

"Go into the arts.  
They are a very human  
way of making life  
more bearable."  
— Kurt Vonnegut

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## Vote in AEA's 2012 Election

Ballots for Equity's 2012 election of Officers and Councillors were distributed on Monday, April 16, 2012. You may vote by paper ballot, remembering if you vote by mail, you must tear off the top portion of the ballot; by email, which will come from [actorsequityhelp@electionservicescorp.com](mailto:actorsequityhelp@electionservicescorp.com); or you may vote online. Even if you did not pre-register for E-Voting, you can still vote online. When you receive your paper ballot, go to

<https://www.esc-vote.com/ae2012>. Enter your unique internet log-in number (from your paper ballot) and your Member ID# (printed on the front of your membership card, minus the leading zeroes) and follow online voting instructions.

Deadline for receipt of ballots is Wednesday, May 23, 2012. **All ballots must be received by the balloting company by 5 PM (Eastern Time), 4 PM (Central) and 2 PM (Pacific).**

## Equity Representatives in DC Help Spread the Word That Arts Make a Difference

Equity had a strong presence at the 25th Annual Arts Advocacy Day 2012, presented by Americans For the Arts. The event, held in Washington DC every April, brings together a broad cross-section of America's cultural and civic organizations, and grassroots advocates to lobby for increased public funding for the arts, arts education and other arts-related issues.

Once again Equity was a co-sponsor of the event, and, for the first time, brought six delegates to speak to members of Congress or their representatives about issues

that are important to Equity, including arts funding, arts education, and the Qualified Performing Artist designation (QPA), a tax deduction that allows actors to deduct job-seeking expenses above the line. The delegates, each of whom was assigned to be part of state delegations, were: Marjorie Horne, Councillor, Co-chair of the National Public Policy Committee (NPPC), who represented Equity with the Florida Delegation; Richard Shavzin, Non-Councillor member of the Central Regional Board and a member of the NPPC, Illinois Delegation; Clarinda Ross, Councillor and NPPC member, the California Delegation; Councillor Jess W. Speaker III, a member of the NPPC and a part of the Virginia Delegation; Eastern Regional Director/Assistant Executive Director Rick Berg represented Equity in the New York Delegation; and Spokesperson Maria Somma, who supervises the Union's Public Policy efforts, was a member of the Minnesota Delegation.

A two-day event, Arts Advocacy Day began with a day of legislative training sessions at which the delegates learned more about the current arts issues circulating on Capitol Hill, and how to be effective advocates for the issues that had been developed into briefing papers by the Americans for the Arts legislative committee (in which Equity participated). These issues ranged widely from the

## Rick Berg, Eastern Regional Director, Retires In May

Rick Berg, Equity's Assistant Executive Director/Eastern Regional Director, will retire on May 25, 2012.

The decision, due to family health issues, "was a difficult one," said Mr. Berg. "While I regret the necessity for having to leave Equity and New York City, I believe that I am retiring at a time when Equity's leadership is strong and stable. I am deeply thankful for the defined benefit retirement plan that Equity provides its employees. It is this retirement plan that allows me to take this necessary step in my life," he explained. "The theatre, and especially Equity, has been one of the most important parts of my life. It has been challenging and rewarding to be a part of the theatrical community and to be part of the work the Union does on behalf of its members."

Mary McColl, Equity's Executive Director, said, "Rick has been an important part of



Rick Berg.

the Equity staff and the Executive team, in particular. He has contributed valuable insight, and been a strong leader. We are sad to see him leave us and we wish him a wonderful retirement."

Mr Berg has been a long-time member of the Equity family, first as an Equity Stage Manager and later as a member of the staff. In his early career, he toured as a Stage Manager with such shows as the first national tour of *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas*

*Nickelby*, the Off Broadway and LORT tour of *From the Mississippi Delta* and several seasons at Northlight Theater and Cleveland Playhouse, among others. He joined the staff in 1992 as a Business Rep for Developing Theatre, Production, Special Tour Agreements and Theatre for Young Audiences. Mr. Berg was named Senior Business Rep in 1999, supervising more than a dozen staff, as well as the negotiation and supervision of a dozen contracts.

In 2009, Mr. Berg was promoted to Assistant Executive Director/Eastern Regional Director. During his tenure he oversaw the Union's Eastern Region operations, collective bargaining and led a staff of more than 50 in the New York and Orlando offices. Mr. Berg was also an important part of the Executive team, which is responsible for the overall direction and strategic planning for Equity.

## Equity to Get Special Tony

The Tony Awards Administration Committee announced on April 30, 2012 that a Special Tony Award would be presented to Actors' Equity on the occasion of its 100th Anniversary.

"Actors' Equity Association is honored to receive a Special Tony recognizing our Centennial Celebration at this year's

Tony Ceremony on June 10, 2012," said President Nick Wyman and Executive Director Mary McColl upon receiving the news. "This award recognizes the innumerable contributions our members have made to the theatre and the theatre has made to our country these 100 years. Theatre is a tremendous asset to the cul-

tural fabric of America and we are proud to be at the forefront of making plays and musicals come alive for audiences across the nation.

"On behalf of our Officers, Councillors, Members and Staff, we would like to thank the Tony Administration Committee for this honor."



## Celebrate! Join in the Pride of the AEA Centennial

The year-long series of AEA's 100th Anniversary celebration events gets underway Tuesday morning, June 5, 2012 at 7 AM, and we're calling all members to join in this once-in-a-lifetime occasion.

Where better than Times Square—the crossroads of America and crucible of live American theater—to host an event that lets the public in on our festivities, as well? There will be live performances, interviews, and other entertainment in a

salute to the extraordinary role of live theater in the fabric of American life and culture.

Also at the event, we'll be taking the wraps off an exhibit that will visit more than a dozen cities across the U.S. This "Behind the Curtain" Mobile Exhibit is literally a traveling museum loaded with interactive programming and educational displays about the history of live theater in America. Incorporating a working stage, it also will provide a platform for special

local live performances.

Even more is on tap for the upcoming year, including a coffee table book chronicling AEA's 100 years that's due out in September, a series of educational forums, and a crowning Centennial Celebration Event in April 2013 that will be nationally broadcast.

To join in the June 5 celebration launch and learn more about Centennial events, like our page at [www.facebook.com/aea100](http://www.facebook.com/aea100), or, if you're not online, call 212.966.3759 x 100.

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## Area Liaison Hotline system

Call 877-AEA-1913

Equity has a National toll-free hotline system for members who live in Area Liaison and office cities. The number is 877-AEA-1913 (honoring the year of Equity's founding). Each Area Liaison city has its own extension, where members can access news and information in their region.

### (1) Dial 877-AEA-1913

### (2) Dial your city extension:

811 Atlanta  
812 Austin/San Antonio  
813 Boston  
814 Buffalo/Rochester  
**815 Chicago**  
816 Cincinnati/Louisville  
817 Cleveland  
818 Dallas/Fort Worth  
819 Denver  
820 Detroit  
821 Florida – Central  
822 Florida – South  
823 Houston  
824 Kansas City  
825 Las Vegas  
**826 Los Angeles**  
827 Milwaukee/Madison  
828 Minneapolis/St Paul  
829 Nashville  
830 New Orleans  
**831 New York**  
832 Philadelphia  
833 Phoenix/Tucson  
834 Pittsburgh  
835 San Diego  
836 San Francisco  
837 Seattle  
838 St. Louis  
839 Washington DC/Baltimore

## Arts Make a Difference

continued from page 1

FCC White Space issue (the sale of bandwidth normally used for wireless microphones), to tax reform encouraging charitable gifts, to strengthening our nation's health through the arts.

On the eve of Arts Advocacy Day, the delegates attended the Nancy Hanks lecture featuring Actor Alec Baldwin and a performance by singer-songwriter Ben Folds. The next morning, and prior to going to Capitol Hill, the delegates attended the Congressional Arts Kick Off breakfast. Speakers included

Messrs Baldwin and Folds, Actors Hill Harper, Melina Kanakaredes, Omar Benson Miller, Tiffani Thiessen, Johnathon Schaech, *American Idol* producer Nigel Lythgoe and Robert L. Lynch, President and CEO of Americans for the Arts, among many others. Throughout the two-days, the message was clear: arts make a great difference in people's lives. The guests spoke about how the arts (with strong emphasis on the theatre) impacted their lives and their careers.

Equity's delegates were well-versed on the issues and, in some cases, took the lead for their delegation's meetings

on the Hill. Often, it was the Equity delegate who could speak passionately and with first-hand experience on the positive impact arts funding has on artists, communities and the nation, and was able to make the case most effectively in the meetings. Equity's delegates were also armed with a one-page leave-behind about the Qualified Performing Artist tax deduction, which the Union is seeking to improve through legislation. While tax reform does not look promising during an election year, Equity felt it important to begin laying the necessary groundwork among Congress to educate the need

for QPA tax reform.

Although Arts Advocacy Day is a once-a-year event, Americans for the Arts continues its work on arts funding, arts education and all the issues throughout the year. Actors' Equity Association works closely with Americans for the Arts on issues and topics important to our members. Our presence at Arts Advocacy Day, and our continued participation with Americans for the Arts, was recognized by speakers and in small gatherings, as the Equity delegates often heard "thank you for being here" from appreciative individuals.

## Philadelphia's InterAct Theatre Company Receives AEA's Annual Rosetta LeNoire Award

InterAct Theatre Company, an Equity Small Professional Theatre in Philadelphia, has received Equity's 2012 Rosetta LeNoire Award. The Award was presented to InterAct's Founding/Producing Director Seth Rozin at the Eastern Regional Membership Meeting in New York on April 13.

Introducing Mr. Rozin, Tom

Helmer, the workplace, and the community. Through its artistic and educational programs, InterAct makes a significant contribution to the cultural life of Philadelphia and to the American Theatre.

Under the helm of Mr. Rozin, InterAct has presented 78 main-stage productions, including 32 world premieres, two US pre-



Tom Helmer (l) with Seth Rozin.

Helmer, Chair of the Philadelphia Area Liaison Committee, spoke of the theatre's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and tolerance and the opportunity it provides for new voices. Mr. Helmer called it a "small professional theatre with a big heart."

Mr. Rozin thanked everyone for this "tremendous honor," saying the LeNoire Award means more than any other award the theatre has received because it is recognition for its body of work and commitment to diversity.

Founded in 1988, InterAct's mission is to educate, as well as entertain, by producing thought-provoking productions and by using theatre as a tool to foster positive social change in the

mieres, and over 30 regional premieres since its inception. The company has received 52 Barrymore Award nominations and 18 Awards, including the Brown Martin Philadelphia Award and the Ted and Steve Wolf Award for New Approaches to Collaborations. InterAct's productions have provided work for over 500 local artists.

InterAct also has a highly-acclaimed outreach program that uses the interactive power of live performance and dramatic role-playing to cultivate tolerance and understanding, promote cultural diversity, and improve human relations in its community and in local classrooms.

