



External Evaluator's Packet for:

SETH PANITCH

**HEAD OF MFA/BA ACTING PROGRAMS
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA**



Full Media Portfolio can be viewed online at

www.sethpanitch.com



May 12, 2014

RE: Application for Full Professor
Seth Panitch
Head of MFA/ BA Acting Programs
Associate Professor of Theatre
University of Alabama

Dear External Evaluator:

I offer you my sincerest thanks for serving as an external evaluator during my application for promotion to Full Professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Alabama. It is my hope that after reviewing both the media portfolio on my website www.sethpanitch.com and the supporting documents contained in this packet, you will be able to comment on my creative and academic record, as well as the promise it suggests for future success. I believe this record makes a compelling case that during my time at the University of Alabama, I have not only well integrated myself into this academic community, I have singularly enriched it, and the lives of its students, as well.

In terms of teaching, my **acting classes** at UA have maintained tremendous popularity with both graduate and undergraduate students. The passion I have for teaching and my dedication to the growth of our students is reflected in the strength of my student evaluations, which consistently place my classes in the highest percentage of student satisfaction at the University. During my tenure here, I have successfully established the study of acting as a rigorous and highly technical discipline, not a "talent" bestowed upon a fortunate few. These concrete results are quantifiable, and are reflected in the number of graduates from both the MFA and BA acting programs who have gone on to **professional success** in their careers- both as actors and as professors of acting at colleges across the country. I have enclosed a "Graduated Student Update" in your binder, which details this success, as well as a selection from my student evaluations for your consideration.

I continue to search for **new techniques** in the study of acting, not only through what I learn in my professional experiences in Theatre, but by employing professionals from other disciplines and utilizing instructors across the University, including numerous professors from the School of Music, the Art department, the African Music Collective, and the Japanese Taiko Drumming group *Nozomi Daiko*. I have developed Acting for the Camera coursework for my students through my connection with the Department of Telecommunication and Film, exposing students to both single and multiple camera styles on location and in the University of Alabama television studios.

I have combined my Advanced Acting Styles class with the Advanced Film Directing course in Telecommunication and Film to enable the students in both departments to study together on the collaborative art of film, which has resulted in numerous successful partnerships after graduation between these young artists. I have incorporated exciting new techniques in the acting studio, including acting improvisation with music, clowning, mask work, Suzuki, Tai Chi, Karate, and the incorporation of Film into multiple classes. I have instituted end of semester advising for all my classes, providing a personal, one-on-one forum for students to discuss not only progress in their training, but to develop strategies to better prepare them for their transition into the industry. I have also enriched my instruction of acting by serving five times as a **Guest Master Acting Teacher at El Instituto Superior De Arte in Havana, Cuba** (Cuba's most prestigious arts institution), bringing the fruits of those experiences with extraordinary international artists back to the classrooms of the University of Alabama.

I have complemented my training by inviting a steady stream of **guest artists** into my classes. Through my professional connections, I have been able to set up master classes with, among others, Joel Zwick (director of Big Fat Greek Wedding, Fat Albert, Laverne and Shirley, and Bosom Buddies), Philip Sneed (Executive Director of the Arvada Center for the Arts), Gavin Cameron Webb (international director of note), Karyn Casl (Telsey and Company Casting), Barry Shapiro (Herman Lipson Casting), Ted Barton (professional actor of stage and screen), and Geoffrey Kent (former President of the Society of American Fight Directors).

I have relentlessly sought out **professional opportunities for students** in every one of my national and international projects, as well as in regional theatre through the connections these projects have fostered. It is my firm belief that the more often we are able to give our students a taste of the professional world they wish to enter, the more prepared they will be when they finally enter that world as graduates of this University. To this end, I created **The Bridge Project**, an initiative that seeks to give students professional experiences to assist in their transition to the industry by incorporating them into many of the creative projects I will detail below. Through this initiative, I have given 34 UA students their first Off- Broadway credit and have brought 52 students down to act in or design professional productions in Havana, Cuba with the National Theatre of Cuba. I have additionally secured casting for a number of my students through an **internship with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival**, which I developed through my ongoing partnership with that nationally recognized theatre.

My **professional creative work** has flourished during my tenure at the university. Internationally, I have built a substantial reputation through **directing four plays in Havana, Cuba** in partnership with the Cuban Ministry of Culture (El Instituto Superior de Arte), which has brought national and international attention to my career, while enriching the international reputation of the University as well. In 2008, I became the first U.S. director in decades to helm a professional production in Cuba with our production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. Productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Christopher Durang's *Beyond Therapy* followed, all celebrated in the Cuban press. Most recently, I directed a production of my own play, *Alcestis Ascending*, which served as the

grand opening for the Teatro Raquel Revuelta, named for Cuba's most distinguished classical actress. This production travelled to Cuba after a well-received run Off-Broadway at the Harold Clurman Theatre in New York City, which according to the *Associated Press*, marked the first Bi-National New York production since the Cuban Embargo. In each of these productions, which starred Cuban artists, I have cast supporting roles with my acting students, in order to provide them a singular professional and educational experience. In previous trips to Havana, I developed a professional relationship with **El Instituto Superior De Arte** (I.S.A., the highest level of artistic training in Cuba), where I was invited to direct *The Importance of Being Earnest* with graduate Cuban acting students in their final year. Due to the success of this production, I have been invited multiple times to teach master classes, both at I.S.A and for professional theatre companies in Havana including *Mefisto Teatro* and *Teatro El Publico*, the two largest companies in Cuba. My work in Cuba has been recognized three times with official commendations from Julian Gonzalez, the Minister of Culture.

Nationally, I have steadfastly maintained and strengthened my connection to the **Professional Theatre**, and have been regularly employed as a director and actor at nationally recognized Shakespeare Festivals. This work has gained me admittance into the **Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers**, the professional director's union. This summer, I directed *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the **Colorado Shakespeare Festival** (*Time Magazine's* third rated Shakespeare festival). This follows two seasons performing in CSF's acting company, where I played leading and supporting roles in *Love's Labors Lost*, *Macbeth*, *The Fantasticks*, *Measure for Measure*, and *The Three Musketeers*. In the summer of 2009, I directed *Tartuffe* for the Twenty-Fourth season of the **Texas Shakespeare Festival**. I was also employed as Festival Fight Director, choreographing combat sequences for *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love's Labors Lost*.

I have made it a priority to develop my own theatrical projects as well, which has resulted in **three successful Off-Broadway productions in New York**. I wrote, directed and performed in my play *Dammit Shakespeare!* at the Urban Stages Theatre in New York City. The production, a mix of professionals and graduating UA students, attracted accolades and interest from the *New York Times*, *Associated Press*, *CBS 42 News*, and other media organizations, both in Alabama and across the country. I followed this up by directing and performing in a highly successful, well received production of my play *Hell: Paradise Found*, that was co-produced by the Drama Desk Award winning 59E59 Theatre. *Hell* was well reviewed by over a dozen theatrical media organizations, including the *New York Times* and *Backstage*. Last summer, I returned Off-Broadway with my play *Alcestis Ascending/ Alcestis Ascende*, which I directed with Cuban actors and dancers at the Harold Clurman Theatre at Theatre Row, before transferring the production to Cuba for the grand opening of the Teatro Raquel Revuelta in Havana. *Alcestis Ascending* received critical acclaim, both in New York and Havana, and its tour was closely chronicled by the *Associated Press*. The success of this production gained the notice of the **Dramatists Guild of America**, who extended an invitation for me to join the guild soon after we opened Off-Broadway.

I have also developed **multiple film projects** in my time at UA. I wrote and produced *A Night in the Theatre*, a documentary on the interplay between audience and performer, which has been published by Insight Media- the top producer of Theatrical Media in the world. I also wrote and co-produced *Company HavanaBama: Directing Across the Gulf*, which documents my directing work in Cuba and was an official selection at the 2013 Sidewalk International Moving Picture Festival. As for narrative film, I have recently secured financing to produce my screenplay *The Service of Man* in partnership with Meharry Medical College. This will be a feature film on the Nashville area African-American Medical School in the turbulent year of 1968, co-produced with Professor Aaron Greer of Loyola University of Chicago.

On the University of Alabama campus, I have directed well-received productions of *Seven Guitars*, *Othello*, *Animal Crackers*, *Moby Dick*, *Saint Joan*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Henry V*, *The Heiress*, *Into the Woods*, *The Government Inspector*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Fifth of July* for the department of Theatre and Dance, earning multiple awards for Excellence in Directing from the *Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival*. I have also performed as a **Faculty Guest Artist**, acting to strong reviews in *Misalliance*, *Moon Over Buffalo*, *Blithe Spirit* and *A Flea in her Ear*.

I have been honored to **serve the University** in a myriad of functions both on and off campus. I have served seven years as a **Faculty Senator**, including one term as Senate Vice President, two terms on the Faculty Senate Steering Committee, and three terms as co-chair of the Senate Student Life Committee. Additionally, I have sat on numerous committees at the Department, College and University level. I serve as the Undergraduate Coordinator for the Department of Theatre and Dance, the department's academic liaison to the administration. For nine years, I have **directed the Senior/MFA New York Showcase** for graduating theatre students, both here in rehearsal and on location in New York City. I have **taught master classes and guest lectured** for the Department of Music, New College, the Honors College, and the Hudson Strode Program. I have served multiple times as a judge for **Undergraduate Research Competitions**, and have mentored successful student presentations as well. I am a faculty mentor in the **University Fellows Program**. I have organized and presently advise two student outreach performance groups- the "**Paper Moon Players**," which performs for area retirement communities as well as an additional troupe that teaches **acting classes to local High Schools**. I have given the induction address to the new members of the University of Alabama chapter of **Phi Beta Kappa**. I have also spoken at numerous **University Media Days**, vigorously promoting the fine work of the department in which I serve.

I have served on **national organizations**, presenting master classes and taking active positions on the Acting/ Directing and Movement committees at the **Southeast Theatre Conference**. I have served as a regional respondent numerous times for the **American College Theatre Festival**, in order to connect myself better to that national body as well. Additionally, I serve as a member of the **Alabama Conference of Theatre**, and have been asked to return as an organizational member of the **Mississippi Theatre Festival**.

I have been steadfastly dedicated to **recruitment**, and take my responsibility as a mouthpiece for the University very seriously. Due to these efforts, I have been designated by the admissions office as one of the coordinators of UA "V.I.P." Visitation Days. I have attended both the Alabama Conference of Theatre Festival and the Mississippi Theatre Festival (where I also served as a festival judge) to recruit the best and brightest theatre students. I continue to co-organize the Department's Scholarship Audition Days, where prospective students from all over the country audition for both the department and available scholarships. I have repeatedly recruited for the College of Arts and Sciences at numerous functions. Additionally, as director of the MFA Acting Program, I assemble each class of potential MFA candidates through numerous auditions and interviews both on campus and at the Southeast Theatre Conference. In all areas of recruitment, I strive to reflect the scholastic values of the University of Alabama and the proficient level of artistry of my Department as well.

I have continually **collaborated with other professors**. I have worked with the Department of English to bring Theatre to their classrooms. I included Engineering students in the special effects design for the Department's production of *Henry V*. The aforementioned "*A Night in the Theatre*," was co-produced with the Department of Telecommunication and Film, with which I have a long standing partnership. I have incorporated the Nozomi Daiko Drummers and the African Drumming Collective into classroom and departmental productions. I have experimented in Acting and Musical Improvisation with multiple professors in the Department of Music. I have investigated theatrical design projects in Cuba with the Art Department. I have performed voice over work for Professor Rita Snyder's *Ballet Noir: The Tango* public performance, as well as her final filmed version, which was shown to accolades at the Sidewalk International Moving Picture Festival. I have been invited into Professor Cornelius Carter's dance classes to explore together how theatrical approaches might be further employed in dance. I have also incorporated University student musicians into multiple mainstage productions, creating a constant collaboration between students of our departments.

I have been extremely fortunate to have my **teaching and creative research honored** at the University, National, and International levels. I have received three official commendations from the **Cuban Ministry of Culture** for my work with Cuban artists. I have received seven Certificates of Merit for Excellence in Faculty Direction from the **American College Theatre Festival**. This year, I have been selected by the President of the University of Alabama to be the University's nominee to the Carnegie Foundation's CASE National Professor of the Year Award. This past spring, I was awarded the University of Alabama's 2014 **Burnum Distinguished Professor Award**, given for an exceptional balance of teaching and research over a career. In 2012, I was awarded the **Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award** by the University of Alabama's National Alumni Association. In 2011, I was named the **Druid City Arts Educator of the Year** by the Tuscaloosa Arts Commission. I was awarded a **College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Board Faculty Fellowship** from 2009-2012.

I believe I have taken the steps necessary to comfortably **integrate myself into the community of this University**. My office door is always open, and I am gratified that the students feel comfortable stopping by to discuss their craft and their career, which ultimately is my chief concern: the viable professional future of the student body of this university. I believe that the training of these students does not end with their graduation, and I put that belief into practice by maintaining an active dialogue with them as they seek and establish their professional careers. I consider myself supremely honored that these students continue their partnership with me well beyond graduation and into, what I am most proud to report, thrillingly exciting careers.

Although your position marks you as someone whose insight can best shed light on my candidacy, it also marks you as someone whose spare time is in extremely short supply. I graciously thank you for taking the time to review my materials online on my website and attached in this packet. I am deeply honored to work at the University of Alabama, and have high hopes for a long successful relationship with this fine institution.

Very Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Seth Panitch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Seth" and last name "Panitch" clearly distinguishable.

Seth Panitch
Associate Professor of Theatre
Head of MFA/ BA Acting Programs
Department of Theatre and Dance
The University of Alabama
www.Sethpanitch.com

(List of Enclosures Follows)

List of Enclosures:

www.Sethpanitch.com (Full Media Portfolio Website)

Biography

Resumes

Directing Resume

Acting Resume

Teaching Resume

Professional Work- Pictures and Videos

Directing

Acting

Dramatic Writing- Full scripts can be requested in PDF

Teaching

Student Evaluations

Graduated Student Update

Pictures and Video of student work

Raves and Recommendations

Awards

Professional Recommendations

Actor and Student Recommendations

Cuba Media

Reviews and Articles

Full Curriculum Vita (and CV in Biography Form)

Detailed Teaching/ Creative Activity/ Service History (2005- Present)

Professional Recommendations

Former Student Recommendations

Teaching: Teaching Philosophy, Graduated Student Update, Selections from Evaluations, Selection of Full Evaluations, Scene Evaluation Tool, Process Papers (assessment), Sample Syllabus

Representative Photography, Creative Activity

Representative Reviews, Creative Activity

Representative Media Coverage, Creative Activity

Awards and Recognition

Full Media Portfolio

Online at
www.sethpanitch.com

Biography

Resumes

Directing Resume

Acting Resume

Teaching Resume

Professional Work- Pictures and Videos

Directing

Acting

Dramatic Writing- Full scripts can be requested in PDF

Teaching

Student Evaluations

Graduated Student Update

Pictures and Video of student work

Raves and Recommendations

Awards

Professional Recommendations

Actor and Student Recommendations

Cuba Media

Reviews and Articles

FULL CURRICULUM VITAE

&

CV IN BIOGRAPHY FORM

Seth Panitch
Associate Professor of Acting
Head of MFA / BA Acting Programs
Department of Theatre and Dance
Box 870239
College of Arts and Sciences
The University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0239
Office: 205/ 348-3845; spanitch@as.ua.edu

EDUCATION

University of Washington- Professional Actors Training Program
M.F.A. in Acting, May 1993

Circle in the Square Theatre School, NYC, NY
Certificate, Summer 1990

Occidental College, Los Angeles, California
B.A. Theater, May 1990
Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude

Tufts University, Boston, Massachusetts
(Transferred to Occidental, May 1988)

**PROFESSIONAL
EXPERIENCE**

Associate Professor of Theatre (Acting)
Director of MFA, Undergraduate Acting Programs
Department of Theatre and Dance
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama

8/05 to present:

Director of MFA / BA Acting Programs:

Teach MFA and BA courses in: Advanced Acting, Acting Shakespeare, Period Styles (Moliere, Shaw, Ibsen, Chekhov, Coward, Wilde, Mamet) Acting for the Camera, Comedic Styles, Directing, Careers in Professional Theatre, Rehearsal Process, Stage Movement (Tai Chi, Laban, Animal Work, Physical Stage Actions, Physical Characterization), Advanced Stage Movement (Suzuki, Clowning, Mask Work), Showcase Preparation and Stage Combat (Hand to Hand, Rapier and Dagger, Broadsword).

Direct mainstage productions

Faculty Guest Artist (Actor) in productions.

Senator, Faculty Senate (Seven Years, Vice President 2012-2013)

Faculty Senate Steering Committee (Five Years)

Co-Chair Senate Student Life Committee (Six Years)

Chair, Undergraduate Scholarship Committee

Undergraduate Academic Coordinator for Department of Theatre

Co- Chair, MFA/ Senior Showcase in New York City.

Provost Search Committee (University)

Chair or participant in College and Department Faculty Searches.

Administrator, High School Scholarship Auditions.

Academic advisor to both graduate and undergraduate majors.

Advisor/ Coach to participants in the SETC, URTA and UPTA combined auditions.

12/14- 7/14

Director, Colorado Shakespeare Festival- I am directing a production of William Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* for the 56th Season of the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, (*Time Magazine*'s third rated Shakespeare festival in the country).

5/13- 7/13

**Director, Playwright, Teatro Nacional, Havana, Cuba-
Director, Playwright, Harold Clurman Theatre, NYC-**
I directed a production of my play *Alcestis Ascending* both Off Broadway at the Harold Clurman Theatre in New York and in Havana for the Teatro Nacional at the Raquel Revuelta Theatre, under the auspices of the Cuban Ministry of Culture (CNAE). This marked my fifth professional directing project in Cuba, where I had previously become the first American director to officially direct a Cuban theatre company in decades. According to the *Associated Press*, the New York production marked the first bi-national production there since the revolution. This touring production, well reviewed by the New York and Havana press, employed professional Cuban actors and dancers, as well as MFA acting students from the University of Alabama.

6/12- 7/12

Director/ Playwright/ Actor, 59E59 Theatre, NYC- Directed and performed in a production of my play *Hell: Paradise Found* Off-Broadway at the Drama Desk Award Winning 59th Street Theatre, July 2012. Well reviewed by *New York Times*, *Backstage*, and numerous other publications.

- 11/11- 9/12 **Filmmaker-** Produced and wrote the documentary *Company HavanaBama: Directing Across the Gulf*, about my experiences directing in Cuba for the National Theatre of Cuba. The film was selected and shown by the 2013 Sidewalk International Moving Picture Festival.
- 11/11- 1/12 **Guest Director, Teatro Nacional, Havana, Cuba-** Invited to direct a Spanish language professional production of Christopher Durang's *Beyond Therapy* for the Teatro Nacional at the Teatro Adolfo Llauro with Cuban artists, under the auspices of the Cuban Ministry of Culture (CNAE).
- 10/11- 2/13 **Guest Editor, METHODS: A Journal of Actor Training-** I served on the Editorial staff of METHODS, a journal being developed by Pace University Press.
- 5/10- 8/10 **Actor, Colorado Shakespeare Festival-** Performed leading and supporting roles in *Measure for Measure* and *The Fantasticks* for the 52nd Anniversary Season of the Colorado Shakespeare Festival (*Time Magazine*'s third rated Shakespeare festival in the country).
- 7/09-8/09 **Guest Director, Teatro Nacional, Havana, Cuba-** Directed a Spanish language professional production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the Cuban Ministry of Culture. Production rehearsed at the University of Alabama with Cuban artists in residence before transferring to the Teatro Berthold Brecht in Havana, Cuba.
- Summer, 2009 **Director, Texas Shakespeare Festival-** Directed the Texas Shakespeare Production of Moliere's *Tartuffe*. Texas Shakespeare Festival has been a major Shakespeare Festival for 24 seasons, hailed by the *Austin Statesman* as "indisputably the best Shakespeare Festival in Texas."
- Summer, 2009 **Festival Fight Choreographer, Texas Shakespeare Festival-** Served as festival fight choreographer for *Romeo and Juliet* and *Love's Labor's Lost* at the Texas Shakespeare Festival.
- 11/08- 1/09 **Guest Director, Teatro Nacional, Havana, Cuba-** Directed a Spanish language professional production of *The Merchant of Venice* for the Teatro Nacional at the Teatro Adolfo Llauro under the auspices of the Cuban Ministry of Culture (CNAE), becoming the first American director to officially direct a Cuban theatre company in decades. The production employed both professional Cuban actors and my graduate MFA acting students from the University of Alabama.

Summer, 2008	Actor, Colorado Shakespeare Festival- Performed leading and supporting roles in <i>Love's Labors Lost</i> , <i>Macbeth</i> , and <i>The Three Musketeers</i> for the 50 th Anniversary Season of the Colorado Shakespeare Festival (<i>Time Magazine's</i> third rated Shakespeare festival in the country).
12/06- 11/12	Guest Director, El Instituto Superior De Arte, Havana, Cuba- Directed fifth year graduate actors in their thesis production of <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> and taught multiple Acting workshops over six years to the advanced acting class at <i>I.S.A.</i> , which is the highest level of artistic training in Cuba.
Summer, 2008	Guest Professor, the University of Colorado- Taught Shakespeare in Performance for the University of Colorado Department of Theatre while performing as an actor at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival.
07/06- 12/07	Filmmaker- Produced and wrote the documentary " <i>A Night in the Theatre</i> " published by Insight Media, the largest purveyor of theatrical media in the world.
Summer, 2006	Director/ Playwright/ Actor, The Urban Stages Theatre, NYC- I directed and performed in a production of my play <i>Dammit, Shakespeare!</i> Off- Broadway at the Urban Stages Theatre in NYC.
10/03 to present	Screenwriter- My screenplay <i>Restoration</i> was optioned by Affinity Films, Los Angeles, California. <i>That's Life</i> optioned by Joel Zwick Productions, Los Angeles California. <i>Damn Nation</i> contracted to Erik Bergquist Productions, Los Angeles, California.
03/08	Presenter, Southeastern Theatre Conference- Presented the workshop " <i>A Night in the Theatre</i> ," a lecture / discussion of my approach to filming and selling a Theatrical documentary.
03/07	Presenter, Southeastern Theatre Conference- Presented the workshop "Physicalising the Action," an improvisational approach to bridging text analysis and scene study at SETC in Atlanta, Ga.
01/99 – 12/04	Lecturer, Department of Theater, Rio Hondo College- Los Angeles, California. Taught Acting, Shakespeare, mask work, produced New Play Festival, directed mainstage productions.
01/02 – 12/04	Lecturer, Department of Theater, Long Beach City College- Long Beach, California. Taught beginning and intermediate acting, directed departmental productions, and produced Repfest (festival of short plays in repertory).

- 09/95 – 06/98 **Artistic Director, *Poor Yorick Productions***- Theatre company in Los Angeles, California.
- 04/97 – 05/97 **Guest Director, Rio Hondo College**, Los Angeles, California.
- 01/97 – 03/97 **Senior Comprehensives Director, Occidental College**- Los Angeles, California.
- 05/90 – 07/91 **Instructor, *Arts Unlimited***- Los Angeles, California. Taught acting, directed festival productions at Summer Training Program.

CREATIVE ACTIVITY

DIRECTING

***Member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers**

- 2014 *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Colorado Shakespeare Festival
- 2013 *Alcestis Ascending*, Teatro Raquel Revuelta, Havana, Cuba
 **Official Commendation*, Cuban Ministry of Culture
- 2013 *Alcestis Ascending*, Harold Clurman Theatre, NYC
 **Best Bet, Time Out New York*
- 2013 *Seven Guitars*, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
- 2013 *Othello*, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
 **Meritorious Achievement in Directing*, KCACTF
- 2012 *Hell: Paradise Found*, 59E59 Theatre, NYC
 **Best Bet, Time Out New York*
- 2011 *Beyond Therapy*, Teatro Berthold Brecht, Havana, Cuba
 **Official Commendation*, Cuban Ministry of Culture
- 2011 *Animal Crackers*, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
 **Meritorious Achievement in Directing*, KCACTF
- 2011 *Moby-Dick*, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
 **Meritorious Achievement in Directing*, KCACTF
- 2010 *An Enemy of the People*, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
 **Meritorious Achievement in Directing*, KCACTF

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| 2010 | <i>Saint Joan</i> , University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
*Also, Fight Choreographer
*Meritorious Achievement in Directing, KCACTF |
| 2009 | <i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> , El Teatro Nacional, Havana, Cuba
*Official Commendation, Cuban Ministry of Culture |
| 2009 | <i>Tartuffe</i> , Texas Shakespeare Festival
*Also, Festival Fight Choreographer |
| 2009 | <i>Henry V</i> , University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa AL
*Also, Fight Choreographer |
| 2008 | <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> , El Teatro Nacional, Havana, Cuba
*Official Commendation, Cuban Ministry of Culture |
| 2008 | <i>The Heiress</i> , University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa AL |
| 2008 | <i>Into the Woods</i> , University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa AL
*Meritorious Achievement in Directing, KCACTF |
| 2007 | <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> , El Instituto Superior De Arte,
Havana, Cuba |
| 2007 | <i>The Government Inspector</i> , University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa AL |
| 2007 | <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
*Also, Fight Choreographer
*Meritorious Achievement in Directing, KCACTF |
| 2006 | <i>Dammit, Shakespeare!</i> , Urban Stages Theatre, NYC
*Also, remounted at the University of Alabama |
| 2006 | <i>Fifth of July</i> , University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
*Meritorious Achievement in Directing, KCACTF |
| 2004 | <i>Speed the Plow</i> , Long Beach City College, Long Beach, Ca. |
| 2004 | <i>Taming of the Shrew</i> , Rio Hondo College, Ca. |
| 2004 | <i>Measure for Measure</i> , The Raw Space, NYC |
| 2004 | <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> , Whittier Theater, Whittier, Ca. |
| 2003 | <i>Don Juan in Hell</i> , Rio Hondo College, Ca. |

2003	<i>Beyond Therapy</i> , Long Beach City College
2002	<i>The Seagull</i> , Rio Hondo College
2002	<i>Hamlet</i> , Rio Hondo College
1999	<i>My Left Feet</i> , Theatre Geo, Hollywood, Ca.
1997	<i>Sister Mary Ignatius</i> , Guest Senior Comprehensives Director, Occidental College, L.A, Ca.
1996	<i>What's Taking Moses So Long?</i> , The Wooden O Theater, L.A, Ca

ACTING

2012	<i>Hell: Paradise Found</i> (Lucifer), 59E59 Theatre, NYC
2012	<i>Misalliance</i> (John Tarlton), Faculty Guest Artist, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Al.
2010	<i>The Fantasticks</i> (El Gallo), Colorado Shakespeare Festival
2010	<i>Measure for Measure</i> (Provost), Colorado Shakespeare Festival
2009	<i>Love's Labors Lost</i> (Don Armado), Colorado Shakespeare Festival
2008	<i>Macbeth</i> (Mentieth), Colorado Shakespeare Festival
2008	<i>The Three Musketeers</i> (Grimaud), Colorado Shakespeare Festival
2008	<i>Moon Over Buffalo</i> (George Hay) Faculty Guest Artist, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Al.
2007	<i>Blithe Spirit</i> (Charles) Faculty Guest Artist, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Al.
2006	<i>Dammit, Shakespeare!</i> (Richard Burbage) Urban Stages Theatre, N.Y.C.
2005	<i>A Flea in her Ear</i> (Chandebise/ Poche), Faculty Guest Artist, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Al.
2003	<i>Hamlet</i> (Hamlet), Farnsworth Playhouse, Los Angeles, Ca.

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| 2002 | <i>Hell: Paradise Found</i> (Lucifer), The American Place Theater,
Second Space, NYC, New Comics Festival |
| 2000 | <i>The Eyes Have It</i> (Indep. Film, Lead), Benson Productions
<i>Holly Powers</i> (Indep. Film, Featured), Parabolic Productions |
| 1998 | <i>Improvisation</i> (Ionesco), Dramatic New Arts Theater, L.A., Ca. |
| 1998 | <i>Hell: Paradise Found</i> (Simon), Ventura Court Playhouse, LA, Ca. |
| 1997 | <i>Dammit, Shakespeare!</i> (Burbage), Westbeth Theater Center, NYC. |
| 1996 | <i>Dammit, Shakespeare!</i> (Burbage), Globe Playhouse, L.A., Ca. |
| 1995 | <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> (Mercutio), Hillside Repertory Theater, L.A., Ca
<i>Charlie's Aunt</i> (Brasset), Hillside Repertory Theater |
| 1994 | <i>Violence and the Sacred</i> (Paul), Seattle Fringe Festival, Wa.
<i>Doctor Doolittle</i> (Long Arrow), Seattle Children's Theater, Wa. |
| 1993 | <i>Julius Caesar</i> (Lepidus), Utah Shakespearean Festival
<i>King Lear</i> (Herald), Utah Shakespearean Festival
<i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> (Gascon), Utah Shakespearean Festival
<i>Don Juan in Hell</i> (Don Juan), Penthouse Theater, Seattle, Wa.
<i>Bartholomew Fair</i> (Quarrelous), Meany Theater, Seattle, Wa. |
| 1992 | <i>The Imaginary Invalid</i> (Dr. Diafoirous), Idaho Repertory Theatre
<i>Shadowland</i> (Peck), Idaho Repertory Theatre
<i>Story Theatre (Robber Bridegroom)</i> , Idaho Repertory Theatre
<i>A Doll's House</i> (Torvald), Glen Hughes Playhouse, Seattle, Wa.
<i>The Merchant of Venice</i> (Morocco), Glen Hughes Playhouse |
| 1991 | <i>Three Sisters</i> (Tuzenbach), University of Washington,
Professional Actors Training Program, Seattle, Wa.
<i>The Sea</i> (Hatch), University of Washington PATP
<i>La Valse</i> (Paul Claudel), University of Washington PATP |
| 1990 | <i>Comedy of Errors</i> (Balthazar), Hillside Repertory Theater, Ca
<i>The Mikado</i> (Chorus), Hillside Repertory Theater, Ca |

DRAMATIC WRITING

***Member of the Dramatists Guild of America**

- 2013 *Alcestis Ascending*, play, produced by the Cuban Ministry of Culture, performed in Havana at the Teatro Raquel Revuelta, July-August 2013.
- 2013 *Alcestis Ascending*, play, performed Off- Broadway at the Harold Clurman Theatre, NYC, July 2013.
- 2013 *Hell: Paradise Found*, play, produced for New Works Festival, Florida Studio Theatre, Sarasota, Fla.
- 2012 *Hell: Paradise Found*, play, re-written for Off- Broadway production at 59E59Theatre, July 2012.
- 2012 *Dammit, Shakespeare!*, play, translated and produced by the Cuban Ministry of Culture, performed in Havana's Teatro Adolfo Llauro, April, 2012.
- 2012 *1968*, screenplay, to be filmed at Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee, May 2015.
- 2012 *Company HavanaBama: Directing Across the Gulf*, a documentary.
- 2007 *A Night in the Theatre*, a documentary.
- 2007 *Restoration*, screenplay, optioned by Affinity Films, Ira Besserman, producer.
- 2006 *Dammit, Shakespeare!*, play, re-written for production Off Broadway at Urban Stages Theatre, NYC
- 2006 *That's Life*, screenplay, optioned by Joel Zwick Productions.
- 2005 *Damn Nation*, screenplay, co-written with Erik Bergquist (*The Fast and the Furious*), property of Limelight Productions
- 2003 *The Hypochondriac*, play, originally produced at The Complex Theater, Los Angeles, Ca.
- 1998 *Hell: Paradise Found*, play, originally produced at the Ventura Court Theater, Hollywood, Ca.

1997 *Dammit, Shakespeare!*, play, originally produced at the Westbeth Theater Center, NYC.

1996 *What's Taking Moses So Long?*, play, originally produced at The Wooden O Theater, Los Angeles, Ca.

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

2009 Grant Writing Workshop, *Cultural Alliance*, Birmingham, Al.

2005 “*Story*” *Script Structure Intensive*, Robert McKee, L.A., Ca.

2000-2001 *TVI Actor's Studio*, Acting for the Camera, Hollywood, Ca.

1998-2000 *The Actor's Workshop*, Joel Asher Studio, Los Angeles, Ca.

1993 *Classical Clowning/ Character Mask Workshop*, Arne Zaslove, Seattle, Wa.

1993 *The Society of American Fight Directors and Choreographers*, certification by David Bouche, Seattle, Washington

1990 *Circle in the Square Theater School*, NYC
Acting- Alan Langdon, Jacqueline Brookes

1989 *Commedia Intensive*, Thomas Leabhardt, Pomona College, Pasadena, Ca.

GRANTS

2013 *CARSCA* Grant, University of Alabama

2009-2012 Leadership Board Faculty Fellow, University of Alabama

2007 Cultural Alliance, Birmingham, Alabama

2006 Research Advisory Committee Grant, University of Alabama

SERVICE

2013- 2014 Faculty Senate
Arts and Sciences Performance Space Proposal Review Committee
Arts and Sciences Cuba Initiative Committee

Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
 Chair, Scholarship Committee
 Co- Chair Showcase Committee
 Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
 Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; Movement
 Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
 Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
 Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," Student group that
 performs at local Convalescent Hospitals.
 Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective
 students, University of Alabama.
 Presenter, CARSCA Conference, University of Alabama
 Presenter (Stage Combat), *UA Future Teachers Day*- Recruitment
 Presenter (directed performance)- Stillman College, outreach
 Presenter (directed performance)- Shelton State College, outreach
 Co-operative teaching relationships with:
 Laurie Arizumi (Nozomi Daiko Drumming Collective)
 Adam Schwartz (TCF- Filmed Projects)
 Jennifer Caputo (African Drumming Collective)
 Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2012- 2013

Vice President, Faculty Senate
 Faculty Senate Steering Committee
 Co- Chair Senate Student Life Committee
 Provost Search Committee
 Arts and Sciences Cuba Initiative Committee
 Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
 Chair, Assistant Professor in Directing Search Committee
 Chair, Scholarship Committee
 Co- Chair Showcase Committee
 Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
 Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; Movement
 Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
 Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
 Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," Student group that
 performs at local Convalescent Hospitals.
 Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective
 students, University of Alabama.
 Presenter (Stage Combat), *UA Future Teachers Day*- Recruitment
 Faculty Mentor, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*
 Presenter (directed performance)- Tuscaloosa Christian Academy
Renaissance Day
 Co-operative teaching relationships with:
 Laurie Arizumi (Nozomi Daiko Drumming Collective)
 Adam Schwartz (TCF- Filmed Projects)
 Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2011- 2012

Faculty Senator
Faculty Senate Steering Committee
Co-Chair Senate Student Life Committee
Arts and Sciences Cuba Initiative Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Co- Chair Showcase Committee
Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
A & S Recruitment Trip to Palm Beach Florida Schools
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; Movement
Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," Student group that
performs at local Convalescent Hospitals.
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective
students, University of Alabama.
Presenter (Stage Combat), *UA Future Teachers Day*- Recruitment
Faculty Mentor, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*
Speaker, Capstone Scholars Day
Speaker, Honors College Recruitment Day
Presenter (directed performance)- Tuscaloosa Christian Academy
Renaissance Day
Co-operative teaching relationships with:
Laurie Arizumi (Nozomi Daiko Drumming Collective)
Adam Schwartz (TCF- Filmed Projects)
Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2010-2011

Faculty Senator
Faculty Senate Steering Committee
Co-Chair Senate Student Life Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Co- Chair Showcase Committee
Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; Movement
Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," Student group that
performs at local Convalescent Hospitals.
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective
students, University of Alabama.
Presenter (Stage Combat), *UA Future Teachers Day*- Recruitment
Faculty Mentor, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*
Co-operative teaching relationships with:
Laurie Arizumi (Nozomi Daiko Drumming Collective)
Member, Phi Beta Kappa, University of Alabama Chapter

2009-2010

Faculty Senator
Faculty Senate Steering Committee
Co-Chair Senate Student Life Committee
Equal Opportunity Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Co- Chair Showcase Committee
Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Search Committee- Dance Assistant Professor
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; Movement
Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," Student group that
performs at local Convalescent Hospitals.
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective
students, University of Alabama.
Speaker, *Stepping Stones*- Black Belt recruitment day
Speaker, Strobe Program: Shakespeare in Performance
Faculty Mentor, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*
Speaker, Capstone Scholars Day
Speaker, Honors College Recruitment Day
Co-operative teaching relationships with:
Laurie Arizumi (Nozomi Daiko Drumming Collective)
African Dance Ensemble
Andrew Dewar, New College
Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2008-2009

Faculty Senator
Senate Representative- Equal Opportunity Committee
Senate Sub Committee- Student Life Committee
Outstanding Senior Awards Committee
Arts Bridge Committee (Creative Campus)
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Co- Chair Showcase Committee
Co-Director Senior Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; Movement
Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," Student group that
performs at local Convalescent Hospitals.
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective
students, University of Alabama.
Recruiter, *Mississippi High School Acting Festival*, Mississippi
Further developed co-operative teaching relationships with:
Beth Todd (Engineering) – *Henry V* battle effects
Chris Kozak (Music) - Musical Improvisation in Acting

Judge, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*, University of Alabama
Speaker, *Stepping Stones*- Black Belt recruitment day
Faculty Mentor, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*
Speaker, Capstone Scholars Day
Speaker, Honors College Recruitment Day
Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2007-2008

Dean Olin's Special Committee on the Historian of Old Havana
Dean Olin's Special Committee on Culture Builds
Faculty Senator
Senate Representative- Equal Opportunity Committee
Senate Sub Committee- Student Life Committee
Arts Bridge Committee (Creative Campus)
New College Search Committee
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Co- Chair Showcase Committee
Co- Chair Audition Day Committee
Co-Director Senior Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; Movement
Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," Student group that
performs at local Convalescent Hospitals.
Director/ Advisor for Student Group teaching at Akron Elementary
Produced production of *1776* for the Department of English
Lectured for School of Music Convocation
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective
students, University of Alabama.
Recruiter, *Mississippi High School Acting Festival*, Mississippi
Co-operative teaching relationships with:
Beth Todd (Engineering) – *Henry V* battle effects
Laurie Arizumi (Nozomi Daiko Drumming Collective)
Aaron Greer (T.C.F.) – Acting for the Camera
Chris Kozak (Music) - Musical Improvisation in Acting
Judge, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*, University of Alabama
Faculty Mentor, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*
Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2006-2007

Faculty Senator
Senate Representative- Equal Opportunity Committee
Senate Sub Committee- Student Life Committee
Performed as *U.A. President George H. Denny* for Capstone 06
Alumni Gala, University of Alabama
Judge, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*, University of Alabama
Judge, *Miss Corolla Pageant*
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; Movement
Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.

Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," Student group that performs at local Convalescent Hospitals.
 Director/ Advisor for Student Group teaching at Akron Elementary
 Taught master class for School of Music Convocation (3/07)
 Formed co-operative teaching relationship with Laurie Arizumi (Nozomi Daiko Drumming Collective)
 Search Committee, New College
 Search Committee, Technical Director
 Search Committee, Temporary Directing Replacement
 Co-Director of Actor's Showcase, University of Alabama
 Chair, Scholarship Committee
 Audition Day Committee
 Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective students, University of Alabama.
 Recruiter, *Trumbauer Acting Festival*, Alabama

2005-2006

Performed as *U.A. President George H. Denny* for Capital Campaign Kick Off Gala, University of Alabama
 Judge, Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations, University of Alabama
 Adjudicator/ Organizer Scholarship Day, University of Alabama
 Recruiter- MFA Acting/ Pedagogy, University of Alabama
 Co-Director of Actor's Showcase, University of Alabama
 Recruiter/ Interviewer for undergraduate prospective students, University of Alabama.
 Formed co-operative teaching relationship with Professor Chris Kozak, Department of Music, University of Alabama
 Search Committee, Assistant Professor in Acting/ Voice University of Alabama
 Participant, Learner Centered Initiative, University of Alabama
 Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

HONORS AND AWARDS

2014	Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award, University of Alabama
2013	" <i>Best Bet</i> ," Time Out New York Magazine, <i>Alcestis Ascending</i>
2013	Official Commendation, Cuban Ministry of Culture. Directing and producing <i>Alcestis Ascending/ Alcestis Asciende</i> , which performed Off Broadway at the Harold Clurman Theatre and in Havana at the Grand Opening of the Raquel Revuelta Theatre.
2013	American College Theatre Festival. Special Recognition for Meritorious Achievement: Director of <i>Othello</i> .

- 2012 "Best Bet," Time Out New York Magazine, *Hell Paradise Found*
- 2012 Invited to join Dramatists Guild of America due to success of Off Broadway production of *Hell: Paradise Found*.
- 2012 Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award (OCTA), University of Alabama
- 2012 Official Selection, Sidewalk International Motion Picture Festival. Documentary, *Company HavanaBama: Directing Across the Gulf*
- 2011 Official Commendation, Cuban Ministry of Culture. Direction of Christopher Durang's *Beyond Therapy* at the Teatro Adolfo Llaurado, November- December 2011
- 2011 Theatre Arts Educator of the Year, Druid Arts Awards, Alabama
- 2011 American College Theatre Festival. Special Recognition for Meritorious Achievement: Director of "*Animal Crackers*"
- 2011 Best Actor. Sidewalk Film Festival- Sidewalk Scramble, Alabama.
- 2011 American College Theatre Festival. Special Recognition for Meritorious Achievement: Director of "*Moby Dick*"
- 2010 Official Commendation, Cuban Ministry of Culture. Direction of Shakespeare's "*Midsummer Night's Dream*," for the Teatro Nacionale at the Teatro Berthold Brecht.
- 2010 American College Theatre Festival. Special Recognition for Meritorious Achievement: Director of "*Enemy of the People*"
- 2010 American College Theatre Festival. Special Recognition for Meritorious Achievement: Director of "*Saint Joan*"
- 2009-2012 Leadership Board Faculty Fellow, University of Alabama
- 2009 Official Commendation, Cuban Ministry of Culture. Direction of Shakespeare's "*Merchant of Venice*," for the Teatro Nacionale and the Sala Adolfo Llaurado.
- 2009 Appointed Associate Member of the *Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers*, the union of professional Stage Directors.

- 2008 Official Commendation, Cuban Ministry of Culture. Lecture / Master Classes on Shakespearean Acting for El Instituto Superior De Arte (ISA), Havana Cuba.
- 2008 Best Production “Into the Woods.” The AL Awards, University of Alabama
- 2007 Best Director, “*Romeo and Juliet*.” The AL Awards, University of Alabama and Tuscaloosa
- 2007 American College Theatre Festival. Special Recognition for Meritorious Achievement: Director of “*Romeo and Juliet*”
- 2007 Keynote Speaker, Phi Beta Kappa Induction, University of Alabama
- 2006 Best Director, “*Fifth of July*.” The AL Awards, University of Alabama and Tuscaloosa
- 2006 American College Theatre Festival. Special Recognition for Meritorious Achievement: Director of “*Fifth of July*”
- 2004 Finalist, *Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences Screenwriting Festival (29 and Holding)*.
- 2004 Finalist, *Open Door Screenwriting Festival (The Gondolier)*.
- 2003 Included in “*America’s Best Teachers*.” Nominated by students from Rio Hondo College, L.A., Ca.
- 1995 *Hell: Paradise Found* – “Best of the Weekend” L.A. Times
- 1990 *Phi Beta Kappa*
Magna Cum Laude – Occidental College, L.A, Ca.

