference organizer. As a first experiment in winter conferences, this year's was fraught with some difficulties, and I wanted to talk about that. As the conference organizer, I have to acknowledge that there was not enough time to advertise an event in January. I am used to seven to eight months lead time for annual conferences or other special workshops I have done in the past. There is justifiable apprehension that a special conference, whether held in the summer or winter, simply will not draw enough response. After all, these are difficult economic times for artists and anyone connected with a university or conservatory. Money for workshops is not plentiful. It may always be a risky venture for us on uncharted seas, offering special workshops.

It seems to me that there are several issues VASTA faces in regard to special conferences. Who should we serve with workshops, the entire membership or only a small portion of our group? For every conference or workshop we are torn between two conflicting desires and goals: (1) to bring together the entire membership and serve everyone, and (2) to give training and networking opportunities to a manageable-sized group that is small enough to allow individuals one-on-one work with a guest artist.

Should VASTA encumber its resources to provide training and networking for only a small portion of the entire group? If a workshop fails to draw a minimum number of participants, should VASTA stand by its commitment to special workshops and reimburse the guest artists, if necessary? (This has not ever happened, but it might.) The Board faces some difficult choices of how best to promote and support our national professional dialogue. Are workshops a viable and essential way to talk to each other about what we are doing and to exchange information of how we teach, coach and manage the business of voice? If the answer is yes, that we do need special workshops, conferences and regional meetings, then we need to say so, and we need people who will organize these events. This summer, why not speak to the Board about this, and why not volunteer yourself? The future of special conferences is the one you make!

Barbara Acker

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Change of Address

When you move and/or change place(s) of employment, please promptly send your new address(es), phone and FAX number(s) to: KATE UFEMA, VASTA TREASURER, 7022 WOODSTREAM TERRACE, SEABROOK, MD 20706.

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VASTA Newsletter Advertising

The VASTA Newsletter is a tri-annual publication of the Voice and Speech Trainers Association, Inc., a six-year-old organization representing a select and growing membership. Our members include voice and speech trainers in the professional theatre, radio, television, business and academia, dialecticians, singing teachers, speech therapists, acting/directing teachers, and otolaryngologists.

Our Fall issue includes election results and information from VASTA-sponsored workshops and conferences. Our Winter issue often includes articles on the international voice and speech arena and our Spring/Summer issue concentrates on information both about the profession and upcoming conferences and study opportunities here in the United States.

Advertising rates are available by contacting: Janet Rodgers, Virginia Commonwealth University, 922 Park Avenue, Richmond, VA 23284. Work Phone: (804) 367-1514.
VASTA Winter Workshop Report

by Barbara Acker

For the very first time, the Voice and Speech Trainers Association held a Winter Workshop. Twenty-five actors and voice teachers from the four corners of the USA and Canada met in Tempe, Arizona, for eight intensive days of work on language in classical text. At issue was how to find an alternative to the method approach to dealing with language. The Department of Theatre at Arizona State University was the co-sponsor of the event, and the department provided a meeting space in the Fine Arts Center on campus. The weather cooperated and the sun shone the first week in January. Our guest artists were the internationally recognized voice and text coaches, Cicely Berry and Andrew Wade, of the Royal Shakespeare Company. They led the group through an exhilarating and exhausting exploration of the ways and means to give life and breath to Shakespearean text.

The day began with a vocal and physical warm-up covering breathing, relaxation and connecting breath and sound. For two days, the group divided to meet individually with Cicely and Andrew for work on sonnets. The rest of the time we spent together with Cicely and Andrew running, hopping, rolling, bouncing and singing Shakespearean text. Cicely and Andrew kept giving us improvisations that fed our imaginations and helped us, almost effortlessly, to physically embody the intellectual content of the language. This was a challenging and visceral approach to giving voice to thought. Since we were on our feet, discovering the physical life of words, we had to trust our experience. It was a simple and transformational way of exploring and realizing text.

Each of us had his or her own way of describing the workshop process, so the view I am stating here is mine alone. Everyone who shared this amazing eight days with me, though, felt that it was a tremendous experience. Cicely and Andrew were generous, warm, and marvelous at getting to the heart of the matter, as only very great teachers can be. We were grateful to them for giving us this distillation of the accumulated wisdom of years of teaching and coaching.