## CRB to Fill Six Non-Councillor Seats

As per Equity's By-Laws, the Central Region will be electing six non-Councillors for seats on the Central Regional Board for the 2012 election. Only members living in the Central Region are eligible to run and to vote for these positions.

The following two-year terms are available: four Principal, one Chorus, and one Stage Manager.

All candidates must meet the same eligibility requirements as the Councillors in their category. The Nominating Committee that was seated for the Council election will also serve as the Nominating Committee for these Central Regional Board positions. If you wish to be considered for any of the seats, submit your candidacy according to the following schedule:

Thursday, June 7, 2012	Deadline to reseal the Central Regional Nominating Committee.
Thursday, June 14, 2012	Deadline for candidate submission to the Nominating Committee. Materials are due in the Chicago Office by 3 PM (CDT).
Monday, July 2, 2012	Deadline for Nominating Committee report to the Central Regional Board.
Wednesday, July 11, 2012	Deadline for nominations by Independent Petition. Materials due in Chicago Office by 3 PM (CDT).
Monday, July 16, 2012	Deadline for all candidate statements and photos to be received in the Chicago Office is 3 PM (CDT).
Monday, August 6, 2012	Deadline for mailing of ballots.*
Tuesday, September 4, 2012	Deadline for return of ballots to Chicago Office by 2:30 PM (CDT).
Wednesday, September 5, 2012 or Thursday, September 6, 2012	Tellers' Committee picks up ballots and tabulates results.
Monday, September 10, 2012	Report of Tellers' Committee to the Central Regional Board and seating of new Board members.

\* In accordance with the Equity By-Laws, should there be no independent nominations for these non-Councillor Central Regional Board seats, and therefore no contest, there shall be no balloting. Those uncontested members chosen by the Nominating Committee will be deemed elected and will be seated at the September 10, 2012 meeting of the Central Regional Board.

For a submission form, contact Pam Spitzner in the Chicago Office at [pspitzner@actorsequity.org](mailto:pspitzner@actorsequity.org) or 312-641-0393, ext. 240.



ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION 1913

## EQUITYNEWS

Editor: DICK MOORE

Associate Editor: HELAINE FELDMAN

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## Are You a “Favored Nation?”

**A** Favored Nation clause (often referred to as “Most Favored Nations” or “MFN”) can be a useful negotiating tool for Actors and agents. In order for Actors to protect themselves from misuse of the clause, however, Members need to understand what the term means and how it is used. The explanation below covers the topic thoroughly, if somewhat dryly. (No one ever said taking care of the business end of your career was going to be fun or easy, but it is your responsibility!). Most importantly, if you negotiate a Favored Nations clause, put it in writing!

**Q: What is a Favored Nations clause?**

A: The term Favored Nations refers to a negotiated agreement between a producer and an individual Actor which generally indicates that if other Actors in the show (as specified) receive better terms (as specified) than this individual, then this individual Actor will be entitled to those same terms. (*It does not mean that everyone in the show is being paid the same.*) For such an agreement to be valid and enforceable, it should be in writing and included as a part of a rider to an individual employment contract.

**Q: What rule covers this in our Rulebooks?**

A: Equity-negotiated collective bargaining agreements do not contain Favored Nations clauses (with the exception of the Workshop Agreement), and therefore none appear in the Production Contract, LORT, Stock or other Rulebooks. However, Equity will accept an individual employment contract with a rider containing a Favored Nations clause, as long as it is properly worded, and will administer the clause or rider as part of that individual employment agreement.

**Q: What is the purpose of using a Favored Nations rider?**

A: The Favored Nations rider has been utilized as a tool by an Actor and his/her representative to ensure that no one else in the company (primarily, someone having the same stature or playing the same size role) was getting a better deal. It also became a means of allowing an Actor who would normally command a large salary to work for a lower salary without cheapening that Actor's value. For example, an experienced Actor who would normally be paid higher than minimum might choose to do a

<sup>1</sup> Workshop Agreement: “Everyone who participates in the Workshop receives the same salary, so if anyone negotiates a salary above minimum set by Equity, everyone gets the higher salary.”

role in a not-for-profit theatre which cannot afford to pay more than minimum, and by including the Favored Nations rider the Actor, in essence, says to the commercial entertainment world: “I still don't work for minimum, but in this particular situation I'm willing to as long as I know that no one else is being paid more than I am.”

In recent years in not-for-profit theatres, however, the Favored Nations rider has often been initiated by the producer and offered wholesale to everyone or nearly everyone in the company. This situation will be discussed more thoroughly later in this article.

**Q: What is the wording of the Favored Nations rider?**

A: There is no standard wording for a Favored Nations rider; each one is individually negotiated. Below are two examples of general wording in which the *italicized phrases* could be modified according to the specific terms the parties agreed would be subject to the Favored Nations clause:

Example 1. “The Theatre guarantees that no Actor shall receive a *higher compensation* than the undersigned Actor. Should any Actor receive *such higher compensation*, the undersigned Actor's *compensation* shall automatically be increased to that higher amount.”

Example 2. “*In the event any other Actor engaged for the play is entitled or becomes entitled to receive compensation or terms and conditions more favorable than that provided Actor hereunder, manager shall promptly advise Actor of such fact, and Actor's compensation shall be increased automatically to such higher amount, and/or comparable terms and conditions shall be provided for Actor.*”

**Q: What terms are covered in a Favored Nations rider?**

A: *Only those terms which are specified will be covered.* The terms to be covered are individually negotiated and will therefore vary from show to show or Actor to Actor. Any individually negotiable item may be the subject of a Favored Nations rider. These can include such things as salary, expense money, transportation, housing, dressing

room space, or even the care of one's pet. (Billing may also be part of a Favored Nations rider if everyone in the show is being billed alphabetically, but usually individual billing is the subject of a separate billing clause.) Sometimes a general term, such as “compensation,” is used. *You should be as specific as possible about what terms and conditions are included.*

It should be understood, however, that any compensation paid to an Actor which is the minimum required by the Equity Contract will not activate a Favored Nations rider in another Actor's contract unless the rider is worded to include these conditions. It is not considered favoritism by Management to pay an Actor the minimum which Equity requires in any situation. Therefore, it is possible for an Actor with a Favored Nations rider to be earning less than another Actor in the show if, for instance, both Actors are earning minimum but the second Actor also receives the minimum increment for being dance captain.

**Q: Does the Favored Nations rider include everyone in**

(continued on page 5)

## SAG, AFTRA Approve Merger Overwhelmingly

**A**s hundreds of members crowded into union offices across the country and thousands of others watched a live stream on the internet, the announcement came that members of Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists had overwhelmingly voted to approve a merger. The new union will be called SAG-AFTRA.

SAG members, who had voted against two earlier efforts (1998/1999 and 2003) to achieve a merger, voted 82% in favor this time. AFTRA members, who voted for merger in both previous attempts, voted 86% in favor this time, both exceeding the 60% threshold needed by both unions for passage. The merger is effective immediately.

Immediately upon hearing the news, Equity issued the following statement: “Today AEA congratulates the Screen Actors Guild and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists on their historic merger. By an overwhelming majority, the members of both Unions have affirmed that they are stronger standing together than separately, and that collec-

tively, they can face the challenges of the labor-media landscape and improve wages, working conditions, benefits and work opportunities for their members with one powerful voice.”

With this historic vote, “we have chosen a path of unity and strength,” said SAG-AFTRA National Co-President Ken Howard. “Members have said loud and clear this is not a fractured group; this is a united group, united in commitment to improve our wages, residuals and benefits our members depend on.”

National Co-President Roberta Reardon hailed the merger as a “huge victory for our members,” and “a monumental achievement for the labor movement. As this vote today proves, great and transformative things are possible when working Americans stand together and shape their collective destiny through their union.”

The new union represents more than 150,000 actors, announcers, broadcasters, journalists, dancers, DJs, news writers, news editors, program hosts, recording artists, singers, stunt performers, voiceover artists and other media professionals.

## How Can Arts Advocates Claim Real Political Power?

### Culture Counts Campaign For Chicago Underway – Signatures Wanted

**By Ra Joy, Executive Director, Arts Alliance Illinois**

**H**ow can artists and arts advocates claim real political power? This is the question that keeps me up at night.

For the first time in 25 years, Chicago is creating a plan to support the arts and artists throughout the city. The last time the city created a cultural plan was in 1986 under the administration of Mayor Harold Washington. That plan was filled with ideas that helped shape the arts in Chicago today: a city-funded grant program for the arts, the redevelopment of the downtown theatre district, the renovation of Navy Pier, and arts groups in residence at Chicago parks, to name a few.

Now it's time to adopt a new plan for culture in Chicago. But what will it take to transform the plan into real policy wins for the arts and arts education? Here at Arts Alliance Illinois, to build political power for the arts, priority number one is growing our base.

As a sector, the arts are uniquely positioned to excel at coalition-building and alliance politics. Cultural organizations have direct access to broad networks that often include staff, board, audience members, and community partners. And today's technology and social media

tools enable us to reach more people with less money than ever before. If hundreds of arts organizations stand firmly behind a common cause, they can collectively engage and mobilize hundreds of thousands of people. That's power.

And that's what the Culture Counts campaign is all about: building a stronger, more diverse grassroots base of arts advocates who can transform the good ideas in the 2012 Chicago Cultural Plan into actual public policy.

One of the key goals of the Culture Counts campaign is to build an advocacy network in Illinois that transcends age, race, ethnicity, geography, and other factors. An empowered and informed network enables the arts sector to appropriately “thank” or “spank” policymakers based on their actions and our priorities. In the end, the stronger our network — and the more sophisticated our organizing tactics become — the more policy wins will be achieved in Chicago and beyond.

To that end, the Culture Counts campaign is assembling a coalition of 100 organizations including Actors' Equity Association and other unions as well as major cultural institutions like Steppenwolf and the Goodman, arts service groups such as the League of Chicago Theatres, and universities including Co-

lumbia College Chicago. Together, the Culture Counts coalition will mobilize 5,000 arts and arts education advocates before the city releases the final cultural plan in the fall.

If you care about culture — whether you reside in another state, live downtown in Chicago, downstate in Belleville, up north in Rockford, to the west in Quincy, in our capitol city of Springfield, or somewhere in between — show your support for the arts by signing the Culture Counts petition.

To sign the petition, go to [www.actorsequity.org](http://www.actorsequity.org) and click on “Sign the Culture Counts Petition” or visit [www.artsalliance.org](http://www.artsalliance.org).

The more people we engage, the more we show elected officials and city leaders that the arts have real support. And the more likely it is that worthy ideas included in the cultural plan actually come to life.

Ra Joy has more than 15 years experience as an advocate, community organizer, and coalition builder. As executive director of Arts Alliance Illinois, he sets and implements the organization's strategic goals, manages its operations, and serves as a principal spokesperson. Mr. Joy was recently appointed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel to serve as a member of the City of Chicago's Cultural Advisory Council.

## To Work or Not To Work (Without an Equity Contract)

**When is it okay for me to work without an Equity contract?**

The best (and shortest) answer is "never." There is never a reason for an Equity member to work without a contract. Accepting such work undermines the union's considerable efforts to maintain standards for professional Actors and Stage Managers. Often, by involving Equity, terms can be reached with even the most reluctant producers to bring the show under contract.