Curriculum Vitae: Seth Panitch

Seth Panitch is an Associate Professor of Theatre at the University of Alabama, where he directs the Undergraduate and MFA Acting Programs. To his parents' eternal chagrin, he left Occidental College not with a Pre-Med degree, but with a BA in Theatre, graduating Phi Beta Kappa and Magna Cum Laude. In 1993, Seth completed his MFA at the prestigious Professional Actor's Training Program at the University of Washington. His parents were impressed, but did not forgive him.

Since joining the faculty at the University of Alabama in 2005, Seth has worked extensively on major national and international stages as an Actor, Director, and Playwright. In 2007, Seth was invited to teach at El Instituto Superior de Arte, Cuba's preeminent performing arts school. He has returned several times, bringing UA students with him to participate in that world renowned program. In 2008, Seth became the first U.S. director to helm a professional production in Cuba in almost fifty years, when he was invited by the Cuban Ministry of Culture to direct Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* at the Adolfo Llauro Theatre. Since then, Seth has directed three other productions in Havana, casting his students in supporting and leading roles, creating the first joint Cuban/ American Theatre Company in the process: Company HavanaBama. In the summer of 2013, Seth directed his play *Alceste* with HavanaBama at the Harold Clurman Theatre in New York, marking the first Off-Broadway production of a bi-National company according to the *Associated Press*. Seth has produced, directed, and starred in two other highly successful Off-Broadway productions: *Hell: Paradise Found* at the Drama Desk Award Winning 59E59 Theatres, and *Dammit, Shakespeare!* at the Urban Stages Theatre. Regionally, Seth has directed and acted at the Colorado and Texas Shakespeare Festivals, creating partnerships that helped numerous UA students into those prestigious festivals. Many of these projects were designed within *The Bridge Program*, an initiative developed by Mr. Panitch to assist student performers with the extraordinarily difficult transition from college to the professional world.

As Head of Acting at UA, Seth teaches classes in Advanced Acting, Shakespeare, Comedy, Acting for the Camera, Physical Characterization, Stage Combat, and Audition Technique. Each spring, he directs *Bama on Broadway*, UA's actor showcase in New York, where many graduating seniors have gotten their professional start. He also serves as a Faculty Director in the department's Mainstage season, and has performed as a guest artist, acting alongside his students in numerous productions.

Seth is fiercely committed to continuing his partnership with students well beyond graduation, and derives his greatest professional satisfaction from their burgeoning careers. His students can be seen in major studio films, including *Endless Love*, and *What to Expect When You're Expecting*; on Television in *The Walking Dead*, *Once Upon a Time*, *30 Rock*, and *Law and Order*; on Broadway in *Rock of Ages*; Off-Broadway in *Carrie the Musical*; and in Regional Theatres across the country.

Mr. Panitch has been recognized by The Cuban National Office of Scenic Arts with an Official Commendation of Excellence for his work in Theatre and Education. In 2013, the University of Alabama awarded him the Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award, given for an outstanding combination of teaching and research. In 2010, The Alumni Association of the University of Alabama conferred him with the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award, and the Druid Arts Council named him Theatre Educator of the Year. He has received the Kennedy Center/ American College Theatre Festival Meritorious Achievement Award in Faculty Direction for multiple UA productions. Lastly, Mr. Panitch has been awarded membership in the Society of Directors and Choreographers, the Dramatists Guild of America, and the Illuminati, although he steadfastly refuses to brand any of their names on his chest, knowing full well his parents would certainly *never* forgive him.

DETAILED WORK HISTORY

2005- PRESENT

**TEACHING
CREATIVE ACTIVITY
ACADEMIC SERVICE**

Detailed Work History
Teaching/ Creative Activity/ Academic Service
2005- Present

2013- 2014

Teaching:

Acting Shakespeare
Acting Styles (Shaw, Comedy, Film)
Movement III (Mask, Suzuki, Clowning, Combat)
Acting II Section A
Acting II Section B
Independent Study: Showcase Preparation
MFA Acting Shakespeare
MFA Acting Styles

Creative Activity:

The Merry Wives of Windsor
Director/ Adapter
Colorado Shakespeare Festival
Company HavanaBama: Directing Across the Gulf
Writer/ Producer
Documentary
Selected by Sidewalk International Moving Picture Festival
Seven Guitars
Director
University of Alabama
Service to Man
Writer- Screenplay
Feature Film (to be filmed at Meharry Medical College in May 2015)

Academic Service:

Faculty Senator
Arts and Sciences Performance Space Proposal Review Committee
Arts and Sciences Cuba Initiative Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Co- Chair Showcase Committee
Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective students, UA
Presenter, CARSCA Conference, University of Alabama
Presenter (Stage Combat), *UA Future Teachers Day*- Recruitment
Presenter (directed performance)- Stillman College, Shelton State College; outreach
Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2012-2013

Teaching:

Acting Shakespeare
Acting Styles (Shaw, Comedy, Film)
Acting II Section A
Acting II Section B
Acting II Section C
Independent Study: Audition
MFA Advanced Acting
MFA Movement and Physical Characterization

Creative Activity:

Alcestis Ascending

Playwright/ Director
Produced Off Broadway at the Harold Clurman Theatre at Theatre Row
Produced in Havana, Cuba at the Teatro Raquel Revuelta
Developed with El Teatro Nacional (National Theatre of Cuba)
El Consejo Nacional de Artes Escenicas (Cuban Ministry of Culture)

Hell: Paradise Found

Playwright
Florida Studio Theatre (New Works Festival)

Othello

Director
University of Alabama
*Certificate of Merit, Faculty Direction; American College Theatre Festival

Misalliance

Faculty Guest Artist (Actor)
University of Alabama

Academic Service:

Vice President, Faculty Senate
Faculty Senate Steering Committee
Co- Chair Senate Student Life Committee
Provost Search Committee
Arts and Sciences Cuba Initiative Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Assistant Professor in Directing Search Committee
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
Director/ Advisor- "*Paper Moon Players*," group performs at Convalescent Hospitals
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective students, UA
Presenter (Stage Combat), *UA Future Teachers Day*- Recruitment
Presenter (directed performance)- Tuscaloosa Academy, *Renaissance Day*
Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2011-2012

Teaching:

Acting Shakespeare
Acting Styles (Shaw, Comedy, Film)
Acting II Section A
Acting II Section B
Movement III (Mask, Suzuki, Combat)
MFA Independent Study: Cuba
MFA Directing
MFA Showcase Preparation

Creative Activity:

Hell: Paradise Found

Playwright/ Director/ Actor
Off Broadway Production
59E59 Theatre
New York City

Beyond Therapy (Mas Que Terapia)

Director
Teatro Nacional de Cuba
El Consejo Nacional de Artes Escénicas
Teatro Adolfo Llauro
Havana, Cuba

Animal Crackers

Director
University of Alabama

*Certificate of Merit for Faculty Direction, American College Theatre Festival

Academic Service:

Faculty Senator
Faculty Senate Steering Committee
Co-Chair Senate Student Life Committee
Arts and Sciences Cuba Initiative Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
A & S Recruitment Trip to Palm Beach Florida Schools
Guest Editor, METHODS, Pace University Press; advising new Acting Journal
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective students, UA
Presenter (Stage Combat), *UA Future Teachers Day*- Recruitment
Faculty Mentor, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*
Speaker, Capstone Scholars Day
Speaker, Honors College Recruitment Day
Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

2010-2011

Teaching:

Acting Shakespeare
Acting Careers (Audition and Profession)
Acting II Section A
Acting II Section B
Stage Movement III
MFA Acting Shakespeare
MFA Acting Styles and Combat

Creative Activity:

Alcestis Ascending

Playwright
Script written May-July of 2011
Movement Developed in Cuba in 2012
Produced in Summer of 2013

Moby Dick

Director
Fight/ Effects Director
University of Alabama
*Certificate of Merit, Faculty Direction, American College Theatre Festival

Enemy of the People

Director
University of Alabama

Academic Service:

Faculty Senator
Faculty Senate Steering Committee
Co-Chair Senate Student Life Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Co- Chair Showcase Committee
Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Guest Editor, METHODS, Pace University Press; advising new Acting Journal
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Respondent, Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival
Recruiter/ Interviewer for "V.I.P." undergraduate prospective students, UA
Presenter (Stage Combat), *UA Future Teachers Day- Recruitment*
Faculty Mentor, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*
Member, Phi Beta Kappa, University of Alabama Chapter

2009-2010

Teaching:

Acting Shakespeare
Acting Styles (Shaw, Comedy, Film)
Acting II Section A
Acting II Section B
Stage Movement I
Stage Movement III
MFA Advanced Acting
MFA Movement and Physical Characterization

Creative Activity:

The Fantasticks

Actor
“El Gallo”
Colorado Shakespeare Festival

Measure for Measure

Actor
“Provost”
Colorado Shakespeare Festival

A Midsummer Night's Dream / Un Sueno de una Noche de Verano

Director
Teatro Nacional de Cuba
El Consejo Nacional de Artes Escenicas
Teatro Berthold Brecht
Havana, Cuba

Saint Joan

Director
University of Alabama
*Certificate of Merit, Faculty Direction, American College Theatre Festival

Academic Service:

Faculty Senator
Faculty Senate Steering Committee
Co-Chair Senate Student Life Committee
Equal Opportunity Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Director, Senior Actor Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Search Committee- Dance Assistant Professor
Active Member- Acting/ Directing Committee; *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Recruiter/ Interviewer for “V.I.P.” undergraduate prospective students, UA
Speaker, *Stepping Stones*- Black Belt recruitment day
Speaker, Strobe Program: Shakespeare in Performance
Speaker, Capstone Scholars Day
Speaker, Honors College Recruitment Day

2008-2009

Teaching:

Acting Shakespeare
Stage Combat
Acting II Section A
Acting II Section B
Graduate Showcase Preparation
Graduate Directing
Independent Study: Undergraduate Showcase Preparation

Creative Activity:

The Merchant of Venice / El Mercader de Venecia

Director
Teatro Nacional de Cuba
El Consejo Nacional de Artes Escénicas
Teatro Adolfo Llauro
Havana, Cuba

Tartuffe

Director
Texas Shakespeare Festival

Romeo and Juliet

Fight Choreographer
Texas Shakespeare Festival

Henry V

Director
Fight Choreographer
University of Alabama

The Heiress

Director
University of Alabama

Moon Over Buffalo

Actor, Faculty Guest Artist
University of Alabama

Academic Service:

Faculty Senator
Senate Representative- Equal Opportunity Committee
Student Life Committee
Outstanding Senior Awards Committee
Undergraduate Coordinator, Dept. of Theatre and Dance
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Director MFA/Senior Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Acting/ Directing Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Recruiter, *Mississippi High School Acting Festival*, Mississippi
Speaker, *Stepping Stones*- Black Belt recruitment day

2007-2008

Teaching:

Period Acting Styles: Acting for the Camera
Acting II Section A
Acting II Section B
Movement I
Movement II
Graduate Acting Shakespeare
Graduate Period Acting Styles
Acting Shakespeare (University of Colorado, Summer 2008)

Creative Activity:

Love's Labors Lost

Actor
"Don Armado"
Colorado Shakespeare Festival

Macbeth

Actor
"Mentith"
Colorado Shakespeare Festival

The Three Musketeers

Actor
Colorado Shakespeare Festival

Acting Master Classes

Guest Professor
El Instituto Superior de Arte
Havana, Cuba

Into the Woods

Director
University of Alabama

The Government Inspector

Director
University of Alabama
*Certificate of Merit, Faculty Direction, American College Theatre Festival

Academic Service:

Faculty Senator
Equal Opportunity Committee
Student Life Committee
New College Search Committee
Chair, Scholarship Committee
Co-Director Senior Showcase, Theatre Row Theatre, NYC
Acting/ Directing Committee, *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Produced production of *1776* for the Department of English
Lectured for School of Music Convocation

2006- 2007

Teaching:

Acting Shakespeare
Stage Combat
Acting II
Careers in Theatre
Graduate Acting
Graduate Movement
Graduate Independent Study: Shakespeare in Performance

Creative Activity:

A Night in the Theatre

Documentary
Co- Creator, writer, producer
Published by Insight Media

The Importance of Being Earnest

Guest Director
El Instituto Superior De Arte
Havana, Cuba

Acting Master Classes

Guest Professor
El Instituto Superior de Arte
Havana, Cuba

Romeo and Juliet

Director
Fight Choreographer
University of Alabama

Blithe Spirit

Actor
Faculty Guest Artist
University of Alabama

Academic Service:

Faculty Senator
Equal Opportunity Committee
Student Life Committee
Performed as *U.A. President George H. Denny* for Capstone 06
Alumni Gala, University of Alabama
Judge, *Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations*, University of Alabama
Judge, *Miss Corolla Pageant*
Acting/ Directing Committee; *Southeastern Theatre Conference*.
Director/ Advisor for Student Group teaching at Akron Elementary
Taught master class for School of Music Convocation (3/07)
Search Committee, Technical Director
Director of MFA Senior NYC Showcase, University of Alabama

2005- 2006

Teaching:

Period Acting Styles: Acting for the Camera

Acting II

Movement I

Movement II

Graduate Acting Rehearsal Process

Graduate Advanced Movement

Creative Activity:

Dammit, Shakespeare!

Director/ Actor/ Playwright

Urban Stages Theatre NYC

A Flea in her Ear

Actor/ Faculty Guest Artist

University of Alabama

Fifth of July

Director

University of Alabama

*Certificate of Merit, Faculty Direction, American College Theatre Festival

Academic Service:

Performed as *U.A. President George H. Denny* for Capital Campaign Kick Off Gala, UA

Judge, Creative Oral/ Poster Presentations, University of Alabama

Adjudicator/ Organizer Scholarship Day, University of Alabama

Director of Senior/ MFA NYC Showcase, University of Alabama

Search Committee, Assistant Professor in Acting/ Voice, University of Alabama

Participant, Phi Beta Kappa functions, University of Alabama

PROFESSIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS



La Habana, Jueves 8 de Mayo del 2014

"Año 55 de la Revolución"

A quien pueda interesar:

Una recomendación del trabajo desempeñado por el Sr Panitch en Cuba

(Translated by William Ruiz, CNAE)

In December of 2007, the North American professor, actor and director Seth Panitch met with the Vice President of the Desarrollo Artístico del Consejo Nacional de las Artes Escénicas (CNAE), an entity of the Ministerio de Cultura de la República de Cuba, Bárbara Rivero, with the proposal to direct a professional production of William Shakespeare's **"El Mercader de Venecia"** with a company of Cuban actors and a number of his own students at the Sala Adolfo Llauro, one of our most prestigious theaters. This was a project of immense significance for us- the first such official agreement between our office and a professional artist from the United States. Professor Panitch's name was already well established in Cuba, due to the popularity of his teaching demonstrations at El Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA), our most significant artistic institution. In fact, a number of the actors who requested an audition with Professor Panitch had been his students at ISA for their senior comprehensive projects the previous year. From the enthusiasm of these reports, we had the greatest confidence in his ability to develop a cohesive company, and that is precisely what he accomplished, directing a much celebrated production of the play with our actors and his own students from the University of Alabama. The production was a resounding success, and his students performed magnificently, which resulted in a project that has made a lasting impression here both as an art, and also as an expression of cultural collaboration.

Since then, Professor Panitch has mounted four hugely successful productions with this office, his most recent being his own play, **"Alceste Ascending,"** which performed in August at the grand reopening of the Teatro Raquel Revuelta. All these projects were rehearsed and produced in Havana with a company of actors he has developed here over the past six years, in concert with a large number of his own talented and expertly trained students.

His work here has been fully documented and celebrated in Cuban media. His students have been featured in numerous articles and interviews, and they have represented their institution as professionals of the highest order. On the basis of their work, they have been invited to study at El Instituto Superior de Arte by Dean Osvaldo Cano, which is an opportunity that has been extended rarely, if ever. The success they have had in Cuba is directly attributed to the guidance they have received from Professor Panitch. This is not the first time such projects have been attempted with our office, but this is the first time they have been successful, and that is due to his tireless efforts.

Our entire institution is greatly pleased with the extraordinary work of Professor Panitch. Through his work here, two very different cultural forms have been united for the purpose of producing exceptional works of theater. The Cuban actors have all blossomed in the very different form of Seth's direction, as each rehearsal becomes, for them, both a rehearsal and a classroom, where they have all grown substantially as performing artists. The fact that he has developed a multinational company that has functioned for many years under the most difficult of logistics, is a great proof of the worth of his approach, which is to be both teacher and director in the company, making these projects both a classroom where great advancement occurs, and a creative expression which stands alone as the highest expression of the art.

The Office of the President of CNAE, Gisela Gonzalez, has given maximum priority to the work of Seth Panitch in Cuba, and has reached agreement with him to work directly with her office to facilitate all future projects. We believe through continued partnership, that even greater results can be realized.

We are pleased to offer him our highest recommendation.

Cordially,

Erich Cartaya Conyedo

erich@cubaescena.cult.cu (inquiries welcome, Spanish preferred)

Productor, Especialista de Eventos y Programación Internacional

Coordinador y Productor del Proyectos Internacionales

CNAE, MINCULT



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A PROFESSIONAL THEATRE COMPANY
IN ASSOCIATION WITH



**University of Colorado
Boulder**

May 3, 2014

**Promotion Committee
University of Alabama**

Dear Promotion Committee,

I am writing this letter in full support of Associate Professor Seth Panitch's application for Full Professor at the University of Alabama. I have known Seth since 2010 and I have nothing but the highest regard for him as an actor, a theatre artist, and an educator.

Seth and I first worked together as actors in the Colorado Shakespeare Festival's (CSF) 2010 season: we performed in *Measure for Measure* and *The Fantasticks*. Seth carried lead roles in these productions and was a gentle, brilliant leader in rehearsal. I was instantly struck by how quickly Seth made deft, insightful acting choices that supported the director's vision, while agreeing with what was being created around him. CSF's production of *The Fantasticks* was particularly fraught with leadership problems, and Seth gently inspired a cohesion in the company with his strength of performance, his comic choices, and his complete command of his character. The result was an outstanding production and the audiences loved him.

My next experience with Seth was in my subsequent role with Colorado Shakespeare Festival as the Associate Producing Director. In 2011, of his own invention, Seth created a brilliant partnership between the University of Colorado and the University of Alabama. This partnership allows for UA graduate students to work as acting interns with CSF and has been an unmatched success for both organizations. Seth has created an incredible training opportunity for Alabama students; he prepares them beautifully for their audition with CSF, and they arrive in Boulder with a level of dedication—and expectations of themselves—that I consider to be irreplaceable to our success. Their skill, training, and work ethic consistently exceed expectations. Every summer an Alabama student proves to be a hero that saves the day and I attribute this extraordinary behavior to their mentor. Seth is an excellent supervisor of his students, staying in communication with me during the summer about their work and progress. Some of his students have been so excellent, I have hired them back in later seasons as full members of the acting company; and others have gone on to leadership positions in the American theatre industry via the connections they have made through Seth and

CSF. This is a TRUE testament to Seth's abilities as a professor; he is not only training his students, he is helping them start careers after graduation.

Finally, based upon these experiences with Seth and my regard for his skills, I hired him to direct our mainstage production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at CSF in the summer of 2014. Seth is bringing several of his graduate students with him from the University of Alabama, helping to launch their professional careers and introducing them to a large group of professional American and British theatre artists. While continuing to mentor his students this summer, Seth will be overseeing a professional company of 30 actors and six designers, he will be participating in auditions and design meetings (and has been since December), he will be guiding a large scenery and costume budget, leading an army of interns, doing press ten times a week while in rehearsal, and all of this with my complete confidence. Seth not only has the talent and spark to lead our flagship comedy this season, I know he has the humanity to do it with class and respect—something I value highly. Seth is the perfect blend of professional artist, innovative teacher, and insightful scholar.

I cannot a better prepared or more accomplished candidate for Full Professor than Seth Panitch. He has brought the name of the University of Alabama to Colorado every summer for the past four years, and our audience of 36,000 has come to associate that name with quality. Having him here as a director is going to be a highpoint in our partnership, and we cannot wait to see the creation of this brilliant artist.

Yours very truly,



Tim Orr
Producing Artistic Director
timothy.orr@colorado.edu
303-492-1537



University of Colorado at Boulder

Department of Theatre and Dance

C132 University Theatre
Campus Box 261
Boulder, Colorado 80309-0261
Theatre: (303) 492-7355
Dance: (303) 492-5037
FAX (303) 492-7722

Monday 12 May 2014

To the Promotion Committee:

I am very pleased to endorse Seth Panitch's application for promotion to full professor.

I think, somewhere, Seth Panitch has an enormous closet, because I have seen him wear so many different hats that it boggles the mind. He is seemingly able to change them in the blink of an eye – faster than Clark Kent transforming into Superman – and never showing a sweat.

I take that back. I worked with Seth most recently on his dazzlingly concise and clever telling of an epic story, *Hell: Paradise Found*, during the summer of 2012 in Alabama and New York. It was my first visit to the South, and no one could deny the heat of the season. Yet, Seth Panitch handled his hat changes with the aplomb of a breezy spring day. He was writing, he was directing, he was acting, he was producing, and seamlessly all the while, he was mentoring.

I had first witnessed Seth Panitch's work as a fellow actor at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival here in Boulder. His portrayal of Don Armado, a parody of a courtly Spanish lover, in *Love's Labour's Lost* made a fantastic first impression upon me, and the breadth of his acting range was truly impressive. But nothing could prepare me for the incredible professional I witnessed in Tuscaloosa. Seth's commitment to his students, his department, his artistic endeavors – of course, he practices more than one – and his professions both on campus and in his creative work would humble even the greatest of theatre artists I have worked with.

The craft of theatre is done collaboratively, with many people intricately involved in a production on both sides of the footlights. As the director of *Hell: Paradise Found*, Seth led the team with grace and ease. He inspired the company with passion and drive, and displayed a great ability to listen and to speak in language suited to the individual actor.

The students at the University of Alabama are so very lucky. In Seth Panitch, they have a teacher who is a jack-of-all-trades, and a master of them all. Seth's work is most telling in the quality of the students he prepares for the profession

and for life, and his students are rightly his greatest advocates. Working in *Hell: Paradise Found* I got to know Seth's recent students as castmates. Their readiness for theatre was outstanding; they were prepared, prompt, disciplined, thoughtful, motivated, and respectful. And every one of them told me personally that they had Seth to thank for those skills. I came to consider these young thespians as colleagues in our efforts together.

The chances of success, as the general public would define it, in the entertainment industry are frighteningly slim. Seth prepares his students in the best way possible; he shows them how to leverage their specific disciplines in the craft of theatre to make themselves better citizens and leaders.

If there were a United Nations for the Arts, Seth Panitch would be on the executive committee. His reach as an artist extends not only across the US and back again, but also to Cuba where he has become an ambassador for the arts, collaborating with foreigners by using the common language of theatre.

Always a reliable mentor, Seth nourishes his students' career development by creating opportunities for them in his creative work, both at home and abroad. As the company of *Hell: Paradise Found* rehearsed in Tuscaloosa and then performed Off-Broadway in New York City, Seth offered continual guidance to his former students among the cast. By citing examples of past training methods he had employed with them in the classroom, Seth was able to speak personally to each of them about how to continue their artistic development. Further, he put each step of this professional experience into context for his former students, offering them a sense of ease through understanding their work within the theatre industry. The whole experience was a boon to their training and personal growth.

I'm sure that you will hear similar reports from others about this bright and gifted individual. Seth Panitch is worthy of your full attention. Please feel free to contact me for more information about him.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Chip Persons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chip" and last name "Persons" clearly distinguishable.

Associate Professor
chip.persons@colorado.edu
(303) 492-1797

May 10, 2014

The Promotion Committee, The University of Alabama

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing in enthusiastic support of Seth Panitch's application for Promotion to Full Professor at the University of Alabama. I have known Seth for several years, and have worked with him, and/or observed his work as, a professor, a professional theatre artist, and an administrator.

Seth is an extremely intelligent, talented, and motivated educator and artist. He has much to recommend him, including his skill in teaching and directing a very wide range of theatrical genres and styles, his ability to communicate effectively to a diverse group of constituents (students, fellow professional artists, colleagues in academia and in the profession, etc.). His inquisitiveness and intellectual curiosity have led him to become conversant with a variety of historical and cultural approaches to theatre.

As an actor in the professional theatre, Seth is highly skilled at both tragedy and comedy, and exhibits facility with a range of styles. His theatrical instincts are well-developed and he shows great inventiveness and imagination in every role I have seen him play. Audiences responded very well to his comic work as Don Armado in Shakespeare's LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST for my former company (the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, where I served as Producing Artistic Director for six years) in 2008 - a very large and difficult role to make effective today, given the nature of the comedic writing, which is less resonant now than it undoubtedly was in Shakespeare's time. As a fellow actor in MACBETH, playing a minor role, he brought a very different – and very appropriate – approach to a great tragedy, and also demonstrated that he clearly understood how to support the work of the leading actors. More recently, he displayed his considerable musical theatre skills when he played the leading role of El Gallo in the 2010 CSF production of THE FANTASTICKS, as well as turning in a very fine performance as the Provost in Shakespeare's MEASURE FOR MEASURE.

Regarding Seth's skills as an educator, I have had the opportunity to work with many of his students in my capacity as a guest director for the department in the fall of 2009. I was extremely impressed with the work of these young artists, both at the graduate and undergraduate level. The play I directed (THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE) is filled with roles for mature character actors, and I was not expecting to find university students who would be able to fill roles successfully. To my delight, the students proved themselves extremely capable of convincingly portraying a range of character types, in a play which is

stylistically very challenging, and which represents a genre of play with which many young actors are not at all familiar. I have taught and directed at many universities (including UC-Berkeley and UC-San Diego), and I have seldom seen such skill and artistic maturity among actors of this age – and that is a testament to Seth's ability both to recruit and to train young artists for the profession.

Shortly after working with Seth's students, he approached me about the possibility of creating a formal graduate-level internship at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, for a select number of his students. Given the quality I had witnessed in those students, I eagerly agreed, and we worked together to create an arrangement which commits us to using several MFA acting students every summer as interns in our company. This arrangement was of great benefit to the company, and (I believe) to the students. They excelled onstage in CSF productions, working comfortably alongside our professional, Equity acting company.

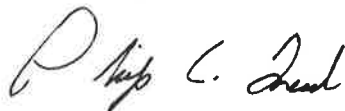
Additionally, I believe – based on my observations at other universities where I have taught or served as a Guest Artist – that Seth's body of creative work far exceeds that of other educators, in both quantity and quality; he is far more active in the field than most.

Lastly, I would like to speak to Seth's work as an innovative artist both within the academy and in the profession as a whole. His work shows great initiative and entrepreneurial resourcefulness. He has created many original works, and unlike most playwrights he has also found the means to see these works produced and presented in public venues (a much more daunting task in our field than for a visual artist, a dancer, or a musician). Seth's work with Cuban artists, both in Cuba and in the United States, shows great artistic and administrative ability on his part; I have been involved with international cultural exchange for many years and I know from firsthand experience how difficult it can be to negotiate artistic, political, and cultural differences.

In my assessment, Seth Panitch shows tremendous promise for continuing success artistically and academically, and I highly recommend him for promotion to Full Professor. I have enjoyed my work with him, and I look forward to the opportunity to partner with him again in the future.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance in your consideration of Seth's application for promotion.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Philip C. Sneed". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Philip C. Sneed

Executive Director, Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities
Former Producing Artistic Director, Colorado Shakespeare Festival
Past President, Shakespeare Theatre Association of America

Zwick Productions, Inc.

818.421.6176

May 13, 2014

To whom it may concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this recommendation for Seth Panitch. I have known Seth for twenty years as a fellow artist, mentor and friend. Seth is perhaps the hardest working, intelligent, creative artist I know. He acts, directs, writes, produces and teaches, a five-threat man.

The University of Alabama pulled off a coup when it hired Seth. If you have studied his record, I'm sure you are as impressed as I am with his passion and skill. He is the gift that keeps on giving. Nothing seems to stop his endless supply of energy and creativity.

Awarding Seth the position of Full Professor is, in my estimation, truly a no-brainer. Seth could easily make it as a professional actor, writer or director in any market of his choosing. That he chose to be an educator is a blessing for generations of students whose potentials will be brightened by Seth's presence.

As a professional director of theatre, film and T.V., my appraisal of Seth is decidedly non-academic. I do not have the experience to comment on Seth in a scholarly light, but I can talk about Seth as a professional creative artist (an incredible accomplishment when one considers this development has occurred simultaneously with exceptional success in academia). His professional portfolio is nothing short of impressive. His range is monumental. He is a one in a generation find and the University of Alabama is beyond fortunate to have him, just as it will be beyond fortunate to have him continue his work there as a Full Professor.

Sincerely,

Joel Zwick

Director/ Producer

Joel Zwick Productions

18588 Linnet St.

Tarzana Ca. 91356

(CV Follows Below)

Zwick Productions, Inc.

818.421.6176

Filmmaker

Big Fat Greek Wedding

Fat Albert

Elvis Has Left the Building

Theatrical Director

Dance With Me

Broadway, Tony Nomination

Shenandoah

Broadway, Nat'l Tour

George Gershwin, Alone

Broadway, West End, London

Back from Broadway

Broadway, Lincoln Center

Oklahoma

Nat'l Tour.

Woycek

West End, London

Beethoven As I Knew Him

Old Globe Theatre

Charter member, La Mama Theatre Company

Off Broadway

Television Director

Mork and Mindy

Laverne and Shirley

Happy Days

Perfect Strangers

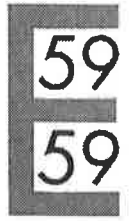
Bosom Buddies

Teaching Positions

Yale School of Drama

University of Southern California

Brooklyn College



November 8th, 2012

Dear Burnum Distinguished Professor Committee,

It is my immense pleasure to recommend Seth Panitch for the Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award. As the House Manager at 59E59 Theaters, I personally was able to witness how his diligence and work ethic surpasses that of many company members who I've worked with at 59E59 Theaters. His passion for his work and the entire company was seen every day on and off stage. On the first day when I met him, I immediately knew this was going to be not only an amazing show, but also an amazing company. A House Manager always wants to work with someone who is very approachable and very well organized; Mr. Panitch is exactly that.

Aside from being a delight to work with, Mr. Panitch is a great role model. His ability to write, direct, and perform in the production while simultaneously positively influencing other members of the company and the 59E59 staff was impeccable. I can see that all cast and crew enjoyed working with him. There was something very positive about the company that we don't see regularly here at 59E59 Theaters. On his first week here, I immediately told our Artistic Director Elysaabeth Kleinhans that Seth Panitch and his company must immediately return with another show.

I absolutely enjoyed working with Seth Panitch and the company so much that I am considering of going to the University of Alabama for my MFA. The university is very lucky to have Mr. Panitch as a member of their faculty. It was a great honor working with him. The show was brilliant. Seth Panitch is brilliant.

Sincerely,

Kenny Nunez

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kenny Nunez', written over a light-colored background.

House Manager
59E59 Theaters
212-753-5959 Ext. 117
KN@59E59.org

10160 Cedro Road
Nevada City, CA 95959
530/913-1866
sands @sandshall.com

July 23, 2010

Re: Seth Panitch

To whom it may concern:

This past summer I had the enormous pleasure of directing Seth Panitch in a production of The Fantasticks for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival.

Seth was not simply an actor in the production but a deeply appreciated collaborator. We had an extremely short rehearsal period—less than three weeks—in which to mount the musical. Seth played the lead, El Gallo, a character with quite a line load and quite a number of songs. The first day of rehearsal Seth not only arrived with his lines memorized, he was also in full command of his songs, including tempo, phrasing, and even necessary key changes. In addition, he had actively thought through all kinds of blocking. Any number of times it occurred to me that working with Seth was like getting to play with the most inventive and delightful of co-directors.

Seth is a director, of course, and it shows in his vast understanding of such things as spacing and tempo. Yet at no point did he ever make me feel as if he had better ideas or would do things differently. He was utterly respectful while offering terrific suggestions and solving the occasional blocking problem (the production included onstage seating, which offered quite a challenge).

Every now and then I got the sense that El Gallo is the sort of character that Seth is not given the opportunity to play very often. This would never have occurred to me. Seth utterly occupied the dark, sensual air of the role, while also contributing marvelous comic timing. He was arch where appropriate but also provided a beautiful and appropriate melancholy to moments that required such a shift—it was a pleasure to watch him find and unfold these nuances. He was also a terrific company member, providing a professional example to the younger actors in the cast (while never being nerdy about it; it is easy to see that he must be a cherished teacher); and was always willing to work a song, a scene, a moment as many times as necessary to make the show the best it could possibly be.

If you have an opportunity to work with Seth in any capacity you will find a hugely talented, focused, and energetic partner. I'd work with him again in a minute. It would be a pleasure and an honor.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Sands Hall



May 19, 2014

Re: Seth Panitch for Full Professor

Dear External Evaluator:

I completely support Seth Panitch for Full Professor. As previous Coordinator of the Alabama-Cuba Initiative for almost 12 years, I have had the unique pleasure in assisting Professor Panitch in developing creative activity for the Cuba Initiative.

Professor Panitch has crossed all messy political boundaries to produce art. I am sure other support letters will focus on Professor Panitch's superior skill in his art. While, it's true that his ability has raised the level of theater production at The University of Alabama to nothing short of professional, I would like to focus on the outcomes of his excellence as seen through the lens of someone trying to establish educational and cultural ties with a country that has been closed off to such activities for decades.

Over the 11 years of the Cuba Initiative, many faculty have succeeded in establishing solid scholarly ties with Cuba. For those disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, those ties have been with the University of Havana and have been easier to establish because of the more traditional nature of this university. However, as most know, nothing in Cuba is easy. The higher education system in Cuba is organized more like the Soviet Union. From a practical perspective, this means that many disciplines are studied at institutes, centers, or government agencies. Tracking down exactly who is in charge of what discipline has been very difficult.

When faced with the opportunity of establishing ties with Cuba, Professor Panitch did not hesitate to seek out the institute and organization that controlled theater education in Cuba. His quest was made even more difficult because he had to navigate two entities. Cuban professionals are skeptical because they want to know that they are not being used for microscopic inquiry. Rather, they want a sincere appreciation of their talent. From the beginning they knew Professor Panitch was sincere. Professor Panitch was given an opportunity to teach and perform. His superior talent is quite simply what opened the door. They knew he was "for real." His talent at his art and his exceptional teaching style opened doors for him and The University of Alabama's Cuba Initiative.

Professor Panitch has subsequently been able to take numerous undergraduate and graduate students to perform and train in Cuba. He has created a program of study unlike any other in the country, providing his students the unique opportunity to work side by side with professional Cuban actors on Cuban stages throughout Havana. He has directed well-received productions of both Shakespeare and contemporary American playwrights in Cuba and in the U.S. while developing this Cuban-American theatre company. He was able to bring an unprecedented number of Cubans to study with UA students in a production of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The project has been ongoing and unceasing.

Last year's production of *Alceste Ascending* has been the highlight of this project between these two countries. Written by Professor Panitch and performed by both Cuban and American artists, this play was performed in Tuscaloosa, New York City, and Havana. In all three locations, it received rave reviews.

I can honestly say that Professor Panitch's work with Cuban theater has been a cornerstone of our entire Initiative. And ... the cornerstone of his work in Cuba is superior talent. Talent and art have a language all their own and can be appreciated across all cultural and political views. This is what Professor Panitch has done for both his students and The University of Alabama.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Carmen Burkhalter". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Carmen" and last name "Burkhalter" clearly legible.

Carmen Burkhalter
Professor
College of Arts and Sciences

RE: Application for Full Professor
 Seth Panitch, The University of Alabama

May 1, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my privilege to write in full enthusiastic support of Seth Panitch's application for Full Professor at the University of Alabama. Through my position as the Director of the Dance Program at the University of Alabama, I have witnessed Seth's unique balance of cutting edge teaching and ambitious student performance projects, which are directly responsible for a stunning emergence of our Theatre program on the national scene, and for the remarkable success of our acting students in the professional world.

When I initially met Seth in his first semester here, he was already planning an enormously ambitious Off Broadway project for himself and his graduating MFA students. That summer, he directed them in his play *Dammit, Shakespeare!* at the Urban Stages Theatre, injecting his students directly into the thick of the New York Theatre scene. As I sat in the theater opening night, surrounded by a seasoned New York audience palpably thrilled by our students' work, it was clear to see his vision for teaching reached far beyond the classroom. For those two weeks in New York, he gave those students a priceless gift: the knowledge that they truly belonged on that national stage. Seth immediately parlayed that triumph into grander, more ambitious projects. He co-produced his play *Hell: Paradise Found* with the prestigious 59E59 Theatres in NYC, hiring professional actors to work shoulder to shoulder with his students. The production was a smashing success, selling out the majority of its run and receiving positive reviews from scores of national media, including *The New York Times*- an astonishing accomplishment for a production predominantly filled with graduating UA students. This past summer, Seth directed his students Off Broadway once again in *Alcestis Ascending*, collaborating with Cuban Actors in the first combined Cuban U.S. Production since the 1950's.

Seth is a practicing professional himself: he acts, writes, and directs in theatres across the country, but in every case, he simultaneously creates exciting opportunities for his students as well. He was invited to direct in Havana by the Cuban Ministry of Culture- a truly amazing accomplishment- but within the year, he had brought his students down with him to perform on Havana's biggest stages. Through his work at the Colorado, Utah, and Texas Shakespeare Festivals he has built relationships that allow him to either directly cast his students into those prestigious companies, or place them in positions to be cast themselves. This tireless advocacy ensures that his students, many of whom have never been out of the state, have every possible advantage when they compete in the world beyond.

This passionate advocacy is clearly appreciated by our students, and his classes are consistently filled beyond their capacity. I can always tell when students are walking into one of Seth's classes by their demeanor: serious, driven, and totally focused. They emerge energized and excited; visibly changed as artists and as individuals. I have often slipped into the rear of the theatre when he is directing, continually amazed with just how far a student can travel under his instruction. What sets Seth apart is that his teaching does not end at the limits of his discipline: I have repeatedly brought him in to work with my dancers, due to his ability to communicate so effectively to students of any study. I am never surprised to hear students from the African Drumming Collective in his classes, or Jazz musicians from the School of Music, or even engineering students, developing battle effects with his actors.

His commitment to personal and professional growth is reflected in the unprecedented success of his students, many of whom are performing on Broadway, in theatres across the country, and in major motion pictures and hit television series. In Alabama, many of our students' life experiences are circumscribed by powerful economic and cultural limitations. Through his teaching and the opportunities he creates, Seth has given these students the confidence to not only dream beyond those boundaries, but to pursue a life beyond them as well, breaking cycles of behavior that have, in some cases, been entrenched for generations.

At the University of Alabama, we remain in continual dialogue about our past. I admire Seth's ability to be sensitive to these issues, but also to be an advocate for real change as well. Last year, as part of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the integration of the university, he directed a rich and powerful production of August Wilson's *Seven Guitars* that not only provided our African American students a platform to make a statement they could take pride in, it also served as a tremendous outreach opportunity in the surrounding communities. This was not the first instance of Seth's active role in our cultural metamorphosis, as he has developed a longstanding partnership with the First Generation Scholars Program. In fact, the most accomplished of his students, Sonequa Martin- Green, who currently stars on AMC's *The Walking Dead*, is a product of the combination of that program and Seth's mentorship.

Seth Panitch is a rare blend of teacher, mentor, and career advocate. He has expanded his classroom to broaden the art he teaches, and in doing so, broadens the humanity of the students he inspires. I have seen first-hand there is no barrier to what he thinks is possible for his students, and therefore, no barrier to what can be achieved by them. This supreme dedication to the inner life and future career of his students compels me to enthusiastically support his candidacy for Full Professor at the University of Alabama.

Very Sincerely,

Cornelius Carter
Director- Dance Program and Professor of Dance
The University of Alabama
(205) 348-2894
ccarter@ua.edu

STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS

May 10, 2014

To the Promotion Committee:

I am proud to call Seth Panitch my mentor, and even prouder to be a voice in his application for promotion to Full Professor. In all honestly, his direct contributions to my craft and my career are immeasurable. He came to the University of Alabama's Theatre Department in my junior year, and he changed absolutely everything for me. He changed my outlook on which roles I could be cast in, opening a realm of possibilities I had no idea existed. He changed my understanding of what the art of acting could be, allowing me to see myself in my work more clearly, and gave me the confidence to stand up for that internal truth onstage. He changed my plan of attack for achieving a professional career, setting me on the path to my present and future successes. In fact, he daily changes my disposition to the better with a single telephone call, when this business of Film and Television becomes simply overwhelming to me, as it sometimes can.

Seth taught me that the real truth of a character lies within and that I must continually question my own experiences in order to answer the significant challenges of a character's emotional and intellectual transitions. This was both a terrifying challenge and an absolute relief, as it led to my my understanding of acting as an intensely personal art form I could practice, as opposed to merely a half felt performance I would halfheartedly manufacture. Working alongside him in classes and rehearsals pushed me to discover and excavate myself in ways I had never understood before, techniques I will never be without again. Under his guidance I developed a brand new craft, but more importantly, Seth demanded I develop "My Craft." It is this personalized craft I have carried with me into the professional world, and it has proved successful beyond my wildest dreams. I've been blessed with near constant success in film, TV, and theatre, including major roles on network television's ***The Walking Dead*** and ***Once Upon a Time***, a leading role in an independent film officially selected as a Grand Jury Prize Nominee at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival, a supporting role in the McCarter Theatre play ***Fetch Clay Make Man*** starring Ben Vereen, a guest starring role on USA's ***Law & Order: Criminal Intent***, and recurring roles on Lifetime's ***Army Wives*** and CBS's ***The Good Wife***.

I even owe my initial residency in New York to Seth as well. He convinced me, over a number of personal objections, to participate in the 2007 UA New York Showcase. Since I was planning on moving to Los Angeles after graduation, I felt the showcase would be pointless for me. He implored me to rethink my judgment, as he was convinced that starting in New York was the best first step for my career. Although I went, I was still unconvinced, that is until Seth, more or less, threw me into a taxi and demanded I take a trip to Central Park. I finally conceded, and it remains the best professional decision I have ever made. Once I moved to New York I realized that I had a substantial head start over most of my peers. Not only had Seth prepared me to act as well as anyone I went up against, I had learned a

tremendous amount about the business itself from Seth's "Careers in Professional Theatre" class, and I was therefore able to hit the ground running without looking back.