The last couple of days of the workshop, I watched all my new and old friends giving monologues. One after another, Cicely gave each of them a simple physical task to do as they went through the speech. The task magically stripped away all the unnecessary mental pressures--the "acting" --and transformed the monologues into simple and moving performances. I felt that we all knew this was the way we needed to work, we just had to figure out how to get out of our own way, to get out of our heads.

Cicely and Andrew showed us a path to take that we will be traveling for many a year to come. The only sad note from this conference was Mary Corrigan's walk in the Tempe Center parking lot. A car clipped her and broke her elbow. She has all our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Unfortunately, next year Cicely Berry and Andrew Wade will be spending January in England for a very important international conference. They did promise to return to the USA for another VASTA Winter workshop. My only hope is that it will be sooner rather than later.
Report From ATHE FORUM Meeting

by Marian Hampton

As your VASTA representative to the ATHE Forum, I wanted to share with you some ideas which were discussed and some action items voted upon, at the planning and policy sessions held at the ATHE 1994 conference site in Chicago. There have been ongoing concerns that VASTA might lose its full membership in the Forum, membership which allows us to have a full vote at every meeting, with a Forum Representative and a Conference Planner always in attendance. Our Board has feared that, with the new emphasis in ATHE toward containing the size of the Forum, which is getting too large to be a viable discussion group, and toward combining groups for more cross-fertilization and impact, that we would lose our hard-won sovereignty and find ourselves represented by the voice of a director or movement person or some other group, rather than our own voice. Instead, the Forum has decided to handle its size problems by breaking out into "Affinity Groups/Coalitions" for discussion of issues and for organizing special conference events. All groups would retain their individual voices; the groups would be self-chosen and would change from time to time or rotate; and the spokesperson would rotate, as well.

One such group, in which Patti Raun and I participated, is planning a special bring-your-own "Brown Bag Lunch" seminar focused on Advocacy for Theatre Education. The panel of invited guests will include powerful persons of varied backgrounds and occupations who are passionate about theatre. They will be invited to respond to questions about why our work is valuable, who needs to know about it, and how we can demonstrate the same. This should be a wonderful opportunity to get connected with our real reasons for being and ways we can raise the public consciousness regarding the value of theatre education, at a time when theatre programs are being downsized and even eliminated in some places.

The Forum also agreed on the following policies:

1. Each Focus Group should elect or appoint both a Forum representative and a Conference Planner for terms of two years.

2. A mechanism will be devised to stagger the representation of Forum Reps and Conference Planners at meetings. One suggestion was to divide Forum Rep meetings from Conference Planner meetings. This should enable the organization to deal with issues of emerging or ongoing significance in addition to the more specific tasks involved in planning an annual conference.

3. We should begin to look for coalitions and affinity groupings for future discussion, strategy and conference session planning. An obvious grouping might include representatives from the Acting, Directing and Movement Programs in combination with VASTA. Other viable groupings might link us with the Women in Theatre Program, the Gay and Lesbian Caucus, Chairs and Deans, etc.

One thing is certain, if we are to be effective in advocating for our profession, we must give up preaching to the choir: They, after all, already know our song! We must find ways to listen to--AND BE HEARD BY--administrators, directors, producers, performers, and clients everywhere who use our services, but are not yet fully apprised of the value of their contribution to works of art in the theatre, to the lives of individuals, and to society as a whole. As a member of the ATHE Forum, VASTA has both the opportunity and the responsibility to continue raising the consciousness of the body politic regarding issues of importance in our profession.
Summer Conferences (continued from page 1)

For further information on the ATHE Conference, contact: Theatre Service, P.O. Box 15282, Evansville, IN 47716-0282, 812-474-0549.

Michael Lugering, VASTA Conference planner, has brought together four gifted presenters for the VASTA Conference on the campus of Northwestern University.

Conference participants will be divided into 3 groups, working with each conference presenter for a 90 minute class session, each of the 3 days of the conference. The four sessions and their leaders are:

"Torsos, Breath, and Walls," a movement workshop led by Michael Johnson-Chase, Associate Professor of Theatre in the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and an expert in both Alexander and Feldenkrais.

"Roy Hart Vocal Work," a voice exploration workshop led by Ivan Midderigh, a member of the Roy Hart Theater, who has taught workshops throughout Europe and North America.

"Skill Acquisition and Voice Training," a "hands on" workshop applying sensory motor learning to speech and voice training, led by Kittie Verdolini, Assistant Professor of Speech Pathology and Audiology at the University of Iowa.

"Speech for the Theatre: Shaping Sound," a Speech workshop examining sound production and the effects of recent social, cultural and political changes, led by Ralph Zito who teaches Voice and Speech in the Drama Division of the Juilliard School.