**But this theatre is really small-time... But this gig is really short... But I'm just doing it as a favor...**

Equity has endeavored to be flexible by creating contracts that cover all levels of work. Agreements such as Special Appearance, Guest Artist, Business Theatre and Staged Reading can often be utilized to bring the work onto Equity contract. If you're wondering, call Equity!

**Shouldn't Equity let me know if a show is non-union?**

On our website ([www.actors-equity.org](http://www.actors-equity.org)), we will post notices of shows that are casting non-union, especially those we have tried to get on Equity contract. Similar notices are also often posted on SAG and AFTRA's websites.\* It's worth checking at least our website before auditioning, especially if the audition no-

tice doesn't state the type of Equity contract that will apply. These notices can be found through the link on the News Index page titled "Equity, 4As "Do Not Work" Notices".

**But this is a benefit performance...**

Benefit performances using Equity members must be approved by the Theatre Authority. Joe Chiplock (New York) or Peter Bailey (California) can help producers through the process and can answer any questions members may have.

**What about shows not in Equity's jurisdiction?**

You should call Equity and ask. Sometimes the producer will say it is covered by Equity, but it is not. Sometimes the work is in an area we are attempting to organize. Sometimes it is in the jurisdiction of a sister union. In any case, you may not accept the employment.

Actors' Equity, AGMA, AGVA, the Italian Actors' Union, and SAG-AFTRA are all part of the Associated Actors and Artistes of America (the "4As"), and as such, we recognize, respect and support each others' efforts to organize and negotiate fair and equitable contracts. As a member of any 4A's union, you are bound by your union's constitution to uphold these provisions. If you do not do so, you can be disciplined

under the 4As charter, which specifically calls for the discipline of members of one union who are working without contract in

### Do Not Work Notices

Equity posts notices on its website ([www.actors-equity.org](http://www.actors-equity.org)) of shows that are casting non-union. You should check it out before auditioning, especially if the audition notice doesn't state the type of Equity contract that will apply. The listing can be found through a link on the News Index page titled "Equity 4As Do Not Work Notices." Equity News does not include a Do Not Work list because the list changes often, making it unfeasible to include in a monthly publication.

the jurisdiction of another union. And that's not what anyone wants!

**I live in a "right-to-work" state. Doesn't that mean I have the right to work without an Equity Contract?**

No. It does not. "Right-to-work" does not impact upon your obligations as an Equity member. Once you have joined, you have

agreed never to work without an Equity contract.

**I'm on Temporary Withdrawal (or Suspended Payment).**

You are still an Equity member, and are still bound by the same rules about working non-union – that is, you cannot do it.

**What could happen if I am discovered working without benefit of contract?**

First of all, there is the moral penalty of knowing you have betrayed your fellow union members. But there are steep tangible liabilities as well. In accordance with Equity's Constitution and By-Laws, a Charges Hearing Committee is convened. It hears the case and decides on the remedy. Penalties can include fines, letters of apology to the membership, and even mean expulsion from the union.

**Can I resign to work non-Equity, then rejoin?**

Equity membership is a hard-won honor and something of which to be proud. Many Actors dream of the day they "get their card." It is not a commodity to be traded for financial gain or convenience. Unfortunately, some Actors do make the choice to leave Equity to take non-union work. Often, those Actors wish to rejoin the union later. In that event, their case must go before the President's Planning Committee. Sometimes the Actor is allowed to rejoin (after paying any fines and/or fees—including initiation—that may be exacted), and sometimes not.

**What if my agent sends me for non-Equity work?**

Equity's agency regulations state that an agent who knowingly advises a Member to seek non-union employment is subject to a fine of \$5,000 for a first offense and additional penalties, including loss of franchise for subsequent offenses.

**But I still have more questions...**

Not surprising. Even long-time Members have admitted to us that these can be tricky questions. Call your union(s)!

**And one last thought...**

An important point to remember is that while this article is mainly about working without an Equity contract, there's more to your Equity membership.

Today's professional performers must be able to work in every medium: theatre, television, radio, film, the internet and other new media platforms. To protect the wages and working conditions that everyone deserves, members of one union must not undermine another union's efforts to organize professional work opportunities.

If you have questions, contact Equity *before* committing to a project. Call or e-mail Flora Stamatades, National Director, Organizing and Special Projects, at 212-869-8530, extension 419 or [flora@actors-equity.org](mailto:flora@actors-equity.org).

\* With the merger that created SAG-AFTRA, these procedures may change. We will update this on our website when and if we get such information.



## Equity Member Wins AEA-Union Plus Health & Wellness Video Contest

Ryan Michael Hartman, an AEA member residing near New York City, is the winner of the 2012 AEA-Union Plus Health & Wellness Video Contest. The health-conscious actor will receive \$1000 towards a membership at his choice of health clubs.

Ryan was one of seven AEA Actors and Stage Managers who shared tips about how they maintain their peak performances – through exercise, healthy eating, rest and meditation, stress reduction and a positive attitude – as part of a nationwide online contest that was promoted through social media. The contest ran from March 5 – April 8 and was judged by online voting by fellow union members.

In Ryan's two-minute video, he explains how he uses the "My Fitness Pal" app, a free online calorie counter and diet plan that lets users track caloric intake and get nutritional information for over



Ryan Michael Hartman.

one million food items.

"I'm an eater – I love me some food," jokes Ryan. "I was getting out of control, but luckily "My Fitness Pal" came into my life. It's an easy, fun way to track your calories through your smart phone or computer – simple to use and very interactive. The database of food is seemingly endless,

including many restaurant items. What I like most about "My Fitness Pal" is the fact that you can interact with friends. By giving and receiving encouragement, I was able to achieve my goals with much more accountability. It was also nice to share tips with friends and family, which led to one friend losing more than 30 pounds. I still eat, but now I just try to eat two or three Oreos instead of the whole sleeve."

One of his favorite features is the app's bar-code scanner, which instantly tells you how many calories there are per serving in a box or can of food.

To view Ryan's video, go to: <https://apps.facebook.com/promosapp/250250/entry/252089>.

The runner-up is AEA member Donna Bostany, who will receive a \$100 iTunes gift card. Health tips from all of the contestants will be featured in upcoming articles in Equity News.

## Equity's Bonding Policy And How it Works

The Equity bond is one of the Union's cornerstone provisions to protect its members. It has been in place in Equity's contracts for decades, and has been used on numerous occasions to rescue members from defaulting producers or theatres.

Almost all producers are required to post a bond with Equity. (There are a few exceptions, where producers "pre-pay" salaries and benefits, e.g. under the Guest Artist Agreement.) This bond ensures that if an employer defaults in his/her obligations to Equity, you will receive the minimum salary, pension and health credits guaranteed by the agreement (generally two weeks contractual salary and benefits). *However, your guarantee is contingent upon the proper filing of your contract.*

If you are working under any Equity agreement, you *must* file a signed copy of your contract with Equity no later than first rehearsal. This helps the Union to enforce your contract, assuring that your production is properly bonded. Filing contracts in a timely manner takes on even greater significance since Equity has

introduced electronic employment contracts, which may be released to producers via email after a bond is secured.

Here's how it works: The amount of bond is determined by whether or not you are employed by a "single unit" producer or a seasonal theatre.

**Single Unit Productions**

**Only single unit productions are fully protected by a bond—to the extent contracts have been filed with Equity.** A single unit production is one that is individually produced (whether by one or more producers) that is not part of a regular season of plays presented by a specific theatre. Production Contract, Cabaret, HAT, BAT, Off-Broadway and Mini-Contract shows are examples of single unit productions.

**Seasonal Theatres**

Seasonal theatres post a bond for the largest number of active contracts in a two-week period. Seasonal theatres include all Stock, LORT, Dinner Theatres, Letters of Agreement and Small Professional Theatres.

(continued on page 6)

## Favored Nation

continued from page 3

### the show?

A: Not necessarily. A Favored Nations rider may include everyone in a production, or it may exclude certain members of the cast, or there may be several different riders in a company, each including a specific group of roles. Using the wording of Example 1 above for a production of *West Side Story*, the variations might be as follows:

Variation 1: Tony and Maria have riders worded exactly as in Example 1.

Variation 2: Bernardo and Anita have riders as follows: "The Theatre guarantees that no Actor, except for the Actors playing Tony and Maria, shall receive a higher compensation than the undersigned Actor. Should any Actor, except those playing Tony and Maria, receive such higher compensation, the undersigned Actor's compensation shall automatically be increased to that higher amount."

Variation 3: Jets and Sharks have the following rider: "The Theatre guarantees that no Actor of those playing the roles of Chino, Riff, A-Rab, Action, Snowboy or Baby John shall receive higher compensation than the undersigned Actor. Should any of those Actors receive such higher compensation, the undersigned Actor's compensation shall automatically be increased to that higher amount."

**Q: What if a producer offers me minimum and says, "It's Favored Nations; I can't pay you more than minimum."**

A: Just because the producer has offered someone else in the company a Favored Nations rider, doesn't mean he can't pay you higher. It simply means he would then also have to pay the higher salary to any Actor who had signed such a rider. You can still try to negotiate higher. If the producer says no, you have the choice of accepting the job at minimum or turning it down. You can also ask the producer what terms are included in other Actors' Favored Nations riders. If

only salary is included, you can try to negotiate better terms in other areas to make up for the minimum salary.

Also, if you think you are one of the first Actors to be offered a role for this show, you can suggest that the producer exclude you or your role from everyone else's Favored Nations rider (see Variation 2 above). In any case, if you accept a job which a producer has stipulated as being on a Favored Nations rider, make sure you get a rider on your contract stating what is covered by the Favored Nations terms.

Even if a producer initiates the Favored Nations clause and seems to be doing so as a means of keeping everyone at minimum, it can still protect you as long as it's in writing. When a contract containing a Favored Nations rider is filed with Equity, all other relevant contracts for that company are checked to make certain that the terms of the rider are being adhered to. So if you have it in writing, you can be sure that the producer isn't telling you that it's Favored Nations at minimum and then paying someone else more. (If the producer won't give you the Favored Nations rider in writing, it doesn't exist.)

And remember, you don't have to accept the producer's offer. It is a valid option to say, "I'm sorry. I can't accept the role under those terms and conditions." This throws the ball back in the producer's court. There are times when this will cause a change in the offer rather than a withdrawal, although you have to be prepared for the possibility of a withdrawal. In some cases, there truly isn't money to pay anyone above minimum and the producer thinks he's being a nice guy by offering the Favored Nations clause up front.

If you have any doubt about the wording of a Favored Nations rider or what is covered by the rider, discuss it thoroughly with your agent or other representative before you sign the rider. You may also call Equity if you have any additional questions or concerns.

## Working Overseas: A Brief Primer

### I've been asked to work in the United Kingdom or Australia. What should I do?

Call Actors' Equity Association directly. While we will need to speak to the producer as well, don't assume that the producer will contact us voluntarily. Also, don't assume that everything is fine just because the producer tells you it is.