I'm so grateful and honored to have been a student of Seth's. He has helped to shape who I am as an actor, in every way. I cherish the fact that he continues to do so, more than six years past my graduation, sometimes in person when our paths cross, and other times over a frantic phone call to his office. As the man I call my mentor, and considering the irreplaceable contribution he's made to my ability to follow my dreams, my great wish would be for him to consider me to be his protégée. I will forever be thankful for his presence in my work and in my life, and as a former student, I urge you to consider the tremendous impact he has made on all his students' careers as you review his application.

Very Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sonequa Martin-Green". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Sonequa Martin-Green '07
SAG, AFTRA
sonequamartin@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern:

I am absolutely thrilled to be writing on behalf of Seth Panitch for his outstanding dedication to teaching, his tremendous effect on my training and career, and his tireless dedication to his students far beyond campus boundaries, which in my mind sets him apart from any other professor I have ever had. I am a graduate of the University of Alabama and I had the privilege of being instructed by Professor Panitch for four years in classes that thrilled me and in productions he directed, which challenged me to improve beyond the point I would have thought possible. He always set the bar a good distance beyond my level of comfort, but with him beside me I was always confident that I could make up the difference. In all my years at UA, and in all the years since, there is not another professor or teacher at any level to whom I am more grateful, and I truly feel I am forever indebted to him for the road he set me on.

When I got to UA I was eager about beginning my studies there, as, up to that point, I had never had any official acting training. Needless to say, I was absolutely lost, and feeling a good distance behind many of the other students at UA. I was lucky enough to take Professor Panitch's Advanced Acting 2 class in my freshman year and from then on, both my confidence and my outlook on this art form completely changed. Under Mr. Panitch's guidance I was able to access emotions and techniques, and even sides of myself, that I had never even thought to explore. One amazing exercise I remember in particular (and one that I still use today in my professional work) from Professor Panitch's class is using my favorite music as a connective guide to what was going on in a scene. The series of techniques he took us through was simply astonishing in its range of influences. There is no material I come across today which I do not have something powerful to apply. If basic image connection or music improvisation do not work, I use Asian movement training, or contact improv, or mask characterization, or Shakespearean verse work, or even Vaudeville punch line construction (for a young man from Tuscaloosa, that one was a revelation).

Best of all, Mr. Panitch cast me in one of his Cuban productions here in the United States, and I played alongside professional actors from Havana in a Spanish language production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. That single experience will be something I will cherish forever. To be able to earn those actors trust onstage, to build a world together with artists from a completely different background, was absolutely priceless in terms of my development as an actor, and as a human being. The outcome of these experiences was unreal: a completely new level of awareness of possibilities that I would never have been able to access without the guidance of Mr. Panitch.

Most importantly, Professor Panitch instilled in me the importance of professionalism and hard work, which has transcended every technique I could have learned, and also the one that I hold most valuable. There are literally millions of hopefuls yearning to be actors and actresses and without that armor, it would be extremely easy to fall by the wayside. Professor Panitch developed this quality in me every day for four years and it is almost solely due to this, that, soon after my departure from his lessons at UA, I can proudly say that I have performed on Broadway in *Rock of Ages*, played a leading role in the Broadway National tour of *Oklahoma!*, co-starred on the CBS series *Blue Bloods* starring Tom Selleck and Donnie Wahlberg, guest starred for three episodes on the TBS sitcom *Are We There Yet?*, played young Alec Baldwin on *30 Rock* on NBC, performed in recent Off Broadway musicals *Carrie* and *The Last Smoker In America*, and most exciting of all, performed live on Television in NBC's *The Sound of Music*.

I know that without Seth Panitch's guidance I would not have had the skills, professionalism, and dedication I needed to perform these amazing accomplishments in such a short time. I am truly grateful to this man, who has helped me to turn what I thought might always be dreams into a profession and a reality. Seth Panitch is an amazing confidant to his students; however, he is an even greater mentor. Because of all these things, it is my honor to support Professor Panitch in his application for Full Professor at the University of Alabama.

Very Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jake Boyd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jake Boyd
University of Alabama Alumni 2010
thejakeboyd@gmail.com

Dear Promotion Committee,

My name is Alexandra Ficken. I am a graduate of the University of Alabama with a BA in Musical Theatre and Dance. I am very proud to say I was a part of the Arts and Sciences College for four incredible years. I am writing to you because I feel a great need to recommend Seth Panitch, Associate Professor of Acting, for promotion to Full Professor because of the enormous impact he has had on my life and so many others'. My decision to attend the elite UA program was based on the reputation it had acquired from its outstanding professors, mainly Seth Panitch. I knew the second I set foot in Professor Panitch's classroom that I had made the right choice. He is, by far, the most inspiring teacher and mentor that I have ever had the honor of studying under. His love for the theater keeps his students thriving in this field that we hold so dear to our hearts. I would not have the confidence, technique, or work ethic to make it if I did not have him pushing me, then and now, to become my very best. He wants truly his students to succeed more than any other professor I have encountered.

While in college, I was looking to find a professor or mentor that could make an impact on me, push me, believe in me. I left his classroom everyday wanting to be better and wanting to pursue a career in this field. Seth created a professional environment and we all were eager to register for his class because of his love for teaching and acting. I left college not only feeling like I found what I was looking for, but I found so much more than that. He has prepared me in so many ways: everything from my technique, to auditioning, to working in a professional setting. I know I have the discipline and the preparation for what this world has in store for me. It is because of Seth Panitch.

Since graduating, I am proud to say I am a working actor. This past year, I booked my first feature film, *Endless Love* (Universal) and had my television debut on "The Originals" (CW Network). In January, I was cast in my fourth professional show with the prestigious Alliance Theater in Atlanta. I have had the opportunity to audition for huge casting directors from all over and I have never felt more prepared. Not only that, Seth graciously gave me an opportunity of a lifetime: to perform Off-Broadway in New York City in his play *Hell: Paradise Found*. The theater was sold out almost every night and because of Seth's connections, witty writing, and determination we were able to have an incredible performing experience in the Big Apple. We even received a wonderful review in the New York Times, something not everyone can say. I grew as an actor, experienced living in the city, and now I have an Off-Broadway credit. I cannot thank him enough.

Thank you for your time and most of all, thank you for considering Seth Panitch for full professor. He truly has a captivating spirit that makes his students reach for more. From a student perspective, I can assure you that spirit should be recognized with this promotion.

Sincerely,

Alexandra E. Ficken
University of Alabama Graduate, 2011
(770) 547-4219

To the Promotion Committee:

This is a letter of recommendation for Seth Panitch.

Mr. Panitch was my teacher, director, and University Fellows mentor for four full years of undergrad, and my experiences with him proved that nothing is more important to him than inspiring his students and instilling in them a deep understanding of their discipline and an appreciation for their education. The time I spent with him in classes and in rehearsal made me a better actor, challenged me as a student, helped define my career aspirations, and continues to provide opportunities that not only expand my artistic sensibilities, but my personal and professional horizons as well.

Seth Panitch makes it clear to his students that he expects nothing less than professionalism from them: that they leave their personal baggage at the door and commit to class with a constructive attitude towards their own work and the work of their classmates. He creates a supportive but challenging environment where I always felt comfortable working openly and honestly with my fellow actors—my own sense of proper professional conduct has grown enormously from watching his interactions with his students. His positive and insightful classroom critiques have consistently helped me identify areas where I need improvement without ever making me feel as though my work were being disparaged in any way. He tailors classroom exercises and improvisations directly to his students—exercises that have led me to breakthroughs both in the classroom and while preparing for work on the stage. In his office, Mr. Panitch is intensely candid and attentive. While I was still one of his students, Mr. Panitch lavished time on me—time he most likely couldn't spare—to help locate a monologue for an important audition, and often spent personal time reading and critiquing my playwriting. This is indicative of a wider trend: theatre majors go into Seth Panitch's classes without any interest in writing, and by the end of the semester, they list dramatic writing as one of their career goals. He makes sure his students know that writing skills create opportunities. He's right: with help from Seth Panitch, two of my writing projects were produced at the University my last semester at school. His passion for his art is infectious; his respect for his students inspires their respect for him.

Also in my final semester, I had the pleasure of working on Mr. Panitch's production of *Moby-Dick*. The rehearsal process for this show was reminiscent of his classroom—actors were compelled to explore the boundaries of the sometimes-frightening world created on the stage, and they felt comfortable doing so. More importantly, as a director, Mr. Panitch exhibited the ability to simultaneously assess the “big picture” on the stage and address questions and concerns from individual actors. The same has held true in every Panitch production I have been a part of, no matter the size of my role. The end product always speaks for itself—shows of his I've had the pleasure of observing from the audience, such as *Saint Joan* and *The Heiress*, have been true works of art: telling compelling tales because they sound the depths of his actors' souls. In my opinion, my classmates' strongest work has been onstage during a “Seth show.” This past year, I saw my former classmates perform pitch-perfect farce in *Animal Crackers* under Seth's

direction. The show was not only a pleasure to watch, but it perfectly tested and expanded our training in comedy and stage physicality.

His professional connections afforded the department both a guest director and a guest actor, both unionized professionals themselves, in my last two years. These professionals were valuable resources in and of themselves, and it was Seth Panitch who brought them to us. His work with the UA Cuba Initiative has likewise proved a breeding ground for mind-blowing artistic and cultural opportunities. I was lucky enough to have been a part of both projects involving guest artists *and* the first Cuban-American theatrical production on American soil since the embargo.

In recent months, he has taken time to critique my spec scripts for film festival submissions and to prepare me to pitch pilots. Perhaps most importantly, he has given me my first writing “job” in preparation for a current round of graduate school applications. Because I expressed the need for structure and the experience of having set hours in which to work, Mr. Panitch suggested I assiduously stick to a daily writing schedule—and he once again offered his free time to essentially be my “supervisor” to keep me motivated and on-target. Between his heaps of other responsibilities, from Monday to Friday every week this school year, I have “clocked in” (and out) with Seth Panitch, who has without fail twice-daily responded with supportive acknowledgments of periodic achievements and continued dedication. This experience has proved an invaluable stimulus for the career I would like to enter into—and has supported something I already believed about Seth: *improving my skillset and providing me with opportunities to get professional credits and professional connections in undergrad wasn't enough—he will not rest until his students shine as much after graduation as they did in his classroom.*

Seth Panitch is the greatest teacher I've had. His dedication, passion, and insight—and his ability to craft life-changing, career-building experiences both in- and outside of the classroom—make him worth every award, distinction, and honor I can imagine.

David Bolus '11
(205) 317-1293
streator@gmail.com

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Michael Luwoye and I am a recent graduate of the University of Alabama with a major in Musical Theatre. Throughout my four years I had the privilege of working under the instruction of the university's Associate Professor of Acting, Seth Panitch. Every student understands what a privilege it is to have Mr. Panitch as a professor. His classes are always filled with eager individuals ready to glean any information from his courses. We are all trained to find the constructive aspects of our peer's work and to utilize them in our own development. This is a useful measure Mr. Panitch employs in order to build a better learning environment which invites creative play to enhance our acting abilities. Mr. Panitch makes a point of instilling the importance of preparation in our work. He does not tolerate excuses for a lack of preparation or a negligence of respect for other actors or the space (the stage or the rehearsal area). This approach is not a ploy to intimidate or come off as cross toward his students, but rather to help us understand the vitality of culturing a strong work ethic in an extremely precarious career path.

Seth Panitch conducts his classroom and directs his shows with the necessary honor and respect for a craft that has been survived throughout the world for over 2,500 years. His passion for the craft is truly unmatched to any instructor I have worked under. Mr. Panitch is patient when it comes to aiding his students toward overcoming personal hurdles that may stunt the growth of their work and nurturing any breakthroughs that a student may experience. As a director, Mr. Panitch takes his time with managing his students and crew in order to help us produce our best work. The real work comes from honoring the text and the world created by each individual involved in every production. With his actors, Mr. Panitch is open to collaborating to try and discover the best choices to make on stage. While we rehearse and are credited under the label of educational theatre, Mr. Panitch holds his actors and creative team to conduct themselves under professional standards. There is no such thing as a perfect show, but Mr. Panitch always emphasizes the importance for everyone to strive for perfection leaving no room for regret while creating an honest atmosphere.

Seth Panitch has also been an integral factor in my post-collegiate endeavors and decisions for my career. During my early years at the university I found theatre to be a useful tool of expression but never solidified it as something that would be fulfilling after I graduate. My initial plans after college - during my Freshman and Sophomore years - included a non-practical pursuit somewhere in Europe to further explore my interests for music composition, production, and performance (nothing pertaining to theatre). At that point, I had no substantial guidance for what career I wanted to engage in once I left the university. By my Junior year I began having sessions with Mr. Panitch that touched on in-class work but, more importantly, what I could do with theatre as a career. Mr. Panitch helped to advise me for the next two years over the various options I had available to me - interpolating his own personal experiences in school to open a relatable avenue for me. We weighed many different options from graduate schools to regional theatre work and also sifted through the various cities now abundant with opportunities in the world of theatre. Before my Senior year I was having a difficult time

deciding on a place to move to pursue theatre. After a lot of debate and ambivalence on my end, Mr. Panitch advised me to move to New York.

Despite my initial aversions and prejudices to the fast pace of New York, I have successfully settled in the city. With the help of Seth Panitch my first year out of college has been greeted with success which has surpassed my expectations. In my first three months in the city I received my first two professional jobs as an actor, one of which being a lead role in a new musical, *Witness Uganda*, which premiered at the American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge, Massachusetts under the direction of the 2013 Tony Award winner for Best Direction of a Musical, Diane Paulus. Mr. Panitch was also a factor in my decision to work with my agency, Clear Talent Group, who have helped me make valuable steps to continue my career in theatre. Since the show has closed I've been active in the New York acting community shooting an international commercial, and being involved in more new work (the latest being the new musical, *Fable*, premiering at the New York Musical Theatre Festival in July).

There is a quotation from the American actress Stella Adler which states, "Growth as an actor and growth as a human being are synonymous." Under the tutelage of Mr. Panitch I feel that I have grown into a proper actor, but he has also made me into a greater man. Because of his instruction, direction, and wisdom I am now armed with a stronger mindset and an incessant drive to better my craft. Seth Panitch is one of the most important mentors I've encountered in my lifetime and I believe that he is most deserving for this position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M. Luwoye' with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Luwoye
University of Alabama Alumnus 2013
atomlu71@gmail.com

Caroline Schmidt
May 13, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Caroline Schmidt and I graduated from the University of Alabama in 2012, receiving a degree in Musical Theatre. I am writing this letter because I feel the great need to recommend Seth Panitch, Director of MFA and Undergraduate Acting Programs at UA, for his promotion to Full Professor.

It is always thrilling for me to be able to talk to the incoming freshman about the Theatre and Dance department at the University. They anxiously ask me things like, "Who's your favorite teacher?" or "What classes should I take?"

My answer will always be Seth Panitch and the varied classes he has to offer. To put it plainly, Seth is the best teacher I have ever had. It is incredibly evident that Seth cares deeply about each and every one of his students. In class, he has a way with students that makes them excited to be vulnerable and try new things. He stresses the fact that no actor is ever perfect and encourages his students to never settle. Seth believes in his students. After living in Manhattan for two years, I can attest that the business is a crazy industry, but Seth remains a constant in my life and the lives of all his graduates, instilling in us the iron clad belief that we are capable of achieving anything we want to with hard work and dedication.

Personally, when I had Seth as a teacher I was excited to go to class each day and learn from him. He made me excited about school. I respect his opinion immensely and have always appreciated the fact that he is incredibly honest with me when I ask his opinion on anything. Students know to register early for Seth's classes because they fill up so quickly. His classes have molded me into the actor I am today.

I have had the extreme privilege of working with Seth as a director as well. Seth has directed me in three shows, and they were my favorite of my college career. Seth is a brilliant director. He comes into the first rehearsal with an impeccable vision for what the show is going to be. He allows his actors to explore their characters and make decisions on their own. He is an incredibly hands on director, and isn't afraid to hop on stage and explain blocking further to actors. He is always willing to talk to his students outside of the rehearsal process. Seth is extremely accessible to students. Working with Seth was truly the highlight of my college career.

If all of this wasn't enough, Seth gave me an opportunity of a lifetime. A few years ago, I was able to travel to Cuba with him and 6 other MFA and undergraduate actors. Working with Cuban actors was truly one of the best experiences of my life. They have such passion for the arts, and seeing them work was truly moving. Not only did this opportunity help mold me as an actor, I also grew as a person. Talking with the Cubans, getting to know them, and just being around them was unlike anything I have ever experienced. I am forever grateful for the opportunity and Seth made it all possible.

Not only does Seth care about his students in the professional sense, he also cares about them as people. His door is always open just to talk. He cares about their well-being and I always feel like I can go to him with anything. He's a great listener and always there to give advice. I think that's something that really sets Seth apart from other teachers.

With Seth's guidance I have had no fear in my transition into the real world to become a professional actor. Looking back on my first two years in Manhattan I've booked work as an ensemble member in the musical *Cabaret* at a theatre in Connecticut. I was a featured actor in the television season premiere of *Redrum*, playing the role of Chelsea. I have filmed a commercial for Subway. When I book work, I immediately call my mom, my dad, and Seth Panitch. It is such a joy to share in the excitement of hard work coming to fruition with a mentor. I'm continuously perfecting my craft with the full support of Seth Panitch. Seth doesn't forget about his students when they graduate, he wants to know what they are doing. He invests his time in monthly check ins, where we can celebrate or commiserate about our careers. I can turn to Seth just as easily now as when I was at the University. That's special. I feel like I can hold my own in this extremely competitive field, and Seth Panitch is the reason.

I can tell you honestly that if it weren't for Seth Panitch, I would not be where I am today.

His classes and training are my "secret weapon" for success here in New York City. He has prepared me for the real world in every way, shape, and form.

I strongly encourage you to consider Seth for this promotion. He has changed the lives of so many students in the very best ways possible. Knowing him has surly changed mine.

Sincerely,
Caroline Schmidt
985-778-8437
carolinedschmidt@gmail.com

May 10, 2014

Dear Sir or Madame of The Promotion Committee:

I am a proud alumnus of the MFA Graduate Acting Program at the University of Alabama Department of Theatre and Dance, and it is my privilege to write this letter in support of the fine work of Professor Seth Panitch. The guidance and leadership of Professor Panitch over my creative development as an actor and a teacher has been outstanding, and I am truly thankful for the opportunity to study under him.

Professor Panitch greatly improved and increased my skills as a performer and professor by sharing the wealth of knowledge that he has accumulated during the course of his own academic and professional career in theatre and film. He has a superb talent for communicating various approaches and techniques to the craft of acting to his students. I personally experienced an unfathomable amount of growth as an actor during my time as one of Professor Panitch's students at the University of Alabama.

This artistic and professional growth has led directly to a steady stream of professional opportunities since my recent graduation. I immediately secured an assistant professor position within the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at Kennesaw State University as well as challenging acting roles at multiple professional theatres in Atlanta where I now reside, including the Alliance Theatre, Georgia Ensemble, Dad's Garage, Fabrefaction, and Stage Door. I have no doubt these many opportunities are a direct result of the training I received from Mr. Panitch.

Not only have I found great benefits from my time in Mr. Panitch's efforts in the classroom, but also from his diligent attention to my continued professional success as well. It is a testament to the breadth of his professional career that a recommendation from Mr. Panitch can open so many doors for his students. His direct efforts resulted in multiple employment opportunities at Texas Shakespeare Festival, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and Utah Shakespeare Festival, which are each widely considered to be among the best Shakespeare Festivals in the nation. I currently have the pleasure of returning for my second season as a member of the Resident Acting Company at the Texas Shakespeare Festival, due entirely to the training I received at the University of Alabama from Mr. Panitch. Furthermore, because Professor Panitch was able to bring Philip Sneed, the Executive Director of Denver, CO's largest regional theatre, the Arvada Center, to campus as a guest director of our 2009 production of *The Time of Your Life*, I have been able maintain a professional connection with Mr. Sneed that has and will continue to provide me further professional acting opportunities.

His professional dedication to continued success for the University of Alabama and his students also made it possible for me to make my Off-Broadway debut in a lead role in 2012 at the world-renowned 59E59 Theatre. This is a highly coveted achievement for any actor, and the fact that

Professor Panitch put forth the limitless effort required to make this opportunity possible for me is but another example of how deeply he cares for the continuing growth of his students. This opportunity has in turn led to even more professional opportunities for me, including being recently cast in a lead understudy role in *Warrior Class* at the Alliance Theatre, winner of the 2007 Regional Theatre Tony Award.

I have also recently gained profession representation with one of Atlanta's top talent agencies, Atlanta Models and Talent, through which I've been invited to numerous auditions including the Cartoon Network, the Lifetime Network series *Devious Maids*, and several major motion pictures. I have no doubt that I continue to be held in high esteem by my agency because of the skill set I acquired in the classroom of Mr. Panitch.

Mr. Panitch is a valuable asset to the academic community at the University of Alabama, and successfully fosters a wonderful environment for students to learn, grow, and simultaneously feel challenged and nurtured. Please feel free to call me at (678) 361-8560 with any further questions regarding this recommendation.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Lewis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Matt Lewis
Assistant Professor of Acting and Arts in Society: Theatre and Performance
Kennesaw State University
Department of Theatre and Performance Studies
mlewis59@kennesaw.edu
(678) 361-8560

May 9, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my honor and pleasure to unreservedly recommend Professor Seth Panitch for his promotion to full professor. As a student in the theatre department, I had several classes with Seth, and also had the honor and privilege of taking part in his Cuban production of *Beyond Therapy* in Havana during my senior year at UA. His numerous qualifications for this promotion would take too long to list individually, so I will simply begin with this: Seth is the most dedicated, charismatic and amazing teacher I've ever had.

Seth holds his students to an extremely high standard of professionalism—a standard that he keeps himself. Seth always manages to bring out the best in all of his students, and one would be hard-put to find a student that did not grow tremendously from one of Seth's classes.

I, personally, feel that Seth's Acting II class changed my life. I don't say this flippantly. I discovered more about myself as an actor and a person in that class than I ever had before. Acting II really engenders a special type of introspection that allows everyone to look deep within, face their demons, and come out with a new level of self knowledge and confidence that shines through their work. And that work doesn't have to be on the stage—that knowledge and confidence translates to every discipline.

I have also found that Seth takes every opportunity to broaden his students' horizons. In my senior year, I, and two other undergrads, were given the opportunity to travel to Cuba and take part in Seth's production of Christopher Durang's *Beyond Therapy* and take classes at El Instituto Superior Del Arte. This was an unprecedented opportunity for the three of us, and it is one that would not be possible without Seth's tireless efforts. I cannot express how completely this trip informed my own work and how I grew as an actor and person—I know that I have Seth to thank for that growth.

Seth heavily promotes camaraderie and being a "support system" for one's peers. He taught me that the business side of theatre, and theatre itself, can be heavy, but that as actors we have to be the ones to lift it up and lift up our fellow actors. He taught me that "every attempt must be perfect, but the result doesn't have to be." Above all, Seth has taught me what it means to bring myself to bear in my work. He taught me that ultimately, what I have to offer and give as a person is what is most important—I didn't understand that before his classes.

Seth truly is an amazing teacher and mentor. He has touched so many lives, and I cannot think of any professor more worthy of promotion.

Amber Gibson
(256) 919.8319
amberagibson@gmail.com

Dear University of Alabama Promotion Committee,

I am so honored that I have the privilege of telling you a little about the gift that Seth Panitch gave me while attending the University of Alabama. If I could think of one person that impacted my life immeasurably as an actor it would be Seth. He is indubitably deserving of promotion to full professor. While attending Alabama, I held his class to a different standard. He demanded excellence, commitment, an open heart, and focused mind. His training not only helped us as actors to explore our work, but also ourselves, and when he saw that glimmer of passion in you, he committed himself to helping you fulfill it in everyway.

Since attending Alabama, I attended 3 others schools (Georgia State, The New York Conservatory for Dramatic Arts, as well as graduating from the Savannah College of Art and Design), and not a single one even touched the surface of what Seth taught me at Alabama. Sure, they understood basic theatre knowledge, but I found myself moving backwards at these institutions and clinging towards the knowledge I learned while under Seth's teaching (even sharing some of his techniques and exercises to other struggling students!).

During schooling with Seth, he would always be open and willing to listen to my concerns during office hours. I remember before I took the leap into the film industry, he said "Chelsea, the industry is telling you yes now, few people ever hear that affirmation, don't tell it to wait because it may not be there forever." Those words helped me sign with my first agent at 18, and I have been working professionally in the film industry ever since.

Seven years later, his advice and words of wisdom are still instrumental in my life. Because of him, my career has spanned from a recurring role on Showtime's *Homeland* (Maddie), a variety of national commercials, including *Shoney's*, *Stanton Optical*, and *UPS*, three movies, including *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, a series recurring role on the Cinemax show, *Banshee* (Beaty), and multiple large movie final callbacks for lead roles (*Footloose*, *The Collection*, *Barely Lethal*) and series regular auditions on a constant basis. I attend the Golden Globe Awards each year for HBO and Cinemax, working for *Banshee*.

I have worked as a professional actor for 7 years—and I never take for granted how lucky I am to say that. The more work I get, the more I return to my original training and process with Seth. It was really only when I began attending other schools that I saw how decrepit and hollow their programs are—and how great the students have it at Alabama with Seth. I feel now even more grateful to him. He trusted in my talent the minute I walked in freshman year, and because of his dedication to me, I have wanted to make him proud ever since. When I book a new role, he is one of the first calls I want to make.

If you ever were to give a promotion to anyone that represents Alabama's dedication to excellence and tenacious spirit for knowledge and empowered thinking-- look no further. You have had the pleasure of having him on board from the very beginning. He changes and inspires our lives in immeasurable ways. He alone made my Alabama experience immeasurable and has kept me a 'Roll Tide' fan ever since. But more than that—At the age of 18, he taught me how to respect my craft, work hard for what is important to me, and become a moral and honest human being. He guided my path to being the adult I am today and for that I am forever grateful.

Chelsea Cardwell
chelscardwell@gmail.com
Houghton Talent, Inc.

April 30, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jeremy Windham, and I graduated from the University of Alabama in May of 2008. I would like to recognize Seth Panitch, Associate Professor of Theatre and Head of the BA/MFA Acting Programs, as the best acting trainer I have ever studied under (both in the U.S. and in my studies in London, England), and the finest educator and adviser I have ever known.

Seth's way of teaching acting is different from any other instructor I have encountered. While many teach "the process of acting," Seth teaches each individual student numerous skills in order to be personal on the stage. Every student receives the knowledge and confidence that s/he can, at a fundamental, basic, and important level personalize and connect with written characters. Before Seth arrived at UA, I was not confident in my work as an actor or in my future as one. I received my basic acting training under other teachers. After having Seth for several advanced classes, I knew I had to take his basic acting class in order to gain the tools and confidence I needed. It exceeded my ever expectation. I was excited about what I could do after that class, and I demand nothing less of myself than the way he showed me to approach acting.

Seth's classes are excellent preparation for students who are serious about careers in theatre. They require dedication and professionalism. Students do not take his classes expecting a break from their busy schedules: They take them knowing they will be challenged, that they will learn and that they will grow tremendously. Every class he teaches is filled quickly, and he is always accommodating to allow in more students. He is so knowledgeable, experienced, and passionate about what he does that it carries on to his students. Students who have cared little about styles such as Shakespeare and Shaw have grown to love and appreciate them. He demands that you give your best for yourself in order for you to reach the potential that he sees. He truly wants you to

succeed in whatever you do, whether you are involved with theatre or not. I emerged from his classes with more respect for the art and a level of professionalism that has remained with me in the professional world.

There is continually a line of students at Seth's office door waiting to talk to him. He is always willing to discuss the steps that you need to take in order to grow as an actor. He is happy to advise you on your life and career after college. He seeks out auditions and jobs for students and is always fighting on their behalf in these opportunities. He has an extensive knowledge of graduate schools and professional companies and gives students the information needed to make decisions for the future. I left college excited about the future, and I am blessed to have Seth as a resource whenever I face uncertainties in this most uncertain of careers. He implores all of his former students to keep in touch with him and contact him any time, and he honors that contract without exception.

In truth, I could not imagine what I would be doing now or in the future had I not had Seth as an acting teacher. He has an incredible dedication and loyalty to the Theatre Department and especially to its students. He has certainly made a huge impact on my life, and his students are trained to respect and make an impact on the art of acting or any other career path that they choose.

Very Sincerely,

Jeremy Windham '08
windhamjj@yahoo.com
334.300.7916

Regan Stevens ('10)
237 W. 74th Street, Apt. 510
New York City, NY 10023

May 2, 2014

UA Promotion Committee

Dear Promotion Committee:

The metropolis of American theatre, New York City, is located an astonishing 1026 miles from the University of Alabama campus. However, graduates of the University of Alabama theatre program annually herd to the Big Apple in pursuit of their theatrical aspirations assured that the education they received at UA has adequately prepared them for immense competition among myriad talented New York actors. So, what gives these young actors the confidence they need to make the biggest move of their lives? As a 2010 graduate of UA's theatre program and a current resident of Manhattan, I am certain that professor Seth Panitch should be attributed with the credit of equipping his students with the technique, skills, and motivation we need to seek and attain the highest success.

During my tenure as a student at the University of Alabama, Seth mentored me as my professor, my director, and my advisor in the Department of Theatre and Dance. Through each of these roles, he epitomized the quality of being passionate in one's work. From the first day of my first class with Seth, and in each of his subsequent courses that I took, he explained that acting is not a rudimentary career that offers the stability of a paycheck and benefits, so it is crucial that those in pursuit of this demanding art form must have a keen passion for it. Though many professors in various colleges at UA may give similar speeches, what singles out Seth is that as a professor, he does more than lecture about the career's demands for passion; he exhibits that quality throughout every moment of his teaching, directing and advising by his own shrewd preparation, his demands of excellence, and his visionary mindset.

One crucial component of success in acting—or any profession—is preparation. As a professor and director, Seth is exceptional in his own detailed preparation, thereby inspiring his students to be equally as prepared. The classes Seth teaches and the shows he directs are quite varied in the expertise that they require him to possess: from brandishing broadswords to dissecting dialogue. But one thing is consistent: Seth always commands great respect from his students through his ability to use his immense base of knowledge to provide us with a complete understanding of whatever topic he is teaching: whether it is the technical skill of stage combat or the interpersonal skill of truly relating to a scene partner through a playwright's text. The ultimate effect of Seth's preparation is in itself a lesson to his students: we have to prepare an equally rich well of knowledge on each topic we study in order to excel in the vast and competitive career of acting. He not only helps us learn from his knowledge, but he instills in us a desire to always yearn to learn more. To me, that is the hallmark of a great professor. I have benefited from Seth's demonstration of preparation both as a student, and now as a graduate. In one of my advising sessions with Seth, he reminded me that once I graduated I still needed to devote a minimum of two hours daily to developing my acting skills. This was a tall demand because I work ten-hour days at my non-acting, bill-paying job in NYC. But I know that in order to attain the success I desire, I must follow his advice. At first, I used his two hours a day requisite as a benchmark, a goal. Now, I far exceed putting two hours a day into the development of my skills as an actor. I am certain that without Seth's motivation to prepare for acting success outside of the classroom, I

already would have floundered amongst the intense competition of Broadway. Instead, I have received great feedback from casting directors and my current acting coach. I am so grateful for Seth's exemplary preparation, and his encouragement to me to match his arduous career-advancing practices.

One of Seth's qualities as a professor that always amazed me as his student is his ability to elicit excellence from each one of his students—even if those students are not inclined to strive for excellence in other courses. In acting classes with other professors, it is rare that students are eager to present their work before a professor. However, in Seth's classes all of the students are conscientious in their preparation and eager to get the most advice and feedback from Seth. Therefore, class time is maximized and students learn not only from the advice he offers directly to them, but from the feedback that he offers to other students. Seth reinforces his demands for excellence among his students by encouraging them to define what they view as excellent, unique, and compelling in the work of other artists and actors. In the business of acting, criticism is rampant; however, Seth enlightens his students by explaining that deciphering what is excellent in art will yield far more benefit for us than ruthlessly seeking flaws in another's craft. By encouraging us to seek out excellence, he not only improves us as actors, but also fosters a nurturing, supportive environment in what could otherwise be a cut-throat, negative, and viciously competitive department. As I have collaborated with other UA graduates in NYC, I have seen how this spirit of community that Seth has created enables alumni to have a support system beyond the UA campus. We assist each other in finding auditions, we offer feedback to one another as we rehearse for auditions, and we provide support for one another through the victories of being cast in productions. Because of Seth's approach to encouraging excellence and high standards without the burn of negative criticism within the UA theatre community, he has fostered a supportive network of alumni in NYC. I am grateful to be a part of this network, a family of UA grads in which we continue to support one another in our endeavor for excellence and success in acting due to Seth's influence on us.

Aside from demonstrating that we should seek excellence through the strengths of one another, Seth fervently seeks opportunities and, more importantly, creates them. Our department hit international acclaim due solely to Seth Panitch's visionary efforts to seek out a relationship with a theatre in Cuba. Through his efforts, UA actors had the opportunity go to Cuba to produce the first American-directed show in Cuba since Castro's rise. In addition, he even masterminded a way to bring Cuban actors to the United States to involve more UA undergraduates in the opportunity to work with the Cuban actors. He overcame governmental and linguistic barriers in order to direct shows both in Cuba and here at the Allen Bales theatre on UA's campus. This was not an opportunity that fell into his lap, but a desire he had to create a truly unique experience to benefit his students, and bring even more credibility and renown to the UA's theatre program. Although I was not personally involved in the Cuban projects, Seth's pursuit of extraordinary opportunities has inspired me in my journey as an actor. I have realized that even when the casting breakdowns do not call for an actor of my type, that does not preclude me from making strides in my acting career. I am currently working with a friend I met who is an intern at Comedy Central's *Colbert Report* to write our own comedic sketches for a web series and a stand-up duet. The only reason that I am embarking on this new journey is because of Seth's insistence and example that I need to create opportunities for myself in order to reach my goals.

I am forever grateful to Seth Panitch for devoting his time and energy into embodying the traits that his students must have in order to achieve our highest goals. His passion for acting has

manifested itself through his exemplary preparation, quest for excellence, and creating opportunities; and through his efforts he has inspired me to follow his path. I am eager to see what doors will open for me as a result of what I have taken away from his tremendous efforts as a professor, director, and advisor. Seth Panitch is a truly unique Professor, and I could not be more emphatic in my recommendation for him to be promoted to Full Professor.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Regan Stevens
(205) 913-2965

If I could sum up my experience working with Seth Panitch in a few words, they would have to be along the lines of wonderful, professional, and encouraging. I have never felt better in any other class or in any other show, than when I'm in a class or show with him. I always feel inspired to push myself to the absolute limit, to be prepared, to do my best, to search my mind and my heart for anything and everything I could do to serve my character, the cast, or the show. He is always a very clear communicator, especially when it comes down to Shakespeare.

I have never met anyone who has really made me believe in myself as an actress until I met Seth. As far as professionalism, it is always such a relief to be in a performance environment with him. You can always expect to be treated fairly, encouraged, and even disciplined when someone is being lazy, unappreciative, disrespectful, or unprofessional.

I can say that I have learned more in a year of studying with Seth than I ever have throughout my entire acting career. I have learned so much about self discipline, self respect, and endurance of spirit for theatre, not to mention all the Shakespeare training he has given me. It is hard to describe his directing style, but all I can say is that I was never in doubt, always understood what he asked of me, was completely willing to trust his judgment and work with him on the same level.

My experience working with him has always been positive. I feel that whoever works with Seth Panitch will not only be very lucky, but will be transformed to use their mind, use their spirit, and act with their whole self.

Sincerely, Kelly Ann Shamburger
1015 7th avenue, apt6
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
678-522-7416

TEACHING

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY
GRADUATED STUDENT
UPDATE**

**SELECTIONS FROM
EVALUATIONS**

**SELECTION OF DETAILED
EVALUATIONS**

**CLASS EVALUATION
(ASSESSMENT)**

**PROCESS PAPERS
(ASSESSMENT)**

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Personal Statement of Teaching Philosophy
Seth Panitch
Associate Professor of Acting
The University of Alabama

"The Car goes where the Eye goes..."

Every young actor has a dream. This dream consists of equal parts Oscar acceptance speech, various parents eating their words, the sheepish return of an ex-boyfriend or girlfriend, and the accompanying bank account of a small island nation. Unfortunately, this dream rarely includes years of intense training, bulletproof professionalism, courageous self-exploration, or sleeping on the permafrost floor of a friend's apartment in the Bronx. This is the ultimate challenge of the acting teacher; and indeed of arts teachers the world over: how to convince young artists to relinquish the seductive sirens of these irrelevant dreams for the richer landscape of the eminently attainable: the adventure of a career serving society's need for shared catharsis, dynamic storytelling, or a simple laugh at the end of a particularly miserable day. Partnering with students through that journey from Serial Dreamer to Working Actor has provided my life's greatest test, and being a part of that metamorphosis has become my most cherished professional achievement.

When I first came to the University of Alabama, I immediately fell in love with the extraordinary passion of the acting students, but found myself facing two significant obstacles. The first is familiar to all Arts Professors: how do we bridge the gap between training and the profession? The internship of medicine, the clerking of law, these beneficial structures do not exist for us, and yet we have the same sacred responsibility to develop not only the minds of our students, but their future pocketbooks as well. The second challenge was one of geography. For these students, many of whom hail from humble rural communities, there is no regional professional theatre nearby to ignite their young passions. I determined I would have to create projects to transport our students into the professional world itself, in order to provide them the experiences that would not only contextualize their training, but also enable them to compete on equal footing with students from any other University.

To this end, I created "The Bridge Project:" a series of plays I wrote, directed, and produced to enable scores of our students to perform Off-Broadway in successful, well-reviewed productions alongside professional actors. My ongoing partnership with the Cuban Ministry of Culture has spawned opportunities for UA students in four bi-national productions I have directed in Havana, providing them the experience of a lifetime: to work, perform, and live alongside professionals of an entirely different tradition. Next year, the Bridge Project continues with a full length feature film about relations between African-American and white medical students at the historically black Meharry Medical College in 1968, affording my students the thrilling opportunity to hone their on-camera technique beside professional screen actors from New York and Los Angeles.

I am resolved to seek opportunities for my students in my own professional research as well. Through my work as an actor and director at the Colorado, Utah, and Texas Shakespeare Festivals, I have been able to develop partnerships that have directly resulted in our students being hired at those nationally recognized festivals. I have developed a varied network of professional collaborators in New York who consistently attend our NYC Senior Showcase, "*Bama on Broadway*." This showcase, which I direct each spring, has jump started the theatre and film careers of scores of our graduates.

This relentless focus on the transition from training to career is paying off significantly for our students. Recent graduates of my classes have starred on Broadway, Off-Broadway, in major regional theatres across the country, in major motion pictures, such as *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, *Endless Love*, and *Old Boy*, and on television in *The Walking Dead*, *Once Upon a Time*, *30 Rock*, *Law and Order*, *Blue Bloods*, and even the recent live production of *The Sound of Music* on NBC.

These opportunities would be meaningless, of course, without the training to back them up. The actual profession of Acting is brutally variable. I am determined to provide my students with a concrete weapon against the tremendous self-doubt that can accompany that variability: the knowledge that they are skillfully practicing a finely honed technique, that they have something interesting to say, and that when the correct fit of audition and role come their way, they will be able to exploit that possibility to its fullest. The heart of my technique is contained in "Four P's:" Preparation, Professionalism, Passion, and most importantly, Personality. Most young students ironically fail to grasp that it is their uniqueness, that singular collection of magnificent quirks and quibbles, which constitutes their greatest ammunition in the battle ahead. Therefore, my central task is to relentlessly encourage each student to develop that essential signature. It is a singular thrill to see that recognition on a student's face: that not only is their own experience valid, it has the power to entertain, challenge, and inspire.

I do not subscribe to any one school of thought to chisel out that personal signature, but to all of them. I have combined Suzuki with Contact Improvisation, collaborated with African Drumming classes, and developed acting improvisational exercises with Jazz musicians, as often as I have employed western "Stanislavski" connective training. If I thought I could get a student closer to their personal singularity through bull riding, I would pick up my copy of *Urban Cowboy* immediately.

"*The Car goes where the Eye goes*" is an old auto racing expression. Just as a vehicle tends to carve a path that follows the trajectory of the driver's eyes, so too does the career of a young student follow the focus of their commitment. My sacred responsibility has been to redirect that young vision onto the path that will lead them to successfully achieve their life's great passion. To be a part of that remarkable process in my students is *my* life's great passion, and I am forever thankful that I am allowed to pursue it.

GRADUATED STUDENT UPDATE

Updated May 2014

The following is an update of the professional accomplishments of students I have taught and mentored in acting classes at the University of Alabama.

Sonequa Martin plays starring or recurring roles on Network Television's *The Walking Dead*, *Once upon a Time*, *Army Wives*, *The Good Wife*, and *NYC 22*, and has appeared twice as a guest star on *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*. She also starred in the Feature Film *Toe to Toe* (Sundance Film Festival honorable mention) as well as in regional commercials for the American Red Cross. She also starred in the play "*Fetch Clay, Make Man*," which played in numerous regional theatres.

Sonequa Martin, Stephanie Mosely, Willie Williams and Dawoyne Alexander were all seen in the John Sayles' film *Honeydrippers*.

Jake Boyd appeared in guest-starring roles in NBS's *The Sound of Music*, *30 Rock* (as the young Alec Baldwin), *Law and Order*, and in the CBS drama *Blue Bloods*. He also has recurring roles on the TBS sitcom *Are We There Yet?* and *All My Children*. Jake has performed on Broadway as Joey Primo in the musical *Rock of Ages*, and Off-Broadway in *Dogfight*, directed by Joe Montello at Second Stage, *The Last Smoker in America*, at the Westside Theatre, *Carrie the Musical* and also played Will Parker in the National Touring Production of *Oklahoma*.

Chelsea Cardwell recently appeared in the Lionsgate film *What to Expect When You're Expecting* with Cameron Diaz and Chris Rock. She has a recurring guest starring role on *Homeland* on Showtime and a recurring supporting role on the Cinemax series *Banshee*.

Stephen Brunson, Amy Handra, Abby Jones, William Rowland, David Bolus, Sarah Jean Peters, and Jeffrey Horger have performed in multiple productions at the nationally recognized Colorado Shakespeare Festival.

Matt Lewis, Peyton Conley, Laswson Hangartner, and Alexandra Ficken performed off- Broadway in the Drama Desk Award winning 59E59 Theatre in the play *Hell: Paradise Found*.

Alexandra Ficken played a supporting role in the Universal Pictures remake of *Endless Love*. She is currently shooting *The Originals* for the CW network, and has guest starred on *The Vampire Diaries*. She has performed leading roles in *Love and Warcraft* and in the World Premiere production *Bike America* at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, and in *Sherlock Holmes* at the Georgia Ensemble.

Rebecca Kling has played supporting roles in the films *God's Pocket* opposite Philip Seymour Hoffman, directed by John Slattery, and in *Outliving Emily*, opposite Olympia Dukakis.