Other sessions include the annual "Things That Work," a teaching tip discussion led by Bonnie Raphael of the American Repertory Theatre and "Ethics and Issues," a discussion of various membership concerns led by VASTA president Barry Kur.

For more information on the VASTA Conference contact: Michael Lugering, VASTA Director of Conferences, College of Fine and Performing Arts, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 455036, Las Vegas, NV 89154-5036, #702-895-3659 (W) #702-796-5011 (H).

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ALEX DAVIS, Artist-in-Residence, Brandeis U., directed and dialect coached NEVER IN MY LIFETIME; was speech/dialect coach for THE RECRUITING OFFICER; and make-up consultant on OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD.

MARYA LOWRY, Artist-in-Residence, Brandeis U., in conjunction with the conference "Revolutionizing Motherhood: The Mothers of Plaza de Mayo," sponsored by the Brandeis Women's Studies and Latin American Studies Programs, played the role of Alicia in a staged reading of Lavonne Mueller's play, THE MOTHERS, performed in THE BODY REVEALS, a program of dance, poetry, movement and sound; will be in residence this summer at the Barter Theatre, Abington, VA playing Birdie in THREE TO GET READY, and Mrs. Cole in THREE TO GET READY.

PAMELA LYNN HARVEY, Coordinator, The Voice Center, Beth Israel Hospital, Boston, recently completed a chapter, "Behavioral Management of the Performing Voice," for an upcoming laryngology textbook; presented as part of a national teleconference on "Laryngeal Imaging" and is conducting a study on "Role Stabilization in the Actor" with Robert F. Coleman, Ph.D., Eastern Virginia Medical School.

KAREN WHITE, Artist-in-Residence and Professional Voice Studies Intern, Brandeis U., performed in MEDEA at Merrimack Repertory Theatre, directed THE KITCHEN LOVERS, by Brandeis MFA candidate Roger Krishan Jones; appeared in several regional industrial and educational videos; is preparing to direct HAMLET for Actors Shakespeare Company in Albany.

Regional News

This column helps VASTA members network. Let everyone know of your special projects, awards, promotions, research plans and results and/or need for information and assistance. Respond when your Regional Editor calls or contact her/him with your news. An asterisk (*) designates a request for information.

For the name of your Regional Editor, contact Sandra Shotwell, Department of Theatre, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112. (801) 581-6448

Mid-Atlantic

MARY E. BAIRD, played the Nurse in ROMEO AND JULIET at the Pioneer Theatre in Salt Lake City.

South East

KATE BURKE, University of Virginia-Charlottesville, played Auntie Julia in HEDDA GABLER and will be playing Mrs. Potts in PICNIC at New Harmony Theatre in Indiana this summer; will coach the Kansas City Institute of Arts Renaissance Faire.

LAURY CHRISTIE, University of South Carolina-Columbia, will be Artist Faculty for Studio Lirico's International Opera training program, Cortona, Italy, teaching Alexander Technique and voice development for opera; performed "Mirabai Songs" for soprano and chamber orchestra in the SC premiere with composer John Harbison as guest in residence at USC School of Music.

East Central

JANET FEINDEL, Head of Voice/Speech, School of Theatre, Kent State University, will be vocal coaching at Canada's Stratford Festival, will be presenting at the Voice Foundation in Philadelphia in June; is on leave from Kent to vocal coach at Concordia U., Montreal (her home town.)

DARRELYN MARX, directed a highly successful production of WEST SIDE STORY at New Trier High School in Winnetka, IL.

SHANNA BETH MCGEE, Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve U., was awarded tenure and was promoted this academic year; directed FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE, was voice coach for the world premiere of SCENES FROM THE PENETRATORY and AS YOU LIKE IT.

RUTH ROOTBERG, Evanston, IL, voice coached Northwestern U.'s HAMLET, the third production in which she has collaborated with Ann Woodworth and movement director Dawn Mora.