### What union covers this work?

The union in the United Kingdom is known simply as Equity. In Australia, the appropriate union is the Media and Entertainment Arts Alliance, or MEAA. Occasionally, Actors' Equity may cover overseas work, if it originates in this country. For questions about the specifics of work under these contracts, you should contact the appropriate union.

### Who will take care of me while I'm overseas?

Your first resource should always be the union covering the work.

### My agent is negotiating on my behalf, the producer is offering a good salary and housing, and I will be on a union contract—so why should I involve Actors' Equity?

Actors' Equity will make sure that the compensation meets ap-

propriate minimums—more like what you're used to here. Additionally, under some agreements, you may be able to receive Health, Pension or 401(k) contributions. Finally, if there are outstanding issues when you get home, Equity can facilitate the resolution of those issues with the hosting union.

### I can get Equity/League pension and health benefits on an Equity contract overseas, right?

Unless there is an agreement in place between the producer and Actors' Equity Association that covers the engagement, benefits cannot be paid on your behalf.

### I'll be working in Canada. Which union should cover the work—Canadian Actors' Equity Association (CAEA), or Actors' Equity Association (AEA)?

It depends on the circumstances. Call AEA to find out. If you are traveling with a show that is already on an AEA contract, the producer will handle the arrangements. If you are going as an individual to appear in a show on a CAEA contract, you should contact Canadian Actors' Equity, but always feel free to contact us if you still have questions.

### Will I have to join another union? Will I have to pay dues to both unions?

For questions about joining, you should contact the union that will be covering the work and your dues will be paid to that union. If you will be out of the country for a significant period of time, you can call Actors' Equity's Membership Department to find out if you are eligible to temporarily freeze your dues obligations. However, if you are working under another union's contract, it is logical (and even appropriate) that you would join and pay dues to them, as they are administering your contract. You should also be aware that in some other countries, non-members may not be entitled to the same services as members. In the end, it will be up to you. But it's the right thing to do in every case.

### Where, if at all, will I pay taxes on my overseas income?

In general, you will be liable for taxes in both countries, but you should consult a tax professional before committing to the engagement.

For more information contact Flora Stamatiades, Equity's National Director, Organizing & Special Projects, 212-869-8530, ext. 419.

## BRIEF NOTES

• The Library of Congress has acquired a portion of the personal papers of Lee Strasberg (1901-1982), co-founder of the legendary Group Theatre, artistic director of the Actors' Studio in New York and founder of the Lee Strasberg Institutes in New York and Los Angeles. The collection is a donation from Mr. Strasberg's widow, Anna Strasberg, joined by son, Adam Strasberg.

• After months of struggling and more than 30 years, Theatre in the Square in Marietta, Georgia has closed its doors.

• The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts at Lincoln Center and the Noël Coward Foundation are presenting *Star Quality: The World of Noël Coward*, a major exhibition focusing on Coward as playwright; composer; director; stage, screen, and cabaret performer; and international celebrity. The exhibit, which runs through August 18, 2012, features photographs, posters, programs, scripts, costumes, personal effects, memorabilia and other objects, many previously unseen.

• Also at The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts is an exhibition on *The Great American Revue: How Florenz Ziegfeld, George White and their Rivals Remade Broadway* running through July 27, 2012.

• Veteran Hollywood publicist/film marketing executive Dale C. Olson has been named



(From l) Actors Fund COO Barbara Davis, Home Administrator Jordan Strohi, Trustee/music executive Abby Schroeder, Fund Chair Brian Stokes Mitchell and Dale C. Olson.

Chair of The Actors Fund Committee overseeing The Lillian Booth Actors Home, The Fund's assisted living and skilled nursing facility in Englewood, New Jersey. Mr. Olson has 20 years of experience as a Fund Trustee and member of the Executive Committee as well as the Human Services Committee.

• *Perfect Crime*, New York's answer to *The Mousetrap*, celebrated its 25th anniversary Off-Broadway on April 18, 2012 with performance number 10,233, making it the longest-running play in the history of New York theatre. Equity member Catherine Russell has starred in the play since its first performance and has never taken a sick or vacation day, a feat which earned her a spot in Guinness World Records. During the historic run of *Perfect Crime*, Ms. Russell has shot 89 different men and kissed 57 others. Over 83,000 bullets have been fired onstage and more than 5,000 prop coffee

cakes have been eaten.

• Equity member Michael Edwards, formerly Vice Chair of the Central Florida Liaison Committee, has received the Gilmor Brown Award, presented by the Pasadena Playhouse Alumni Association. The award recognizes outstanding creative and artistic achievement

covering a period of several years of work in a specialized field, making a significant contribution to the theatre that reflects the ideals exemplified by the long and illustrious example set by Gilmor Brown, a founder of the Playhouse. The award will be presented in Pasadena on June 10, 2012.

• Applause Theatre & Cinema Books has just published *Mr. Broadway: The Inside Story of the Shuberts, the Shows, and the Stars* by Gerald Schoenfeld. Foreword is by Hugh Jackman, introduction by Alec Baldwin.

• Equity member Ronald Rand, in his 12th year of touring with his solo play, *Let It Be Art!*, the story of Harold Clurman and The Group Theatre. The play has been seen on five continents, in 18 countries and 16 states across America. The latest tour is to Zimbabwe, Nepal, Morocco, India, Russia, Thailand, South Africa, Belarus, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## Study Shows Overuse Injuries by Performers

A team of clinical researchers from the University of Missouri Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation studying overuse performance-related musculoskeletal injuries to professional stage performers has issued its results.

Fifty-five Equity members responded to an article in Equity News (October/November 2011, December 2011) calling for interested members to participate in a survey. Sixty-nine percent of respondents reported that they had sustained an

overuse injury related to stage performance; 56% reported they were still able to perform despite the injury and 16% said they were unable to perform for more than two months. The body parts reported to have the highest rates of injury were the knee, ankle, hip and lower back. On a ten-point scale, stretching, massage therapy, and strength training were rated the highest in terms of preventing overuse injuries.

Dr. Jarron Tilghman, Dr. Michael Khadavi, and Dr. Kevin Komes spearheaded this study.

## THEATRICAL SPOTLIGHT

**F**ounded in 1977 by Tisa Chang, an Equity member since 1962, New York's Pan Asian Repertory Theatre provides a platform for Asian American Artists to participate in the American Theatre. As it celebrates its 35th anniversary, the company's mission remains: to provide professional theatre opportunities for Asian American Actors not limited by race, language or ethnicity; to create new works that dignify Asian Americans, and dispel stereotypes; and to expand access for Asian American artists and diverse audiences with Off-Broadway productions, educational outreach and community service. The theatre achieves these goals, in part, by supporting a Senior Artist Resident Ensemble, developing the Asian American canon in its New Play Development, and offering Master Classes such as Stage Combat and Japanese Dance along with year-round Actor Training Workshops.

### Eastern Region

## Pan Asian Repertory Theatre Celebrates 35th Anniversary

Acclaimed productions from the company's past include *Rashomon*, which was invited to Cuba in 2003; *Cambodia Agonistes*, which toured to Cairo, Johannesburg, El Paso, Boston and Philadelphia; and *Yellow Fever*, which went on to enjoy a long Off-Broadway run reaching more than 10,000 audience members. Ms. Chang is especially proud that "Pan Asian has been able to partner with professional unions all these years."

Actors who have had the opportunity to work at Pan Asian Rep are grateful for Tisa Chang's guidance and vision. Equity member Bea Soong says, "Tisa cast me in my first Equity production, Momoko Iko's *Flowers and Household Gods*. I was just starting out as an actress and Pan Asian Rep provided me with not only opportunities to work, but to learn and be a part of a growing community of Asian American theatre artists—Actors, playwrights, directors, lighting and set designers and costumers—in New York. Through

Pan Asian Rep, I worked the gamma of Equity contracts: LOA, TYA, Off-Broadway and a Pro-



Appearing in *Shanghai Lil* are (l to r) Timothy Ng, Leanne Cabrera, Rebecca Lee Lerman and Lisa Villamaría. (Photo: Corky Lee)

duction Contract when we went to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe with *Yellow Fever* in 1988. For 35 years, Pan Asian Rep has been known for producing not only innovative and original new works about the Asian American experience, but also more classically-

based works from various countries in Asia. I would never have had the opportunity to play some of the leading roles that I performed if not for Pan Asian Rep."

"Growing up and being a member of AEA since 1969, it was in my first Broadway show that I met Tisa," recalls June Angela. "I played her daughter and

and is now directing its world premiere production of *Rangoon* by Mayank Keshaviah, a highlight of the 35th anniversary season, also got a big boost in his career at Pan Asian Rep. "When I first started acting 30 some years ago, I auditioned for almost everything," he says. "Having been born to parents from both European and Asian descent, I did not give much thought to ethnicity. I thought, just let me 'act,' and I can be 'the guy.'"

"Then I auditioned for Tisa Chang's Pan Asian Rep. I took pride in being a part of an 'Asian' community. The joy of working with colleagues from different cultures was a boon I will always remember and cherish."

"Tisa also gave me my first directorial gig, *Yellow Fever*, a satire tracing a Japanese Canadian detective's case in Vancouver. We went on to Off-Broadway and to Edinburgh. And now Tisa has given me an opportunity to direct a piece dealing with the plight of an East Indian American family (*Rangoon*). I embrace the challenge not just because it is an excellent play dealing with the human experience, a struggle to persevere, but it also gives a voice to a specific Asian community rarely heard. Tisa has once again opened the door."

### Central Region

## Next Act Begins its Next Act

**M**ilwaukee's Next Act Theatre, which specializes in contemporary and issue-oriented productions, opened its 22nd season and its highly-anticipated, brand new theatre in October, 2011, with a critically-acclaimed production of *The Exonerated* by Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen.

Now located in the emerging and historic Walker's Point neighborhood, Next Act Theatre has established itself as one of the premier professional theatre companies in Milwaukee. Its new 152-seat thrust theatre, which captures and preserves the intimacy that has become a Next Act trademark, includes production facilities, administrative space for staff, a rehearsal hall, backstage support areas, and storage for all costumes, props and lighting equipment. The new theatre is also available for rental by other theatre companies and performing arts groups (15 weeks of rentals this season). In addition, the space has played host to two neighborhood meetings, a business retreat and an aldermanic debate.

Next Act performs for a growing subscriber base of over 1,600, a single ticket constituency of over 15,000, and attracts individuals and groups from throughout Wisconsin and Northern Illinois. Theatregoers enjoy an intimate performance style and accessibility to the

artists and staff. This creates a strong connection between the company and its audience, and ensures an engaged experience with the work onstage. This has not changed in the new venue. The company is particularly noted for the caliber of its



performances and for a varied and interesting choice of plays chosen from the best new works and Off-Broadway hits. During its 22 years, Next Act has mounted more than 90 mainstage productions, including over 50 area premieres and six original scripts.