Michael Luwoye is appearing at the American Repertory Theatre in the World Premiere of *Witness Uganda*.

Caroline Schmidt has starred on the Discovery Channel Series *Redrum* and starred in *Cabaret* at Playhouse on the Park in West Hartford, CT. She has also performed in a national commercial for *Subway*, making her a singularly healthy performer.

Thaddeus Fitzpatrick, Abby Jones, John Paul Snead, and Jeffrey Horger performed Off- Broadway at the Harold Clurman Theatre and in Havana, Cuba at the Raquel Revuelta Theatre in the Cuban Office of Scenic Arts Production *Alceste Ascending*.

Thaddeus Fitzpatrick performed in the World Premiere of *I and You* by Lauren Gunderson at the Olney Theatre center in Washington, DC. He has also been seen on Television in commercials for the *Video Music Awards*.

Matt Lewis is a regular performer with the Georgia Ensemble, Alliance Theatre, Stage Door Players, and the Texas Shakespeare Festival. He is currently an Adjunct Instructor of Acting at Kennesaw State University in Atlanta, Georgia., and has served as an Instructor of Acting at Stillman College in Alabama.

Nicholas Burroughs has performed in the acting company at the Utah Shakespearean Festival.

Katie Burton appeared on Television in *Stranded* on the Sci-Fi Channel.

Erica Hansen performed a leading role for the National Touring production of *Cats*.

Laura Ballard performed in the National Tour of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*.

Jason Keef has guest starred in episodes of *CSI Miami* and *Eli Stone*. He has also appeared in multiple productions for L.A.'s Glendale Center Theatre.

Stephen Tyler Davis is the Emcee of the *Ripley's Believe it or Not* tour in Times Square, New York and performed in the national tour of *Christmas Carol* for *TheatreWorks USA*.

Michael Freeman toured with Theatreworks in the *Junie B Jones* National Tour and was one of three finalists for the role of "Shrek" in *Shrek the Musical* on Broadway.

Gaye Jeffers is Assistant Professor of Theatre at the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga.

Maegan McNerney is Assistant Professor of Acting at Furman University. She has also performed at the Seaside Repertory Theatre and served as Director of Education at the California Theatre Center.

Daniel Tracy is Assistant Professor of Theatre at North Georgia College and State University.

Willie Williams is Assistant Professor of Theatre at the University of Western Alabama

Sadie Magadan is an Instructor of Acting and Speech at Northwest Mississippi City College.

Chris Hardin served as Assistant Professor of Acting at Austin Peay University

Jeremy Cox is Adjunct Acting Instructor at University of Tennessee, Chattanooga.

Thomas Azar served as an Equity company member of Theatreworks, a professional theatre in San Francisco. He spent the summer season of 2007 performing the leading role at the nationally recognized "*Blue Jacket*" in Ohio. He has also worked professionally at California Shakespeare Theatre and other Bay Area theatres.

Taylor Curtis has performed Off Broadway in *The Best Party Ever* at the Richmond Shepard Theatre and *Sevens and Snake Eyes* at the Red Room Theatre.

Anastasia Munoz has appeared in numerous productions at the nationally recognized Dallas Theatre Center and the Dallas Children's Theatre.

Wade Mowles performed in the National Tour of *Virtual Me*.

Wallace Barton starred in the independent film *Dianne and Lloyd*.

Thomas Walker is a company member of the Merry Go Round Playhouse in New York.

Peyton Conley is a company member of New Harmony Theatre in Evansville, Indiana.

Dianna Duffy has starred in multiple productions for the Le Petit Theatre in New Orleans.

Cameron Bartell has performed at the Texas Musical Drama Festival, most recently as Claudio in *Measure for Measure*. He also played Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* at the Greenbriar Valley Theatre.

Gia Asperas worked on *Sideways* at The La Jolla Playhouse under Des McAnuff.

Darin Cabot has signed with the Artists Group in New York and is pursuing a career in acting. He is appearing in an Off-Broadway production of "Almost Maine" with the New York Deaf Theatre.

Motel Foster is in the MFA Acting Program at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts.

Erin Hutson performed in Rapunzel at the Birmingham Children's Theatre.

Jaqueline Wheeler performed in the company of an Off Broadway Improvisational comedy troupe. She is currently in the MFA Acting Program at Michigan State University.

Reagan Dickey is a professional actor in Seattle, and has toured with *Let's Pretend Entertainment* throughout the West Coast.

Allison Moy served as a member of the Intern Acting Company at the prestigious Actor's Theatre of Louisville.

Blake McCorvey has had numerous major callbacks in New York, including the final callback for a lead in the National Tour of *Dirty Dancing*.

Taylor Bridges was the musical director for the Off Broadway play *Underwear the Musical*.

Taylor Curtis and **Hunter Cain** both perform weekly with the Misfit Toys Improvisational Theatre Company, Off Broadway.

Crista Bergman has performed as an extra in numerous feature films. With this work, she has recently been admitted to the Screen Actor's Guild.

Karina Croskrey performed has performed with the Renegade Theatre Company, the Walking Fish Theatre and the EgoPo Theatre in Philadelphia, PA.

Shannon Dionne made the final round of callbacks for a leading role in *Hair* for the recent Broadway revival.

Stephanie Mosely made the final round of callbacks for a leading role in the National Broadway Touring production of *Drowsy Chaperone*.

Allison Wilkes is touring with Theatreworks USA on a six-month national tour. She is also building a prolific list of voice over credits.

Sarah Ondocsin is an acting company member at the California Theatre Center.

Corey Williams is furthering his training in the prestigious MFA Acting Program at Pace University in New York.

Emily Etheridge has signed with Professional Artists in New York and is pursuing a career in acting.

Blake Williams recently signed with Kevin Thompson Talent in New York and has been accepted to the Atlantic Theatre School professional actors training program.

College Alumni Bring Talent to the Stage and Screen in New York and Beyond

The College's Department of Theatre and Dance and School of Music have long received regional and national acclaim for the talented performers they produce. Three young alumni — **JAKE BOYD**, **KATIE BURTON**, and **KRISTA ADAMS SANTILLI** — through their work on both the stage and the screen are enhancing that reputation.



Jake Boyd

JAKE BOYD (musical theatre, 2010)

His current work as an understudy with *Rock of Ages* gives Boyd continuous employment, a rare situation for young actors.

"It gives me the freedom to have an awesome job and do something that I love but also the ability to go out and audition for other things without conflict," he said.

With credits on the stage, including the 2012 production of *The Last Smoker in America*, and television, such as playing a young Jack Donaghy on NBC's *30 Rock*, Boyd says he has developed flexibility in his craft. He credits the emphasis put on preparing for roles in college with helping him prepare for different opportunities.

Looking forward, Boyd said he is still trying to find his place in New York. He hasn't decided whether he will do more stage or screen acting, but he knows that he has come to the right place for the job he loves to do.

"As long as I'm staying busy and working on things that I'm passionate about—whether it is acting on stage, doing a web series, or writing a book—I then I'm doing great."

You can follow Jake on Twitter @JaykeBoyd.

KATIE BURTON (musical theatre, 2010)

Katie Burton, also a 2010 graduate of the Department of Theatre and Dance, performed with

minute audition format prepared her for grueling professional auditions. Although the audition was intimidating, it allowed her to get her feet wet before making the big move to New York, she said.

One of her first acting jobs after college was the result of work she did with Associate Professor Raphe Crystal, director of the College's musical theatre program. Crystal was working on a musical version of William Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* with director Deloss Brown. Although Burton's involvement in the show was small, it would later lead to more opportunities.

"I tell everyone, do every tiny little thing you have the opportunity to do," she said. "You're not too big for anything because all these things I have done have turned into something else."

Her "say yes" attitude has led to a variety of roles, including short films and television. Also, she has put her 10 years of competitive gymnastics training to good use in stunt work. Recently, she worked with the Upright Citizen's Brigade, whose alumni include Amy Poehler of *Saturday Night Live* fame, doing improvisational comedy.

Burton says she has really enjoyed finding her niche in comedy. Her dream job would be to land a steady role on a sitcom like *Modern Family*.

"That would be the end all, be all, for me," she said. "But right now I am just seeing where things go, and it has taken me to some pretty cool places so far."

Her most substantial stage role has been as Elisa in *The Red and the Black*, a world premiere

Department of Theatre and Dance, Jake Boyd has been featured in the off-Broadway production of *Carrie* and *Oklahoma!*, has played in a recurring role on TBS's comedy *Are We There Yet?*, and most recently has worked with the Broadway musical *Rock of Ages*.

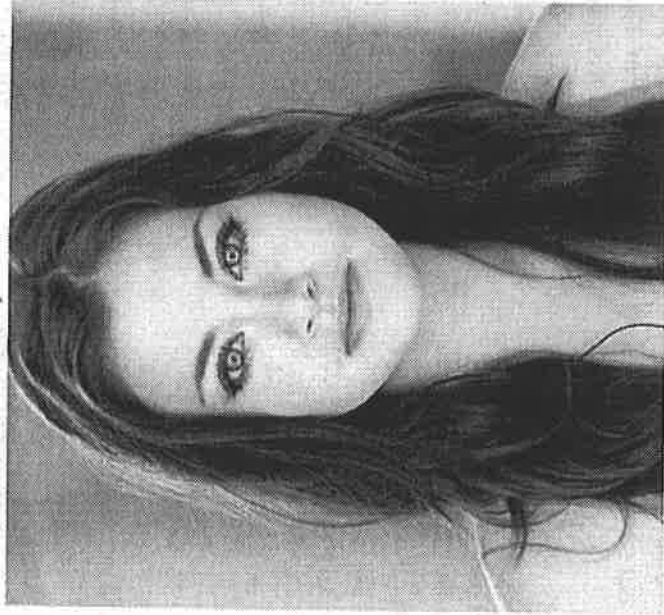
A talented singer, Boyd always wanted to be a performer. A summer production of *Hello Dolly* with Theatre Tuscaloosa was the final push he needed to pursue acting. Even after he made his decision, Boyd faced some unexpected challenges in college.

"When I got to UA, I was clueless," Boyd said. "I had never had an acting class before, and I had always just done musical theater because I sang."

Under the tutelage of Associate Professor Seth Panitch and now-Professor Emeritus Ed Williams, both in the Department of Theatre and Dance, Boyd's acting flourished. He received solid training, and was given the freedom to explore different aspects of each role and create unique characters. Some of his most memorable roles at UA include Jack in *Into the Woods* and Paul in *Moon over Buffalo*.

Another formative experience for Boyd was performing in "Bama on Broadway," the Department of Theatre and Dance's musical theater showcase in New York. As part of the performance, musical theater students audition for professional agents and casting directors. As a result of that performance, Boyd landed a role in *Carrie*, which earned him membership in the Actors' Equity Association.

Woods, where she played Cinderella. Because of her success in this role and her generally pleasant demeanor, Burton was often cast as "the sweet girl." She challenged that persona by auditioning



Katie Burton

for the part of a "woman of disrepute" in UA's production of *The Wild Party*.

"I told them not to discount me because of Cinderella," she said. "It was a learning experience because it brought out a part of me that I didn't know was there."

Burton, a Trussville native, used this experience to show a versatile range during UA's "Bama on Broadway" showcase. The two-

of the same name written by Stendahl. She was called in to audition because of her previous work with the director, Deloss Brown.

She said the best part of the experience was actually creating the show, since it was the first time it was being performed.

Burton says her family and friends have been a huge support in her transition from Alabama to the hustle and bustle of New York.

"They know that this is what makes me happy," she said. "I love being creative. I wouldn't have been happy doing something that wasn't creative."

You can find more information about Katie Burton at www.katieaburton.com.

KRISTA ADAMS SANTILLI (vocal performance, 2001)
Burton costarred in *The Red and the Black* in New York with Krista Adams Santilli, a 2001 graduate of the College's School of Music.

For Santilli, whose background is in vocal performance and opera, the play was her first experience with a nonmusical play.

For most of Santilli's career, she has performed in-musicals. She has appeared in *The Pirates of Penzance* with the Young Victorian Theatre Company, *Rigoletto* for Cheju-do Opera in South Korea, and *Le Nozze di Figaro* with Opera Birmingham.

Santilli, a Birmingham native, remembers watching *Annie* and being inspired to become a performer. But it wasn't until she was given a

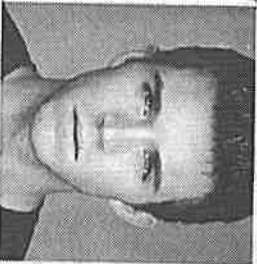
Continued on page 4

HELE
JOININ
PE

HELEN HAYES THEATRE
JOINING THE CAST AT THIS
PERFORMANCE OF



Handwritten signature of Jake Boyd



JAKE BOYD (his Broadway debut in *ROCK*! Peanut butter and origami enthusiast. Off-Broadway: *Carrie* (MCC), *The Last Smoker in America*. National tour: *Oklahoma!* Film: *Face Value*, *No Compromise*. TV: "30 Rock," "Blue Bloods," "Are We There Yet?" My Mom = The Best. (@_Notake).)

JAKE BOYD (Swing) is totally stoked to be making his Broadway debut in *ROCK*! Peanut butter and origami enthusiast. Off-Broadway: *Carrie* (MCC), *The Last Smoker in America*. National tour: *Oklahoma!* Film: *Face Value*, *No Compromise*. TV: "30 Rock," "Blue Bloods," "Are We There Yet?" My Mom = The Best. (@_Notake).

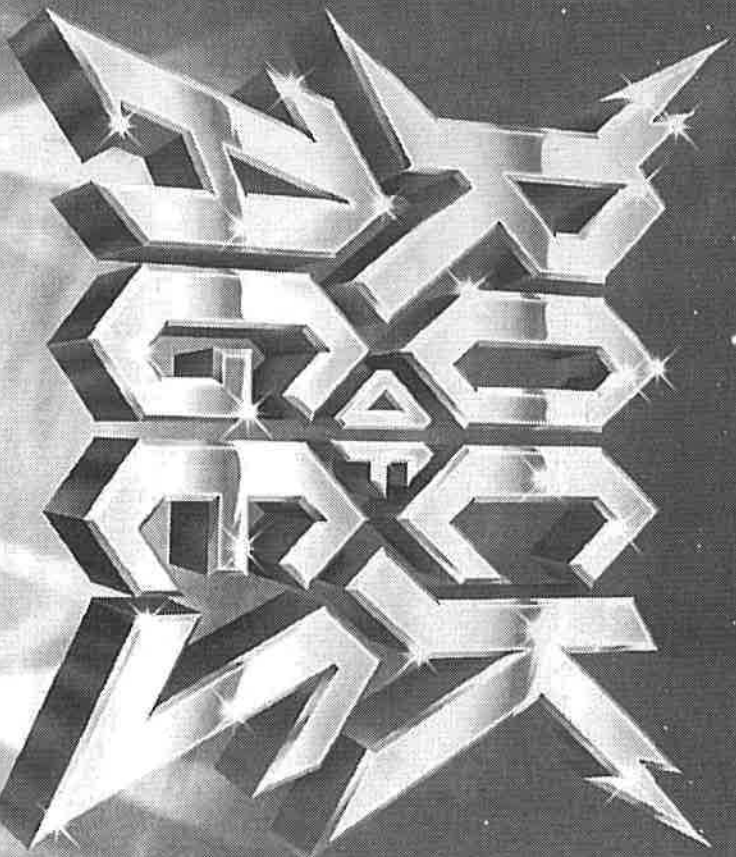


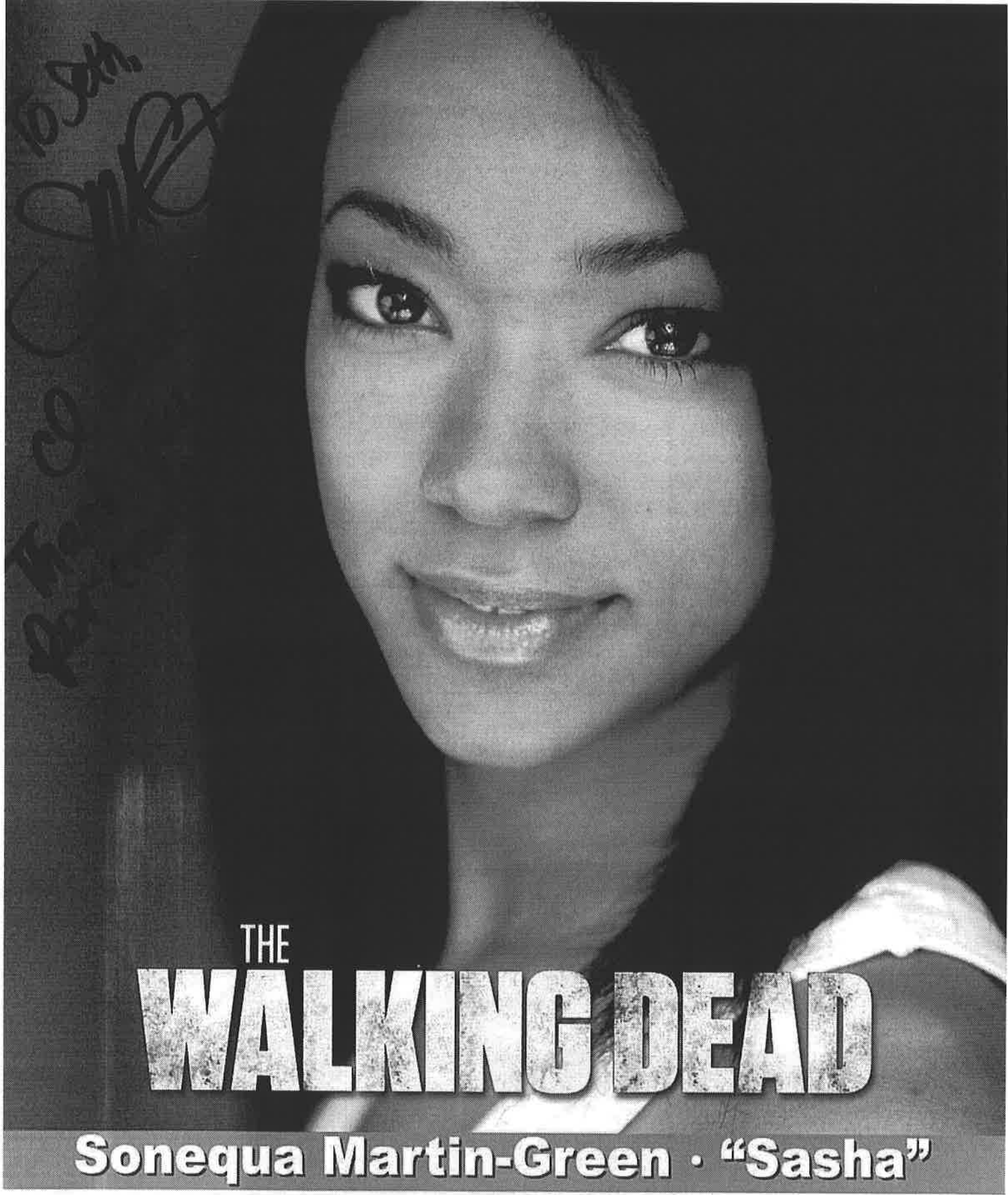
LAURALYNN to reunite with the kick-ass 1st *Grease*, *West Side Story*, the crew Telsey, the crew Man upstairs.

LAURALYNN McCLELLAND (Swing) is psyched to reunite with *Rock of Ages* after performing with the kick-ass 1st National Tour last year! Broadway: *Grease*, *West Side Story*. Thanks and love to CTG, Telsey, the creative team, family, Patrick, and the Man upstairs.

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THE
WALKING DEAD

Sonequa Martin-Green · "Sasha"



Birmingham, AL
February 7, 8, & 9, 2014

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THE
Hollywood
REPORTER



APR
3
16 HRS

'Walking Dead' Promotes Three to Series Regular for Season 4

4:00 PM PDT 4/3/2013 by Lesley Goldberg

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[Comments \(#comments\) \(19 \(http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/node/432869#disqus_thread\)\)](#)

Chad Coleman (Tyreese), Sonequa Martin-Green (Sasha) and Emily Kinney (Beth) will have a major presence when the zombie drama returns in October, with Melissa Ponzio (Karen) set as a recurring guest star.



"The Walking Dead's" Chad Coleman, Sonequa Martin-Green and Emily Kinney

AMC

AMC's *The Walking Dead* is firming up its ranks for season four.

OUR EDITOR RECOMMENDS



'Walking Dead's' Laurie Holden

Just days after the zombie drama's bloody season finale, the show based on the comics created by Robert Kirkman has promoted three familiar faces to series regular.

New additions Chad Coleman (Tyreese), Sonequa

Selection of Student Responses from Course Evaluations

All available Online Student Opinion of Instruction Forms can be found on my website: www.sethpanitch.com. Additional comments (selection below) are not required and are, of course, anonymous, and as such, may serve as an unbiased response to my instruction:

From Acting II (Fall 2013): “Seth Panitch is the best instructor I have ever had.” “He not only taught me to how to perfect my acting, he also taught me how to handle life decisions.” “The man is a mad scientist within Theatre. He’s done it all, but he still treats us like colleagues.” “Some people climb mountains to learn from gurus; I got to walk to Rowand-Johnson 236.”

From Movement III/ Character in Movement (Fall 2013): “I have never felt so encouraged in a classroom setting as I have in this class.” “His passion for teaching is so evident, and his number one goal is to make his students shine as brightly as possible.” “He is committed to his calling as an educator on a level that most other professors cannot even come close to.”

From MFA Shakespeare in Performance (Fall 2013): “Mr. Panitch’s passion for teaching is exceeded only by his care of the students.” “His rapid-fire coaching sticks, and it’s always insightful, incisive, and the very definition of respectful.”

From Acting Shakespeare (Spring 2013): “Seth Panitch has easily been the most influential teacher I have ever had the privilege of learning from. His passion for the art infects each one of his students and it shows in the level of seriousness and pride we place in our work in his class.” “This class not only prepares you for successful approaches to Shakespeare but also to life.”

From Classical Comedy/ Film (Spring 2013): “Seth is the best professor I have ever had.” “I never knew I could fall in love with Shaw!”

From Acting II (Fall 2012): “I have never learned more in a class in my life. Seth gave us tools to use for the rest of our careers.” “An incredible communicator that makes his students want to work harder.” “By far, the best class I have taken.” “This class will change your life.”

From Classical Comedy/ Film (Spring 2012): “By far the best instructor any student could ask for.” “I consider Mr. Panitch a mentor and in inspiration. He demands the very best from his students, and he consistently and thoughtfully assists us in delivering just that.”

(Continued, Over)

Selection of Student Evaluations, Continued

From Acting II (Fall 2011): "I loved everything about this class. I loved that I had to work my tail off. I loved that my classmates were passionate. I loved that I could see growth in my ability every single day." "Seth is an amazing instructor - I cannot name a single person in my class who has not vastly improved from this course. I could keep learning and growing from this course almost indefinitely."

From Movement III/ Character in Movement (Spring 2011): "This is my second class with Seth and yet again I am floored by how amazing a teacher he is. Seth is the model for how the student-instructor relationship should be. He is open, honest, and respectful to his students, and so it is no surprise that he receives the same treatment from his students."

From MFA Shakespeare in Performance (Fall 2010): "Seth is a gift. He is challenging and he always demands the best efforts from his students. He pushes them to grow as performers and as adults and he does this all in a nurturing, positive manner." "Wonderful class. Invaluable. A Game Changer."

From Acting II (Fall 2010): "Seth is the most charismatic instructor I've ever had. His enthusiasm for the work we do in class, and the craft of acting is contagious. The class environment he sets up is professional, but very supportive." "I have learned more in this acting class than I have learned in any previous course. Not only have I learned more about acting than I ever have before, I have learned more about myself as a person. I never missed a class, because I was afraid I would miss too many discoveries....and honestly, I just enjoyed coming to class. It's a fantastic, supportive environment, and I felt so safe there. This is the first class I can honestly say that I am a better person for having taken."

From MFA Acting Studio (Fall 2009): "Seth is why I came to Alabama. Seth is why I stay." "Seth is one of the best instructors I have had. His passion for acting is inspiring, his preparation is always 100% and his classes are always impactful and worthwhile."

SOI Report: Fall 2013**20 Surveyed****Seth Panitch (TH 242-001 Acting II Intro to Scene Stud)**

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The procedure for grading was fair.	15	75%	4.60	0.51	60%				40%
The course was a valuable learning experience.	15	75%	5.00	0.00	100%				
The instructor...									
was an effective communicator.	15	75%	5.00	0.00	100%				
was accessible to students outside of class.	15	75%	4.60	0.51	60%				40%
was well-prepared for class.	15	75%	5.00	0.00	100%				
used class time effectively.	14	70%	4.79	0.43	78%				21%
treated you with respect.	15	75%	4.80	0.41	80%				20%

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	A	B	C	D	F	Other
What grade do you expect to receive in this course?	15	75%	4.53	0.52	53%				46%	

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Excellent	Above average	Average	Below average	Failure
How would you rate this course?	15	75%	5.00	0.00	100%				
How would you rate the instructor of this course?	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Did you come to class prepared by having completed the assignments (readings, problems, projects, etc.)?	15	75%	4.53	0.64	60%				33% 6%
Did your background prepare you to take this course?	15	75%	4.40	0.63	46%				46% 6%
Were the course requirements clearly defined?	14	70%	4.71	0.61	78%				14% 7%
Were the reading materials/text useful to the course?	15	75%	4.67	1.05	86%				6% 6%
Were the tests and/or assignments appropriate for the course materials?	15	75%	5.00	0.00	100%				
How frequently did you attend class?	15	75%	4.93	0.26	93%				6%

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Frequently	Usually	Quite a bit	Occasionally	Not at all
How frequently did you seek out of class help from your instructor?	15	75%	2.87	1.30	20%	13%	66%		

Num	Resp	Std	A great deal	Much	Some	Little	Nothing
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Any additional comments about the instructor.

Best Acting teacher i have ever had.

Great at challenging the class! Brilliant instructor!

Seth knows every aspect of acting and what the real world is like out there in this business. He is honest and will tell you like it is. He is a great motivator and is doing exactly what he needs to do for this program. He teaches students that are eager to learn and are willing to put in the time and hard work in order to become successful.

he's amazing and we should have more instructors like him that motivate the program as much as he does

Seth Panitch was the best professor I have ever had at UA. His passion for theatre made the class interesting while his experience and knowledge of the course material made it extremely beneficial to each and every student. He was willing to work with students on an individual basis and always went out of his way to make sure that students got the most out of their 50 minutes in class. I would highly recommend this course to any theatre major, and plan to take as many of his classes as my schedule allows for the rest of my college career.

Seth Panitch's class has been a wonderful experience for me, as a growing actor. Before I took his class, I thought I knew what acting was. Afterwards, I realized there was a whole 'nother universe of acting that I had never realized. With his help, I've been able to watch myself grow more, as an actor, than I have in my entire previous 20 years. As an instructor, I feel Seth Panitch is a necessity for this course, for I can't imagine anyone bringing to it what he has.

Seth Panitch was a terrific professor. He not only taught me to perfect my acting but he also taught me how to handle life decisions and what to expect in my career. I admire seth and his career and he is truly an inspiration to all actors like me and my fellow classmates and to all actors in the department. HE is a teacher i certainly look forward to having him as a professor again.

Brilliant. I want to take every course he teaches.

Any additional comments about the course.

Such an amazing class! Wish it was longer!

Very valuable. By far the best acting training I've ever gotten.

This course is what you make it. You put the time and effort in the class and he will give you the same amount back to you.

this class has helped me to be prepared for my career and has helped me to become a better actor. I be live i will truly use every exercise this professor has given me. i believe every student should take him. A class with Seth Panitch not only helps you further your degree, but it also helps you create life goals and fulfill them. GREAT PROFESSOR ! Roll Tide

I thoroughly enjoyed this course.

Course helped me grow more than i couldve ever imagined!

SOI Report: Fall 2013**20 Surveyed****Seth Panitch (TH 242-003 Acting II Intro to Scene Stud)**

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The procedure for grading was fair.	13	65%	4.85	0.38	84%				15%
The course was a valuable learning experience.	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				
The instructor...									
was an effective communicator.	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				
was accessible to students outside of class.	14	70%	4.57	0.65	64%			28%	7%
was well-prepared for class.	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				
used class time effectively.	14	70%	4.93	0.27	92%				7%
treated you with respect.	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	A	B	C	D	F	Other
What grade do you expect to receive in this course?	14	70%	4.58	0.51	50%				35%	14%

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Excellent	Above average	Average	Below average	Failure
How would you rate this course?	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				
How would you rate the instructor of this course?	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Did you come to class prepared by having completed the assignments (readings, problems, projects, etc.)?	14	70%	4.71	0.47	71%				28%
Did your background prepare you to take this course?	14	70%	4.50	0.52	50%			50%	
Were the course requirements clearly defined?	14	70%	4.93	0.27	92%				7%
Were the reading materials/text useful to the course?	14	70%	4.79	0.43	78%				21%
Were the tests and/or assignments appropriate for the course materials?	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				
How frequently did you attend class?	14	70%	5.00	0.00	100%				

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Frequently	Usually	Quite a bit	Occasionally	Not at all
How frequently did you seek out of class help from your instructor?	14	70%	3.00	0.96	7%	21%	35%		35%

Num	Resp	Std	A great deal	Much	Some	Little	Nothing
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Any additional comments about the instructor.

Seth is an amazing teacher. He treats all of his students with the same amount of respect and gives us all equal attention.

Very intense, he brought out something in me as an actor I could not have ever expected myself to do.

This man REALLY knows what he is doing. It was an honor and a privilege to study under him. He's done it all, but he still treats us like colleagues. He genuinely cares about his students, and this gives him justification for expecting the best. I learned more from him this semester than I've learned from anyone in a very long time. Some people climb mountains to learn from gurus; I got to walk to Rowand-Johnson 236.

Incredible Teacher! Best i've ever had

Seth was by far the greatest professor I have ever had. I have never felt so encouraged in a classroom setting as I have in his class. His passion for teaching is so evident, and his number one goal is to make his students shine as brightly as possible.

He made it known from the beginning that the class was meant so that you can improve and use everything outside of the course. He made everyone feel comfortable in what they were doing and would push us when he knew we could do better. He was completely honest about feedback for everything we did.

He is an amazing professor and an inspiring person in general. He told the class the truth and prepared us to go out into the world as an actor/actress. He was always punctual, prepared, and respected. I learned more in his class than I have in my entire life about my chosen field.

Used class time very effectively, had a clear lesson schedule. I learned an incredible amount about acting in this class.

Honestly, I think Seth is what made this class such an invaluable experience. He knows how to teach theatre, but, what's more, he's been in the field - film, straight plays, acting, directing, writing - and he is able to tell us honestly how we need to prepare and what we can expect in pursuing an acting career. He is very clear about the amount of work we need to be putting in to excel in our craft, and he has high standards and high expectations. Every person in the class worked hard to meet and exceed these. The improvements and the quality of everyone's acting has increased hugely since the beginning of the semester, and I feel personally that I've come leaps and bounds since then. I'm confident that the tools he gave us for approaching different works will be more than sufficient as I continue pursuing an acting career, and I will definitely refer back to the things I've learned in this course as I continue growing as an actor.

The man is a mad scientist within Theatre, he is fair, smart, and very good at getting the actor to understand what it is he is looking for them to explore and understand within the script or the character. I know I have improved because of his tutelage as an actor. I would love to work on a show with this Man.

Seth is BY FAR the greatest asset to UA's theatre department. I have learned more in this class than I have in all of my other acting classes put together.

Any additional comments about the course.

It is the perfect course for anyone who is seriously considering a career in acting. I loved every minute of it. You have to work hard to succeed and it is so fulfilling.

I love it and I want to take it a million times again.

This sounds cheesy, but it literally changed me.

This is not a required class, but it is a class that everyone wants to take. You go into the class thinking that you are just going to learn a few things that will make you look like a better actor, but you actually learn a lot of techniques and gain a new perspective on the art of acting. You come out seeing things in a new light and it makes it easier to become the character you wish to portray and connect to their situation. I can confidently say that I am a stronger actor and I know how to get behind each and everything I say and do much more than I did going into the course.

I'd take this course again in a heartbeat -- an absolute must for anyone studying theatre at UA.

Great class. If you aren't willing to work or put forth effort, DO NOT TAKE THIS CLASS. Don't waste Seth's time or the rest of your classmates. I enjoyed every second of my class time.

I've learned so much about myself in this class.

This is the best class I've ever had in my life! I would take it every semester if I could. Learned more about my craft in this one semester than I've learned in my 20 years of living!

Incredibly amazing class, helps actors grow immensely.

SOI Report: Fall 2013**9 Surveyed****Seth Panitch (TH 545-001 Period Acting Styles II)**

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The procedure for grading was fair.	9	100%	4.89	0.33	88%				11%
The course was a valuable learning experience.	9	100%	5.00	0.00	100%				
The instructor...									
was an effective communicator.	9	100%	4.78	0.44	77%				22%
was accessible to students outside of class.	9	100%	4.89	0.33	88%				11%
was well-prepared for class.	9	100%	4.89	0.33	88%				11%
used class time effectively.	9	100%	4.89	0.33	88%				11%
treated you with respect.	9	100%	5.00	0.00	100%				

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	A	B	C	D	F	Other
What grade do you expect to receive in this course?	9	100%	4.88	0.35	77%				11%	11%

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Excellent	Above average	Average	Below average	Failure
How would you rate this course?	9	100%	5.00	0.00	100%				
How would you rate the instructor of this course?	9	100%	4.89	0.33	88%				11%

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	
Did you come to class prepared by having completed the assignments (readings, problems, projects, etc.)?	9	100%	4.78	0.44	77%				22%	
Did your background prepare you to take this course?	9	100%	4.56	0.73	66%				22%	11%
Were the course requirements clearly defined?	9	100%	4.78	0.44	77%				22%	
Were the reading materials/text useful to the course?	9	100%	5.00	0.00	100%					
Were the tests and/or assignments appropriate for the course materials?	9	100%	5.00	0.00	100%					
How frequently did you attend class?	9	100%	5.00	0.00	100%					

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Frequently	Usually	Quite a bit	Occasionally	Not at all
How frequently did you seek out of class help from your instructor?	9	100%	3.67	1.41	44%		11%	11%	33%

Num	Resp	Std	A great deal	Much	Some	Little	Nothing
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Any additional comments about the instructor.

Mr. Panitch's passion for teaching is exceeded only by his care for his students. It is always a pleasure to attend his classes. He is truly an asset to the department and the university.

Seth is pretty much brilliant. He obviously cares intensely about each student. I always learn so much from him.

I appreciate Seth's desire to use the hour and 15 minutes as fully as possible. Sometimes, however, he moves so quickly that I have trouble keeping up with what he is saying or writing down everything I need to know, and can sometimes feel overwhelmed with information.

Watching Seth's reactions during other people's scenes and monologues, I could see just how invested he was in our growth and future success, and it gave me a new appreciation for his leadership.

Seth knows his shit.

He is a great motivator, a sharp communicator, and one of the most supportive instructors in the university. His rapidfire coaching sticks, and it's always insightful, incisive, and the definition of respectful. When students need help outside of class, Mr Panitch puts down the dozen or so responsibilities he's juggling to watch their scene or listen to their monologue and give quality notes and improves with which they may improve before the NEXT time he sees it. His professional connections have opened up enrichment opportunities to the graduate students AND undergrads, and whenever these opportunities crop up he always makes himself available to help prepare for them.

Seth is an incredible coach and teacher. He makes great use of class time and is always willing to provide help outside of class.

Any additional comments about the course.

This Shakespeare course was intense and fluid and gave us all ample room to explore while forcing us to constantly prepare and refine new material. When a professional opportunity arose, we were able to take time in class to study out material true practical experience, which is difficult in a course that doesn't involve putting on a full production of a show. And yet even though we took time for this, we still managed to cover the materials we wanted to cover in part because Mr Panitch was so accessible outside of class, despite his busy schedule, to continue coaching. The dense and difficult material was broken down for us and presented in a number of ways (including in video and external text materials), along with our practice in and outside of class and Seth's sidecoaching.

I learned a lot about Shakespeare and acting and life.

This class helped me immensely in my approach to classical text.

This was a very valuable course that challenged and grew me in many new ways, mostly through the way that it was structured around in-class risk-taking.

I am a better actor than I was at the beginning of the semester, and, as I have wanted for a long time to work in Shakespeare, I felt that this class gave me the kind of training needed to start preparing me to be marketable in this realm of theater.

SOI Report: Spring 2013

19 Surveyed

Seth Panitch (TH 445-001 Acting IV Period Actng Styles)

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The procedure for grading was fair.	8	42%	4.75	0.46	75%				25%
The course was a valuable learning experience.	8	42%	4.88	0.35	87%				12%

The instructor...

was an effective communicator.	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				
was accessible to students outside of class.	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				
was well-prepared for class.	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				
used class time effectively.	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				
treated you with respect.	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	A	B	C	D	F	Other
What grade do you expect to receive in this course?	8	42%	4.75	0.46	75%				25%	

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Excellent	Above average	Average	Below average	Failure
How would you rate this course?	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				
How would you rate the instructor of this course?	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Did you come to class prepared by having completed the assignments (readings, problems, projects, etc.)?	8	42%	4.88	0.35	87%12%				
Did your background prepare you to take this course?	8	42%	4.50	0.53	50%		50%		
Were the course requirements clearly defined?	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				
Were the reading materials/text useful to the course?	8	42%	4.88	0.35	87%12%				
Were the tests and/or assignments appropriate for the course materials?	7	37%	5.00	0.00	100%				
How frequently did you attend class?	8	42%	5.00	0.00	100%				

Question	Num Resp	Resp Rate	Mean	Std Dev	Frequently	Usually	Quite a bit	Occasionally	Not at all
How frequently did you seek out of class help from your instructor?	8	42%	3.12	1.36	25%	12%	12%	50%	

Num	Resp	Std	A great deal	Much	Some	Little	Nothing
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Any additional comments about the instructor.

Seth Panitch is by far one of the best instructors any student could ask for! He is an amazing teacher. He is always pushing students further in their skills.

I consider Mr. Panitch a mentor and an inspiration. The beneficial effects he has had on my learning experience at UA and my professional career cannot be understated. He demands the very best work of his students, and he consistently and thoughtfully assists us in delivering just that.

This class not only prepares you for successful approaches to Shakespeare but also to life. This guidance is found in all of Seth Panitch's classes. Above excellent instructor and considerate director.

Seth Panitch has easily been the most influential teacher i have ever had the privilege of learning from. His passion for the art infects each one of his students and it shows through the level of seriousness and pride we place in our sacred class time. It has been truly a fortunate semester due to this man and his teachings.

Any class with Seth Panitch is fantastic. He does his best to get the best from his students and doesn't allow us to settle for mediocrity. I believe that for this department, he is one of are greatest tools and assets.

Any additional comments about the course.

Absolutely essential for anyone seriously interested in performing Shakespeare in any setting.

3 months is not enough to learn everything this course has to teach us, but its the best start we could ask for.

Lovely course. It humanizes Shakespeare and his convoluted poetic veil. It is easily one of the most essential classes for anyone who plans on a career in acting or performing or anything that involves public speaking.

Shakespeare Scene #1

Names : _____

Play: _____

Character: _____

Ratings from 1- 5

1= Below Average; 2 = Average; 3 = Proficient; 4 = Mastery

A

Musicality _____

Scansion _____

Coining Words _____

Flexibility _____

Emotional Connection _____

Total: _____

Total x 4 = Grade _____

Notes: PROs

CONs

Corey Rives

Acting Styles

Process Paper

What I Did before	What I did After
Film	
I had issues letting loose and kept my body too rigid; compromised emotional release.	I have to make a physical release to help me release emotionally, but it greatly improves my performance. I am still looking to drop the physical release entirely so I do not have to rely on it, and that is my next step in making improvements.
I developed preconceived notions about the constraints of my movement on film, and I limited myself both intellectually and physically as a result.	After releasing physically and viewing my performances on screen, I saw that the physical release made for a more compelling performance.
My facial tension resonated strongly in my forehead, and overtook my performance. It was hard to balance utilizing what I do innately and not allowing it to take over.	I was able to close in on a happy medium, balancing using and releasing tension.
I started out with a decent concept of constant thought, but it still could have used improvement when applying to film technique.	I was able to create more variety in a performance with my use of constant thought during rehearsal as soon as I made myself aware that it could have improved.
Comedy	
Sometimes I have issues in general with tightening my comedy initially.	I worked to improve my timing under shorter time constraints.
Characters such as Andrew Dice Clay, that have lazy but intentional physicality and are foul-mouthed, are characters that are very dissimilar to me and can be hard for me to pull off.	I have to develop a strong mask to first be able to believe myself as these characters. And then I have to really sit down and analyze physicality. I have to, in the future, make sure I am not commenting on the character in my attempts to recreate. I think that is a reflection of me not allowing myself to believe that I am the character I am portraying.
Period/Styles	
Coming in from Shakespeare, I had a really hard time sustaining my vocals and emotionality at the same time.	I think I showed a lot of improvement in that area, compromising vocals only when we were outside per forming our Shaw monologues and I had to project over a large dead space.
I had a huge issue with Shakespeare initially because I just felt so disingenuous trying to "make" myself sound beautiful, (which is really an issue I have with my vocal performance/singing technique in general.) And it compromised my	Now, coming into Period and Styles, I am more comfortable with my vocal instrument and I realized that without using technique as a baseline, your speech can be virtually ineffective in some styles. I also found more flexibility in my

Shakespeare Process Paper

Process Before Shakespeare	Process After Shakespeare
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read play • Research character as necessary • Graph scene: identify objectives, action work, character work, as well as transitions within the scene • Go through the scene word by word, and “root the language within myself”; repeat text (this is where most of the memorization occurs) • <i>Modify actions, “characters”, and transitions as needed</i> • Work through transitions with partner; repeat text • Identify external improvisations to help connect to experiences within the scene; work those with partner • <i>Modify actions, “characters”, and transitions as needed</i> • Stand scene up; play with blocking, and see what works most with the motivations of the character; repeat text • Identify internal improvisations (opening up the scene, etc.) to help in connect in places where there is trouble making establishments; repeat text • <i>Modify actions, “characters”, and transitions as needed</i> • As scene is being run, strengthen with those externals and internals so that it takes less and less (and eventually none) of them to “get lit” and jump back into scene; repeat text as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read play • Scan text • Attempt to scan the line regularly with five iambs • If the line has too few or too many syllables, see if words need to be condensed or expanded. • If a line cannot be condensed, does it have a feminine ending? Is it an Alexandrine line? • Find the ceasura(s) of the line, so as to balance the argument. Their may be more than one. • Figure out whether breaths are at the end of the line or in mid-stops. • When dealing with a scene partner, discover transitions between lines – are the lines shared? Are there pause? Do the lines fit regularly? • “Feeling follows form” - if the form simply does not fit, discover if Shakespeare has built in an inconsistency. This generally means he is giving a clue about the character. • Find important words to coin • Open up monologue/scene before/during/after those words (perform this exercise enough that pauses can be eliminated but coining is still evident) • Find as much flexibility and musicality in the lines – the more specific, the better • Stand monologue/scene up; play with blocking, and see what works most with the motivations of the character; repeat text • Identify external improvisations to help connect to experiences within the scene • Identify internal improvisations (opening up the scene, etc.) to help connect in places where there is trouble making establishments; repeat text • As monologue/scene is being run, strengthen with those externals and internals so that it takes less and less (and eventually none) of them to “get lit” and jump back into scene; repeat text as necessary

Naomi Prentice

Seth Panitch

April 29, 2014

Shakespeare process paper

What I used to do:	What I do now:
I used to speak the lines as if it were any old monologue. I paid no attention to the scansion, caesuras, or the difference between endstops and midstops.	Now I start breaking down my text by first counting the syllables in each line and then writing in each foot. I then look at each word and determine if it is stressed or unstressed. I identify, and circle, midstops and catch breaths. I take note of triplets, lists, and the repetition of consonant sounds. I also pay attention to the caesuras of each line. They usually go after commas but in lines without commas you have to decide where it would best fit. I've learned to take my time with each line so I can read it many ways to fit the best place for it.
Before I did not know what coining a word was and had never done it consciously before.	Now I pay special attention to how the words sound and feel in my mouth. I pay attention to the different meanings I can get from each line by coining different words in the line. When I first get the text I go through it line by line and circle the words that I think are important and need coining.
I used to method the line then say it. I would paint it with emotion rather than letting the words paint themselves. Flexibility has never been my strong suit because I am a CONTROL freak. When I like how something sounds I lock it in. It's not changing. It would be the same every time.	I allow the words to change me. Or at least I attempt to let them do that. It's very difficult.. By paying attention to each word rather than the line as a whole, I get a whole new and more interesting read on the line. While I am still a control freak, I am trying to be more flexible with my lines. I'm doing this by discovering them for the first time every time I say them. This way I allow the words to change me
Musicality is something I have struggled with a lot but haven't been able to find the words to describe it until now.	Until recently I would get caught in this small vocal range when doing a scene. Now I make a conscious effort to explore the range of my words. I explore how they sound and how their meaning changes when I lift or drop the words pitch.

