

Faculty Newsletter: Summer and Fall 2011

Cynthia Bassham

Bassham's most recent accomplishments are that she has been granted "Security of Employment" and that she was designated recently a "Master Teacher" of Fitzmaurice Voicework. Bassham was also voted onto the VASTA (Voice and Speech Trainers Association) board for a second term.

Richard Brestoff served as a Blue-Ribbon Panel Judge for the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences 2011 EMMY Awards given out on September 17th in the categories of Best Drama, Best Actor in a Drama and Best Actor in a Miniseries or Movie. He also served as a Blue Ribbon Judge for the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences College Television Awards in summer 2011. Brestoff presented a paper at **The Robert Cohen Festival** in October 2011.

Robert Cohen directed Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* in Fall 2011 at UC Irvine.

Cohen published "The Eyes Have It", a study of how the actor's eyes, like a boxer's, must be actively searching for clues and employed to win goals in his or her interactions with others. He also presented a part of this paper at **The Robert Cohen Festival** in October 2011. At quarter's end, he is heading abroad to see the Romanian premiere of his play, *Machiavelli, the Art of Terror*, at the Romanian National Theatre of Cluj.

Ketu H. Katrak's book, *Contemporary Indian Dance: New Creative Choreography in India and the Diaspora* was published by Palgrave Macmillan (August 2011). In June 2011, Katrak presented a paper on "The Language of Love and Loss in Julia Cho's *The Language Archive*" at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. In July 2011, she did a paper on Contemporary Indian Dance at the Confluences 6 Conference at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. Katrak is co-convening a Symposium (with dance and drama performances) entitled, "Mad and Divine" on India's female saint-poets in Chennai in December 2011.

Daphne Lei published her second book *Alternative Chinese Opera in the Age of Globalization: Performing Zero* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011) and a number of articles in the past year. She gave a keynote speech at the University of Reading (UK), where her book made its official UK launch. She also gave a talk at Asian Performing Arts Forum (APAF) in London. Daphne Lei was invited to give a keynote address "Performative Chineseness: Contesting Chinese Opera in the National, Transnational, Diasporic and Global Contexts," at the conference of Contesting 'British Chinese' Culture: Forms, Histories, Identities (University of Reading, UK, September, 2011) and a talk "Talk about Ganga!": Predicament and

Opportunity for Innovative Chinese Opera in the New Millennium," at Asian Performing Arts Forum (APAF) in London (Sept, 2011). She presented her paper "Humanity Trumps All? The Economy of Chinese Opera under the UN Typoaphy," at the American Society for Theatre Research conference in Montreal (Nov. 2011), and participated in a roundtable discussion and led a post-show discussion at the performance studies conference "Global Flashpoint: Transnational Performance and Politics," UCLA, October 2011.

Lei's article "Interruption, Intervention, Interculturalism; Robert Wilson's HIT Productions in Taiwan" will be published in *Theatre Journal* (December, 2011).

Annie Loui's inter-media video collaboration with Mark Zaki, "Orpheus Trilogy" was selected for inclusion at the SEAMUS Festival, Miami Florida, and at Rutgers Stiedman Gallery. Loui taught a Master class at the Accademia del'Arte, Arezzo ITALY summer 2011, and will be going back to teach a week in February. Her work-in-progress performance of devised theater work "Jane Eyre" presented in Spring 2011 is under construction for a full performance in December 2011.

Vincent Olivieri

In June 2011, Olivieri traveled to Prague to take part in the Prague Quadrennial Design Exposition. He spoke on a panel on Sound Design & Sound Art, and presented two pieces of work: an improvisatory hand-held-device band called The Night I Found Out I Was Adopted (with Brad Berridge of Williams College), and a sound-art installation piece called 'City Park' with Olivieri's sound art collective, Push The Button. The other members of Push The Button are Berridge and Davin Huston of Purdue University.

In August 2011, Olivieri designed *The Understudy* at Theaterworks in Hartford. Luke Hegel-Cantarella designed the scenery, and the production (and sound design) received great notices in *The New York Times*. In early October 2011, he had two pieces in SoundWalk, a sound-art festival in Long Beach, CA. Push The Button had a piece, and Olivieri developed another piece with UC Irvine's Anthropology Professor Roxanne Varzi.

Eli Simon was an invited guest at the National Theatre of Romania's International Theatre Festival - celebrating Romanian poet, Gellu Naum - in Cluj. While there, Simon cast twenty-one actors from the National Theatre Company in his upcoming production of *War of the Clowns*, which will open at the National Theatre in Cluj on June 15, 2012. The second edition of Simon's *The Art of Clowning* is now in production and will be released in Spring 2012. This fall, Simon was the keynote speaker for the San Diego School District's annual theatre conference at the Old Globe Theatre.

The Robert Cohen Festival (a landmark achievement for the Drama department an initiative of Chair Eli Simon with key support from Assistant Chair Don Hill) took place on two days in Fall 2011. October 28 featured Acting seminars by our alumnae Rebecca Tourino, Mark Booher, and James Calleri, and talks by Robert Cohen and Richard Brestoff followed by the 6.30pm Ribbon-cutting ceremony of **The Robert Cohen Theatre** at UC Irvine, attended by the Chancellor Drake, EVC Gottfredson, among other distinguished guests, faculty, and students. On October 29, the Drama department hosted a lunch for Drama alumnae, followed by matinee productions of *Waiting for Godot* (directed by Cohen), and Cohen's translation of *The Misanthrope* (directed by Keith Fowler).

Jaymi Smith

The biggest highlights for Jaymi Smith have been winning the 2010 Joseph Jefferson Award for *Mary's Wedding* at Rivendell Theatre. Smith has also been nominated for another Joseph Jefferson Award for *Orlando* at The Court Theater

Over summer 2011, Smith designed *The Music Man*, *The Glass Menagerie* and *Noises Off* for Utah Shakespeare. Additionally, she designed *The Wiz* at Dallas Theater Center and *Moonlight and Magnolias* at The Clarence Brown Theater in Knoxville.

Philip Thompson worked as voice and text director at the Utah Shakespeare Festival on *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard III*, and *The Glass Menagerie*. He also took on a new role at the festival as the head of Voice Speech and Text. In July 2011 he taught two workshops in New York City with collaborator and UCI emeritus professor Dudley Knight. In August 2011, Thompson made two presentations at the Voice and Speech Trainers Association summer conference in Chicago: a panel on the use of computer technology in voice and speech, and a live recording session for his podcast, *Glossonomia*. In September 2011, Thompson did voice and text work on a production of *As You Like It* at the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. In October, he worked as accent director for *The Trip to Bountiful* at South Coast Repertory Theatre.

Shigeru Yaji designed the costumes this summer (2011) for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's production of *The African Company Presents Richard III*, (July to November 2011) a play that centers on the first Black theater company in the United States.

Yaji also designed costumes for *Peter Pan* starring Cathy Rigby, August 2011 to 2012. The National Tour includes Madison Square Gardens, NY in December.

Currently, Yaji is working for OSF on *Animal Crackers* that opens in February 2012, with UCI Alumnus, Mark Bedard, playing Groucho Marx.