KAREN RYKER, U. of Wisconsin-Madison, had her most fascinating voice designing/coaching project with UW's production of THE GOLDEN AGE, which demanded creating the language of a lost tribe (derived from Irish/Scottish with cleft palate dysfunction) as well as an array of Australian dialects; dialect coached CABARET for UW and HAY FEVER for Madison Theatre Guild; directed and vocal coached IPHIGENIA IN AULIS AND TAURIS; participated in the Cicely Berry winter workshop at Arizona State; will direct THE FANTASTICS and will take part in the ATHE panel "Acting, What's Theory Got To Do With It?"
Regional News (continued from page 7)

* DOROTHY RUNK MENNEN and RICHARD SULLIVAN LEE, Purdue U., have completed a video entitled USING YOUR VOICE TO IMPROVE YOUR TEACHING with Barbara Solomon, Director of the Speech-Language Clinic; will present a program at ATHE on collaboration of voice/speech specialists. Dorothy would like other VASTA members who are engaged in like endeavors to contact her.

RICHARD SULLIVAN LEE, played elder Duke in AS YOU LIKE IT and vocal coached DANCING AT LUGHNASA.

*TYNE TURNER, Professional Theatre Training Program at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and First Stage Theatre Academy, served as dialect coach for the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre's SIGHT UNSEEN and Skylight Opera Theatre's production of the MIKADO; played Lady Sneerwell in SCHOOL FOR SCAN-DAL with Milwaukee Chamber Theatre; has become the radio and television spokesperson for a major Florida based furniture company and has completed extensive voice over work this year. She is eager to hear from anyone who has had experience with the successful delivery and rearing of twins, as she is expecting her own in early May. Tyne wishes to acknowledge VASTA member SUSAN SWEENEY for her recent brilliant performance in Milwaukee Chamber Theatre's production of DEATH AND THE MAIDEN.

NAN WITHERS-WILSON, Loyola U. of Chicago, served as vocal director and dialect coach for Loyola University's production of LEND ME A TENOR and the Northlight Theatre's production of SOMEONE WHO'LL WATCH OVER ME.

Southern

KATHRYN BYRNE, is under Equity contract for Martha in SECRET GARDEN with the Dallas Children's Theatre and is dialect coach for the show; is teaching voice and diction for actors at K.D. Studio; address change to: 115 N. Roberts Road, Cedar Hill, TX 75104 (214)293-9227.

SUSAN CONOVER, participated in a semester long "transculturation" project to learn about the Mexican-American co-culture. The program culminated in an intensive Spanish language institute in Cuernavaca, Mexico in May.

DEBORAH KINGHORN, U. of Houston, dialect coached STREET SCENE for Houston Grand Opera, ORPHEUS DESCENDING with Alley Theatre, MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA! with the TheatreLab Houston, and CRIMES OF THE HEART at the U. of Houston, also directed LOVE LETTERS at the Strand Street Theatre and presented several workshops at the Texas Educational Theatre Conference, 2 with Arthur Lessac.

Western

ROBERT BARTON, U. of Oregon and ROCCO DAL VERA, National Theatre Conservatory, have a new voice textbook being published by Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, available August, 1994. According to Robert, VOICE: ONSTAGE AND OFF deals with "the complete vocal process, from initial impulse to speak and taking the first breath, through the creation of sound, all the way to refining the final product. It is an actor's guide for connecting voice production to voice technique. It tries to help actors and teachers make informed decisions."

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Alba Emoting Seminar that was announced in the last VASTA newsletter will be held August 1-12 on the campus of Northwestern University. Special attendance arrangements can be made for VASTA Conference participants. So, if you thought you had to choose one or the other, you don't have to. You can attend both.

For more information contact: Roxanne Rix (610) 519-7324 or fax (610) 519-6913.
**VASTA Membership Application**

Membership growth is necessary to achieve our objectives. Personal invitation and solicitation are the most effective ways to gain new members. Please share this application with Voice/Speech Professionals you know who could benefit from membership.

**Membership Categories**

**Voice/Speech Professional:** Has voting privileges, receives the VASTA Newsletter, Membership Directory and VASTA Guidelines. Eligible for reduced VASTA Conference fees. **Annual dues:** $55.

**Affiliate Member:** Professional in related field, business or organization. Receives same benefits as V/SP but has no voting privileges. **Annual dues:** $55.

**Student Member:** Currently enrolled in a training program. Receives same benefits as Voice/Speech Professional. **Annual dues:** $35.

*(Please print.)*

**Name**

**Affiliation**

Work Address ___________________________ Phone ___________________________

City/State/Zip ___________________________

Home Address ___________________________ Phone ___________________________

City/State/Zip ___________________________

Send this form and dues (US currency only, please) to: Kate Ufema, VASTA Treasurer, 7022 Woodstream Terrace, Seabrook, MD 20706.

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

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**VASTA STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

The Voice and Speech Trainers Association expects 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.