<p>I would use “instincts” to explore words and lines. I said what “felt right”.</p>	<p>Now I pay attention to whether I want to put my emphasis before the word, making it more thought out, on the word, making it in the moment, or after the word, making it seem spontaneous and then “oh shit, I just said that.” By doing this I am giving more value to each word. They are all special and thought out now. This, in turn, makes them more interesting to listen to.</p>
<p>I tend to drop the ends of my lines.</p>	<p>This class I have learned the importance of the ends of the lines. The most important part of what Shakespeare is trying to say is almost always at the end of the line. That’s usually where I drop off because I’m running out of breath. But, when I don’t run out of breath and barrel through to the end of the line it sounds great.</p>
<p>When on stage I don’t think too much about my breathing. I didn’t think it would be any different with Shakespeare but I was very wrong.</p>	<p>Breath is one of the most important parts of studying Shakespeare, in my opinion. Shakespeare has written your breaths in for you. You just have to find them. When an actor can get through a whole line without having to take a breath, it sounds so much more pleasing to the ear to listen to than someone who breathes in the middle of a line and breaks up the scansion. I don’t usually have a problem with breath when it comes to Shakespeare. I just didn’t know that Shakespeare had specific places for breathing written into the text. Now that I know, I pay special attention on where I take each breath in a line.</p>
<p>I didn’t count syllables before.</p>	<p>There are supposed to be ten syllables in each line. If there are nine or eleven then a word in the line has to be stretched or condensed. Unless the eleventh syllable is a feminine ending. In which case, leave it. A lot of times Shakespeare will give us clues about what’s going on with the character through the number of syllables they use in each line. For example, if someone is going crazy or in a hurry to spit out their argument, there will be more syllables in each of their lines. This tells us that they are more frantic and not in as much control.</p>

Andrea J. Love
4/27/14
MFA Acting

Process Paper-Styles and Film

Before I used to:	Now I:
Not understand style	Know what style is and how to research and implement it
Think style was purely visual	Understand that style is not just about body, posture, and gesture, but about voice, intention, argument, rhythm, musicality, and more
Not understand how political speeches might apply to acting	Understand the inner workings of political oration and know how to break it down and use the cadences, suspension, etc. in application to my own acting work. I also understand the importance of resonance and repetition.
Not understand how to approach Shaw	Look at Shaw as an intellectual, operatic force. I know his biography and how that influenced his playwriting, and more importantly how that knowledge should apply to my interpretation of his work.
Think arguments were intellectual	Get that in Shaw, arguments are visceral and can change the world
Not understand in depth how vocal tone reads to an audience	Understand how the pitch and prosody of a line can indicate continuation or conclusion to an audience. I see how different pitches can affect the seriousness or playfulness of a line.
Think line reading was limiting	Understand how a detailed line reading can inform acting, and can be used as a frame
Not understand the rhythm of Shaw	Enjoy the bouncy vs. the intoning arguments, know how to emphasize argument, nouns, contrasts, and builds, while skimming over linking words to create Shavian argument
Not understand Coward	Enjoy and understand the musicality, lightness, and playfulness of Coward. I now have visuals and aural references to clue me into Coward's style.
Mask?	Understand the masks of the different styles and know when to bend and break them
Didn't know how to approach Coward	Have tools to approach Coward—singing, tapping, bouncing, dancing, etc. Finding the mask and breaking it, acknowledging the audience, physical one-upmanship
Not understand the definitions of comedic pairing	Understand short/fat and tall/thin archetypes and how they are masks in comedy

TH 444: COMEDIC STYLES AND FILM
Course Syllabus – Spring 2014

M/W/F 1- 1:50pm, RJ 236

Instructor: Seth Panitch

Office: RJ 248

Contact: 348-3845, spanitch@as.ua.edu

Office Hours: T/TH: 1:45- 2:45; and by appt.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

-Plays, as assigned

*"Acting With Style"

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides an in- depth exploration of classical British and American Comedy and an extended module of Acting for the Camera. Playwrights to be studied: Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde and Noel Coward. Additionally, we will explore classical American 20th Century Comedy including Vaudeville, Stand- Up, and the modern Sit-Com. A broader working knowledge of these periods will include specific research into the times themselves. Film work will be in conjunction with the Department of Telecommunication and Film and will be shot both in studio and on location (TBA).

COURSE OBJECTIVES/GOALS:

To study a wide range of acting styles and periods in order to develop a greater confidence not only with the particular styles themselves, but also with the actor's ability to distill and become proficient in any additional style they might encounter. Particular emphasis will be placed on those styles of which knowledge is required in order to pursue a successful career in Regional Theater, Television and Film, (including the necessary familiarization with the demands of acting for the camera). This will be achieved through attaining proficiency in:

- **Shavian Text Analysis and Performance**
- **British Comedic Styles of the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries**
- **The Structure and Particular Demands of Comedy (including stand-up)**
- **The Technique of Acting for the Camera**

OBJECTIVE EVALUATION – LEARNER OUTCOMES:

Actors must not only grow with the assistance of instruction, but through effective self-evaluation as well. As valuable as an external eye may be to the development of an actor, it must be supported by the simultaneous maturation of an Actors' own skills of self-evaluation if that Actor is to be successful professionally. Students will be required to articulate their progression through any new technique in *group discussion*, make regular written evaluations of both their work and their classmates in *daily journal entries*, observe and *critique their progression on film*, and finally, sum up every aspect of their growth in a *Final Outcome Process Paper* which specifically compares the state of the actors technique before the class and after mastery of the material.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- An open mind, and the courage to explore it in public
- Shavian monologue, Coward/ Wilde scene, two comedy scenes, three film scenes.
- One filmed project with TCF (including multiple shoots on location).
- Attendance at ALL department productions.
- Guts. Bring them, ladies and gentlemen.

WORK ETHIC: Grades in this class are based almost entirely on your level of preparation, the seriousness in which you approach the work, and the courageousness you display in its exploration. This is done to accurately reflect the reality of how success will be achieved (or denied) in your future career. This class will teach to the highest denominator, not the lowest, and because of this, behavior that becomes a detriment to the development of others will be dealt with accordingly. Anyone belittling another's work, or hindering it in any fashion will be asked to withdraw from the course immediately.

PREPARATION: Class preparation in an acting class is mandatory. No growth can ever be achieved without serious outside effort. To this end, a graduate MFA actor (named each semester) is available to assist you with **scheduling rehearsal time** in the Acting Studio. Any student unprepared to work in class, without an appropriate medical excuse, **will be asked to leave the class and will assume an absence** for that class.

DRESS: Anything you wear can and does make a statement about you, so the blanner the canvass, the easier it is to fill as you intend. Always wear comfortable, non-confining clothing that allows total freedom of movement. You may be required to sit or lay on the floor for certain scenes/ exercises, so attire that you don't mind getting dirty is suggested. Appropriate footwear (secure, closed and flexible with traction) is mandatory. Refrain from wearing excessive or bulky jewelry. Hair should be pulled back out of face. Students who are not dressed appropriately for class **will be asked to leave and will assume an absence for the day**. My office is available for costume storage.

ADDENDA: NO TALKING in class, unless it is in direct response to class work. Nothing your neighbor says could possibly be more important than your own education. NO CELLPHONES, no exceptions. No food in rehearsal studio. Water in secure containers allowed. Aside from dire emergencies, there will be no rest breaks allowed, save one at the end of each hour of class.

ATTENDANCE AND MAKE-UP POLICIES: The amount you learn in this class is in direct proportion to how regular your attendance is. Students are allowed three absences (excused or unexcused) without penalty. Each additional unexcused absences will result in 1/3 of a grade subtracted from the student's final grade. If a student shows up to class unprepared to work, that class will be considered **and marked** as an absence. Excused absences cannot be granted after classes are missed, unless it is for an unexpected emergency. Documentation will be required, and will be checked for validity where appropriate. NO makeup assignments for unexcused absences.

NOTE: 3 tardies = 1 absence. Attendance at TWO (2) non-required, instructor pre-approved plays or performances negates 3 tardies or 1 absence.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES: To request disability accommodations, please contact Disabilities Services (348-4285). After initial arrangements are made with this office, contact your instructor.

GRADING:

Shaw Monologue	10 pts	98-100 = A+, 93-97 = A, 90-92 = A-
Coward/ Wilde	10 pts	87-89 = B+, 83-86 = B, 80-82 = B-
Stand Up	10 pts	77-79 = C+, 73-76 = C, 70-72 = C-
Comedy	10 pts	67-69 = D+, 63-66 = D, 60-62 = D-
Film 1	10 pts	below 60 = F
Film 2	10 pts	
Film 3	10 pts	
Cold Reading	10 pts	
TCF Participation	10 pts	
Outcome/ Process Paper	10 pts	

100 pts total		

SCENE/ MONOLOGUE EVALUATION: The grading of acting scenes is often highly subjective. For the purposes of this class, it will be based on four factors: The actor's ability to personalize text, the demonstration of additional preparation and rehearsal outside class, the clarity of thought as it moves through emotional/ intellectual transitions, and the level of proficiency with the analysis of material.

PEER EVALUATION: It is easy for an inexperienced eye to notice what is wrong with an acting performance. It is much harder to discern what *works*. It is a misconception that we learn as much from a bad performance as an exquisite one. Discern and evaluate what is truly exceptional about another's work- that is the key to raising your own work to that level.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

All acts of dishonesty in any work constitute academic misconduct. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of information, misrepresentations, and any abetting any of the above. The Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Policy will be followed in any such case. This policy is outlined in the student affairs handbook, which can be obtained from the Student Life Office in the Ferguson Center.

*****Remember, this is YOUR class, not mine. When you are unprepared, miss a class, or are tardy, you waste our time, but more importantly, you waste your OWN. Ladies and Gentlemen, the clock is ALREADY ticking...**

The Car Goes Where the Eyes Go
Be prepared, be professional, but most of all, be personal.

CREATIVE ACTIVITY

REPRESENTATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY



Alcestis Ascending
Teatro Raquel Revuelta
Havana, Cuba
Director/Playwright



Alceste Ascending
Harold Clurman Theatre
New York City
Director/ Playwright



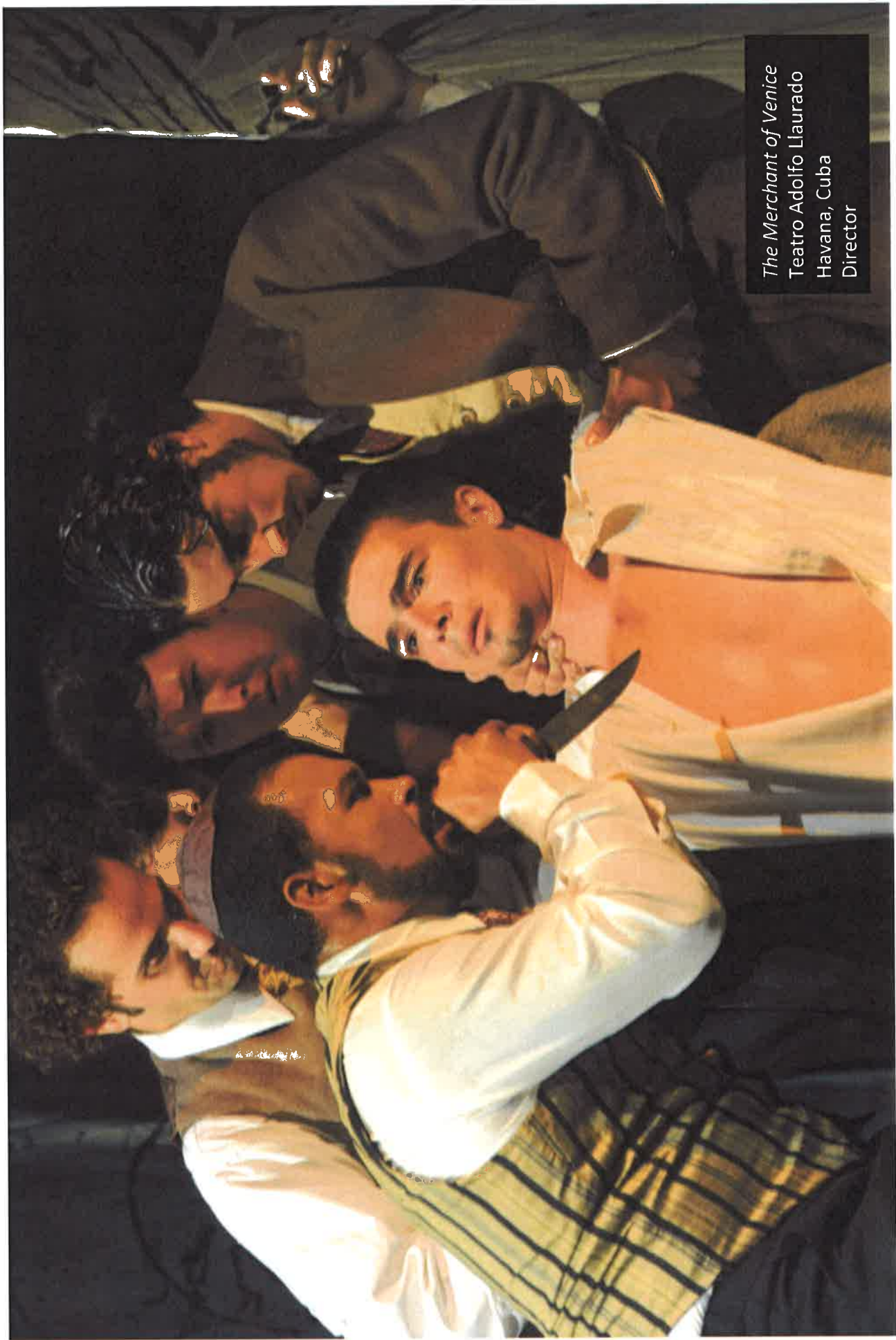
Alcestis Ascending
Rehearsal in Havana
El Centro de Danza



Hell: Paradise Found
59E59 Theatre
New York City
Director/ Playwright/ Actor



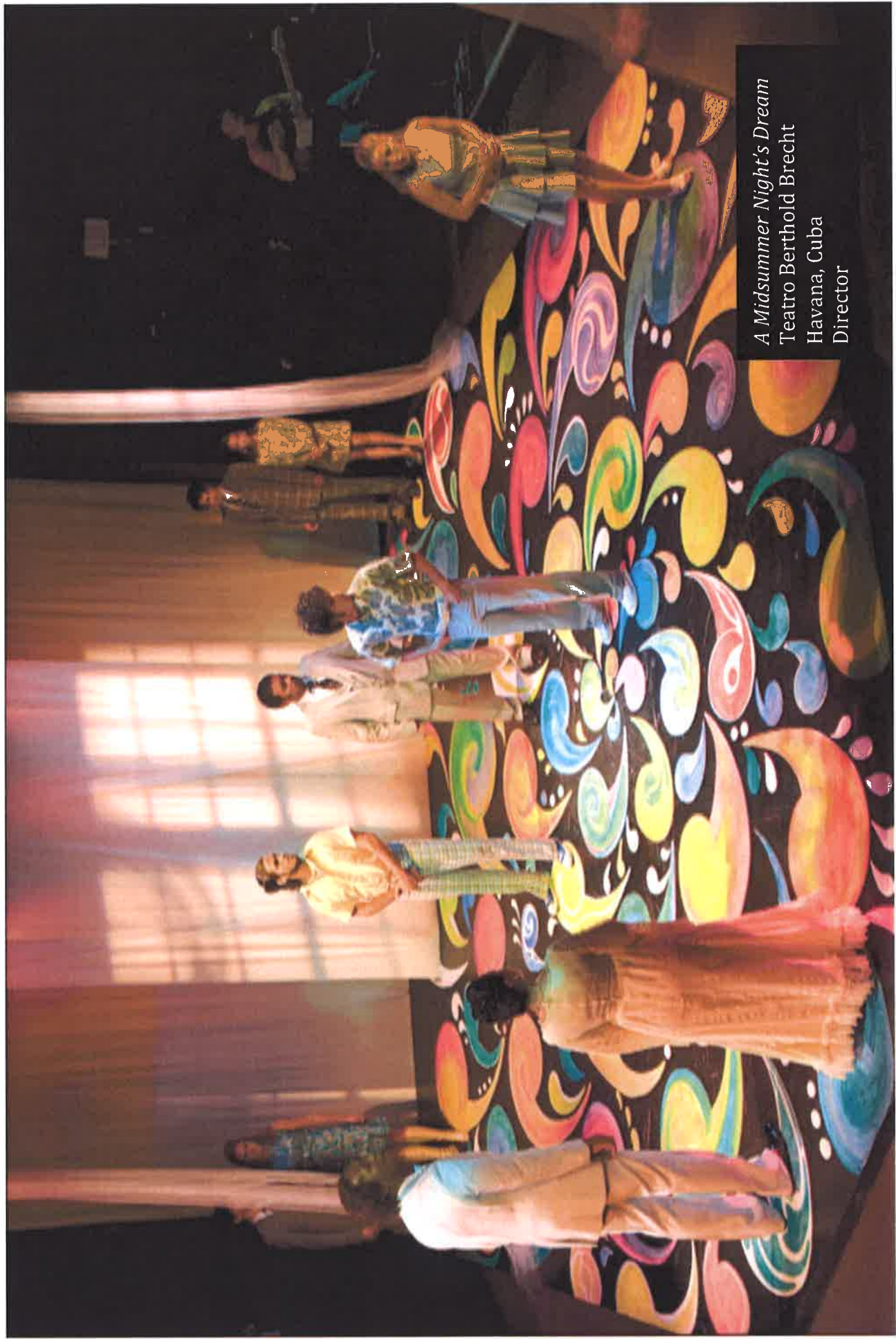
Dammit Shakespeare!
Urban Stages Theatre
New York City
Director/ Playwright/ Actor



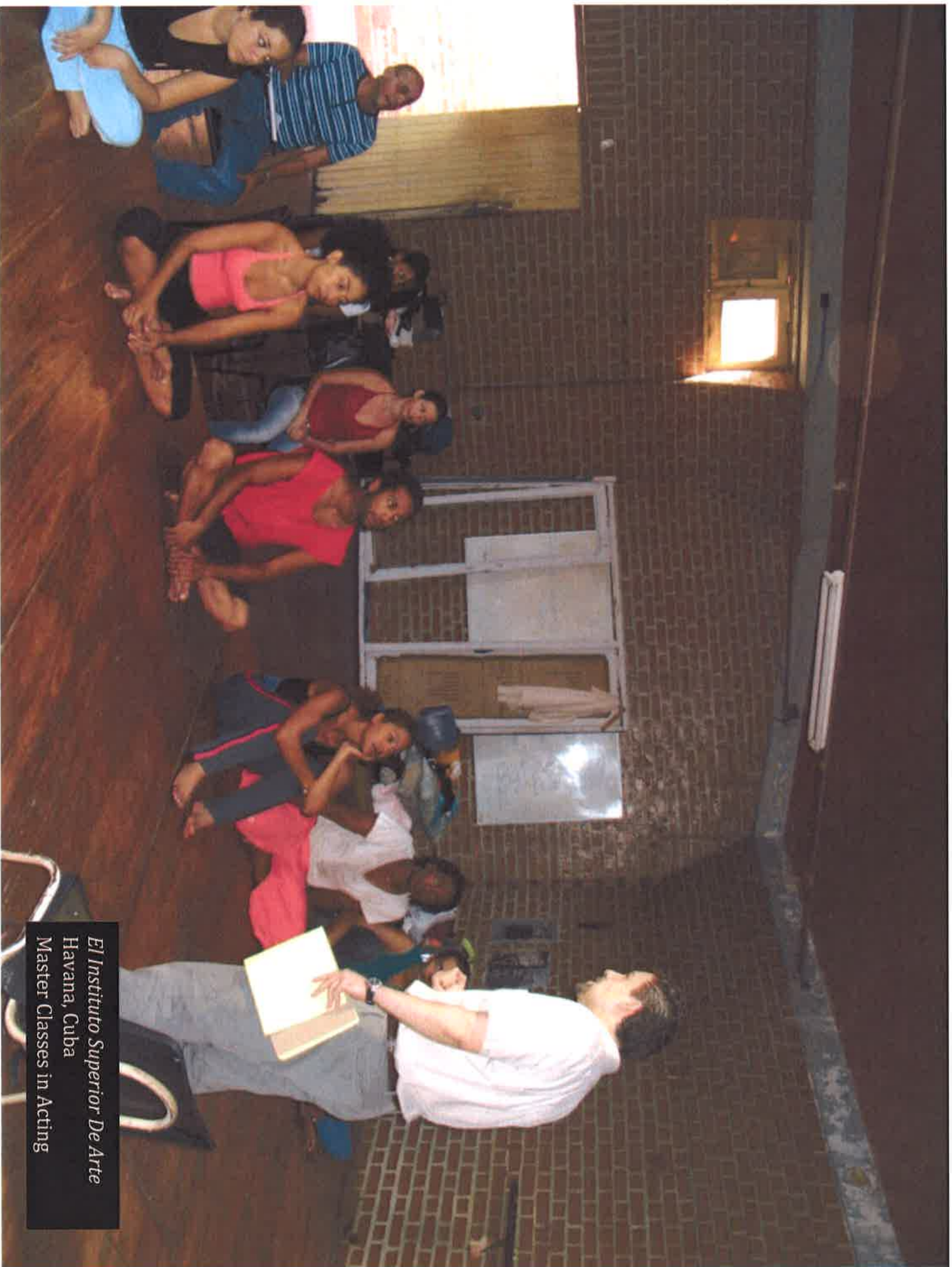
The Merchant of Venice
Teatro Adolfo Llaurado
Havana, Cuba
Director



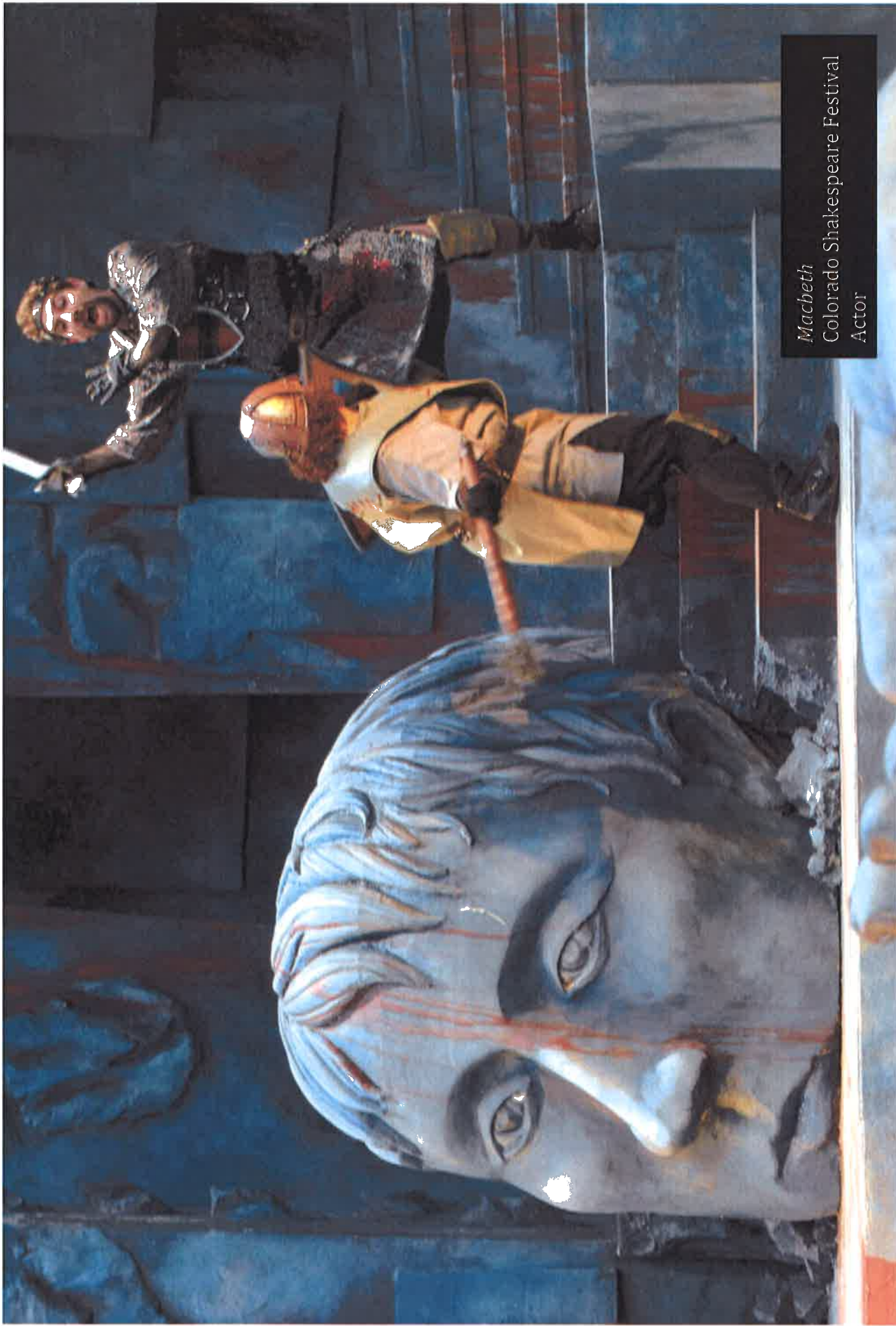
The Merchant of Venice
Rehearsal
Havana, Cuba



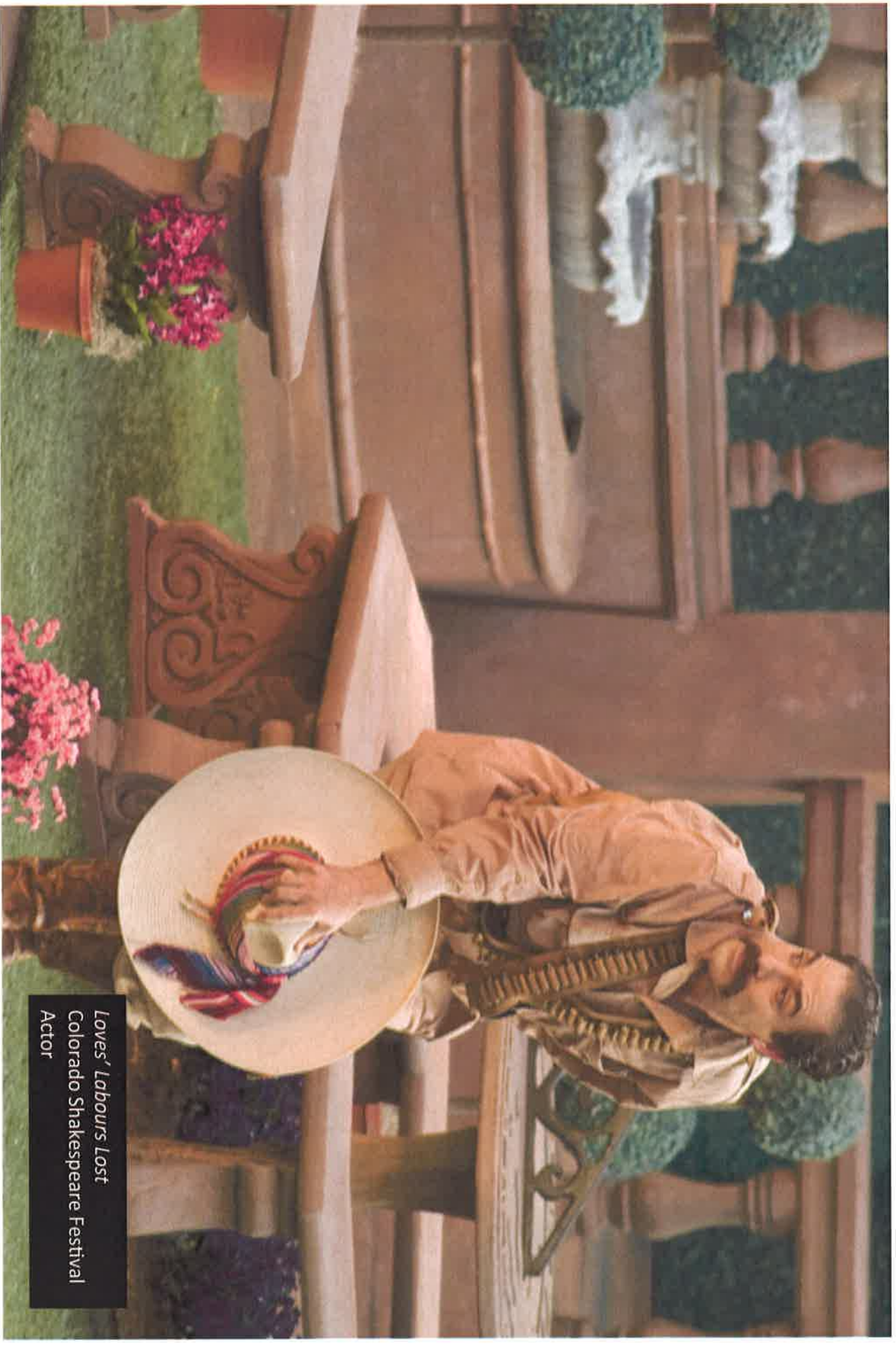
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Teatro Berthold Brecht
Havana, Cuba
Director



El Instituto Superior De Arte
Havana, Cuba
Master Classes in Acting



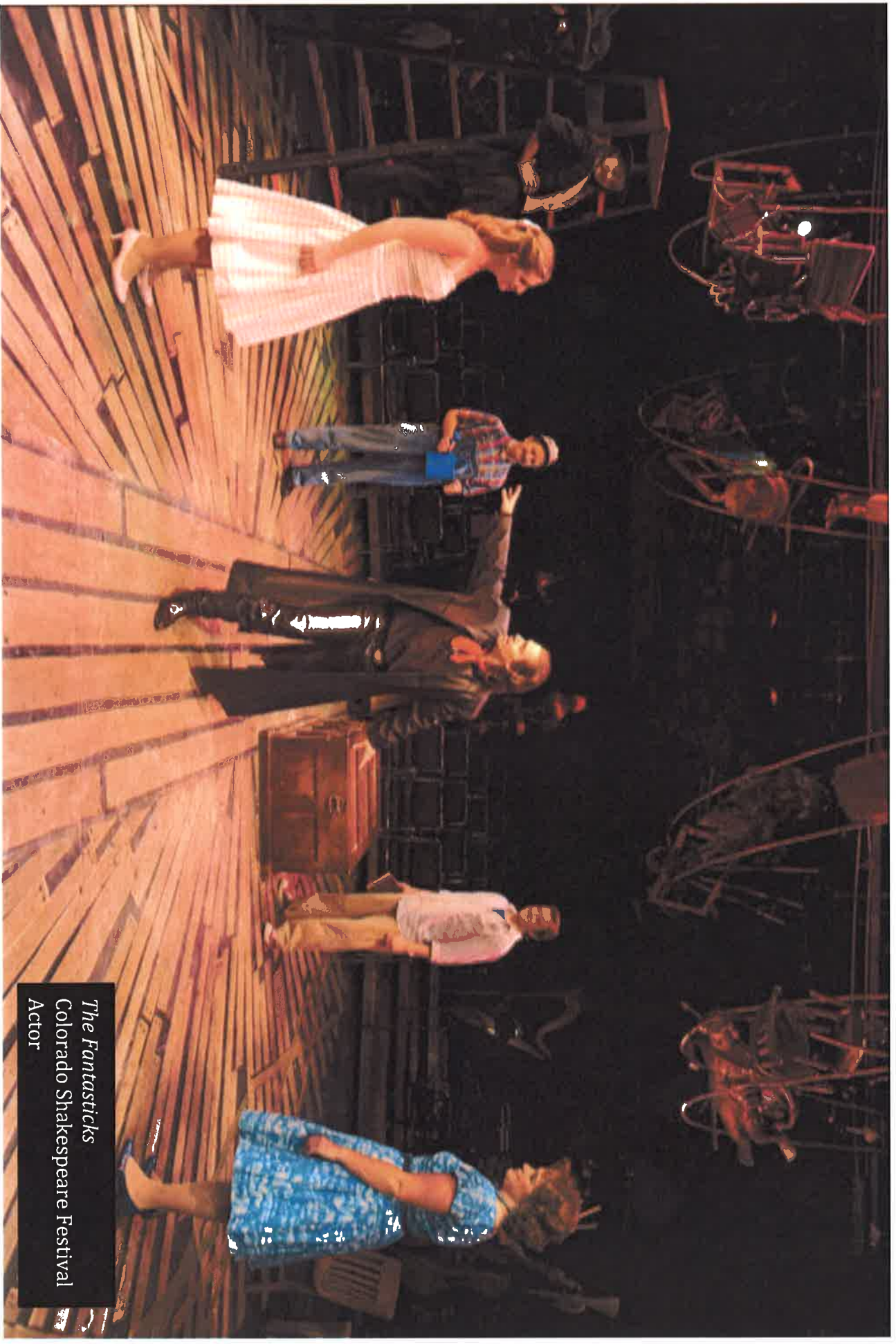
Macbeth
Colorado Shakespeare Festival
Actor



Loves' Labours Lost
Colorado Shakespeare Festival
Actor



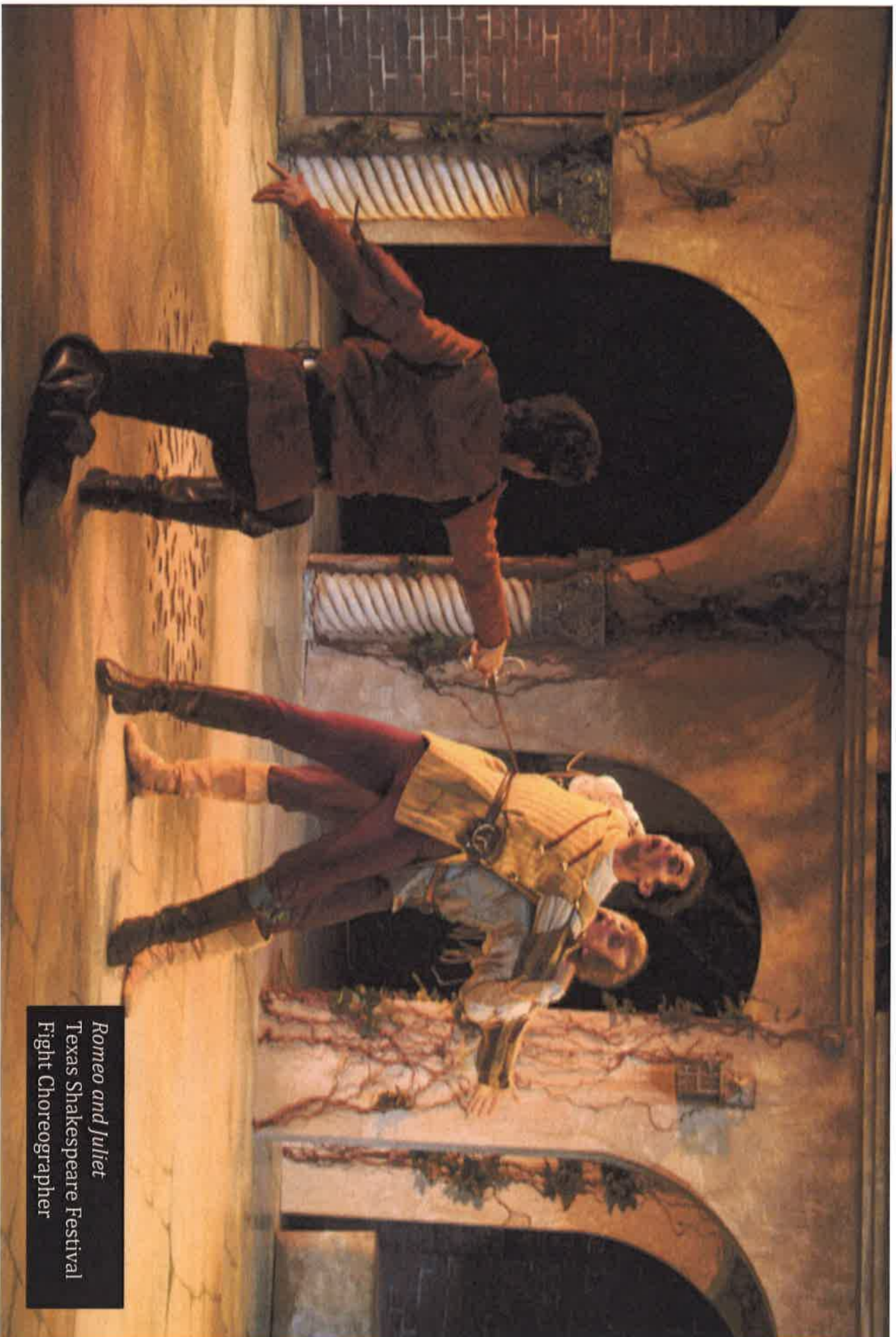
Measure for Measure
Colorado Shakespeare Festival
Actor



The Fantasticks
Colorado Shakespeare Festival
Actor



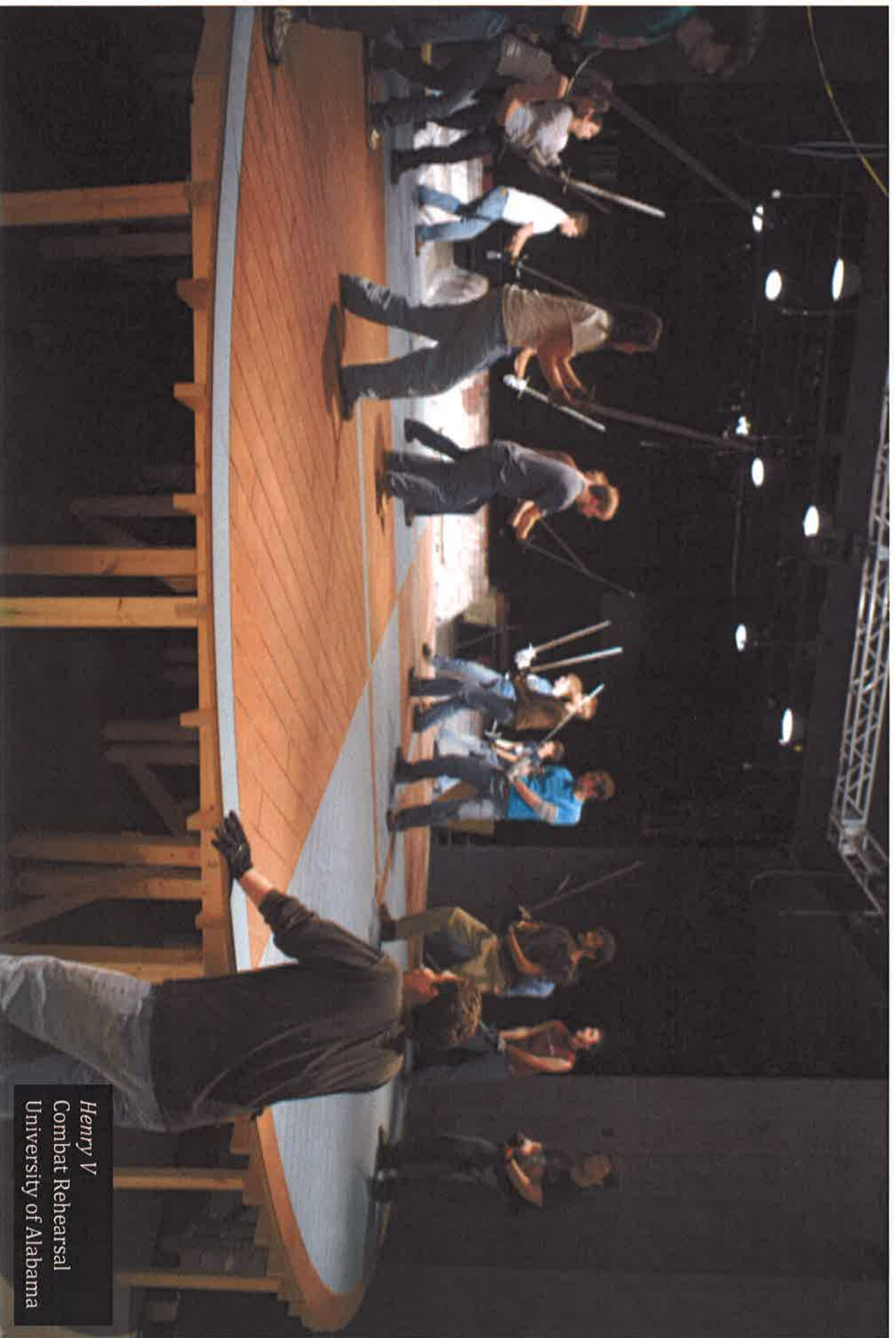
Tartuffe
Texas Shakespeare Festival
Director



Romeo and Juliet
Texas Shakespeare Festival
Fight Choreographer



Henry V
University of Alabama
Director / Fight Choreographer



Henry V
Combat Rehearsal
University of Alabama



The Government Inspector
Rehearsal
University of Alabama



The Government Inspector
University of Alabama
Director



Othello
University of Alabama
Director



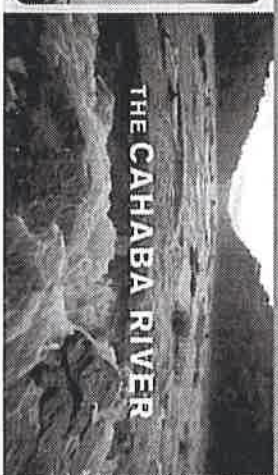
Seven Guitars
University of Alabama
Director



Moby Dick
University of Alabama
Director

Saturday / 6:15pm / Red Mtn. Theatre Co.