"We knew the timeline for opening the new theatre was going to be tight, but there was little choice in the matter," said David Cecsarini, an Equity member and Next Act's Producing Artistic Director for 20 years. "But it was either shrink back into temporary space for another low-profile season, or take the plunge. Thanks to generous donors, community vision, great contractors and lots of hard work, we made the October 6, 2011 opening. Along

the way, people kept asking me, 'So what happens if you don't make it? What's your contingency plan?' My response, à la Captain Kirk, was, 'I don't believe in the no-win scenario.' It's theatre, right? Opening night isn't negotiable. We still have work to do for achieving the space's full potential, but it's a nicely functional, comfortable, professionally-appointed theatre.

Along with our loyal supporters, we take pride in bringing this new space to Milwaukee's performing arts scene."

Equity member and director Edward Morgan has had

a six-year affiliation with Next Act. He says, "I think the new Next Act space is the most versatile mid-sized theatre in Milwaukee. They've managed to preserve most of the intimacy of the old space, and now there's also the possibility of working on a larger scale. I was amazed they raised the money to make it happen in this economy, and I'm delighted at the results."

The Actors agree. "For years Milwaukee has had a number of very nice 50 to 100 seat venues, and then larger venues starting at about 500 seats and up," notes Equity member Bo Johnson. "The new Next Act space fills that middle gap with just what Milwaukee has needed: a beautiful, comfortable, and affordable space that seats about 150. What's especially

great are the acoustics for a space that size. A whisper can be clearly heard from any seat. It's a pleasure to perform there. I hope I do so often (hint, hint)."

Equity member Mary MacDonald Kerr "has worked for Next Act over 16 seasons starting in a floating space, then at The Off-Broadway (Next Act's former 99-seat house), and now, finally, at the new location. It has been similar to watching a

person grow: The Off-Broadway was the adolescent and now the new space is the mature adult. The company is still the same entity, but in a mature, modern, beautiful space. The theatre feels very much the same, but filled out and polished. I love it. I am so proud of Next Act's strength in these tough times, so proud to be a part of their art-making."

Bravo, David. Bravo, Next Act.

## Actors Fund Offers Info on Health Insurance for Dancers

**T**he Actors Fund's Dancers Health Insurance Resource Center (DHIRC) is dedicated to finding quality, affordable health insurance for individual dancers as well as for dance companies unable to offer health plans to their

members. If you would like to discuss your health insurance options, call Jim Brown at 800-798-8447, ext. 280 or visit [jbrown@actorsfund.org](mailto:jbrown@actorsfund.org). DHIRC is funded in part by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

## Equity's Bonding Policy

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When Equity receives more contracts than are protected by the bond, the Union demands that additional bond monies be immediately posted (except in summer stock where the season is too limited and the run of the shows too short for this to be administratively possible). Should the producer fail to increase the bond, the member will have the option of cancelling the contract without any further

obligation to the employer. Therefore, filing your contract may make the difference in Equity's ability to obtain a bond increase that will protect your contractual guarantees.

If you are employed at a seasonal theatre that defaults, you may receive only the portion of the contract guarantee that is available in the bond. Equity can't make up any difference, but will pursue the defaulting employer legally in an effort to secure the full obligation due to the members.



# NATIONAL NEWS

## Chicago

### Spirit 2012: Celebrations All Around

**By Luther Goins, Central Region Business Representative, National EEO Coordinator**

The Central Region Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (EEOC) presented the seventh annual *Spirit, a Celebration of Diversity* on Monday, March 19, 2012 at the Chicago Equity Building. This event honors Chicago and Central Region Members of Color, theatre companies that make non-traditional casting a priority all season long, and other individuals and organizations that follow Equity's goals of diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for all who work in the theatre industry.

The list of Chicago theatres that regularly practice non-traditional casting continues to grow. It includes: About Face Theatre, Black Ensemble Theater, Chicago Dramatists, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Collaboration, Court Theatre, Congo Square Theatre Company, Goodman Theatre, Illinois Theatre Center, MPACTT, Pegasus Players, Remy Bumpo,

(Milwaukee), History Theatre (Minneapolis), Human Race Theatre Company (Dayton), Mixed Blood (Minneapolis), Penumbra Theatre (Minneapolis), St. Louis Black Repertory (Kansas City), Theatre Mu (Minneapolis), Uprooted Theatre (Milwaukee), and Unicorn Theatre (Kansas City).

with a well-kept secret. The Central Region Spirit Award (with a unanimous vote by the EEOC) was officially renamed the Kathryn V. Lamkey Award in honor of the recently retired Central Regional Director. The announcement by EEOC members Diane Dorsey and Ira Carol received a standing



(From l): EEOC Member Ira Carol, EEOC Co-Chair Cheryl Lynn Bruce, Kathryn V. Lamkey, and EEOC Member and CRB Member Diane Dorsey.

For the third consecutive year, a performance of the outstanding song "One Voice" by Butch Stewart started the award program. "One Voice," performed by The AFTRA Singers (Austin Curtis, Dennis Kelly, Mark

ovation for a very surprised, happy, and gracious Ms. Lamkey.

EEOC Co-Chair Cheryl Lynn Bruce, with the help of EEOC members Wydetta Carter, Ghuon "Max" Chung, Michele Cason, and Malcolm Ewen, presented 2012 Kathryn V. Lamkey Awards to three recipients. The first award went to Steppenwolf Theatre's Casting Director and Associate Artistic Director Erica Daniels for her ongoing commitment to audition (and cast) against type and for consistently finding work for the disabled actor. The second award went to Steppenwolf Theatre's Director of Audience Experience Evan Hatfield for his creativity in finding methods to better the theatre experience for persons with disabilities. The third award went to Lois Weisberg for her outstanding career and work as Chicago's Commissioner of Cultural Affairs, a position that she held from 1989 to 2011. Under her successful leadership, numerous programs and events were developed and created that helped and supported Chicago Actors, Stage Managers, and artists.



2012 Kathryn V. Lamkey Award recipient Evan Hatfield (l) with EEOC Member Ghuon Chung.

Silk Road Rising, 16th Street Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Teatro Vista, Teatro Luna, Urban Theatre Company, Victory Gardens Theater, and Writers' Theatre. The Central Region list also includes; Detroit Repertory Theatre, Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati, Hansberry-Sands

MacLean, Greta Pope, Kevin Smith, and Paul Zimmerman), celebrates unions, solidarity, and encompasses Equity's national EEO "One Voice" brand, which was established at the National EEO Summit in January 2010.

The celebration continued



Pushcart Players Daniel Stanton and Megan MacKenzie Lawrence in *Happily Ever After...A Cinderella Tale*.

(Photo: Melody Moore Photography)

## New Jersey

### Pushcart Players Celebrates With First Fundraiser

Pushcart Players, an Equity TYA company, celebrates 38 years of bringing theatre to young audiences across the country with *A Royal Celebration*, a fundraising event to be held from 2-5 PM on Sunday, June 3, 2012 at the Montclair Art Museum in Montclair, NJ.

"The economic climate in recent years has made it increasingly difficult to sustain our mission of bringing the arts to young people in their schools," says Ruth Fost, Executive/Artistic Director of Pushcart Players. "We are

looking forward to this very special fundraising event for the company which, in turn, will benefit thousands of young viewers throughout the state."

Since 1974, Pushcart Players has been performing at schools and other locations around the country, averaging 400 performances a year. This award-winning Equity theatre and arts-in-education ensemble has received two Emmy nominations and has performed twice at the White House.

For information, call Pushcart at 973-857-1115 or email [information@pushcartplayers.org](mailto:information@pushcartplayers.org).

## Boca Raton, FL

### Caldwell Theatre Suspends Operations

After 30 years of operating under an Equity agreement, the Caldwell Theatre in Boca Raton, Florida, an LOA referenced to LORT, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy and is restructuring. At this time, the theatre does not have an Equity Bond in place and may not issue contracts to union members. AEA, AGMA, AGVA, and SAG-AFTRA members are advised that there is *not* a union contract in place for this theatre. Members of Actors' Equity as well as other entertainment unions may *not* accept employment at this theatre without an appropriate

union contract.

Equity Franchised Agents are reminded that it is a violation of the Agency Regulations to submit Equity members for non-union work.

If you are approached about employment at the Caldwell Theatre, contact Russell Lehrer, Senior Business Representative, at [lehrer@actorsequity.org](mailto:lehrer@actorsequity.org) or 212-869-8530 ext. 395 or Jeffrey Morris, Business Representative, at [jmorris@actorsequity.org](mailto:jmorris@actorsequity.org) or 212-869-8530, ext. 413.

The success of this year's celebration was due in no small part to the dedicated members of the EEOC led by Co-Chairs Cheryl Lynn Bruce and E. Faye Butler. Aside from planning the event, EEOC members spent hours making telephone calls to secure attendance, helped with event and room set up, volunteered to work the Members' Education Table, greeted guests, presented awards, and even volunteered to help with all clean up after the event. Special thanks to Sandra Delgado, Leslie Handelman,

Ariane Dolan, Richard Strimer, Ron Keaton, Mike Ward, Vickie Daignault, and Ernest Perry, Jr.

(Editor's note: A special 2012 Kathryn V. Lamkey Award was presented to Central Region Business Representative Luther Goins for his ongoing work with Central Region Members of Color, the Central Region Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, the Members' Education Committee, and for his work as Actors' Equity's National EEO Coordinator.)

## Los Angeles

## Black History Month Event Explores the Significance of "A Raisin in the Sun"

In celebration and recognition of Black History Month 2012, the Western Region Equal Employment Opportunity Committee, in partnership with Center Theatre Group, hosted a panel discussion at the Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City recognizing the connection between A

gave each other strength and support to keep moving forward, creating a bond that has lasted until this day. My career exploded after doing this play and it influenced my life's work."

Starletta, playing Benetha (42 years ago), Ruth (32 years ago) and Lena (one year ago)



(From l): Glynn Turman, Starletta DuPois, Louis Gossett, Jr., and Ben Guillory.

*Raisin in the Sun* and *Clybourne Park*, plays written decades apart. Both plays explore the reactions of residents of an all-white community to the arrival of a black family. While casts from both shows were originally slated to appear, due to scheduling, the cast of *Clybourne Park* was unable to attend.

The panel therefore, moderated by Pier Carlo Talenti, Litrary Manager for the Center Theatre Group, included Actors with a relationship to *A Raisin in the Sun*. Participating were Louis Gossett, Jr., who played George Murchison in the original 1961 Broadway production; Glynn Turman, Travis in the original Broadway production; Starletta DuPois, who recently played Lena at the Royal Exchange Theatre in England and Ruth at The New Federal Theatre; Ben Guillory, Producing Artistic Director of the Robey Theater, who directed past productions; and Wren T. Brown, producer of *Ebony Repertory Theater* and producer of the production at the Kirk Douglas.

Glynn said he was 12 years old and playing baseball when he was tapped for the role of Travis and "was so moved by this play because it reflected a part of my life. Being involved in this particular play I realized what I personally wanted to do with my life."