COMPANY VANABAMA: Bridging the Gulf



THE CAHABA RIVER

Ighted Beauty

Director: Naaman Fletcher / DOC / USA / 9min
Ighted Beauty is a short documentary that presents the story of urban decay through the eyes (and photographs) of urban explorer Naaman Fletcher. The film follows man as he tramps through an abandoned hotel in the city of Birmingham, AL.

ie Cahaba River

Director: Hunter Nichols / DOC / USA / 14min
Alabama residents of all walks of life share their memories and connection to the Cahaba River. Smithsonian Magazine recently heralded the Cahaba as one of the most biologically rich rivers in the nation. As the river gains fame, residents wonder if the river will maintain this status. Many odds face the river and its unique aquatic life.

ie Druid City

Directors: Max Esposito, Kristyn Ulanday
Scheduled to attend)
C / USA / 24min

silent Alabama city colonized by hope, turns to their avering faith in God, football and each other as a vehicle to face the challenges of rebuilding their community after one of the worst natural disasters in American history.

Strong Enough to Fight

Director: Bob Miller (Scheduled to attend)
DOC / USA / 35min

Within Kenya's progressive youth culture is the Kibera Olympic Boxing Club - a hodgepodge group of adolescents from different tribes. The groups ethnic diversity is remarkable given the violence they witnessed as youth. Together these boxers represent a nascent trend of cross-tribe brotherhood in a healing nation.

Company Havanabama:

Bridging the Gulf

Director: Adam Schwartz
(Scheduled to attend with producer Seth Panitch)
DOC / USA / 31min

University of Alabama acting professor Seth Panitch travels to Havana, Cuba to direct the play 'Beyond Therapy,' combining Cuban and American actors into the first officially sanctioned Cuban/American theatre company.

Reasonable Doubt

Director: Caitlin Trotter (Scheduled to attend)
DOC / USA / 10min

Convicted of murder and sentenced to death, Gary Drinkard spent six years on Alabama's death row before a team of accomplished attorneys took up his case and successfully defended him in a retrial. Twenty years after the murder, his attorneys, the DA, and the police investigator in charge of the case provide contrasting views of Drinkard and the ideologies and integrity of the system that determined his fate. In a system that presumes innocence and requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt to convict, is justice really upheld?

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Understanding Theater

Theater Arts: The Basics

This program looks at fundamental concepts of art; shows how these principles relate to theater arts; and examines such dramatic conventions as time, place, action, and language.

DVD / 30 min / 2008 / #ABD4801 - \$169



DVD + 3 yr Digital License / #ABD5361 - \$338

Elements of Theater

Emphasizing the social and cultural importance of theater as an art form, this DVD defines theater as a ritual story that is told through performance and details the essential elements of works for the stage. It explores such theatrical elements as time, characterization, sound, and movement.

DVD / 20 min / 1998 / #ABD5962 - \$119

A Night in the Theater

 Featuring interviews, backstage footage, and views of an audience during a live stage performance, this program explores the experience of live theater and questions what draws audiences to the theater. 

DVD / 23 min / 2007 / #ABD4687 - \$189



DVD + 3 yr Digital License / #ABD5427 - \$378

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Writing for the Theater

The Drama of Creation: Writers on Writing

 Featuring Neil Simon and Arthur Miller, this program examines creative writing strategies and processes. It covers such topics as inspiration and the advantages and disadvantages of collaboration. 

DVD / 46 min / 2006 / #ABD4380 - \$169

DVD + 3 yr Digital License / #ABD5749 - \$338

Master Storytellers: Screenwriters on Screenwriting


In this set, such writers as David Milch, Lowell Ganz, Babaloo Mandel, and John Wells discuss their creative processes and passion for the written word and its marriage to the screen. The set traces the screenwriting process from concept to fade-out.

3 DVD / 90 min each / 2006 / #ABD5143 - \$239

3 DVD + 3 yr Digital License / #ABD6164 - \$478

Drama in the Classroom

Creative Drama and Improvisation

 This program encourages viewers to participate in a variety of exercises and improvisations. It features director and artist Rives Collins, who discusses creative drama, dramatic play, and the creative process. **Highest Recommendation, Video Rating Guide.**

DVD / 90 min / 1990 / #ABD3692 - \$149

DVD + 3 yr Digital License / #ABD5595 - \$298


Children and Dance

In this DVD, Susan Friedman and Jeanne Traxler discuss their approaches to teaching dance to children and emphasize the need for age-appropriate instruction.

DVD / 60 min / 1996 / #ABD4665 - \$189

DVD + 3 yr Digital License / #ABD5796 - \$378

Viola Spolin Conducts Theater Games

In this DVD, Viola Spolin leads a workshop designed for teachers in which she explains how to use theater games in the classroom to enable different paths to student learning. Spolin introduces her Theater Games philosophy and explains how theater games use operational structures to transform complicated techniques into a recreational and entertaining form. 

DVD / 57 min / 1987 / #ABD4615 - \$129

DVD + 3 yr Digital License / #ABD6021 - \$258

CREATIVE ACTIVITY

REPRESENTATIVE REVIEWS

It's a Bit Warm, but the Party's Down Here

Mother Teresa, you may be surprised to learn, is in hell. And still bitter that a certain blond British princess died the same week she did, grabbing all the

ANITA GATES
news media attention. But William Shakespeare is in a good mood, writing a new

THEATER REVIEW
play for James Dean. Jesus visits now and then.

Such is the state of the underworld in "Hell: Paradise Found," a simultaneously nutty and witty one-act comedy by Seth Panich that has landed at 59E59 Theaters with an underlying philosophical message that never gets in the way of the laughs.

Mr. Panich, a drama professor at the University of Alabama

"Hell: Paradise Found" runs through Sunday at 59E59 Theaters, 59 East 59th Street, Manhattan, (212) 279-4200, 59e59.org.

Hell: Paradise Found 59E59 Theaters

(most of the performers onstage are university alumni), has brought to life a frequently voiced opinion among everyday sinners: "Who wants to go to heaven? I'd hate everybody there."

Simon Ackerman (Matt Lewis), a young defense lawyer, has died after eating bad sushi. He finds himself opposite the interviewer (Mr. Panich, who also directed), a self-described demon-bureaucrat who is taken aback that Simon doesn't want to stay where he is: in hell. Doesn't he realize that heaven is boring? "Up there, there is only one reality," the interviewer says. "And they love it. Like one big happy school of fish." Hell, it turns out, is for the innovators, the originals among us, from Frank Sin-

atra to Vlad the Impaler.

"Hell: Paradise Found" is so sophisticated enough to make John Milton and E. E. Cummings jokes, but some of its one-liners are painfully sophomoric. In one example the interviewer tells Simon: "You're a dead man. Live a little." Another character announces that "Elvis has left the building," simply because he just has.

Still, it's impossible not to like a show whose opening number includes Hitler and Einstein joining voices in the Arlen-Koehler standard "Let's Fall in Love."

The cast, with several members playing multiple roles, strikes a likable note of matter-of-fact absurdity. As God — who is image conscious, often distracted and a golfer — Dianne Teague comes off as the kind of older woman who ends up owning a baseball team. Somehow that makes perfect sense.

David Roberts Theatre Critic


[Amazon](#) | [CNN](#) | [Wikipedia](#) | [BuzzFeed](#) | [CEOExpress](#)

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Wednesday, July 25th, 2012

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July 2012						
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Most Recent Posts

- * "Eat \$h*t: How Our Waste Can Save the World" at 59E59 Theater C (7/23/2012 5:25:36 PM)
- * "A Man for All Times: W. E. B. DuBois" at 59E59 Theater C (7/23/2012 2:21:30 PM)
- * "Miss Mary Dugan" at The Wild Project (7/23/2012 10:53:31 AM)
- * "The Beautiful Beautiful Sea Next Door" at The Gloria Maddox Theatre (7/22/2012 9:26:49 AM)
- * "Miss Lilly Gets Boned" at the New Ohio Theatre (7/20/2012 3:31:27 PM)
- * "Wh@ If" at the June Havoc Theatre (7/19/2012 2:29:08 PM)
- * "Multiple Plotchanalities" at the Dorothy Strelsin Theatre (7/19/2012 1:33:42 PM)
- * "Hell: Paradise Found" at 59E59 Theater B (7/18/2012 1:15:35 PM)
- * "He's Not Himself" at the PTC Performance Space (7/18/2012 9:15:33 AM)
- * "Made for Each Other" at 59E59 Theater C (7/17/2012 12:41:34 PM)

"Hell: Paradise Found" at 59E59 Theater B**"Hell: Paradise Found"**

At 59E59 Theater B

Reviewed by David Roberts

Theatre Reviews Limited

What happens when God meets Lucifer on the Fallen Angel's turf to discuss the eternal resting place of an attorney whose last meal of Sushi put him in a coffin? That's the stuff of Seth Panitch's "Hell: Paradise Found" currently running at 59E59 Theater B in New York City.

This crafty re-telling of the biblical stories of creation, fall, and redemption is engaging, very funny, and often challenging to conventional understandings of the "rewards and punishments" of the good or not-so-good life on earth. Panitch directs his brilliant cast (of which he is a part) with such skill that the audience is unaware of anyone "calling the shots." Movement is fluid, the cast moves easily in and out of the various roles they play, and scene changes are flawless.

All of this allows the script to unfold with clarity and the conflicts of the characters drive a multi-layered plot into a frenzy of faithless foolery. But not faithless really. Just unconventional faith not found in organized religions of any description. "Hell: Paradise Found" explores the true faithfulness of integrity (which finally busts Simon Ackerman out of the throes of heaven's gate); creativity; and non-conformity. Hell's intake Interviewer (none other, it turns out, than the Dapper Devil himself) says it best: "Who do you suppose goes to Heaven, anyway? Anyone. Anyone goes to Heaven. Anyone who follows another lead, anyone who defers to another explanation, anyone who believes because they are told to believe."

Hell is the place to be with the likes of Shakespeare, Sinatra, Mother Maria Theresa, Vlad the Impaler, Don Juan, Elvis: a mixed bunch to be sure but a bunch bent of self-determination and non-conformity. Ackerman's attempt to decide where he should eternally reside is a brilliant extended metaphor for one's journey toward a personal and meaningful spiritual center.

The play's talented ensemble cast makes the journey pleasurable and fun. Matt Lewis's Simon Ackerman is as unsure about the benefits of Heaven as an attorney could be. Seth Panitch's Interviewer could cajole anyone into the gates of hell. Chip Persons's Vlad the Impaler shares a tale about how he came to drink blood with panache. Dianne Teague's God is the right mix of compassion and righteous anger and serves as the perfect foil for Panitch's Devil. Peyton Conley exhibits Gabriel's tomfoolery with such grace one begins to actually love the archangel. Lawson

Hangartner manages to give life to three very different characters: his disinterested-in-sex Don Juan is simply brilliant. Alexandra Ficken's Lizzie Borden successfully explains how her attorney failed to get her the hung-jury she needed. Stacy Panitch's portrayal of Mother Maria Theresa reeks with scrumptious disrespect. The competent creative team costumes and lights these actors and helps them move about in delicious dizzying dance.

Whoever said God and the Devil couldn't agree on the fate of a supplicant? Find out how they do before July 22 and you will be glad you did.

HELL: PARADISE FOUND

Written and directed by Seth Panitch. Scenic and Light Design by Brian Elliott. Costume Design by Tiffany N. Harris. Composer and Arranger, Raphael Crystal. Compser, Tom Wolfe. Dialect Coach, Allison Hetzel. Choreography by Stacy Alley.

WITH: Matt Lewis (Simon Ackerman); Seth Panitch (The Interviewer); Chip Persons (Lucifer/Vlad the Impaler); Dianne Teague (God); Peyton Conley (Gabriel/Sinatra/Shakespeare); Lawson Hangartner (Adam/Don Juan/Elvis); Alexandra Ficken (Eve/Lizzie Borden); and Stacy Panitch (Maria Teresa).

HELL: PARADISE FOUND is at 59E59 Theaters (59 East 59th Street, between Madison and Park Avenues).

HELL: PARADISE FOUND began performances on Tuesday, July 10 for a limited engagement through Sunday, July 22. The performance schedule is Tuesday – Thursday at 7:15 PM; Friday and Saturday at 8:15 PM; and Sunday at 3:15 PM. Tickets are \$18 (\$12.60 for 59E59 Members). To purchase tickets, call Ticket Central at (212) 279-4200 or go to www.59e59.org.



0 Comments | [Add Comment](#) | [Permalink](#) | Wednesday, July 18, 2012

OFF-BROADWAY

Hell: Paradise Found

Bravo to *Hell: Paradise Found* playing at the 59E59 Theater through July 22nd. Writer/Director Seth Panitch and his cast, traveling all the way from the University of Alabama, surely deserve to go to Hell for this production-- to frolic with Lucifer and his quirky friends. After seeing this outrageously fun play, you'll be won over, and into believing the fiery zip code is the place to be--at least in how it is spiritually presented here.

Exuberant entertainment begins as soon as you sit yourself down in this cozy, intimate theater and meet frazzled Simon Ackerman (Matt Lewis) a lawyer who learns, frightfully, that he has passed on. As if that is not upsetting enough, he's being interviewed by a charming, well dressed demon (who dislikes that title) and explains when pressed that he lost his horns in a poker game, the leathery wings are in the dry cleaner, and Simon is very much in Hell. Some relief is given when, fed up with Simon's attitude over the whole thing, the interviewer (Seth Panitch) tells him he can, and probably should, relocate to Heaven. However, the choice is not to be made until Simon meets and interacts with some of Hell's most wacky characters, and here is where a mix of laughs, amusement and insight is poured straight from the cup of.....brilliance.

What is truly delightful about the 85 minute run time is the acting/synergy among the characters who breathe a flair of animated life into this powerful, jaunty script. The production is replete with lavish costumes, scattered dance numbers, a semi-prim God (yes she is a woman) played to perfection by Dianne Teague, and her fabulously kooky arch-angel Gabriel (Peyton Conley). There is little room for boredom here - or as likeable Lucifer (Chip Persons) would say-- it's certainly not Heaven, that's for sure.



Photo: Amy French and Matt Lewis in Hell: Paradise Found at 59E59 Theater

The majority of the cast takes on various roles and moves from scene to scene in rapid fire succession keeping the audience fully engaged throughout. Alexandra Ficken parades pure talent and range with impersonations of Lizzy Borden and Paradise's Eve that are mighty. Stacy Panitch tickles us with her waggish portrayal of a fashionista-version of Mother Teresa, who has arrived due to her non-conformist nature. She's used some bribery to finance, what Simon describes as, "feeding half the planet" and she's a tad miffed over Princess Diana stealing the thunder of her death.

Hell would not be complete without Vlad the Impaler (Chip Persons) and we learn some of Don Juan's (Lawson Hangartner) startling truths. But when it comes right down to it the

play screams, you have to be there to absorb what Simon experiences, to draw your own conclusions and partake in the naughty world of the sometimes defiant and sometimes saintly — rather than the world of bland “sterilization.” An added treat is the abundance of wise, clear-sighted lines that make you wish you had a photographic memory to keep them resonating long after the play ends. As God tries to clarify what Hell is all about to Simon, she recants: “If you have a drink with Moliere, you must also have one with Mussolini. Choose one, choose all.”

And this is the message that carefully navigates the theme away from offending millions or landing itself in a quagmire of misunderstanding. More brightly, *Hell: Paradise Found* serves to almost kick start the purity of one’s soul asking, through laughs and gags, just what you think of righteousness, playing it safe and idolizations all for the sake of the final prize, going to this place called Heaven.

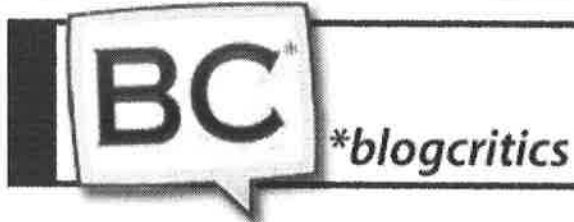
At the shows end the residual feeling is akin to leaving a beautifully complex painting speaking to the individual, evoking interpretation and asking questions only the soul digested. Yet, the universal theme is a solid one: decide for yourself, draw your own conclusions, push the envelope, break the rules sometimes, but through it all, think through your most defining moments and keep an eye on your soul for the right reasons: and only you, God, and Lucifer know what they are.

Reviewed by Karen White

Baby Case

Turning the tragic 1932 Charles Lindbergh baby kidnapping-murder case into a musical may seem a fiasco in the making, awash with rousing dance numbers, such as, “Someone’s Taken the Lindbergh Baby” and the “Ladder Song.” The New York Musical Festival (NYMF) tells the sad story, which became an outlandish media sensation as mortifying as watching these performers shuffle in 1930’s show-girl style. Yet, it’s a wonderful balance of irony, elegance and big talent with choreography that is exceptional. Overall there is enough right about the musical to warrant buying a ticket, and enough needing to be cut to halt calling it a pure success.

The show flourishes with the talent of Patricia Noonan, who has the operatic gift to move you beyond words with the “Nurse’s Song,” asking and pleading if someone has the baby, over his empty bassinette. Will Reynolds and Anika Larsen play the double roles of the heartbroken Lindberghs and the accused (and ultimately executed) Bruno Hauptmann, and his wife who is left to raise their own child. This stark flip in character-performances seems off-putting at first but surprisingly works with the magic of adept acting.



*The critical lens on today's
culture & entertainment*

Theater/Dance Review (NYC): 'Alcestis Ascending: A Rock Myth'

By Jon Sobel | Friday, July 12, 2013

Filed under: [Arts, Culture and Society](#), [Theater](#)

Tags: [alcestis](#), [Cuba](#), [dance](#), [euripides](#), [Greek drama](#), [university of alabama](#)

Once I attended a Cuban-American wedding. Never before had I seen such carousing, such inexhaustible group energy. The revels, I later learned, lasted hours longer than I and my palefaced friends did. Now, too many years later, I've seen my first Cuban-American theatrical event. Though *Alcestis Ascending* lasts a scant hour and a half, it hums with the same buzzing, muscular energy I felt at that wedding.

Euripides'
play
Alcestis is
among
other
things a



Photo by Corey Rives

meditation on death. But like the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, at its heart beats a juicy love story. A new reworking of the myth by playwright and director Seth Panitch and Company HavanaBama accentuates the passion. Passion energizes the love between the Thessalian King Admetus and his wife Alcestis (Jeff Horger and Alianne Portuondo). It fuels Admetus's parents' lust for life as they, like everyone else, refuse to give themselves up so that their son may live. It quickens the bodies of the three Fates, who dance erotically around a comically hunky Apollo (Frank Egusquiza). And it crackles through the veins of Hercules (a fiery Rayssel Cruz, who almost walks away with the show), seeking hospitality just after Alcestis has sacrificed her life for her husband.

It comes about this way: Apollo, having been banished to life among the mortals for a period, repays Admetus for his kindness during that time by intervening with the Fates to allow the king to live past his prescribed lifetime, provided that someone can be found to willingly take Admetus's place. Alas, only loyal Alcestis offers her life for his, and just after the awful trade is carried out, Hercules arrives, halfway through his Labors and looking for a place to crash. Swallowing his grief for the sake of hospitality, Admetus welcomes his friend, but when Hercules finds out why the king's household is so sad he undertakes to travel to the underworld and bring Alcestis back to the land of the living.

Unlike in ancient Greek theater, where much of what we'd call the action takes place offstage, Panitch's conception brings everything to the forefront. The Fates laugh as they "cut the threads" of doomed mortals. One sensuous scene features a dancer portraying a horse. Comical servants mug and prattle. A Latin-rock score by Tom Wolfe thrums through dance after dance. And Admetus begins his quest for a volunteer in the public square, appealing first to the common people, who profess to adore him, in a potently humorous scene in which the large cast spreads partway around the audience. Next up is a feast at which he beseeches his fellow nobles, who, though proclaiming they are in his debt, can proffer only a meek servant girl (Diana Hernandez) who turns out not to be a volunteer after all.

The final failure comes in the encounter with his parents (Roberto Salomon and Vítica Sobrino), one of the few scenes in which I felt I really missed something because of the play's bilinguality. A good part of the story is conveyed through Osnel Delgado's evocatively choreographed dance, the rest



Photo by Corey Rives

via a combination of English and Spanish with some characters (like Admetus) speaking English, some (like Alcestis and Hercules) Spanish, interchangeably to each other. I don't understand much Spanish, but these powerful performers' physical acting – the passion they channel so well – is usually enough to convey what's going on during the Spanish speeches. But when Admetus's father Pheres delivers in Spanish a tempestuous and relatively lengthy argument, I can't follow it and wish I could. Another such moment comes at Alcestis's death.

Though she speaks Spanish to Admetus's English, Portuondo's acute presence and the design of the dialogue made sure I almost always knew, more or less, what she was saying. But I didn't get her last words and wish I had.

Fortunately such moments are few. The movement, pace, and forceful performances from the gifted cast make the time zip by. I never once lost focus, even when my brain wasn't understanding the words. And what's impossible to miss is the deep, even desperate love between the king and queen. There's a gorgeous sequence when after all other hope for someone to take Admetus's place is gone, Alcestis demands why "you never asked *me*?" It's the key moment in the drama; it's when we really learn what a paragon of love and devotion she is. In a parallel scene after she's gone, we witness how lost Admetus feels without her. He grovels in the dirt and wails like a baby as Hercules tries to get him to buck up and come with him to Hades and retrieve her. Here and elsewhere the fertile collective imagination of Panitch and his cast and creative team bring us a whole dimension not available to Euripides's theatrical tradition. Like ancient Greek drama, there's nothing naturalistic about this show. Unlike ancient Greek drama, it revels in florid passion. Whether you understand Spanish or not, I don't hesitate to recommend it to anyone interested in vibrant theater, creative interpretations of ancient myth, or artful, earthy dance.

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New York Theatre Wire™
Theatre Dance Performance Art Music
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Glenda Frank Love and Superheroes

**"Alcestis Ascending" by Euripides
adapted and directed by Seth Panitch.**

Original score by Tom Wolfe. Choreography by Osnel Delgado.

**Featuring actors and dancers from the Cuban National Office of Scenic Arts and Company HavanaBama
Harold Clurman Theatre, 410 W. 42 St., NYC.**

July 9-21, 2013. Tues. at 7 PM; Wed.- Sat. 8 PM; Sun. 3 PM.

Tickets are \$42.50 at 212-239-6200 or www.TeleCharge.com. For more information contact www.alcestisascending.com.



Osnel Delgado as Hades in "Alcestis Ascending" at the Harold Clurman Theater. Photo by Corey Rives.

Lovers offer each other the moon, the stars and eternal love. Adolescents believe these vows and obsessive sometimes follow through. But most of us outgrow romantic ideals, some with regret, some with relief. Centuries ago, the eccentric Greek playwright Euripides wrote about a wife, Alcestis, who makes the ultimate sacrifice for her sniveling, self-pitying mate. Euripides was keen on flavoring his feminism with a touch of the demonic (witness "Medea") and his more sentimental side with parody and sometimes even broad comedy. Seth Panitch has transformed this less known classic into a powerful love story set to a rock-infused score. The impressive choreography is by Osnel Delgado, whose sinewy performance on stage stands out even among this group of talented performers.

The musical opens in a dark cave on the outskirts of Eternity where the Three Fates (Vitica Sobrino, Abby Jones, Diana Hernandez) are severing the life line of King Admetus. Apollo (Frank Egusquiza), a close friend, begs them for mercy. Dramatized through dance and a bilingual dialogue, where some characters speak Spanish, some English, the scene builds in erotic intensity as the goddesses become so aroused by Apollo's passion and beauty, they allow a compromise.

In the next scene we meet Alcestis (Alianne Portuondo), the title character, with her pet stallions (the dancers). She and the magnificent cavorting horses bring a poetic sensuality, until her husband's arrival frightens all by one (the stylish Laura Treto) to flee. Three jostling retainers, who somehow recognize neither the queen nor king (Jeff Horger), provide comic outrage then dismay. The royal couple add their own domestic passion to the mix. The light moods are dashed when Apollo conveys the bad news: Admetus must die unless he can provide a willing substitute. This integration of dance, comedy, pathos, poignancy, and passion make for an engaging 88 minutes of theatre. And the mysterious ending is as

thought-provoking as it is tantalizing.

But first satire: Admetus goes to his people who declare their fidelity, gratitude, affection -- but not their lives. They vanish at his request. He throws a party for his political cronies, the nobles, who too swear devotion and have a solution. In a nice twist, we and Admetus are dismayed to learn they are not volunteering but have commandeered a servant.

Only the scene between Admetus and his lamenting parents is disappointing. Admetus' father (Joan Rodriguez) explains that he gave Admetus the gift of birth and reared him, but does not owe him his life. Old as he is, he values the living air and the light of the sun. It is an argument that resonates especially today when more college graduates than ever refuse to sever their financial dependence. But in Panitch's adaptation it is more a rant, especially for English-speaking audience since the father's long speech is in Spanish. The mother's (Claudia Molinet) affirmation of love and dismay is more emotionally accessible. The couple exit holding each other in sorrow at the loss of their only son.

Not until mid-play do audiences understand the title. Alcestis tells her husband that she prefers to die rather than survive alone. Admetus is astonished. He counted her a weak woman, her love a mirror of his. There is no question in this script that her sacrifice is a strength -- not

one reminds esteem, but one that makes her equal in action to men willing to risk everything for their country or their honor.

Enter another hero, the semi-god Hercules, soiled and stinking from cleaning the Augean stables, one of his seven labors. In the original he is loud, drunk and demanding women. Panitch softens this broad (satyr) comedy -- Which is a shame! Red-costumes dancing girls advise him of Alcestis death. Mortified to have been so insensitive, he resolves to descend to Hades and rescue her. In Hades (in another dance number), Alcestis again proves a warrior, resisting Hades as he demands she discards her memories.

Panitch's most effective innovations begin at this point. In Euripides, Admetus is a narcissist, whining that he must die, then that he must live wifeless. Panitch has him accompany the hero but flee in terror as Hercules battles Cerebus (three dancers), the three-headed dog guarding the gates of Hades.

Back in the palace, Hercules offers Admetus a surprise, Celestia, veiled and wearing black. Admetus refuses her, but Celestia is persuasive. Then she reveals herself as Alcestis, her love stronger than death. It is very moving as they comfort each other. Euripides, far more cynical, left her identity open. She might as easily be a new wife.

Panitch's softened and poeticized version makes a mighty fine rock musical, blending comedy and tragedy with a light hand. Equally accomplished are the acting/dance performances on a minimalist stage that evokes both palace and Hades through lighting by Mike Morin. The choreography alone is a good reason to see the show. Osnel Delgado has a fondness for trios, and his direction is sensitive to the moment, highly focused, and dynamic. Delgado's entrance as Death into Admetus' room is almost as haunting as Nosferatu's. Kudos all around.



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Theater review

CSF takes contemporary approach for 'Measure'

By Mark Collins
Camera Theater Critic

Colorado Shakespeare Festival director Scott Williams has placed "Measure for Measure" in a contemporary world, a non-descript urban setting where seedy underlings pursue their daily pleasures against the backdrop of politics and rulemaking.

It works. Thematically, "Measure" is one of Shakespeare's more accessible stories for contemporary audiences. It plays like a good television drama, filled with political intrigue, hypocrisy in high office, sexual dalliance and bawdy comedy.

CSF's "Measure" is accessible also because of the detail that's gone into much of the character work by the ensemble of actors.

It's in Chip Persons' piercing stillness as Angelo; Sam Sandoe's quiet observance as Escalus; Robert Sicula's intelligent compassion as the Duke; Stephen Weitz's street smarts as Pompey; Tammy Meneghini's in-your-face bravado as Mistress Overdone; Seth Panitch's alertness to duty as Provost; Timothy Orr's bouncy swagger as Lucio; Emily Van Fleet's poise as Mariana; Ian Anderson's complete commitment as a malapropism-spewing Elbow, and

★★★

What: Colorado Shakespeare Festival's "Measure for Measure"

When: 7:30 p.m. July 27, 28, 31, Aug. 5 and 6; 2 p.m. Aug. 1

Where: University Mainstage Theatre, CU campus, Boulder

Tickets: \$10-\$54

Info: 303-492-0554 or

www.coloradoshakes.org

Parent's Guide: Some sexual themes.

a hand-cream using Abhorson.

In a brief scene as the death-row drunkard Bernadine, Chuck Wilcox was so compelling he received applause from the audience upon his exit.

Though the production is more intellectually interesting than moving, Lenne Klingaman, as Isabella, gives us something to feel in the final moments of the play. Her Isabella is a picture of virtue and depth.

Unfortunately, however, some of Williams' staging choices seem to forget the production is essentially in the round — as in CSF's "The Fantasticks" this summer, "Measure" features roughly 40 audience seats on stage opposite the regular audience seats in the CU Mainstage theater.

That leaves the opening moments, when the Duke and his



Courtesy photo

Lenne Klingaman and Chip Persons play Isabella and Angelo in Colorado Shakespeare Festival's "Measure for Measure."

fellow politicians address a crowd, too close to the audience for comfort. And some of Isabella's face is lost in shadowed lighting, while the staging is too static for in-the-round seating during her all-important exchanges with Angelo. Some in the audience no doubt miss much of Klingaman's expressions during the scene.

But the story is never shadowed. It's one that's startlingly contemporary. When the Duke takes a sabbatical and leaves Angelo in charge of the burg, Angelo puts a puritanical law in place that punishes fornication by death. When Juliet

(Van Fleet) becomes pregnant to her betrothed Claudio, Claudio is sentenced for a beheading.

Claudio's sister, Isabella, pleads for clemency from Angelo, but Angelo puts a demand on Claudio's freedom that gives the chaste Isabella pause and shows Angelo as a hypocrite.

The play measures justice against mercy, and the rougher classes against the more powerful and refined. Those are themes that never lose their relevance.

Contact Camera Theater Critic Mark Collins at BDCTheater@comcast.net.

ANSWERS:

Today's Sudoku,
yesterday's Universal Crossword

9	6	7	8	5	1	4	2	3
3	8	4	9	6	2	5	7	1
2	5	1	3	4	7	9	6	8
4	1	6	7	8	3	2	5	9
7	2	8	6	9	5	3	1	4
5	3	9	2	1	4	6	8	7
1	7	2	5	3	9	8	4	6
6	9	5	4	7	8	1	3	2
8	4	3	1	2	6	7	9	5

1	3	R	A	G	E	6	P	L	A	C	E	14	A	M	O	K			
11	I	D	E	S	13	L	A	V	A	S	16	Z	U	L	U				
17	D	O	N	K	E	19	Y	C	A	R	T	21	A	L	A				
23	G	R	O	I	N	25	K	I	L	O	27	L	E	F	T				
29	E	N	A	M	O	R	31	L	A	P	P	E	T						
33						35	O	L	I	O	37								
39	A	R	C	S	41	G	R	O	T	T	43	O	A	T	E				
45	C	I	A		47	R	H	E	N	I	U	M		I	N	S			
49	T	O	M		51	I	T	S	E	L	F		S	N	A	P			
53	S	T	E	R	N						55	E	T	A	L				
57						59	L	E	G	A	T	E		S	M	I	T	H	S
61	A	A	H	S	63		G	H	E	E	65		I	D	E	A	L		
67	B	N	A	I		69	H	O	R	S	E	S	E	N	S	E			
71	A	K	I	N		73	A	R	I	S	E		R	E	T	E			
75	T	A	R	S		77	S	N	E	E	R		S	T	E	P			

Adaptation has power to sweep audiences away

By Mark Hughes Cobb
Staff Writer

Where was God? A plaintive cry at the end of "Moby-Dick," a new play by Steve Burch adapted from Melville's novel, lofts that pivotal question into the wind.

Pursuit of power, and the answers and questions buried in it like the rich raw materials dug from a whale's carcass, is one of the many treasures, not buried but apparent, in this world premiere production at the University of Alabama.

It's orchestrated by director Seth Panitch with almost delicate command, harnessing and harmonizing Burch's muscular carving of Melville's prose, a live score of violin and drums alternately haunting and terrifying, a design team opening possibilities for dreamlike magic and a wealth of performances from thundering Ahab to fluid acting corps embodying everything from storms to tortments to whales.

This show has the power to sweep you away.

Trimming verbose Melville down to a two-hour run time means cutting to the chase, literally, of the adventure tale at the heart of his book, and the show in the Marian Galloway Theatre is at times utterly, viscerally thrilling. But the book and its central story—a charismatic, damaged leader chasing an elusive, massively powerful goal—is so rich in metaphor and potential that Burch would not stint on the language, heightened, heroic, lovely and tragic, Shakespearean, biblical and American. This production seems almost an opera with ballet at times, surprisingly often funny and sweet, building



Brian Elliott, a second year graduate student working on a masters in lighting design at the University of Alabama, builds a rope shroud for the set of "Moby-Dick" at the Marian Galloway Theatre on Feb. 11.

STAFF PHOTO
MICHELLE
LEPANKA CARTER

Putting a whale hunt on stage requires non-literal visuals, partly because realistic whales and waves would be "Spider-Man" costly, and also too limiting for the audience. It is one of the great fortunes of this endeavor that surreal imagery underscores this: The truth of the quest, the answer to what Ahab and crew seek, is too vast and ineffable to be seen all at once. It can only be suggested by sounds, glimpsed in shadows and shapes wavering between water and wind.

Is ferocious Moby-Dick an element itself, dumb and unrelenting as a tempest? Or does that fury have a driving thought behind it? Perhaps even worse, is the whale/god of such unknowable power that the tiny things clinging to its skin, the pests pounding at its walls, are nothing more than minor irritants to be flicked away? The only symbol large enough to fit the tale would be too much for

The eye is drawn, first and last, to the elementals, a simple way of describing 13 actors who dance, or dancers who act, in concert and singly, to create powerful effects throughout, from waves lashing a drowning sailor to the mighty soaring of a hurled harpoon, from internalized demons crawling into reality to the great snow hill itself. Many pieces worked together to make this an exceptional production; the elementals make it outstanding. Credit Panitch's concept, with choreography that's sometimes combat to Qianping Guo and the dancers themselves.

Despite not fitting some visual images of Ahab past—not the scarred, oak-hewn description of Melville, but with a full beard and body seemingly robust, and save for that peg-leg, of course—guest actor Ted Barton wins the role with a mellifluous, musically adept voice, containing resonances and thrills in it like a cello or double bass. He plays his instrument commandingly, keeping the audience in thrall to even windier passages.

David Bolus' Ishmael is a marvel of dexterity in framing scenes, as he morphs from gnarled wraith to youthful sprite seamlessly as a sea rumble from storm to calm. Bolus' open-faced buoyance—despite warnings that Ishmael can grow "grim about the mouth"—carries the show through Ahab's monomania and the occasional clatter of multiple stories bobbing to the surface.

His pal, and sometime comic partner, Queequeg is embodied with a vast dignity and control by Michael Luwoye, giving us someone to root for, and perhaps cry for, as the tragedy unfolds. It's easy to enjoy Ahab's dash without feeling at one

'MOBY-DICK'

■ **What:** New stage adaptation by Steve Burch, performed by the University of Alabama Department of Theatre and Dance

■ **Where:** Marian Galloway Theatre, Rowand-Johnson Hall, UA campus

■ **When:** Performances continue at 7:30 p.m. today through Saturday, closing with a 2 p.m. matinee Sunday

■ **Cost:** Tickets \$18 general, \$15 seniors and UA faculty and staff, \$12 for children and UA students

■ **Info:** 205-348-3400

with him, given his bloody one-mindedness. So the story lends us its Ishmael, Queequeg, or sad, crazed Pip (a very sympathetic, nuanced Thaddeus Fitzpatrick) to love, or at least to latch on to as recognizably human.

The cast is uniformly top-rate, but list among the standouts Stephen Brunson's hearty Stubb, Amy Handra's stalwart Starbuck and Cooper Kenard's stout Bel-Istair. Many actors adeptly play multiple parts, including funny turns from Caroline Schmidt and Glenn Halcomb, a boisterous Coffin by Rebecca Kling, and a somberly effective Mappleby by Matt Lewis.

And it's questionable, ultimately, whether enough of the text remains to explain an Ahab. Perhaps nothing short of a 19th-century novel can.

But this "Moby-Dick" is a remarkable effort, and one that, like Ishmael's memories, deserves to be heard, and to live on.

LOCAL & STATE

Panitch adds indescribable magic to 'Woods'

By Mark Hughes Cobb
Staff Writer

THEATER REVIEW

IF YOU GO

One of the concerns with "Into the Woods" is similar to that of many ensemble pieces. It can get unwieldy, burdened with an excess of plots, characters, settings, dilemmas and emotions running rampant as giants in the forest. Stephen Sondheim isn't afraid to give you your money's worth, and a little extra pocket change to go.

But Seth Panitch, director of the University of Alabama's current production, cuts clear paths, partly by infusing the show with more dance and movement than is typical, especially with the insertion of wood sprites: Bobby Becher, Kelley Brown, Ava Kelley, Renee Reinecke, Julia Simpson and Jamarius Stewart. The Pan-like, puckish creatures serve partly to move set pieces, but also to add extra sprits of energy and mischief to the witch and the woods. With choreographer Rita Snyder, he's built dimensions of movement to this show that should be studied by other directors. Such a simple adjustment, but so subtly

rewarding, as this production flows as musically as its score.

There's a fine word for those inexpressible kinds of things: ineffable. Music, at its finest, reaches into the soul in ways only the rarest of words can. And when you pair Sondheim's witty and incisive lyrics — with all its other concerns and charms, it's easy to forget how many belly-laugh moments live in "Into the Woods" — with his music, something, well, ineffable happens.

As I type "sometimes people leave you/halfway through the woods," even assuming you know the context of loss and despair, it can't come close to communicating the surge of emotion that runs through you when the late wife sings it to her grieving husband, or the mother figure to the child. It's incredibly beautiful, and this UA cast and crew brings those lovely moments home.

The Marian Galloway Theatre often doesn't seem ideally suited for a production of this scale; it's not a wide nor particularly deep space. Previous big musicals, such as the 2003 "West Side Story," have seemed cluttered, almost claustrophobic. But designers Rick Miller and Andy Fitch managed some very nice ideas with this design, using the height of the space,

■ **What:** Stephen Sondheim's musical, performed by the University of Alabama Department of Theatre and Dance
■ **When:** 7:30 p.m. today through Saturday, with 2 p.m. matinees Saturday and Sunday
■ **Where:** UA's Marian Galloway Theatre, Rowand-Johnson Hall
■ **Cost:** Tickets \$13 general, \$11 seniors, UA faculty and staff, and \$9 for students.
■ **Info:** 205-348-3400. www.as.ua.edu/theatre

and adding simple but flexible pieces to represent various levels, with cloths, color and lights — by John McDermott — to add shading and nuance. It's an effect not readily apparent on the naked set, but when the show is moving within and without, there's an interesting sense of depth and inclusion to all but the town and castle pieces, which are, by tradition, right up front and only simply suggested.

Standout performances

To begin to list the fine performances would be to probably slight someone, but just to kick things off with an undeniable favorite, I'm going to say kudos to Sarah Ondocsin, who is amazingly expressive from inside a whimsically awkward cow suit. Next time you feel like mocking a mime, remember this Milky White.

UA's musical theater program, built up by Raphael Crystal, music director for the show, has created the wealth of voices you need to make this a rich experience. It's easiest to pick out the leads — Blake McCorvey as the

Baker, Sadie Magadan as the Baker's Wife, Dianna Duffy as The Witch, Jake Boyd as Jack, Stephanie Marie Mosley as Little Red Riding Hood and Katie Burton as Cinderella — and say that each found terrific character moments to pair with sterling voices. If you had to guess if one was cast for singing or for acting, you'd vote for both.

In smaller, but no less well-refined bits, faces and voices of Jacqueline Wheeler (Jack's Mother), Kelly Ann Shamburg (Rapunzel) and DaWayne Alexander (Wolf) stand out. And the two princes, David Cordell and Jeff Ingram, just about steal the show as very nicely turned comic jerks. So much can be done with the right gestures.

The show launches, appropriately enough, with yet another note-perfect and winning performance by graduating senior Allison Moy, as a Mother Goose-ish narrator. It's a role often double-cast with the same actor as Mysterious Man, but again, this Panitch variation not only works but adds that just-right sort of ... what am I trying to say? ... ineffable touch.

Tuscaloosa
News

4/24/08



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THEATER REVIEW: This is an 'Othello' that everyone will 'get'

By [Mark Hughes Cobb](#)

Staff Writer

Published: Friday, February 22, 2013 at 3:30 a.m.

Productions of "Othello" typically fit certain descriptors: Harrowing. Dark. Disturbing. Chilling.

How they're not as often described: Lovely. Musical. Danceable.

The latter fit within the realm of the University of Alabama's new production of "Othello," cut, carved and assembled by director Seth Panitch to also encompass the former, in a lean interpretation that, remarkably, seems to flex all the muscle with no obstructing bloat. While we're throwing around the adjectives, add in thrilling, as in "Doth not thy blood thrill at it?," which Falstaff asks Hal, elsewhere in the canon.

Panitch's productions move fluidly and rarely pause, but this tragedy, trimmed from William Shakespeare's original 3,300-some lines, finds moments to let air in, to allow for belief in love, however fleeting, and in truth and friendship, however soon lost.

In cutting "Othello" down to modern size, some productions lose the sense of why what is happening must happen, why the stones rumble downhill. Why does Desdemona love Othello, and he love her, especially against the objections their union causes? What makes Emilia provide the incriminating handkerchief? And what is it that burns Iago so?

Rarely content with working with the Marian Gallaway Theatre as is, Panitch and his set designer Leanna Scotten tilted the playing field into a rake, a rough circle painted with swirling dark shapes, as of gathering storm clouds. Towering draperies, some translucent, others obscuring, do the rest of the work as walls or doorways.

Stage right and left spots create a kind of window into the minds of those soliloquizing downstage. When a rant comes on, as it often will, actors appear in those spaces, visible and yet dreamlike in the diaphonous fabrics. This serves dual purposes: adding visual dimension to otherwise mostly static scenes, and making clear what's being implied, or said. With the surrealistic touches, it's shown this is what Iago or Othello thinks has happened, and not necessarily something witnessed. That leaves intriguing ambiguities intact: Did the Moor really sleep with Iago's wife? Or is that just part of Iago's justification for deposing Othello, while the real jealousy is political or otherwise?

"Othello" rolls out in high passion, with Christopher Collins' nimble lighting design setting things a bloody red, and Michael Luwoye posed kneeling, shirtless and flexed in a position evocative of a hero struggling against chains. Fiery flamenco guitar,

which sets the tone throughout, rips in as soldiers come roaring on; there's a bullfight-like setting, with the Moor as the bull in the ring, then a shift in tone, as what seemed a taunting cape becomes the general's coat. Despite Othello's undeniable prowess in war, his status in society will always be in question.

Luwoye wears the mantle of power nobly, slipping into that coat with grace. His Othello rarely seems unguarded, unflexed and unposed from that opening tableau. Luwoye's voice matches that majestic demeanor: This is a man who can't back down; in battle that's probably useful. But if set down the wrong path, say by a formerly trusted ensign, well, fate is a hard habit to break.

Samuel Hardy's Iago both contrasts and harmonizes with that approach. In scenes directly with Othello, Hardy tends to a more rigid posture, mirroring his general. But when cajoling Roderigo (John Paul Snead) he's sly; when belittling his wife Emilia (Natalie Riegel), he's abrupt and dismissive. In asides or soliloquies, he's nearer to a mustache-twirling villain, without the grin of malice. Whatever drives this Iago, it seems absent the pure devilment some actors might use, and more a direct expression of rage.

For those sweeter breaths mentioned above, Abby Jones is a literal figure of light, dressed largely in white, seeming almost childlike surrounded by the soldier-actors, with a kindness and love radiating from within an underwritten part. It helps anchor this "Othello" that her Desdemona seems full of caring that extends beyond her husband and to the plight of Cassio. Snead, as always a joy to watch, brings out the twit in upper-class brat Roderigo, teasing out those few moments of laughter Panitch was able to divine within the text.

Riegel's Emilia introduces a voice of strength and sanity, tempered with sadness by her own (small) fault in the matter, and Sarah Jean Peters dances on as a light-hearted Bianca, adding much-needed joy late in the game, when even as relentless a tragedy as this can stand a reminder that all is not bleak. Michael Witherell plays an upright Cassio, one not easily dismissed as the undeserving dupe Iago would have us believe. All the rest serve ably, from stalwart Brabantio (Chris Bellinger) and Duke (Rebecca Kling) to those who flourish swords, an always enjoyable facet of plays directed by Panitch, who does his own fight choreography.

This would be an "Othello" to introduce kids to, the ones who don't "get" Shakespeare. Between the swords, the passionate, musical performances and relentless pacing, here's one anybody can get.

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University of Alabama's 'Seven Guitars' pulses with vividness

By Mark Hughes Cobb

Entertainment Editor | The Tuscaloosa News

Published: Friday, October 11, 2013 at 3:30 a.m.

In a show built around a young blues singer who scores an unexpected hit record, more than one refrain plays.

That's literally true of the sound design for "Seven Guitars," which erupts with ecstatic blasts of Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson and other blues greats.

But it's from within playwright August Wilson's language, and the subtexts and themes of "Seven Guitars" that the strains of a musical style, called "nothin' but a good man feelin' bad" by Tuscaloosa's own Johnny Shines, emerge.

A rooster crowing endlessly within the big city underscores how out of place Wilson felt his African-American characters were, living in Philadelphia, or even in Chicago, where Floyd "Schoolboy" Barton (Nick Rashad Burroughs), a gifted musician, feels his destiny awaits.

The rooster crows, annoying everyone around, when all its owner needs is to run down to Woolworth and spend a buck and a half on an alarm clock.

Despite what some believe about opportunities represented by the great migration north, Wilson once said: "I think we should have stayed in the South. We attempted to transplant what in essence was an emerging culture, a culture that had grown out of our experiences of 200 years as slaves in the South. The cities of the urban north have not been hospitable. If we had stayed in the South, we could have strengthened our culture."

The rooster cries for rootlessness and displacement, not able to find firm ground.

On the surface the characters are often celebratory and dancing. There's Barton, his band mates Canewell (Gerard Jones) and Red Carter (Jay Jurden), his disenchanted love Vera (Jessica Briana Kelly), smart-mouthed friend and neighbor Louise (Rachel Baber), Louise's promiscuous niece Ruby (Tierra Washington) and their disturbed, physically and mentally ill friend Hedley (Motell Foster).

But the backbeat is dark, droning, a dirge, the hellhounds on their trails seen in all the ways society conspires to flatten dreams: If you've got too much money in your pocket, you must be a thief; not enough, you're a vagrant. Get you comin' and goin'.

Still, this production, directed by Seth Panitch with the verve and fluidity typical of his previous work here, doesn't seem leaden with despair as much as it seems a deep and deeply disturbing portrait of a time and place, a chapter in Wilson's ongoing saga. After all, no one here gets out alive.

Barton, and to a lesser extent Red and the women, love high style, not just looking good but feeling that warming sense of having made it that fine things can bring, or at least suggest.

So it's crucial to note that costume designer Randy Hozian, with hair and makeup designer Jerrilyn Lanier, have pulled together some dazzling looks, layered over the more every day clothing, to create a real sense of rising and falling fortunes. Add to that a subtle lighting schematic by Keegan Butler, illuminating a detailed and ultimately foreboding neighborhood of gentle decay, as designed by David Hartwell, and this is one of the shows where even the inanimate objects resound on multiple levels.

Burroughs crackles in the lead, making it apparent even in non-sung moments why Schoolboy is the star here, both in the show and within the context of the show. He's kinetic and hilarious, dazzling, sympathetic and terrifying by turns as he tries to find the shape of Schoolboy's next incarnation. It's a real work of passion and discipline.

Foster, in real life a healthy young man, transforms himself into the growling, hunched-over, chanting and ranting Hedley, a bit of a mystic, a bit of a madman, like a more primitive version of a blues shouter, someone who might have been revered around a roaring fire. His is another bit of theatrical magic.

Jurden glides through like a musician and ladies' man born, and likewise Jones provides great comic moments but with some stranger and sadder bits as the more melancholy of the two. Baber snaps out many of the best lines as the saucy Louise, like Foster playing an older, more experienced character with deceptive ease, and Washington adds some depth to Ruby's lightness with her acceptance of Hedley's dream. Kelly serves as the most anchored character here, while still allowing Vera moments of joy as she comes to believe in Schoolboy's ability to change for the better.

As an ensemble, the work more closely resembles jive or early jazz, what with everyone getting solo spots to shine, even in light of the more flamboyant roles for Burroughs and Foster.

It's a testament to Panitch's guidance that the ebb and flow succeeds so strongly despite a few abruptly cut-off musical notes and minor technical glitches opening night. While the entirety of the show takes place in a depressed backyard, with rows of rooftops extending into the distance like stones in a cemetery, it pulses with a vividness not dependent on the shine of a new electric guitar or a store-bought suit. The glow shines from within, an irrepressible spirit that might be bruised but can't be crushed.

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STATE & LOCAL

THEATRE REVIEW

'Moon' cast displays firm grip on farce

By Mark Hughes Cobb
Staff Writer

If one of the rules of acting is to never let them see you sweat, "Moon Over Buffalo" fails pretty much curtain to curtain.

But no, it's a backstage farce, showcasing the cracks and seams, the bad notes and over-the-top bellowing, the rampant alcoholism, egos and promiscuity that, of course, are strictly a thing of theatrical past.

Wonder why the thespians in the University of Alabama production look so comfortable falling into those roles?

It might just be that given the chance to let slip the dogs of ham, the actors spent many long, dark hours peering into their souls and dredging up wretched excess, the offshoots and detritus of the torture one goes through to build a character only to find one has lost one's way.

Or maybe they just said: Let 'er rip.

Director Edmond Williams holds the reins, and it's mostly a sure grip, because farce is a thing that spins on a needle's point: The slightest upset can shoot it off balance. This "Moon" had a few timing wobbles in the early going, but righted itself by mid-first act, and built momentum enough to glide over the occasional imperfect lump.

You don't have to be a theater insider to get the jokes about down-on-their-luck actors George and Charlotte Hay, played by real-life married couple Seth Panitch and Stacy Searle Panitch.

If 90 percent of directing is casting, this is an A effort right there. For all the scathing exchanges between the Hays, the radiant affection beaming from the actors Panitch keeps the tone light as meringue.

The fact that these two were clearly made for each other spreads a security blanket under the proceedings, so you in the audience can revel, as the knowing outsider — Those crazy kids! — just as George and Charlotte



STAFF PHOTO | DUSTY COMPTON

Stacy Searle Panitch as "Charlotte Hay," left, Seth Panitch as "George Hay," Katy Montalto as "Eileen," and Jake Boyd as "Paul," perform during a rehearsal for "Moon Over Buffalo" at Marian Gallaway Theatre on the University of Alabama campus.

bemusedly watch daughter Rosalind (Renee Reinecke) try to reject obviously just-right match Paul (Jake Boyd).

Some critics disdain comedy as fluff, but it's an art form of journey, rather than destination, dependent on a cast's energy and chemistry. You know the Hays will end up together and all will be well. It's the centrifugal expansion of the performers' interplay, inflated by egos and circumstances of the script, that makes for laughs; it's like "How far can they flood this balloon before it pops?" Happily the tension here builds well and holds throughout.

"Moon" has a generous script and direction. Everyone gets at least one gold moment, including Eileen (Katy Montalto) and Richard (Darin Robert Cabot), both of whom meet the challenge of carving out sharp characters in very few strokes. Wade Mowles takes the role of thankless goon to hysterical heights, and Reinecke's controlled panic shines in the drunken

moments where Cyrano invades Noel Coward. The Panitches and a limber and charming Boyd carry most of the comedic weight, and they're up to the heavy lifting: pulled faces, slow burns, the wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Some of the biggest and warmest laughs come from what could be a one-joke role for many actresses, that of deaf grandma Ethel. But Williams smartly cast Dianne Teague, who has the rare quality of winning the audience almost before she utters a word or issues a gesture.

Andy Fitch's set thrusts the action so far toward the audience it seems claustrophobic as a literal backstage, while still giving Panitch and Boyd room to flail, sweat, pratfall and all that other shtick that continues to be used because it continues to work. Sarah Widgeon's costumes provide the right support, theatrical and practical at once.

As Oscar Wilde wrote in "The Picture of Dorian Gray," "Laughter

MOON OVER BUFFALO

What: Backstage farce, being performed by the University of Alabama Department of Theatre and Dance

When: 7:30 p.m. today, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

Where: Marian Gallaway Theatre, Rowand-Johnson Hall on the UA campus

How much: \$15 for students; \$13 for UA faculty, staff and senior citizens; \$10 for students.

Tickets: available at the box office at Rowand-Johnson, noon-5 p.m. today, or by calling 205-348-3400, or at www.crimsonartstickets.com. **More info:** www.as.ua.edu/theatre.

is not at all a bad beginning for a friendship...." There's more to that line, but let's wait and see what the rest of the 2008-09 season brings.

CREATIVE ACTIVITY

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The Washington Post

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In a first since 1959, joint Cuban-American acting troupe to perform off-Broadway

By Associated Press, Published: June 29

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — It's difficult enough for actors to perform a play in two languages and make sure the audience understands, but an Alabama-based partnership of Cubans and Americans is tackling that and more with an unusual engagement in New York.

The cast and crew of "Alcestis Ascending" are preparing for one of just a handful of joint Cuban-American plays to hit the Big Apple since the Cuban revolution and Fidel Castro's rise to power in 1959.

The performance is a collaboration between the University of Alabama and the Cuban National Office of Scenic Arts. A cast of 15 Cubans and eight Americans will perform at the off-Broadway Clurman Theatre beginning July 9.

The play, an adaptation of the Greek playwright Euripides' drama "Alcestis," was written and directed by Seth Panitch, the head of acting programs at the University of Alabama. William Ruiz, from Cuba, is the co-director.

The production presents some unusual challenges, such as incorporating rock music and dance into a classical tale while not confusing the audience with dialogue in both Spanish and English.

"Half the play is in English and half the play is in Spanish, so either everyone will be able to understand what is going on or no one will be able to follow what's going on," Panitch said.

The troupe rehearsed in Tuscaloosa before an opening run in a small theater at the University of Alabama. The play is set to debut there July 1, and after wrapping in New York, it will head to Havana.

Ruiz, who is associated with El Consejo Nacional De Artes Escenicas in Havana, said the Cubans and Americans are anxious to take the play on the road, particularly to New York.

"It's very exciting to go there as a joint American-Cuban company because in the end it's going to talk about relations between people," he said. "To do it in New York, I think, is perfect."

The actors can't talk politics or cultural differences very much — language limitations prevent such discussions — but Ruiz said the barriers are gone on stage. "The play becomes the language," he said.

As a bonus, the Cubans get to see a slice of American that many in their culture only dream of. New cars are everywhere instead of the 1950s models so common in Cuba, and store shelves are packed with food and clothes.

Many cast members are thrilled just by the chance to get to see New York. "It is a center for theater," Ruiz said.

The play is a production of Company HavanaBama, a research project that has linked Alabama's College of Arts and Sciences with Cuban actors and agencies since 2007.

The Cuban Ministry of Culture said "Alcestis Ascending" is the first licensed production with both Cuban and American actors to perform in New York. Most contact between the countries is banned because of U.S. embargoes.

Lillian Manzor, an expert in Cuban theater at the University of Miami, said just a few joint productions have been performed in the United States under various arrangements since the Castro regime took power. She said "Alcestis Ascending" is a "very important co-production" because of that rarity.

Sage Lewis, a Los Angeles-based composer who has worked with U.S.-Cuban collaborations for nearly a decade, produced a play in the United States using American actors on stage and Cubans who appeared by video link. He's unaware of exchanges similar to the one that will travel to New York.

"It's definitely an important project," he said of the Alabama-based production. "They're pioneering and doing new things in new ways."

The Alabama partnership opened an era in U.S.-Cuban relations in 2009 when 12 Cuban actors and crew members came to the state to perform a Spanish-language version of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" with American actors. The Obama administration's decision to let the Cubans into the country was seen as a new step in openness toward the Communist-ruled island nation, and Lewis said additional exchanges began in 2010.

Panitch said special writing and directing techniques are required to present a play in two languages for an audience that might understand only one tongue.

"You have to figure out which partners on stage work well with sharing that dialogue, how much repetition I want to use. ... Sometime important plot points are in Spanish so I have to make sure that there's a repetition in English," he said. "And likewise, when we go down to Havana, I have to make sure there's enough repetition in Spanish that a Spanish-speaking audience understands what's going on as well."

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ALCESTIS ASCENDING to Begin Off-Broadway at Theatre Row, 7/9

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Cuban National Office of Scenic Arts, The University of Alabama and Company HavanaBama invite you to the World Premiere of ALCESTIS ASCENDING, a new play with music based on Euripides' classic drama. Written and directed by Seth Panitch, this groundbreaking collaboration combines actors and dancers from the Cuban National Office of Scenic Arts (several of whom are TV stars in Cuba) as well as actors from the University of Alabama. Performances of this Off-Broadway limited engagement run July 9 - 21 at the Harold Clurman Theatre at Theatre Row (410 West 42nd).

Through text, movement, and live rock-infused music, ALCESTIS ASCENDING spins a thrilling tale of fate, self-absorption, sacrifice, and the redemptive power of love. King Admetus and his wife Alcestis see their picture-perfect lives shatter when news arrives that Admetus' thread has run out on the wheel of Fate. If the King can find a willing replacement to take his place, he lives; if not, he dies. Admetus' initial relief gives way to terror as, one by one, every option fails. The veneer of his life strips away, revealing the tenuous, conditional "love" around him, and the seething cowardice within -- a narcissism so powerful, he doesn't blink when Alcestis offers to take his place. Realizing his grave mistake, the King sets out to rescue his wife with his dim, hunky friend Hercules to battle the bony specter of Death, Cerberus the three-headed hound of Hell, and the dark lord Hades himself. Ultimately, Admetus is left combat the most terrifying force in the Universe -- his own crippling self-absorption.

Osnel Delgado, Artistic Director of the Cuban Dance Company Ebony and former principal dancer with Danza Contemporanea de Cuba joins HavanaBama as both a performer and choreographer for the production, and Kennedy Center/ USIA Jazz Ambassador Tom Wolfe has composed and will perform the live score. The production also stars Allanne Portuondo, Rayssel Cruz, Frank Egusquiza, Roberto Salomon, Noelvis Perez, Diana Hernandez, and Jorge Luis Curbelo. Previews run July 1 - 5 at the Allen Bales Theatre at the University of Alabama and the production also travels to Cuba where it runs July 24 - August 4 at the Raquel Revuelta Theatre in Havana.

Seth Panitch's most recent production Off Broadway was Hell: Paradise Found at the 59E59 Theatres in

2012. The New York Times called Hell "simultaneously nutty and witty, with a philosophical message that never gets in the way of the laughs," and Backstage called it "wickedly funny... Panitch's screwball metaphysical comedy has an undeniable huckster charm." Seth has worked as a director in Havana, Cuba (becoming the first American to direct a professional production through the CNAE), in multiple Off Broadway venues in New York, Los Angeles and regionally at the Texas Shakespeare Festival. In 2005, Seth was hired to head the Acting programs at the University of Alabama's Department of Theatre and Dance. His New York directing credits include Dammit, Shakespeare! at Urban Stages, Measure for Measure at Raw Space, and The Hypochondriac at Samuel Bckett Theater. He has 3 official Commendations for Directing from the Ministry of Culture in Havana, Cuba.

ALCESTIS ASCENDING marks the fourth production of Company HavanaBama, a theatrical collaboration begun by Erich Cartaya and William Ruiz of CNAE, and Seth Panitch of the University of Alabama's College of Arts and Sciences Cuba Initiative in 2007. Previous productions in Havana include The Merchant of Venice (El Mercader de Venezia) and Christopher Durang's Beyond Therapy (Mas Que Terapia) at the Teatro Adolfo Llauro, and A Midsummer Night's Dream (Un Sueno de una Noche de Verano) at the Teatro Berthold Brecht. Company HavanaBama performs with the generous support of El Consejo Nacional de Artes Escenicas, the Office of the Provost of the University of Alabama, the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, CARSCA, and the Department of Theatre and Dance.

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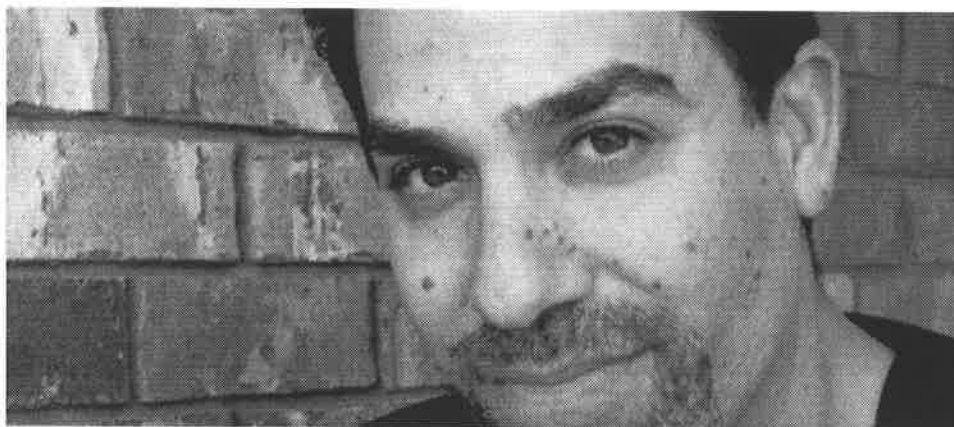
A collective dream of Cubans and Americans

OnCuba

20 August, 2013

Culture

No Comments



Seth Panitch is a dreamer, passionate about utopias. So he comes back again and again to the Cuban stages. This time he came to show, for two weekends, the latest production of the HavanaBama Company.

Alcestris Ascending, released by Panitch in Havana Raquel Revuelta room, is a fable with mythological overtones which mixes contemporary dance and a text by Greek playwright Euripides, all seasoned with a hint of double take and humor.

The highlight: a group of young Cuban and American actors dialogue with the audience in perfect English and in Spanish close to the regular Cubans. All seasoned with the music by experienced composer Tom Wolfe.

In the leading roles the American Jeff Horger debuts as King Admetus. His wife, Queen Alcestris, is played by Cuban Alianne Portuondo. True to the aesthetics of Tony Diaz, director of Mephisto Theatre, Raissel Cruz takes the cake with his sympathetic character of Hercules.

In this piece work several Cuban dancers who come from groups like Open Dance and the Cuban television Ballet. At the completion of the Cuban dance art contributes Osnel Delgado, dancer and choreographer with a promising career ahead.

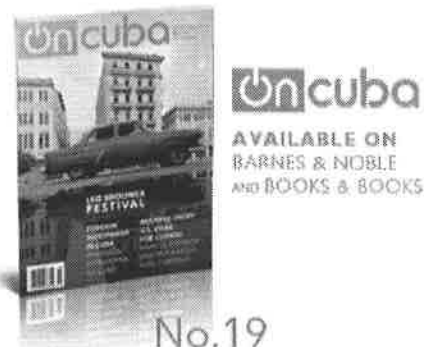
After 75 minutes of presentation, we talked in the lobby of the Raquel Revuelta room with Seth Panitch who is also in charge of program management and masters degree in acting at the prestigious University of Alabama.

Assisted in the translation by the assistant director of the play William Ruiz-representative National Arts Council, (NACE) – we learn the details about this project, unprecedented in theatrical relations between Cuba and the United States, which in the past six years has produced successful roles in The Merchant of Venice, Dream of a summer night and More than therapy, all presented earlier in the Island.

"This is the first time a mixed company of Cubans and Americans is presented in New York City. So there were so many people interested in the show and as they liked both will surely want to see our other works," Panitch says.

How was the idea of this cultural exchange between the University of Alabama and the National Council for the Performing Arts of Cuba born?

This cultural exchange dates back ten years. It was an initiative of Robert Olin, dean of the University of Alabama, who conceived to support research projects with Cuban counterpart in areas such as the arts, sciences and humanities.



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Propositions

Hugo Cancio

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Watching from the bridge

My interest, of course, focused on the theater and, in 2007, I created this project with Cuba. The Cuban William Ruiz is my assistant director.

What selection criteria did you follow with Cuban and American actors involved in the project?

We selected the Cuban actors years ago. We try to keep a stable company where the project and installation of the works are based on the actors involved. In this type of work in the United States is known as repertory company

For all American actors are graduate students or are still pursuing an acting career with me.

How hard can it be mounting a bilingual play with actors of two nations so different?

Of course you need the help of a good translator, in this case my assistant William.

Also you invest three times more time in the rehearsals, which to mount a show without these features because you have to speak two languages with the actors. However, I much enjoy this very special project. Every experience is different

Where was the premiere in the United States? How was the reception of the public?

We turned up at a theater off Broadway, at 42nd Street. The show was very well received in the United States. Of course, the American public laughs at different situations from what provokes the laughter to a Cuban.

In these roles the actors said more English speeches than here in Cuba. For us it is like having mounted two different shows but everyone says that you can follow the story.

I am very pleased that we have succeeded in the two countries, which makes us feel that it was worth the effort. In the United States there are some theaters interested in the work and while working for several public companies who only speak Spanish Alceste Ascending may have a longer life after that.

Did you have some sort of interference with Cuban actors travel to the United States and the same in reverse?

Of course. Sometimes it's difficult to mount the work and release the show. Every time you do something new, for the first time, a lot of effort is needed.

Would you be open to the presence of Cuban directors in your company?

Normally I direct all works of the company but if a Cuban director would direct some of my works it would be very interesting.

I have not had the opportunity to meet many directors of the island when we come to Cuba because we are always working and that consumes all our time.

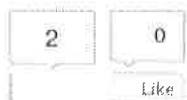
What new projects are attractive to you now from the creative standpoint?

All the time I like to do different things. Right now I can hardly imagine a show as difficult as this. When we find something bigger we will start working again.

We are most proud of is that this company gives us a place to meet in a different way as actors, directors, writers, without any masks or other invented dressing. The theater is a reflection of the dream of the people and how they would really be.

The audience joins this experience and doesn't look at a Cuban actor or an American, but what is going on emotionally between them. To me that is the most interesting of the project.

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In times of bolero



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STAFF PHOTO | MICHELLE LEPIANKA CAP

Scholar artists rehearse Friday in the Allen Bales Theatre on the University of Alabama campus for "Alcectis Ascending."

Alabama-Cuba Initiative gives rise to new play at UA

'Alcectis Ascending' to preview July 1-5 at Allen Bales Theatre

By Mark Hughes Cobb
Staff Writer

Although many things have changed since 2009, when Frank Egusquiza was last in Tuscaloosa as part of the Cuban-American research exchange that became "Un Sueno De Una Noche De Verano," the familiarity of the city's

faces and places outweighs its differences.

While warming up for a run-through of the new play "Alcectis Ascending," greeting friends new and old with hugs and brilliant smiles, he looked around and searched for the right words in English.

"I feel like I am home," Egusquiza said.

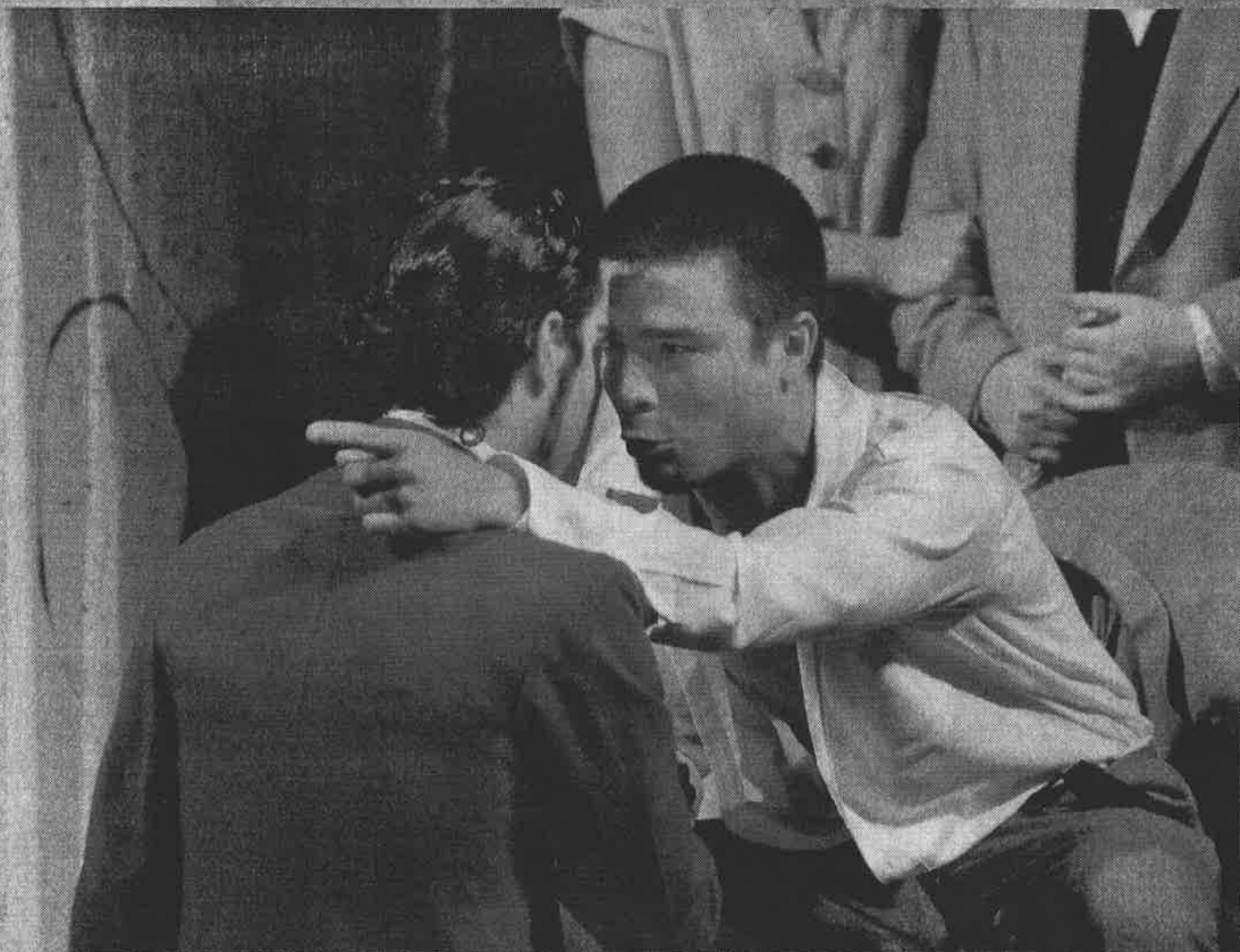
It is the fourth project of the Alabama-Cuba Initiative to wind through translations of text and movement, a fusing of the spirits of U.S. and Cuban styles of performance, to result in one theatrical moment: "Alcectis Ascending." It will feature more

than a dozen Cuban scholar-act-dancers, joined by some University of Alabama students, and will be performed in Tuscaloosa July 1-5, before moving to an off-off-Broadway run in New York City, then down to Havana to open a theater there.

But it's only the second of several projects for which Seth Panitch, UA professor who directs and oversees this facet of the program, is able to bring the Cubans to Tuscaloosa for study and rehearsal. Several of those who worked on "Un Sueno De Una Noche De Verano" Cuban-language translation

SEE CUBA |

SO SHINES A GOOD DEED



A collaboration on Shakespeare becomes an ongoing cultural exchange.

by Lauren Cabral

The emotions evoked by art are something we all have in common, regardless of the medium. This shared experience can foster communication between people from different backgrounds, and even overcome barriers. In one good example at The University of Alabama, the medium is theatre, and the boundaries that have been transcended are language, culture, politics and the Gulf of Mexico.

A unique collaboration between the University and Cuba exists in the form of the Cuba-Alabama Academic Initiative, and within it, assistant professor of

acting Seth Panitch has done something unprecedented. The UA faculty member became the first American to direct a play in Cuba since the Cuban Revolution of the 1950s launched Fidel Castro into power.

His graduate students joined the theatre division of Consejo Nacional de las Artes Escénicas (CNAE), the Cuban ministry of culture in charge of performing arts, to produce two of Shakespeare's works. The first, *The Merchant of Venice*, was performed in Havana, Cuba, in December 2008, and the second, *A Midsummer Night's Dream En Español*, took place at the Capstone in August 2009.



The significance of this collaboration is paramount, and nobody knows that more than Panitch. "To be first at something, anything, is very special," the accomplished director said. "Why put your blood, sweat and tears into something that's already been done?" That valid question only highlights the significance of what Panitch and his students have accomplished. Not only did they successfully put on a production in a language they don't speak and in a country that is almost forbidden for travel, but they brought two very different cultures together through art.

"In theater, there are very few firsts," Panitch said. "I wanted to be able to be a part of something that was new—and this was pretty much as new as I could get."

The Creative Process

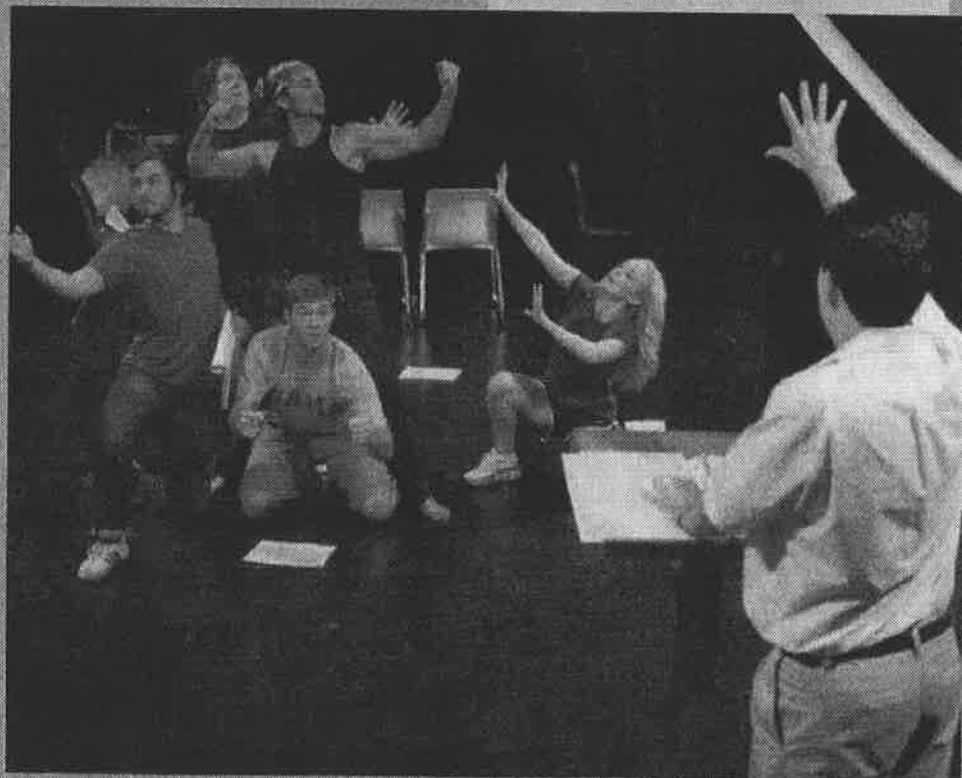
Panitch's involvement with Cuba began in 2005, when he started researching its acting styles. He first went to the country in December 2006, on an invitation from Dr. Robert Olin, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, along with representatives from various other departments. Although most people don't have the option to visit Cuba because of travel restrictions (our gov-

ernment will only allow travel there for specific reasons, such as family visits and educational or humanitarian efforts), in 2002, UA had received academic travel licenses from the U.S. Department of the Treasury for academic activities as part of the Cuba-Alabama Initiative. The licenses also provided opportunities for UA to invite Cuban scholars to its campus.

It was in this semi-banned land that Panitch made a connection with the Instituto Superior De Arte (ISA) in Havana, an art training program. The school is known for having the highest-quality actors in the country, and Panitch was thrilled when the chair of the theatre department invited him to work with students there.

"Dean Olin is always saying, 'Well that's good, but what's next?'" said Panitch. "I wanted to expand upon that." He did just that when he managed to get the go-ahead for six of his students to fly with him to Havana. When they arrived, they were a bit stunned, to say the least. Panitch described their look as one of a deer in the headlights, which is understandable since they did not speak Spanish and were in a completely foreign environment. "No matter what I'd prepared them for, it just didn't match up to what the reality was," he said. "This was a growing experience they needed, though."

(Above) Seth Panitch, standing center, with the cast of A Midsummer Night's Dream En Español; (below) Panitch directs rehearsals; (previous page) Sandor Menendez, facing front, and Rayssel Cruz in The Merchant of Venice



Panitch said many of his students had never left the country before, and he had encouraged them to get outside of their comfort zone. "I'm always trying to teach them about the human condition, not the American condition. And to learn that you have to experience more than the Southeastern Theatre Conference."

Jeremy Cox was one such graduate student. He accompanied Panitch first to observe classes at ISA, and again to participate in the Merchant project. "The Cuban trips were my first time to be outside of the United States, but there was something that still felt like home, something familiar, or perhaps seeing the passion that drives my cast mates," he said. "Cuba has to be certainly the greatest experience in my acting career thus far and ranks high in life experiences—the chance to enter another world and observe the similarities and differences, and embracing that as part of the experience."

As for the Cuban actors, they had to adjust to the fast pace of the Americans. Instead of rehearsing for a year before putting on a show, the normal practice in Cuba, Panitch aimed to rehearse for five weeks, which the Cubans didn't believe at first. In fact, when he told them he'd block the play in one week, meaning to determine all placements and movements of the actors on stage, they laughed. "Cuban directors don't prepare the same way American directors do," Panitch explained.

Erich Cartaya, Cuba's international events and programs specialist who served as the coordinator between CNAE and UA, said he believes the Cubans adjusted well to the new production schedule despite their youth and the difference in their educational backgrounds. "I think this was one of the greatest achievements of the exchange," he said.

As rehearsals for *Merchant* progressed, the group experienced some setbacks. Of the 12 Cuban actors cast, only three ended up in their original roles. About half of the group dropped out of the production due to family hardships and deaths. "It's a different life in Havana; it's not easy," Panitch said. "Working in Cuba is an immense chal-



(Above) Panitch, left, and Erich Cartaya, third from left, in a discussion with the Merchant cast in Cuba; (below) a scene from *Midsummer* in Allen Bales Theatre

lenge because of the poverty of people." Despite these hurdles, one thing did make things much easier: the Cubans' passion for their work. One actor told Panitch he turned down two soap opera jobs because he wanted to work with an American director and perform Shakespeare.

Cox also noticed the commitment of his Cuban counterparts when, after showing a few exercises to a class of actors, they were eager to try them. "That was something that I admired—the great passion and desire to be educated," Cox said. "Although there was a language barrier, being that I speak very

little Spanish, I felt that we were all on the same page in that classroom."

It was the language barrier that influenced Panitch to choose *Merchant*, and later *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. "I was confident that I could do it in Spanish and understand what's going on," The students did as well, he said, and the Americans performed their Spanish lines well with help from their newfound friends.

The World Stage

The play ran from Dec. 17, 2008, to Jan. 4, 2009, and had several sold-out evenings. The venue was the Sala Teatro Adolfo Llauradó in Havana, which Panitch chose because it was the only available theater without a hole in floor.

Tom Wolfe, associate dean of humanities and fine arts and professor of jazz studies at UA, composed and performed the music for the play, which was mostly classical guitar. Wolfe said the opportunity to be a part of the project was one he couldn't pass up. "For years, we've wanted the opportunity to come together and create art that has not been done, that we know of, in this type of collaboration," he said. "Everyone learned so much in this project. It was a great opportunity for both the Cuban students and our own students."

As for Panitch, he said he did not relax until the second night. "I was sitting there in the back of the theatre watching Cubans respond to a 400-year-





UA theatre students and Cuban actors joined forces to bring *Merchant* to life.

old piece that was being directed by an American and being performed by professional Cuban actors and American student actors in Spanish, and I realized that we were making history," Panitch said. "I looked at the results of four years of work and was amazed, because I never thought it could get to this level."

Merchant received a great deal of coverage in Cuba and the international press, and the feedback was extremely positive. "To work with a professional of Settle's caliber is enriching; he taught us to know Shakespeare," Cartaya said. "The Cuban public had not had the opportunity to see *The Merchant of Venice* on stage, and after seeing the performance, theatre directors were stimulated to put on works of this important playwright, such as *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*."

It makes sense, then, that Panitch decided to try a similar collaboration on U.S. soil. Not even a year later, he directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* *En Español* right here at UA. Twelve actors from the CNAE teamed with nine UA theatre students to put on the play, which ran from Aug. 6 to 8, 2009, at the Allen Bales Theatre. Cartaya

again served as coordinator, as well as stage production manager, and Wolfe again composed the music, which this time was psychedelic and rock-themed, featuring music in the styles of Jimmy Hendrix and other 1960s artists. John Virciglio, dance choreographer and instructor; Donna Meester, costume designer and associate professor of theatre; and Rick Miller, set designer and assistant professor of theatre, also helped with the production.

Although the response was similar—applause, media attention and praise—the process was much different. "I could control rehearsals. I knew where the Cubans were," he said. In Cuba, delays had occurred due to broken down cars and various crises that needed attention. Here, there was none of that, and as a result, rehearsals took two weeks, said Panitch. "Even though the Cubans had a hard time focusing because they wanted to see everything."

A Better Understanding

Sitting in his office in Rowand-Johnson Hall, Panitch paused when asked for his most vivid memory of Cuba. He then began describing an afternoon at a café, where he sat next to a four-way intersection, watching people go by. "There was always music. People always seemed to be walking to music," he said. "Everyone was touching each other, there was such a compassion for their fellow people. I realized that this was a beautiful culture, and I wanted to understand it better."

And that understanding has taken root. After his two projects with Cuban actors, Panitch said he will never forget their unique qualities. "There's something dynamic about Cubans that no other culture has, and I wonder if it's partly because they've been so isolated

on the island," he said. "They had a distilled vitality that is unlike anything I had previously encountered."

Considering the success of both plays, more collaborations are possible, according to Panitch. "I think that this project has been successful enough that the University is willing to support that." And ISA has asked him to come again. "It's pretty much an open door," he said, but acknowledges it would be easy to keep putting it off, something he does not want to happen.

"The danger in these programs is we're going to get so caught up here we're not going to continue there, and we're going to lose it." He is well aware of that danger, and wants to prevent it from becoming a reality. There has been talk of May 2010 being a good time for another collaborative project, and though there are no specific plans mapped out, Panitch is confident there will be.

Cartaya mentioned that politics may still impose barriers on the program, but that impact might not be as harsh in the future. "This project served to open a communication bridge between the U.S. and Cuba, and as always, culture overcomes the politics of the moment," he said.

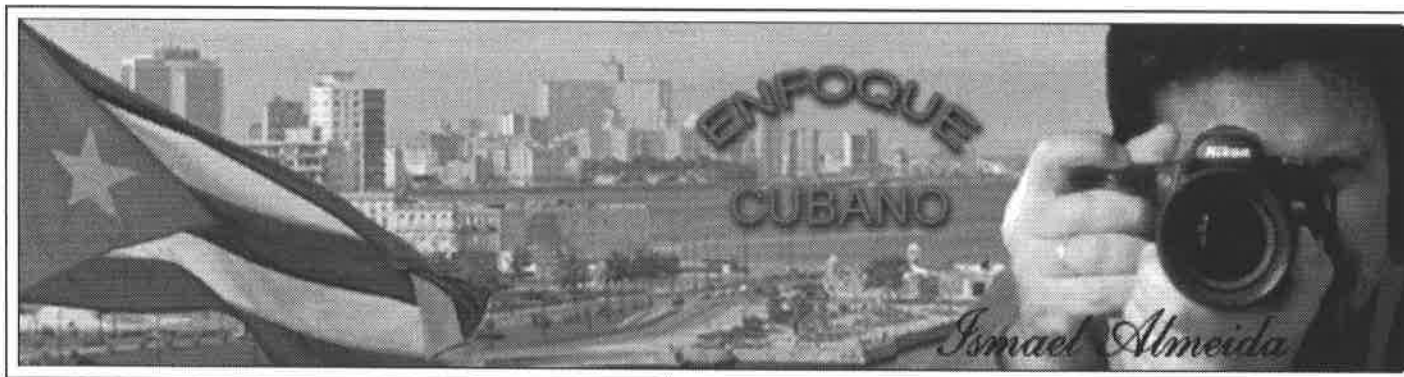
"I think that as times change and it becomes easier for us to have these relationships, the departments and universities that already have these relations are going to be at a great advantage, because we have been able to build up a level of trust," Panitch pointed out. "And in Cuba, trust is so important, especially when it comes to dealing with the U.S."

Regardless of the future, the outcome of the two Shakespeare projects was something nobody involved will ever forget. As Wolfe put it, "It's just fulfilling to be able to bring something about that we know students are going to look back on for the rest of their lives as a fond experience that, frankly, nobody has ever had." ■

(Quotes by Erich Cartaya were translated from Spanish by Lauren Cabral, with assistance from Miguel A. Gutiérrez and Mari E. Gutiérrez.)