Lou went on to say, "Working with Lorraine [Hansberry] was quite controversial at that time and her reach was stunning. Broadway, before integration, was something we could never touch. Lorraine made that possible. Having the opportunity to work with the great Diana Sands, Claudia McNeil, Sidney Poitier and Ruby Dee was amazing. We were family. We

shared: "Having the opportunity to do this play changed not only my professional life, but my personal one as well. I got to see the world through these women's eyes. As a result I am being sought out globally to mentor and discuss the present political climate and to encourage humankind to accept and appreciate our similarities and our differences. As Lena Younger says, 'When you measure a person, measure them right,' take into consideration all they have gone through to get where they are today." Ben, taking it a step further, pointed out, "Our experiences encompass everyone, everywhere and this play is part of our theatrical heritage; it's a very specific play about black people in a very specific place that encompasses centuries of life experiences. We have to realize at some point how to move forward with integrity and principles."

Wren T. Brown closed out with: "Out of respect for black playwrights and Equity Actors in Los Angeles, my objective in putting on this production is to further professional employment in the theatre. *A Raisin in the Sun*, one of our classics, allowed me to do this as it is written for black Actors who portray characters that truthfully reflect the black experience. We must honor the realities. Black playwrights go unnoticed for the most part, which means less work for black professional Actors. Taking it up a notch and spreading the word far and wide is why this collaboration with Center Theatre Group was a terrific move as it provided more work weeks for the Actors and proved once again that this play has legs."

## New York

## It's a Hard Act to Follow: Drama Desk Panel Discusses Playing Iconic Roles

Is there a difference between creating a role and recreating it? Can a role be too iconic and, therefore, more difficult to play? Is there a temptation to get feedback from the playwright or other actors who have played the role? These were some of the questions posed to a panel of Actors (and one director) by moderator Elyse Gardner (USA Today) at a Drama Desk luncheon at Sardi's on March 30, 2012.

Blair Underwood (*A Streetcar Named Desire*) answered first, saying there is a sense of freedom when you start playing a role from scratch. He acknowledged that it was "daunting and overwhelming" to "replace" Marlon Brando in *Streetcar*, and that the trap was to try and imitate what was done before. You have to "dig deep," he said, in creating and discovering your own character. With a classic, you want to reinterpret the role so it's still a good experience for the audience. You want to find your own unique voice and "let comparisons fall where they may." He especially liked seeing *Love Letters* for its different actors and different interpretations.

Michael McKean (*Gore*

*Vidal's The Best Man*) recalled it was a "dubious pleasure" to follow Harvey Fierstein in *Hairspray*. Before he was hired, he hadn't seen Harvey play the role. Harvey came to see it, didn't tell him how to play the character, but made him feel welcome. Success in taking over a part, he said, "depends on who's opening the door and wishing you well." It's great to meet the playwright and/or other actors who have done a role, he said. When he was doing *Superior Donuts*, Tracy Letts was around to question and argue with. Shakespeare, of course, has not been around.

Cynthia Nixon (*Wif*) noted that her role was famous and notable for having been played by Kathleen Chalfant 14 years ago. Seeing the role played before helped, but she had to build her character from the ground up. She thinks there is no problem with "stealing whatever you can" but some things don't look right afterwards and "what works for one actor may not work for another." When she did *Miss Jean Brodie*, she said, she had never seen it done and she was "so much more intimidated." It's fun to work with living playwrights because rewrites come closer to you

and your personality. "An actor can become a wonderful resource for bringing more layers to the character."

Hunter Parrish (*Godspell*) was playing perhaps the most iconic role of all: Jesus. When he did *Spring Awakening*, he took over for Jonathan Groff who had been Tony-nominated. He had never seen Jonathan do the part (he had seen the understudy), but he "couldn't touch what he did." He also tried to make the role of Jesus his own.

Lynne Meadow (Artistic Director of Manhattan Theatre Club and director of *Wif*) viewed the subject from the eyes of a director. She had never seen *Wif* performed, she said, which was good because she doesn't like preconceptions. "If I had seen it, it might have been hard, but I felt free to do it because I hadn't seen it." She didn't want a previous production in her head, she said. "I have to work with the actor currently in the role. You can't make the replacement into the original creator." Sometimes, she agreed, it's better to take something from an earlier production than to come up with something new just for the sake of originality, but it doesn't always work.

## St. Louis

## Ties and Double Wins Featured at 2012 Kevin Kline Awards

By Kari Ely  
Chair, Equity Liaison  
Committee

The 2012 Kevin Kline Awards were held on the unusually warm but welcome spring evening of April 8 at the Loretto-Hilton Center. The Awards are presented by the Professional Theatre Council of St. Louis to honor the work of local professional theatres.

Big wins came to Artistic Directors Steve Woolf of the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and Kathleen Sitzer of the New Jewish Theatre, as they tied for Outstanding Production of a Play with *Red* and *Awake and Sing*, respectively. As icing on the cake, both productions were directed by Mr. Woolf, who also took home his first Kline Award for Outstanding Director of Play for *Red*. Both artistic directors appeared on the podium for a second time as they tied for Outstanding Ensemble in a Play, with the Rep's production of *Circle Mirror Transformation* and New Jewish's production of *The Immigrant*. The Rep took home the most Klines of the evening

which she hopes to bring to New York this summer.

Other Musical Theatre Actor Awards went to: Melinda Cowan, Supporting Actress for *Victor/Victoria*; Leigh Wakeford, Lead Actor for *101 Dalmatians*; and Alexis Kinney, Lead

Actress for *The Secret Garden*, all at Stages St. Louis, and Curtis Holbrook, Supporting Actor for *Singing in the Rain* at the Muny. For a full list of all Award recipients and nominees go [www.kevinklineawards.org](http://www.kevinklineawards.org).

The Kevin Kline Awards are named for the famed Actor who grew up in St. Louis. As St. Louis Post Dispatch critic Judith Newmark wrote, "Since the awards were first presented in 2006,

'Kline night' has turned into the signal celebration of St. Louis theatre. It's the one night all year when you can't find a show anywhere in town. Many theatre artists are at the gala, dressed to the nines, applauding for their colleagues and themselves."



Kathleen Sitzer, Artistic Director, New Jewish Theatre, which has just completed its first year as an SPT company.

awards for *The Immigrant*, which went to Peggy Billo, Gary Wayne Barker, and Bob Thibaut.

Another double win went to Deanna Jent, Artistic Director of Mustard Seed Theatre for her direction of *Godspell* and for her writing of the Outstanding New Play *Falling*,





## New York

## BC/EFA Bids Adieu to "The Broadway Bears"

Equity members joined their teddy bear counterparts on March 18, 2012 for the 15th and final edition of *The Broadway Bears*, the annual auction of handmade, one-of-a-kind, theatrically costumed teddy bears, which benefits Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. This year's edition, held at B.B. King Blues Club & Grill in New York and hosted by Equity member Bryan Batt, raised a record-breaking \$198,300.

The cast of more than 60 bears, donated by The North American Bear Company, Inc., once again included characters from current and past Broadway shows signed by the performers, writers, directors or designers who made them famous.

Broadway's favorite newsboy (1) Jeremy Jordan dashed over from a two-show day in Disney's *Newsies* to accompany the bear based on his character, Jack Kelly. Patrick Page helped present bears from three shows in which he's appeared: *The Lion King*, *Beauty and the Beast* and, currently, *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*. Tony Award-winner Danny Burstein stirred up



bidding on bears from two of his shows, *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *Follies*, while (2) Norm



Lewis left "Catfish Row" to encourage bidding on the Bess bear from *The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*, as well as his own likeness in the form of *The Little Mermaid's* King Triton.

Tony Sheldon and Nick Adams helped present a trio of bears from *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, each wearing a replica of his own Tony Award-winning costume. Laura Osnes from *Bonnie and Clyde* and (3) Faith Dane who created the role of "Mazeppa" in the original cast of *Gypsy* also showcased bears representing roles they originated on Broadway.

The top-selling bear, from the Tony Award-winning (4) *War Horse* fetched a high bid of \$20,000. Seth Numrich, who starred as Albert in the Broadway production, signed the bear and helped lead the live auction bidding to its staggering final price tag. An intense bidding battle helped propel a recreation of *The Lion King's* Simba, complete with his lion-head headpiece, to a winning bid of \$18,000.

The bear embodiment of J. Pierrepont Finch from *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* was signed by Daniel Radcliffe, as well as his two successors, Darren Criss

and Nick

Jonas. Other Equity presenters on hand included Harvey Evans, Hunter Ryan Herdlicka, Zach James, Donnie Kehr, Ilene Kristen, Rebecca Luker, Andrea McArdle, Michele McConnell, Judy McLane, Justin Matthew Sargent and Jennifer Smith. Equity members Kurt Peterson, Christine Pedit and



music director Michael Lavine performed the evening's opening number, written by Douglas Braverman.

Since the first edition of *The Broadway Bears* in 1997, 643 bears have been created by the designers, wardrobe departments and costume shops and backstage personnel across Broadway and signed by many of the stars and performers they represent, raising \$2,048,000 for BC/EFA.

To see the final cast of *The Broadway Bears*, visit [broadwaycares.org](http://broadwaycares.org).



## Denver

## Coaching &amp; Hosting the Annual VA Talent Competition

By **Betsey Cassell**  
Denver Area Liaison

I joined with Denver AEA Liaison Committee members Lowell Noel and Stage Managers Erin Joy Swank and Katrina Stevens as coaches and hosts for a fourth installment of the Denver Veterans Administration's 2012 National VA Performing Arts Competition.

Last year saw almost all of the entrants being awarded first, second and third place recognition in each category, and a few of the winners were invited to attend the National Festival Show in Fayetteville, Arkansas. This year's Festival is scheduled for Boston, Massachusetts in October, 2012.

The taping on March 10, 2012, boasted a Western theme, inspired by the performance of 91 year-old, returning participant, Jack Kamin, and his Yiddish version of "Davey Crockett - King of Delancey Street." Other standouts included returning soloists Gary Satchell and his rockin' electric guitar and vocals, William Ray Hopper on piano and keyboards, and Dennis Hurlburt with an

exciting and percussive digital drum solo. These three artists have formed a wild and wonderful rock band with guitarist Michael Paplow, named Vets In Tune and have been performing locally.

Several previous Competition winners returned with expanded programs, including multi-category winner Orianda Marquez and her precision Dance Group, VISTA: Veterans In Step Together Again, with newcomers Donna Chaney, Kammy Chinnock and Gwendolyn Wilson, choreographed by Ms. Marquez. Ms. Marquez also performed her puppetry in the Drama category and a Solo Interpretive performance, "A Nurse's Diary," a moving dramatic reading of a letter from a Civil War nurse.

Competition favorite and crowd pleaser Ron Tomocik dazzled with his accordion virtuosity in several categories, and teamed with acoustic guitarist Ray Delgado for a delightful rendition of "Jambalaya." Yvonne Wingard, Barry Stevens, Gwendolyn Wilson and Leonard Fanganello inspired us with readings of original creative writing, from poetry to prose

and essays.