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DOMINGO, 4 DE AGOSTO DE 2013

ALCESTIS ASCENDING

Por: Ismael Almeida

En la noche de ayer sábado la compañía Habanabama, que dirige el estadounidense Seth Panitch presentó la sexta y última función de su propuesta escénica **ALCESTIS ASCENDING**, en la sala principal del **Centro Cultural Raquel Revuelta**, en la calle Línea del Vedado en la capital cubana, después de diez presentaciones en New York.



TRANSLATION

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ANACAONA: DE QUINCE EN SUS OCHENTA



Hace unos días conocimos de algunas actividades por el aniversario ochenta de Anacaona. Quedamos en contacto con Georgia Aguirre, su directora, para adentrarnos un poco en la historia de esta emblemática agrupación...

OSMANI ESPINOSA, JOVEN COMPOSITOR QUE PROMETE

Theatre Professor Becomes First American to Direct Play in Cuba since Revolution

By Sarah Colwell

Seth Panitch, assistant professor of acting in the department of theatre and dance, directed The Merchant of Venice in Havana.

Panitch and his students' work is a part of the UA Cuba Initiative that is spearheaded by the College of Arts and Sciences.

The show was so successful that not only did it have several sold out evenings, but the Cuban ministry of culture is developing a tour of the production to travel throughout Cuba.

That success, however, did not come without some challenges, according to Panitch.



The Cuban production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* was directed by UA theatre professor Seth Panitch.

It wasn't until the performance's second night that Panitch began to breathe.

"I was sitting there in the back of the theatre watching Cubans respond to a 400-year-old piece of theatre that was being directed by an American and being performed by professional Cuban actors and American student actors in Spanish, and I realized that we were making history," Panitch said. "I looked at the results of four years of work and was amazed because I never thought it could get to this level."

In December, Panitch directed *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare at the Sala Teatro Adolfo Llauradó in Havana, Cuba. According to the theatre division of the Cuban ministry of culture, Consejo Nacional Artes Escénicas (CNAE), it is the first time an American has directed a play in Cuba since 1959.

Additionally, UA graduate students filled some of the roles in the play for one week in December, acting alongside professional Cuba actors from the four acting companies in Cuba. Professor Tom Wolfe, associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences and guitarist, performed the music for the play. The play ran from Dec. 17, 2008, to Jan. 4.

Seth Panitch, assistant professor in the theatre and dance department, directing professional Cuban actors for a Cuban production of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*.



of UA student actors spoke little to no Spanish despite the fact the play was in Spanish.

"The play was our translator," Panitch said in a Tuscaloosa News interview.

Second, Panitch's directing style and work pace clashed with the Cubans — Panitch is accustomed to putting on a show, start to finish, in about two weeks; the Cubans, on the other hand, were used to rehearsing a play for about a year before opening and taking two to four months just to block a performance.

"When I told them I was going to block the show in a week, they laughed," Panitch told The Tuscaloosa News. "When they realized I was serious, they were terrified."

Additionally, Panitch had a hard time finding a venue for the play where there wasn't a hole in the stage and finding consistent cast members. On opening night, Panitch only had six of the 12 Cubans he originally cast, and only three of those were in their original roles.

"There were only about three or four rehearsals where we had the whole group together," Panitch said in The Tuscaloosa News interview. "When I lost my Portia (the lead female role in the 'Merchant of Venice') four days before opening, I was on the ropes."

all the work that has been done behind the scenes to put on a 90-minute show in the middle of Havana."

The beginnings of the play started four years ago as a research project for Panitch to investigate and learn more about Cuban acting styles. Through that research project, he was introduced to the assistant minister at CNAE who offered to help Panitch in his research. Panitch made a request to direct a Shakespearean play in Cuba in Spanish.

In addition to Panitch and the UA students learning a lot from the experience, Panitch said several of the professional Cuban actors said they gained much from the experience as well.

"One of the actors told me he turned down two jobs with local soap operas so that he could continue to work on the play with us," Panitch said. "He said he turned it down because he was learning so much and wanted the opportunity to work with an American director and perform Shakespeare. He decided to forgo money for a great experience; I wonder how many American actors would do that."

Panitch and Wolfe conducted their creative activity research under a general Department of Treasury license that allows individuals doing professional research in their professional areas to travel to Cuba. Graduate students worked under a special license to UA that provides opportunities for graduate students to conduct research in Cuba as part of their curriculum. Since 2002, UA has received academic travel licenses from the U.S. Department of the Treasury that permit travel to Cuba for specific academic activities. ●

inside

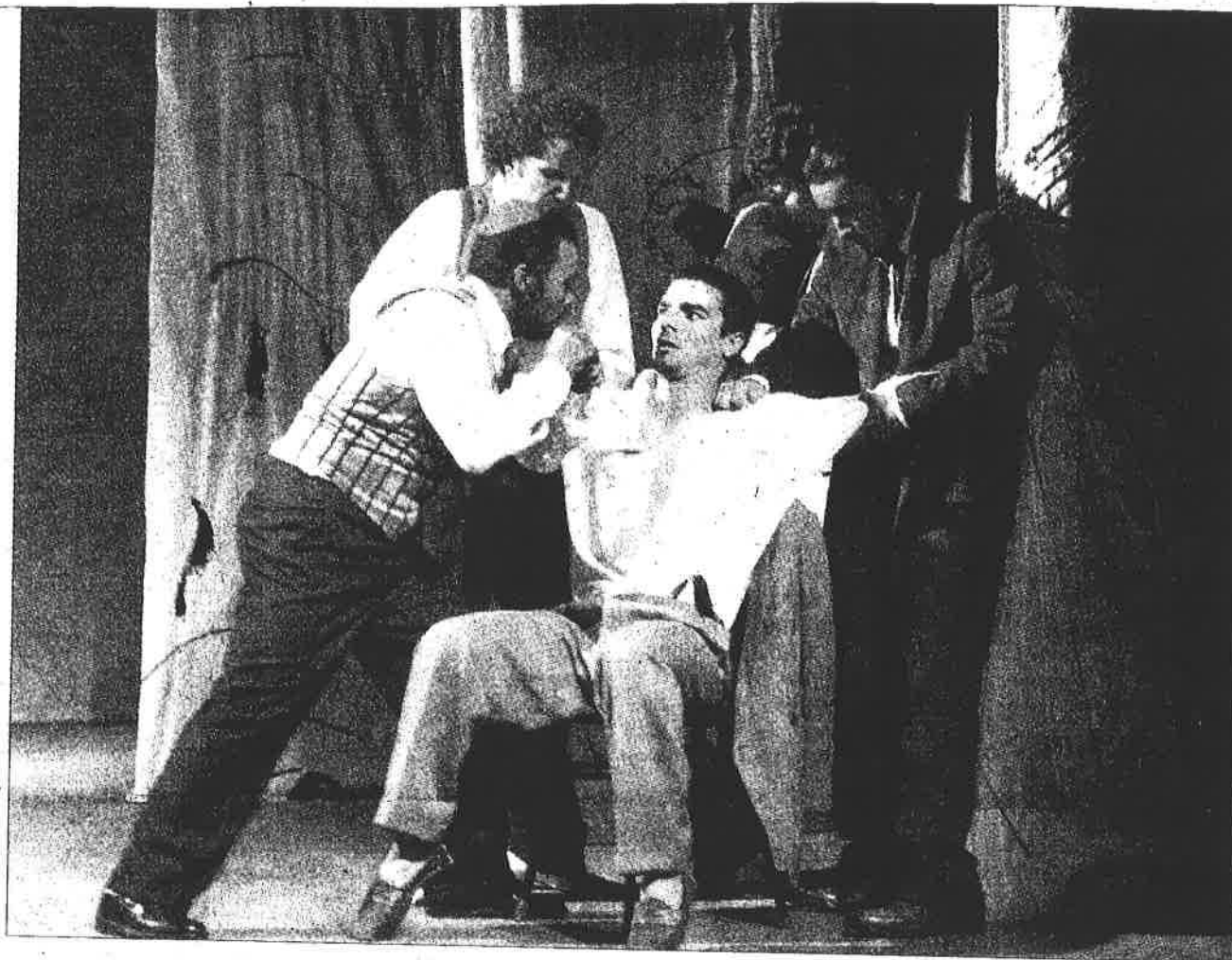
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Shakespeare play deepens ties between UA, Cuba

By Mark Hughes Cobb
Staff Writer

Cuba is less than 100 miles from the United States mainland, about the distance from Tuscaloosa to Montgomery, yet for 50 years it's been terra incognita for most Americans.

But over the past four years, Seth Panitch, assistant professor of acting at the University of Alabama Department of Theatre and Dance, has traveled there several times researching Cuban theater, which tends toward visceral, rapid, physical productions, over in 90 minutes or less without intermission, in part because they have no concessions to sell.

On his latest trip, at the end of 2008, Panitch directed a Spanish-language production of "The Merchant of Venice," the first Shakespeare work to be performed there in 11 years, at the Sala Teatro Adolfo Llauradó in Havana. Remarkably, it was also the first play directed by an

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STAFF PHOTOS | MARK HUGHES COBB

University of Alabama acting professor Seth Panitch, left, directs actors in the Cuban production of "The Merchant of Venice."

CUBA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1B

American in Cuba since the revolution, according to the ministry of culture's theater division, Consejo Nacional Artes Escénicas.

CNAE officials had asked Panitch what would most help him in his research.

He thought directing Cuban actors, in a style they're not familiar with, would be revealing.

"I wanted to work with people who hadn't worked with Shakespeare, and who wanted to be tested against the hardest material imaginable," he said. "I asked Barbara [Rivero, CNAE Vice President] why no American has directed down there and she said, 'I have no idea. No one's ever asked me.'"

"So the door opened; I just walked through it."

UA operates under an academic license from the U.S. Treasury Department, with partnerships so far including efforts in archaeology, biology, music and theater. The Crimson Tide baseball team also traveled to Cuba in December under the program. Guitarist Tom Wolfe, associate dean in UA's College of Arts and Sciences, another frequent traveler to Cuba, composed and performed for the production. A delegation from the Alabama-Cuba Initiative, including Arts & Sciences Dean Robert F. Olin, driving force behind the program, attended opening night.

On a trip in May, Panitch interviewed actors from the half-dozen major companies, then studied a dozen available venues. He picked the one without a hole in the stage. Like much of the country outside tourist areas, Cuban theaters have been subject to hard times and neglect. Everyone is skinny, and it's not from Pilates, Panitch said. Paper shortages are so severe that a prop letter was treated like a rare gem.

"Every time I go down there, there's a sense that we're so close, but there's also the fear that it could be taken away."

Seth Panitch,
assistant professor of acting
at the University of Alabama
Department
of Theatre and Dance

spare time to work on my pronunciation."

Cox, the least accomplished linguist, was prepared to be laughed at for his beginner's pronunciation, but audiences seemed pleased with the effort.

Language barriers fell as the actors began to grasp meaning from body language and inflections.

"The play was our translator," Panitch said.

His directing style, intense and guided but with room for initiative, clashed with the Cubans at first. In professional settings, he's used to putting a show on its feet in two weeks. Even at UA, he rarely has more than four weeks to rehearse. Companies in Cuba can rehearse for up to a year before performance; they may take two to four months just to block a play.

"When I told them I was going to block the show in a week, they laughed," he said. "When they realized I was serious, they were terrified."

Cuban theater actors get paid the same whether in rehearsal or performance, an average of \$15 to \$20 a month, which may barely cover their rent, so there's no incentive to get it up and running quickly. There's more drive to be great once they do perform: A good review can boost their pay; a bad one costs them, literally. Most book TV work, which pays better, to supplement theater.

There's not a great call there for heavily worded plays like Shakespeare's, because Cuban theater tends to be more immediate, violent, sexual.

Next came several months of paperwork, obtaining educational visas, and helping six UA graduate students find money, part of it from UA, to join in the project.

Acting students Jeremy Cox, Darin Cabot, Wade Mowles, Karina Croskrey and Sadie Magadanz, with costuming student Emma Cullimore, raised about half the money on their own. Cabot taught Paul Houghtaling's opera students stage combat lessons in spring and fall.

"I came out of that deal with about \$500, and that pretty much all went to Cuba," Cabot said.

Panitch chose "Merchant of Venice," making his cutting from translations by picking the one closest to the Bard's lines, for a handful of reasons. He'd acted in it twice and directed it once, so it felt familiar. Also, Cuba has a history of anti-Semitism, and "Merchant," with moneylender Shylock, weighs in heavily on themes of prejudice and tolerance.

"But the real reason is that 'Merchant of Venice' is about the outsider," he said. "If anybody knows how to be enemies, it's the U.S. and Cuba. Shylock and Antonio, to me that's Cuba and the U.S. Our cultures were blended once. And 'Merchant of Venice' asks if that break in cultures can't be resolved."

Suspicion was in the air at the first meeting. "They wanted to know who I was, what I was doing there," Panitch said, "because everybody wants something from Cuba. Once they learned I was down there to work, they began to warm up."

When the students arrived later, with a week of work until opening, tension returned.

"There was the sense of feeling each other out," Cabot said, "finding out what the other was about."

Many of the Cubans spoke some English, but both sides relied on translator and assistant director William Ruiz. Cabot had grown up studying and hearing Spanish in New Mexico, so he helped his fellow students with pronunciation. Cox went to sleep to the sound of Cabot's recorded voice saying lines.

"But Cuban is obviously different from Mexican," Cox said. "The Cuban actors were so generous in taking their

"They work very much in front of their noses. They deal with what's in front of them: identity, family, relationships," Panitch said. "They talk about the thing that most concerns them: survival."

"Astonishingly, even though they have no money, there is greater optimism in the Cuban actor, greater devotion, greater dedication. They share the closeness of people under duress. It's inspiring to see their commitment. It makes you look at your own work and say what the hell am I complaining about? We have so much."

They were also warm, affectionate, beautiful people, he said.

"You *have* to kiss them hello, or they feel offended."

Issues arose as actors dropped out for various reasons, including health problems; one returned to rehearsal days after surgery for breast cancer. Opening night, Panitch only had six of the 12 Cubans originally cast, and only three of those in original roles.

"There were only about three or four rehearsals where we had the whole group together," Panitch said. "When I lost my Portia four days before opening, I was on the ropes."

One of the leading company's directors had demanded that his actors come to rehearsals, so Panitch, on losing someone, would turn to his rehearsal audience and ask who else wanted to be in the show. Understudies shifted into place.

The multinational "Merchant" opened to much fanfare from TV and local press. It was a hit, selling out most evenings, having to turn away dozens some nights. More importantly, the cast had become more than a group of actors.

"By opening night, we had a company," Panitch said.

"Merchant" ran for a week with its mixed cast, then two weeks more with an all-Cuban group. It ended its run earlier this month, but there's talk of taking the production on tour.

CNAE has invited Panitch to return, which he longs to do in the near future.

"Every time I go down there, there's a sense that we're so close," he said, "but there's also the fear that it could be taken away."

Actualizado 1:45 P.M. (hora local)

La Habana, lunes 31 de agosto de 2009. Año 13 / Número 244

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CULTURA**Shakespeare llegó de Alabama**

AMELIA DUARTE DE LA ROSA

El teatro de William Shakespeare, uno de los escritores más socorridos en los últimos siglos, regresa a las tablas nacionales, en esta ocasión vestido con los sueños del amor, la magia, la amargura y el humor que el inglés plasmó en la obra **Sueño de una noche de verano**, hace poco más de 400 años.



La versión llega de la mano del director norteamericano Seth Panicht, producto de un intercambio cultural entre la Universidad de Alabama y el Consejo Nacional de las Artes Escénicas.

La historia de Hermia y Lisandro, Oberón y Titania, Teseo e Hipólita, Demetrio y Helena, gana la escena del teatro Bertolt Brecht con un joven elenco de actores de diferentes compañías como Mefisto Teatro, Teatro El Público, Rita Montaner, Argos Teatro y Aldaba Teatro. Llena de amores no correspondidos, triángulos amorosos e intervenciones sobrenaturales o mitológicas, la comedia romántica deriva en un espectáculo hilarante y ameno con evidentes matices contemporáneos. Suerte de flexibilidad textual que, sin alterar la esencia, permite experimentar con la acción y los personajes, trasladar la trama a un lenguaje moderno y acudir a referentes culturales actuales. Quizás en este sentido resida una de las mejores cualidades de la adaptación, cuyo diseño decorativo original no logró llegar a la escena del Brecht.

A pesar de que la obra tiene lugar en la villa de Teseo y en el bosque circundante, la propuesta no sucumbe por la concepción minimalista del escenario en cuanto a recursos técnicos, en cambio, logra una atmósfera intimista en la relación actor-espectador sujeta a la buena energía y humor que los jóvenes le imprimen a la actuación.

Sin embargo, el contexto del montaje cubano americano resulta una grata combinación de las artes y la experiencia entre dos maneras de hacer teatro. Durante un mes, los diez actores cubanos que protagonizan **Sueño...** trabajaron junto a jóvenes estadounidenses bajo el mando de Panicht y el novísimo dramaturgo William Ruiz, en el Teatro Allen Bales, de la ciudad de Tuscaloosa, en el estado de Alabama.

Seis funciones a teatro completo, según atestigua Ruiz —actualmente a cargo de las funciones en el Brecht— dejaron el buen sabor del intercambio cultural que dio sus primeros pasos el pasado año en nuestro país. El proyecto de la Facultad de Artes y Ciencias del estado sureño norteamericano comenzó con la puesta en escena de **El mercader de Venecia**, otro clásico de Shakespeare, en la Sala Adolfo Llauradó, con

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Shakespeare in Havana

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"The Merchant of Venice" by William Shakespeare, runs at the Adolfo Llauradó theater the first two weeks of December.

US actor and stage director Seth Panitch is the producer. Panitch has vast experience producing Shakespeare's plays.

It is indeed a good piece of theater and a remarkable event, which offers theatergoers the opportunity to enjoy a play by the world-famous English playwright, while at the same time opening new opportunities for cooperation between US and Cuban artists.

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The director's attention focuses on the ways in which Shakespeare's plays are traditionally interpreted. This is why, Panitch's work centers on a thorough textual analysis and the ways in which actors -- mostly young members of prestigious Cuban theater companies -- interpret Shakespeare's works. On the other hand, Panitch tries to bring the 1598 play into our time, through the actors' work, the little quirks that each of them contribute to their respective character. Instead of resorting to subterfuge, Panitch appeals to the way in which we, 21st century people, interpret these profoundly philosophical works.

In this play, characters are not portrayed in terms of black and white; there are no heroes and villains. It is a drama based on common contradictions among human beings.



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Alabama actors join Cubans to perform 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' in Spanish

BY JAY REEVES • THE ASSOCIATED PRESS • AUGUST 5, 2009

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TUSCALOOSA -- It's opening week for a new act in U.S.-Cuba relations: A Spanish-language version of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" is beginning a three-day run at the University of Alabama, starring professional actors from Havana.

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Anyone up for "Un Sueno de Una Noche de Verano"?

The Obama administration's decision to let 12 Cuban artists enter the United States for the production marks a midsummer milestone of sorts for greater U.S. openness toward the Communist-ruled island nation.

"This is beyond uncommon. No musician or performing group has been allowed in this country like this from Cuba since 2003," said Ned Sublette, a performer and composer from New York who has studied and written about Cuban music.

With nearly three weeks of rehearsals complete, the troupe of 10 Cuban actors and two managers are turning the Bard into a modern-day diplomat.

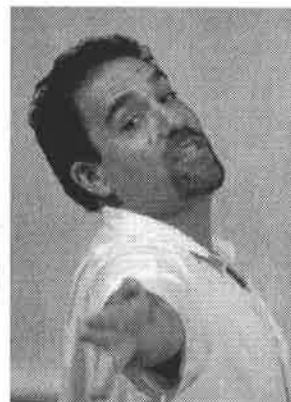
They will perform today through Saturday in a joint production with nine University of Alabama students and a Tuscaloosa-area actor.

The drama within the drama: the Cubans speak little English and the Americans, no Spanish. But together they are memorizing lines in Spanish to stage the 400-year-old romantic comedy about young lovers, fairies and an enchanted forest.

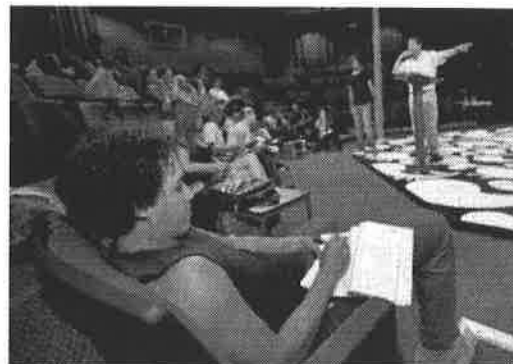
"None of the American actors speak Spanish," said director Seth Panitch, an assistant professor at the university who helped the Americans learn dialogue and even when to take their cues in a foreign language. "It's terrifying for the Americans."



Cuban and Alabama actors have been rehearsing for weeks for tonight's opening of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in Spanish in Tuscaloosa. (Dave Martin / AP)



University of Alabama assistant professor Seth Panitch works with a group of 10 Cuban actors, UA actors and a Tuscaloosa-area actor on the Shakespearean production at the university campus. The three-day run starts tonight and ends Saturday. (Dave Martin / AP)



Cuban actor Enrique Esteve takes notes as he and other actors prepare for the 90-minute production in Spanish. (Dave Martin / AP)

Panitch compressed about 21 1/2 hours of Shakespearean dialogue into 90 minutes of Spanish-language drama.

Allianne Portuondo Olivera, 23, said the communication gap hasn't been too wide. The Cuban actress

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AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Consejo Nacional

ARTES escénicas

La Habana, 6 de febrero de 2009

A QUIEN PUEDA INTERESAR,

Manifestamos nuestro beneplácito por el trabajo que Seth Panitch, profesor de la Universidad de Alabama, actor y director teatral, realizó en el montaje de *El Mercader de Venecia* con la participación de actores cubanos. La experiencia no solo fue un éxito en sus resultados como puesta en escena sino que significó un proceso de aprendizaje para todos los participantes en el proyecto. El trabajo del Sr. Panitch le permitió a los actores un encuentro y un estudio profundo de una obra de William Shakespeare desde la práctica y la teoría, un encuentro con una práctica teatral anclada profundamente en una larga tradición y una muy interesante perspectiva del trabajo profesional en el teatro. El balance del trabajo es favorable además por la experiencia como intercambio cultural y nos sentimos muy complacidos y orgullosos de haber sido parte de este proyecto.

Sin más, les saluda cordialmente,


Rafael Pérez-Malo
Vicepresidente Programación y Comunicación



COMMENDATION TRANSLATION

Havana, February 6 2009

We show our fine approval for the work that Seth Panitch, professor of the University of Alabama, actor and theatre director has done with the mounting of *The Merchant of Venice* with the participation of Cuban actors. The experience not only was a success in its results on stage, but it became a process of learning for all the participants involved in the project. The work of Mr. Panitch permitted the actors to have an encounter and deep study of Shakespearean practices and theory, an encounter of profound theater and a very interesting perspective of professional theater. The balance of the work is favorable furthermore as an experience of cultural interchange and we feel very pleased and proud to have been part of this project.

We salute you sincerely,

Rafael Perez-Malo
Vice President of Programming Communication
National Office of Scenic Arts
Ministry of Culture

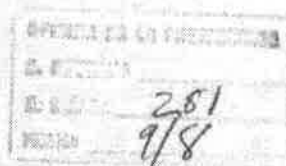
A la atención de autoridades académicas Universidad de Alabama

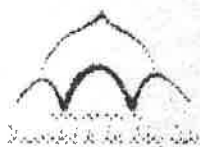
El Consejo Nacional de las Artes Escénicas del Ministerio de Cultura de Cuba, agradece la labor de intercambio liderada por el Profesor Seth Panitch. El trabajo conjunto realizado entre nuestras instituciones, al tiempo que significa sobre el desarrollo de proyectos creativos y artísticos, ha propiciado sinergias colaborativas en favor del relacionamiento cultural entre nuestros pueblos.

Las producciones escénicas resultadas de los proyectos han sido programadas en salas teatrales en ambos países, procurando la asistencia de públicos y especialistas. Hecho que avala la importancia de continuar estos intercambios amplificando sus alcances y visibilización en el futuro.

Cordialmente,

Gisela González Cordeira
Presidenta



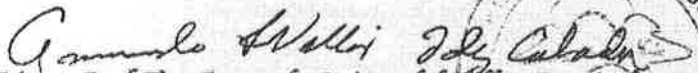


Ciudad de La Habana, 18 de Mayo de 2007.

La Facultad de Artes Escénicas expresa el RECONOCIMIENTO al Profesor SETH PANICHI por el Taller sobre Técnica Suzuki, impartido a los estudiantes que cursan el último año de la especialización de Actuación en esta Universidad de las Artes. El Taller, realizado desde el 14 al 18 de Mayo, contó con la participación de diez alumnos y dos profesores, quienes valoran los beneficios para su formación.

Han sido también muy útiles sus valoraciones sobre el trabajo de Tesis de Graduación de los estudiantes.

Cordialmente.


Mtro. Prof. Tit. Armando Suárez del Villar Fernández Cabada
Decano
Facultad de Artes Escénicas
Instituto Superior de Arte




Lic. Sonia Ortega Bravo
Dpto. Relaciones Internacionales
Instituto Superior de Arte

Dramatists Guild of America

July 13, 2012

Seth Panitch
248 Rowand-Johnson Hall
Box 870239
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487

Dear Mr. Panitch:

I was delighted to read about *Hell: Paradise Found* and wanted to write to invite you to become a member of the Dramatists Guild today.

It's a simple truth. There really is strength in numbers. For nearly a century, the people who write for the stage have had an advocate, a cheerleader, a safe haven and a community thanks to the Dramatists Guild.

Arthur Miller liked to tell the following story about the day he joined.

"It was the early 1940s. I got a call from a producer named John Golden who owned a theater on 45th Street that still has his name on it. He wanted to talk to me about writing a play. I went to see him . . . I was curious about a bookcase behind his desk filled with at least two hundred leather bound volumes. I reached up and opened one of the books. It was a play written by some name I didn't know and John Golden. I opened another volume—a play by someone and John Golden. All the books were plays going back to the turn of the century co-authored by John Golden . . . I told him I didn't know he was a playwright. 'No,' he explained. 'I buy the plays and fix them up and put my name on them.' Who gets the royalties? 'I get the royalties.' I left the office and went over and joined the Dramatists Guild."

Much has changed since those heady days but much has not. The theatre still remains one of the few places where the work of the writer is respected and protected in large part thanks to the efforts of our Guild. We invite you to join your fellow playwrights, composers and lyricists by standing together for the unrivaled value of what we do—it all starts with us.

Call me anytime and I'd be glad to answer any questions you might have concerning the Guild and the benefits of membership.

Sincerely,



Roland Tec
Director of Membership

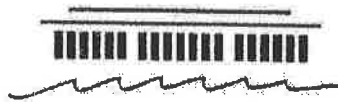
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SETH PANITCH

**EXCELLENCE IN DIRECTION
2011**

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FEBRUARY 1, 2012

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SETH PANITCH

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SETH PANITCH

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UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

FEBRUARY 1, 2011

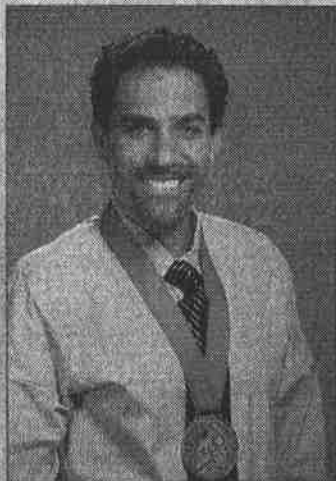
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2011

Druid Arts Awards



The Arts and Humanities Council of Tuscaloosa County honored artists, volunteers, educators, corporate sponsors, a "home grown" artist and a patron of the arts at the 19th Druid Arts Awards on Thursday, April 21, 2011 at the historic Bama Theatre. Twenty years ago, the Arts and Humanities Council realized that the number of talented and dedicated people who were working as volunteers, artists and educators in the West Alabama community was very large and growing rapidly. The Council also realized the work of these individuals often was not publicly recognized. It was for this reason that the Druid Arts Awards were established as an annual, and now bi-annual (since 2003) presentation to recognize individuals who have achieved distinction over a number of years in the arts in Tuscaloosa County. Awards in the disciplines of music, theatre, literary art, visual art, and dance are presented, along with the Patron of the Arts Award, and one or more Special Awards. Twelve years ago, a Corporate Sponsor of the Year Award was added. As well as recognizing deserving individuals, the Council also wanted to recognize the significance of corporate support in our community. A "Home Grown" award was added in 2009 in response to the desire to recognize individuals who, after spending their early years under the influence of the local artistic and educational community, have achieved significant recognition among their peers on a national and international level. The following pages feature the winners of the 2011 Druid Arts Awards.



Theater Educator
Seth Panitch



Dance Artist
Madison Ray Leavelle



Dance Artist
Amy Cole Ahmed



Dance Volunteer
Debbi West



Theatre Volunteers
Faye and Billy Pearson



Literary Artist
Joseph Wood
Slash Pine Press



Special Award
The University of Alabama
College of Arts & Sciences
Dean Robert Olin



Guests and award recipients are seen during the reception prior to the 19th Druid Arts Awards at the Bama Theatre.

Office of the President

December 19, 2013

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
FOUNDED 1831

Professor Seth A. Panitch
5472 Park Avenue
Tuscaloosa, AL 35406

Dear Professor ~~Seth~~ Panitch:

It is my pleasure to inform you that you have been chosen as the recipient of the 2013 Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award. As a recipient of this prestigious award, you will join a remarkable group of our most distinguished faculty.

The Burnum Award recognizes faculty members who are excellent scholars and teachers. Your creative achievements inspire your students and bring credit to The University of Alabama. We are proud to have you as a faculty member who exemplifies the integration of teaching, research, and service.

Dean David Francko, chairman of the Burnum Award Committee, will contact you to coordinate arrangements for your public lecture and awards dinner.

You are most deserving of this honor, and we are proud of your accomplishments.

Sincerely,



Judy Bonner
President

JB/kn

c: Dr. Joe Benson
Dean David Francko
Dean Robert F. Olin
Professor William Teague



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Office of the Dean and
Associate Provost

January 6, 2014

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
GRADUATE SCHOOL

Professor Seth A. Panitch
Department of Theatre and Dance
The University of Alabama
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487

Dear Professor ^{Seth} Panitch:

Congratulations on being named the thirty-fourth winner of the Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award. As you know, this award is to recognize and promote excellence in research, scholarship, and teaching. You have demonstrated superior creative achievements and a profound dedication to the art of teaching, all of which are distinctive and bring credit to the academic community. As Chair of the Burnum Award Committee, I can assure you that we are all impressed with your accomplishments.

As President Bonner pointed out to you in her letter, there will be an opportunity for you to give a public lecture, followed by a reception, and dinner in the spring semester (probably April). We will be in touch with you about specific plans. Call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



David A. Francko
Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

DF/kn

c: Professor William Teague

The University of Alabama

University of Alabama News

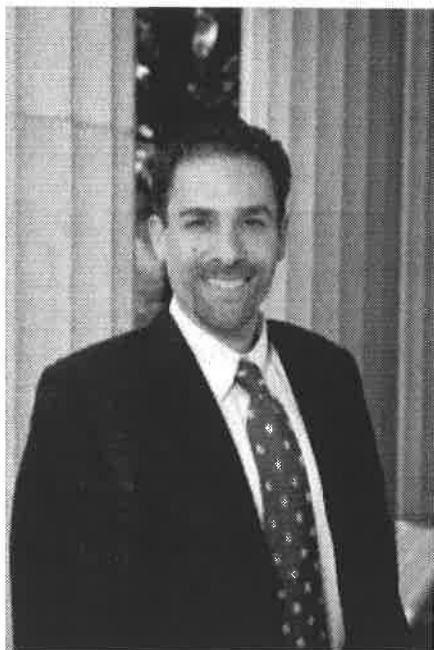
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Panitch Named UA's 2014 Burnum Award Winner

Apr 17, 2014 | Tags: [College of Arts & Sciences](#), [Department of Theatre & Dance](#) | Posted in [Awards & Honors](#), [Faculty & Staff](#) |

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — Following his passion has led Seth Panitch to some interesting places, from the stage, to overseas, and finally to the department of theatre and dance at The University of Alabama. The zeal he brings to the next generation of acting students has led Panitch to the 2014 Burnum Award.

The Burnum Award is one of the highest honors the University bestows on its faculty. Established by Celeste Burnum and the late Dr. John F. Burnum, of Tuscaloosa, it is presented annually to a professor who is judged by a faculty selection committee to have demonstrated superior scholarly or artistic achievements and profound dedication to the art of teaching. Panitch's selection for the award is gratifying for those who work closely with him.



Seth Panitch

“Seth is a model faculty member in every way,” said William Teague, chair of the department of theatre and dance. “He sets high standards for himself in his professional work, whether it be directing, writing or performing. He expects no less from his students. And they have learned that by buying into his process, they will succeed.”

“Over the last eight years, his students have participated in three Off-Broadway productions, multiple performances in Cuba, Shakespeare festivals in Utah, Colorado and Texas, as well as countless projects here at the University,” said Teague. “His students have an implicit trust in Seth. That trust has been earned, and it is that trust that makes him an excellent educator.”

For his part, Panitch sees the Burnum Award as something to live up to.

“It is more than a little humbling to receive an award stamped by so many of our most distinguished faculty,” he said. “Rather than thrash about in a pool of self-doubt, I am resolved to look at this award as a call to action – to live up to the fine work of the superior educators that have preceded me.”

Panitch, associate professor of acting and director of the undergraduate and Master of Fine Arts acting programs at UA, is quietly racking up awards for his teaching skills. In addition to the Burnum Award, he earned the 2010 Alabama National Alumni Association’s Outstanding Commitment to Teaching award. That same year, he was named the Druid Arts educator of the year. He also earned a Leadership Board Faculty Fellowship from 2009-2012.

The University will present the award at 4:30 p.m. April 24 at the Child Development Center. Panitch will present a lecture: “My Life in the Theatre ... Or ‘What Happened?’” The event is open to the public, and a public reception will follow.

Panitch is uniquely qualified for the Burnum Award, said Dr. Robert Olin, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

“Seth Panitch is a valuable asset to our College and University,” Olin said. “While he is highly accomplished as an actor, playwright and director, he is particularly dedicated to his students. When appearing on stage, Seth is surrounded by his students in all of the other roles. He becomes a literal ‘role’ model, always professional in his approach, constantly coaching and supporting the students.

“In the classroom, he is known as a gifted, tough, demanding, fair, intuitive and exciting teacher,” Olin said. “He brings distinction to The University of Alabama.”

Panitch has worked internationally in Havana, Cuba with the Ministry of Culture, directing productions of “The Merchant of Venice,” “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” “The Importance of Being Earnest,” “Beyond Therapy” and his own play, “Alcestis Ascending”; Off-Broadway at the Harold Clurman Theatre, American Place Theater, Westbeth Theater Center, 59E59 Theatre and Urban Stages Theatre; regionally at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Utah Shakespearean Festival, Texas Shakespeare Festival and Idaho Repertory Theatre; and in Los Angeles at the Globe Playhouse, Odyssey Theatre, Complex Theatre and the Hillside Repertory Company.

His documentary, “A Night in the Theatre,” has been published by Insight Media and his plays, “Dammit, Shakespeare!,” “Hell: Paradise Found,” “What’s Taking Moses So Long?” and “Alcestis Ascending,” have received critical success in both New York and Los Angeles productions.

At The University of Alabama, Panitch has directed “Into the Woods,” “Henry V,” “Romeo and Juliet,” “The Heiress,” “Saint Joan,” “Animal Crackers,” “Fifth of July,” “The Government Inspector,” “An Enemy of the People,” “Moby-Dick,” “Animal Crackers,” “Othello” and “Seven Guitars,” and he has performed as a guest artist in “Moon Over Buffalo,” “A Flea in Her Ear” and “Blithe Spirit.”

Panitch received his Master of Fine Arts in acting at the University of Washington’s Professional Actor’s Training Program and is a member of both the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers and the Dramatists Guild of America.

UA’s department of theatre and dance is part of the College of Arts and Sciences, the University’s largest division and the largest liberal arts college in the state. Students from the College have won numerous national awards including Rhodes Scholarships, Goldwater Scholarships, Truman Scholarships and memberships on the USA Today Academic All American Team.

The University of Alabama, a student-centered research university, is experiencing significant growth in both enrollment and academic quality. This growth, which is positively impacting the campus and the state's economy, is in keeping with UA's vision to be the university of choice for the best and brightest students. UA, the state's flagship university, is an academic community united in its commitment to enhancing the quality of life for all Alabamians.

- **CONTACT:** Bobby Mathews, UA media relations, bwmathews1@ua.edu, 205/348-4956
- **SOURCE:** Seth Panitch, spanitch@as.ua.edu, 205/348-4300

Related News

- [UA Press Awards Manuscript Prizes](#)
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April 18, 2011

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
A L U M N I

Professor Seth Panitch
College of Arts and Sciences
The University of Alabama
Box 870239
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Dear Seth:

Congratulations on being selected as one of the four **2011 Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award (OCTA)** recipients.

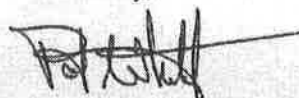
Since 1976, the National Alumni Association has recognized professors for their distinguished service with this award. Each year a selection committee carefully reviews numerous nominations seeking four faculty members who have displayed an outstanding commitment to teaching.

As a recipient, you will receive a handsome plaque and a cash stipend. Presentation of the awards will be made at the first fall faculty meeting, and the National Alumni Association will host a reception that evening in honor of the OCTA recipients at NorthRiver Yacht Club.

Enclosed is a list of the National Alumni Association's 2011 Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award recipients. If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me or Robin Elmore at 348-1545.

On behalf of the National Alumni Association, we are thrilled to honor you.

Sincerely,



Pat Whetstone
Director of Alumni Affairs

Enclosure

2011 Teaching Award Winners Recognized

The University of Alabama National Alumni Association has announced the 2011 recipients of the University's highest honor for excellence in teaching – the Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Awards.

Established in 1976, OCTA recognizes dedication to the teaching profession and the positive impact outstanding teachers have on their students. The National Alumni Association, which gives the annual OCTA awards, is made up of more than 31,000 active alumni and friends of the University organized into more than 100 local chapters nationwide. The association stimulates interest in and supports the betterment of the University and awards \$2.5 million per year in academic scholarships.



Seth Panitch

Professor Seth Panitch is associate professor of acting and directs the MFA and BA acting programs for the department of theatre and dance at UA. Although his particular area of expertise is the study of classical theatre in performance, he has also developed on-camera acting courses in conjunction with the department of telecommunication and film to prepare graduates for the multi-medium reality of professional acting.

His retooling of the undergraduate and graduate acting curriculum includes technique coursework in musical improvisation, Suzuki physical training, classical clowning, character mask, film and television performance, comedic styles (from Shakespeare to Seinfeld) and stage combat.

He has directed 10 productions for the department of theatre and dance and performed onstage as a guest artist in "Moon Over Buffalo," "A Flea in Her Ear" and "Blithe Spirit." He directs the yearly MFA/Senior Actor NYC Showcase, which presents graduating actors the opportunity to audition before New York agents, producers and casting directors.

In 2008, Panitch became the first American director in decades to helm a professional production for the Cuban Ministry of Culture when he directed a Spanish-language production of Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice" at the Teatro Adolfo Llauro in Havana. The following year, he brought up a company of professional Cuban actors to work with UA students on a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." ●



Dr. Lawrence F. Kohl

Dr. Lawrence F. Kohl joined UA's history department in 1987 after teaching at Fordham University in New York City. In his 25 years at UA, he has taught 30 different courses, including every level of history course from beginning surveys to directing doctoral dissertations.

In addition to teaching regularly in the Interim program and summer term, Kohl has taught in the honors program, the Blount Undergraduate Initiative and the study abroad program. In the history department, he has served as both the director of undergraduate and of graduate studies and as interim department chair. While director of graduate studies, he created and taught the first course on "Teaching History" for graduate students in the department.

An interest in Irish participation in the American Civil War led Kohl to offer courses on both Irish and Irish-American history, as well as teach Irish history in UA's study abroad pro-

Civil War, and he has appeared in television documentaries on the History Channel and the Smithsonian Channel.

He is the recipient of the Last Lecture Award, the Lilly Teaching Distinguished Teaching Fellow of the College of Arts and Sciences



Dr. Patrick R. LeClair

Dr. Patrick R. LeClair joined the UA astronomy in 2005, following a th at the Massachusetts Institute of ily teaches introductory and mid- maintains an active research group materials.

Since 2008, LeClair has been for physics and astronomy. His m implementing personal, face-to-f student every semester and cham and computer engineering double responsible for increasing majors four years.

LeClair has been actively committed to revising the undergra With the help of a teaching grant from the College of Arts and Sci developed and implemented a computerized laboratory system fo magnetism labs which has been in use ever since. In 2009-2010, "Modern Physics" laboratory with entirely new equipment and a c fall 2009, he and Dr. Ray White developed a freshman seminar co physics and astronomy majors to the latest developments in the f

At UA, LeClair has also been a pioneer in the use of social me be engaged by interacting with the tools they enjoy and feel com

College of Arts and Sciences

Office of the Dean

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
ARTS & SCIENCES

American Studies

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Religious Studies

Theatre and Dance

Women's Studies



105 Clark Hall
Box 870268
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0268
(205) 348-7007
fax (205) 348-0272

May 26, 2009

Assistant Professor Seth Panitch
Department of Theatre and Dance
P. O. Box 870239
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Dear Seth:

I want to congratulate you on being selected as a 2009-2012 College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Board Fellow. Everyone on our selection committee, which included members of our Leadership Board, commented on the high caliber of the group of nominees and struggled over who to select. That you were one of three selected from this highly talented and respected group speaks volumes about your work as a scholar and teacher.

As a Leadership Board Fellow, you will receive \$3,000 a year for three years to support non-salary expenses of your work. This may include travel expenses, graduate or undergraduate student support, research materials, or equipment. The College also wishes that you list the designation Leadership Board Fellow as part of your academic title during those three years. Rebecca Florence from my office will be in touch with you to arrange a commitment number for your fellowship funds.

The College of Arts and Sciences Leadership Board consists of 140 alumni and friends of who support the College with their friendship, advocacy, and a minimum contribution of \$1,000 in annual membership dues. The board elected to use a portion of their dues to establish and support the Leadership Board Fellows as a way of signifying its respect and the respect of your faculty colleagues for your academic excellence and the distinction you bring to the College and the University.

Congratulations again and best wishes for a pleasant and productive summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bob'.

Robert F. Olin, Ph.D.
Dean

C: Professor Bill Teague