Lowell Noel, in full Western regalia, and I, in pink cowgirl hat, shirt and black and pink cowgirl boots, entertained between set-ups for each act



**Betsey Cassell with Lowell Noel (c) and 91-year old Jack Kamin.**  
(Photo: Erin Joy Swank)

with "show biz" stories, jokes, and a few songs, including my rendition of "Flushed From the Bathroom of Your Heart." By request, "Sheriff Lowell" and I also twanged our way through Patsy Cline's "Crazy." It was another grand afternoon at the VA Hospital with local residents, friends and fans of the performers in attendance.

For a remarkable and rewarding experience, AEA

members are encouraged to contact their local VA Hospital or Administration office and offer to help with the coaching and taping of the annual competition. It's open to Vets of any era and has many categories in which to enter. There's also a separate Art Show held at a different time.

## New York

## Concert Reading Slated for Asian Heritage Month

In celebration of Asian Heritage Month, the Eastern Region Equal Employment Opportunity Committee will present a concert reading of *Gold Mountain* (book, music and lyrics by longtime AEA member Jason Ma) on Monday, May 21, 2012 at 7 PM at Hunter College's Lang Recital Hall, 68th Street and Park Avenue. Featuring a cast including Jose Llana, Ali Ewoldt, Alan Ariano, Steven Eng, Raymond J. Lee, Whitney Kam Lee, Paolo Montalban, Buzz Roddy, Dave Shih, Josh Dela Cruz, Dan Johnson, Brian Jose and Jake Manabat, *Gold Mountain* is the untold story of the Chinese men who, in search of a better life for their families, came to California to build the Central Pacific Railroad—endangering their own lives and finding heartache and hardship instead of the gold they were promised. Two star-crossed lovers find each other in the midst of it all and must find a way to escape, or risk never being together again. RSVP to [eeo@actorsequity.org](mailto:eeo@actorsequity.org) by May 18. Seating is limited.

## South Florida

### Annual Carbonell Awards Recognize Theatre Excellence

By Irene Adjan  
South Florida  
Area Liaison

On Monday, April 2, 2012, South Florida theatre professionals celebrated the 36th Annual Carbonell Awards at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts in Ft. Lauderdale. The evening was produced and directed by Amy London and Michael McKeever and, as always, was a fun and festive occasion for the local theatre community to dress up and celebrate the great work done at the theatres in our region.

In addition to the awards for theatre excellence, the evening featured performances from each of the shows nominated for Best Musical, as well as an opening parody of the South Florida theatre scene written by Paul Louis and Nick Santa Maria. There were also presentations of the George Abbott Award, the Howard Kleinberg Award, and the Bill von Maurer Award.



Marckenson Charles.

This past year, the namesake and Grand Benefactor of the Carbonell Awards, Manuel Carbonell, passed away. The ceremony included a tribute to the life and work of this internationally renowned modern master sculptor.

The Carbonell ceremony is also designed to raise money for scholarships for students in the tri-county area to study at accredited colleges and universities for careers in the visual and performing arts and journalism. Since the first \$500 scholarship was given in 1978, dozens of students in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties have received more than \$100,000.

This year, Equity once again sponsored an award. Eastern Regional Director Rick Berg and Eastern Vice President Kate Shindle were in attendance to present the Best Actress in a Play to Deborah Sherman for *Side Effects* at Mosaic Theatre. Mosaic also won Best Ensemble for its production of *The Irish Curse*.

Palm Beach County dominated, winning 13 of the 20 awards given. *All My Sons* at Palm Beach Dramaworks garnered several awards, including Best Production of a Play, Best Director of a Play (J. Barry Lewis), and Best Actor in a Play (Kenneth Tigar).

*Crazy for You* at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre was honored with Best Production of a Musical, Best Director of a Musical (Mark Martino), Best Actor in a Musical (Matt Loehr), Best Choreography (Shea Sullivan), and Best Musical Direction (Helen Grogory). Catherine Walker won Best Actress in a Musical for *Sound of Music*, and Jose M. Rivera won for Best Costume Design for *Joseph*, both at the Maltz.

The Caldwell Theatre's production of *Stuff* was honored with Best Supporting Actress (Angie Radosh), Best Scenic Design (Tim Bennett), and Best New Work (Michael McKeever). Supporting Actor and Actress in a Musical honors went to Avi Hoffman and Julie Kleiner for their performances in *Hairspray*



Julie Kleiner.

at Actors' Playhouse. Patrick Tennent and Alexander Herrin won for their Lighting and Sound Designs of *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*, also at Actors' Playhouse.

Best Supporting Actor in a Play went to Marckenson Charles for his performance in *Superior Donuts* at GableStage.

An After Party, sponsored by The Theatre League of South Florida, had everyone celebrating another fine year of theatre.



Participants in the Women's History Month roundtable are (l to r): Joyce Guy, Adilah Barnes, Clarinda Ross, Charlayne Woodard, Terrie Silverman, Amy Hill, Diane Rodriguez.

## Los Angeles

### Women's History Month Event Focuses on Solo Performances

The Western Equal Employment Opportunity Committee (EEO), in partnership with the Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival (LAWTF), celebrated Women's History Month with a program on March 21, 2012 entitled *Crafting A Career – A Woman's Way*, a roundtable focusing on solo performances by women. Actors, directors, writers, and producers shared their journeys of creation and discovery in developing original solo work.

"When You Educate A Women – You Educate A Nation" chimed the enthusiastic audience as the panelists assembled and shared their experiences.

Charlayne Woodard, Actor/playwright, with four solo works: *The Night Watcher*, *Pretty Fire*, *Neat*, and *In Real Life*, said "Learn about the craft of solo plays through workshops and classes."

Adilah Barnes, Founder and CEO of Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival and Actor/author of the solo play, *I Am That I Am: Woman, Black*, shared that, "Creating a solo show can have infinite rewards. However, I feel it of chief importance to be clear that the Actor has something to say that will be of universal appeal, the chops to deliver, stamina to sustain the energy required on stage, and the memory needed to serve the Actor. If all elements are in place, the experience can be extraordinary."

Clarinda Ross, Actor/writer/producer with two

solo plays, *From My Grandmother's Grandmother Unto Me* and *Spit Like a Big Girl*, added, "It's a special thing to work solo. It's not for everybody. It requires honesty, a joyfulness in your own skin, and a worthy story, a story that needs telling. I never consider myself unemployed (though I have surely drawn countless weeks of unemployment), I am merely in between engagements of my shows. My best advice is don't direct yourself. Find a director and trust and let them help you tell the story."

Diane Rodriguez, writer/director, Associate Producer and director of New Play Production for Center Theatre Group, pointed out "One-person plays have served women extremely well in terms of employment in the industry."

Amy Hill, Actor/writer of three solo plays: *Beside Myself*, *Tokyo Bound*, and *Deadwood to Hollywood*, said, "I don't have to sit and wait by the phone for someone else to give me work; I have my own shows."

Joyce Guy, Actor/choreographer/playwright of two solo plays: *War Stories* and *We Are Not Exempt*, suggested: "When writing the one-person play, write the story that's true to you, not the story you think the audience wants to hear."

Terrie Silverman, writer, director, performer, arts educator and creator of Life Stories Performance Workshop, rounded out the panel.

## New York

### Credit Union Slates Mortgage Seminar

Actors Federal Credit Union will host a Mortgage Seminar on Monday, May 21, 2012 from 6-8:30 PM in the Council Room on the 14th Floor of the Equity Building, 165 West 46th Street. Learn about the mortgage process and join in a night of questions and answers.

## Philadelphia

### Members Hear About Getting, Keeping Health Insurance

Local members of AEA and SAG-AFTRA attended a seminar on *Getting and Keeping Health Insurance* at Temple University Center City on March 26, 2012. The event was conducted by Jim Brown, Director of Health Services for The Actors Fund, who provided information on various options for obtaining insurance if one is not able to earn coverage via work. Tom Helmer, Chair of the



The Actors Fund's Jim Brown surrounded by AEA and SAG-AFTRA members.

Philadelphia Liaison Committee, thanked SAG's North East Executive Frank Traynor for arranging the venue. Mr. Helmer also looks

forward to "continuing our partnership between SAG-AFTRA and Equity in co-sponsoring events for Philadelphia area Members."

## New York

### Dancer Groups to Meet

The Diamond Group of Career Transition For Dancers will be holding a meeting on Thursday, June 14, 2012, from 11 AM-1 PM in the CTFD offices, suite 701 at the Equity Building, 165 West 46th Street. The Diamond Group enables older dancers in New York to meet and discuss common issues relating to career development, work-related skills, finances, health, and other aspects of a professional

life. Call Dana at 212-764-0172 for more information or to RSVP.

In addition, Career Transition For Dancers has scheduled a Career Conversation on exploring secondary and next-step careers on June 11 from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM in the Council Room on the 14th Floor of the Equity Building, 165 West 46th Street. For further information, call CTFD at 212-764-0172.

## Eastern Region

### A Grand Old Dame Gets a Second Act

By Buzz Roddy  
Eastern Region Principal  
Councillor

At long last, an old, dear friend has come back under Equity's aegis. The famous Bucks County Playhouse (BCP) in New Hope, PA was founded in the 1930s by, among others, Moss Hart, and for decades was an incubator for newly-minted theatre artists and an idyllic respite for old pros from the oppressive (read "pre-air conditioning") New York City summers. The spirits of Broadway and Hollywood royalty positively infuse the walls, stage and dressing

rooms of this theatrical jewel. BCP became a non-union house in the 1980s and finally shuttered altogether in the decade just past.

The converted grist mill turned iconic summer stock theatre will be helmed by former Broadway League president, Jed Bernstein. 2012 will commence with an abbreviated season of two shows in July and August. "We will produce plays and musicals, and once again, there will be live musicians in this place!" beamed an ebullient Bernstein at a press conference earlier this year.



Peter Gallagher (r) with The Actors Fund's Western Region Director Keith McNutt and Fund Trustee Kate Edelman Johnson.

## Los Angeles

### Gallagher in Benefit for Actors Fund, Geffen

Equity member Peter Gallagher performed his one-man show, *Songs and Stories from an Actor's Life*, at LA's Geffen Playhouse on March 11,

2012 to benefit both the Geffen and The Actors Fund. The fundraiser was the second produced in a partnership with the Geffen and The Fund.



Attending the Nashville Membership Meeting are: (standing, l to r) Jeff Morris, Christina Clark, Elizabeth Davidson, Henry Haggard, Brian Webb Russell, Emily Landham; (kneeling) Patrick Waller and Peter M. Vann.

## Nashville

### Members Meet, Network

The 2012 Nashville Membership Meeting was held on March 26 at Bongo Java Café (upstairs theatre). AEA Developing Theatre Business Rep Jeffrey Morris was enthusiastically welcomed by Nashville Area Liaison

Committee Chair Henry Haggard. A productive and informative meeting, the topics discussed included everything from AEA's new Member Portal to Member Resources, updates from New York, and the future of union theatre in Nashville.

## New York

### Dancers Celebrate Tap

TAPI, Dancers Over 40's final event of the 2011-2012 season focuses on the world of tap dancing, with a discussion and performance by DO40 members and guests. The May 21, 2012 event at 8 PM at St. Luke's Theatre, 308 West 46th Street, will be hosted by Mercedes Ellington (*Sophisticated Ladies; No, No, Nanette!*) and begins with a discussion on the history of tap by Ms. Ellington and Lee Roy Reams (*42nd Street!*).

The program includes two panels and performances, featuring tappers from Broadway and beyond, as well as a salute to the tap teachers of the golden ages of theatre and film, including Paul Draper, Honi Coles, Henry Le Tang, Bob Audy and Ernest Carlos. Guests include Harvey Evans and Noah Racey, with Karin Baker, Randy

Skinner and Karen Prunzik (*42nd Street!*); James Dybas and Patti Mariano (*George M!*); Linda Rose Iennaco (*No, No Nanette!*); Teak Lewis, Lawrence Merritt, Joy Serio Dunbar, Max Pollack and Tony Waag, Artistic/Executive Director of The American Tap Dance Foundation, as well as performances and tap demonstrations by Noah Racey, Linda Rose Iennaco, Karen Prunzik, and Karen Callaway. There will also be film clips featuring many of the tap greats of the 20th Century: The Nicholas Brothers, The Step Brothers, Gregory Hines, Georgie Tapps, The Copaceticos, Fred & Ginger, Fred & Eleanor, Gene Kelly and Donald O'Connor.

For information call the DO40 Hotline: 212-330-7016.

## Philadelphia

### Theatre Alliance Shuttters

Theatre Alliance of Greater Philadelphia (TAGP), the organization serving theatres and audiences over two decades of professional stage growth, will shut down at the end of its fiscal year on June 30. TAGP said it had fallen victim to tough economic times and the theatre community's success. In the struggle for funding sources, it increasingly competed with the theatres it serves, many of which needed its

services less as they became ever more robust. Some Alliance programs will be picked up by other organizations: Walnut Street Theatre will take on a project that allows performers to audition for 30 or more artistic directors at one time; the Wilma will take over the Alliance's ticketing system, which ten theatres use as their box office program. The Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, which represents all of the arts, will assume some membership services and an audience development program. At press time, the future of the Barrymore Awards was unclear.

## Pittsburgh

### Classic Thriller Performed to Benefit Actors Fund



The company of *The Maltese Falcon* (l to r): Colleen Maurer, Liz Roberts, Jeff Carpenter, Tami Dixon, Ken Bolden, Paul Reynolds, Karen Baum, James FitzGerald, Alan Stanford, Ingrid Sonnichsen, Elena Bertolino-Alexandratos, Jason McCune.

On March 19, 2012, Rare Theatricals Ltd, together with Bricolage Productions, presented a special performance of the classic radio thriller *The Maltese Falcon* as a benefit for The Actors Fund. The story by Dashiell Hammett and

adapted by Equity member James FitzGerald featured some of the city's hardest working actors, headed by the eminent Irish actor Alan Stanford. The evening was part of Bricolage's "Midnight Radio-Raw!" series.

### Wicked Welcomes Three New Members

*Wicked* (1st National) welcomes three new Equity members to the tour: Ashley Dawn Mortensen, Trevor Ryan Krahl, and Sarah Schenckan, got their Equity cards and a special "wicked welcome" from the company.



## A Look Back@Equity Milestones

### 75 Years Ago May 1937

• An editorial in the May issue of *Equity* (Magazine) supports the formation of the American Theatre Council, an organization including "representatives of the producing managers, dramatists, actors and other theatre unions to cooperate for the solution of mutual and non-controversial problems." A National Convention to consider this issue draws more than 500 supporters.

• *Equity* opposes proposed legislation threatening "censorship of the legitimate theatre" whereby "upon satisfactory proof of a violation upon premises licensed for a public exhibition, drama, play, show or entertainment, the licensing authority shall have power to refuse to issue a new license..." In a letter to New York State Governor Herbert H. Lehman, *Equity* president

Frank Gillmore says: "It must not be believed that this organization in any way encourages vulgarity on the stage. It does not, but we do not believe in censorship, particularly of a character which places the control in the hands of one man." (The bill is defeated.)

### 50 Years Ago May 1962

• *Equity* hails the Kennedy Administration's appointment of August Heckscher as Cultural Coordinator. In this post, Mr. Heckscher is to serve as liaison between the White House and government and private agencies on matters pertaining to the arts.

• *Equity* hires a temporary representative in the Seattle area "to look after the Union's interests with respect to the Seattle World's Fair."

• *Equity* and AGMA (the American Guild of Musical Artists) discuss merger.

### 25 Years Ago May 1987

• *Equity* urges changes in New York State's Rent Stabilization Code in order to expand the definition of "immediate family" to include non-relatives who live together in a family-like relationship. *Equity* maintains that the current definition, which includes relatives by blood or marriage only, is discriminatory to gay, lesbian and heterosexual non-married couples.

• Plans continue to create low cost housing for actors in the Los Angeles area. A new corporation, Housing for Entertainment Professionals, Inc. (HEP), initiated by *Equity*, AFTRA and SAG, leads the fight.

• More than 40 *Equity* stock theatres are listed in the May issue of *Equity* News.

### 10 Years Ago May 2002

• Actors Federal Credit Union

celebrates its 40th anniversary. Notable events from the CU's history include issuing their first mortgage to actor Jerry Orbach (late '60s), signing Angela Lansbury as the 10,000th member (1979), placement of the first ATM (1999) and becoming NYC's number one credit union deployer of ATMs (2001).

• Salary increases totaling 11.75% over four years (rates are compounded) highlight the new Off-Broadway contract.

## Two EMCs Receive Roger Sturtevant Award

**E**quity Membership Candidates (EMCs) Emelie Faith Thompson and Matthew Elliott are the recipients of the eighth annual Roger Sturtevant Musical Theatre Awards, named for the beloved casting director who died in 2003. The award is given to EMCs who have demonstrated outstanding abilities in the field of musical theatre. The award consists of a certificate accompanied by a \$1000 check.

Emelie Faith Thompson attended Shenandoah Conservatory where she earned her BFA in Musical Theatre. Upon graduation, she became a Barter Player at the Barter Theatre in Virginia where she performed as Agatha in *Frankenstein*, Rapunzel in *Rapunzel*, Charlotte in *Charlotte's Web* and many other roles. She recently appeared as Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady* at the Heritage Theatre Festival. This summer, Emelie will join the acting company of Festival 56 where she will perform in all



Matthew Elliott.

four of their summer productions.

Matthew Elliott grew up in Great Bend, Kansas. He performed in his first musical when he was eight years old as the Prince in *The King & I* at a local community college. He attended the University of Kansas for three years until transferring to Wichita State University where he will graduate with a BFA in Musical Theatre.

For Matthew receiving this award means that he will be

able to move to New York with much more confidence. "It's not just financial confidence, but confidence in myself. This award gave me the validation that I am on the right track and that I am ready to put myself out there."

After graduation, Matthew will spend the summer at Music Theatre of Wichita where he is cast as Fyedka in *Fiddler on the Roof* and will be in the ensemble for the rest of the summer, performing in *9 to 5*, *Honk, Singin' in the Rain*, and *Legally Blonde*.



Emelie Faith Thompson.

## FINAL CURTAIN

"Were I to die and go to heaven and find it populated by actors, I would not be unhappy."

— Playwright Ben Hecht

10/11/11 – 1/04/12

Helen Ackerman	Charles M. Kray	Dolores
Ray Aranha	Danya Krupska	Rothenberger
Bradley Ball	John Lawhorn	Sharon Rush
Doris Belack	Barbara Lea	Beatrice Salten
Jack Belt	Christina Lind	Charles E. Sanders
Rex Benson	Howard London	Michael Sartor
Florence Bray	Philip Mandelker	Jessie Saunders
Thomas Martell	Midge Marinello	Tom Sawyer
Brimm II	George McGrath	Patricia Sigris
Graham Brown	Sidney Melton	Scott Singer
Sharon Bunn	Ivars Mikelson	Harold Smith
Leon Capo	Judith Militare	Stanley Soble
Allen Case	John Milligan	Jack Soo
Christopher	Edward Mohler	Leonard Stone
Cazenove	Judith Montgomery	Hal Studer
Shirley Chambers	Kent More	Alan Sues
Michael D. Cupp	Felix Munso	Kenneth W. Tanner
Wilkie DeMartel	John Neville	Florence Tarlow
George Ralph Di	Roger Stuart	Margaret Thomson
Cenzo	Newman	Neal Thomas
Stephen Douglass	Eulalie Helen Nobel	Thorpe
Margaret Draper	Seamus T. O'Brien	Father Frank Toste
Virginia Emerson	Maricela Ochoa	CSE
Aniko Farrell	Alba Oms	Nina Vance
Ellis Foster	Bonnie Blair Parker	George
Dan Frazer	Virginia Payne	Vandenhouten
Alan Fudge	Reg Perry	Renata Vaselle
Rodney Griffin	Joseph Petruccio	Danny Villa
Bill Hargreaves	Rose Pickering	Gerald Walling
Jerry Haynes	James Pompeii	RG Webb
Gary Holcombe	Paul A. Powell	Darryl Wells
Robert Ivey	Ana Pozzi	John Wessel
John R. Ivick	Shirley Prestia	Scottie Wilkison
William C. Jackson	Jeff Reade	Gregory Wright
Paul Kent	Sharon Repking	Mary A. Wunderle
Reid Klein	Paul E. Richards	Joyce Zaccaro
Martin Kornberg	John Robb	

## TCG Offering Grants To Professional Actors

**T**heatre Communications Group (TCG) is administering the seventh round of Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowships, a program giving Actors the opportunity to grow artistically and professionally in collaboration with one of TCG's member theatres. The goals of the program are: to further an actor's artistic and professional development, to deepen and enrich his/her

relationship with a not-for-profit theatre, to ensure his/her continued professional commitment to live theatre, and to encourage Actors to work outside their comfort zone.

Actors are selected in two categories: Extraordinary Potential supports early to mid-career Actors who have completed their training within the last 15 years. Distinguished Achievement supports Actors

who have demonstrated considerable experience in professional theatre, with a substantial body of work. Recipients in the first category will receive \$15,000, with an additional \$10,000 available to relieve student loan debt. Recipients in the latter category will receive \$25,000.

For information, online registration and downloadable guidelines and application forms, visit the website: [http://www.tcg.org/grants/fox/fox\\_index.cfm](http://www.tcg.org/grants/fox/fox_index.cfm). Deadline for registration and applications is June 27, 2012.

## Correction re Centennial Outreach to Senior Members

**S**enior *Equity* members who would like to share their stories for the Union's Centennial celebration may be interviewed over the phone by calling 212-966-3759

ext. 100. The telephone number that appeared in the April issue of *Equity* News was incorrect. Stories may also be mailed to Actors' Equity, Narrative Project, VP+C, 13 Crosby Street, Loft

502, New York, NY 10013. For further information, visit the Centennial website: [www.aea100.org](http://www.aea100.org) and the Centennial Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/AEA100](http://www.facebook.com/AEA100).