Calendar of events

Fabulation, or the Re-Education of Undine
by Lynn Nottage
DIRECTED BY JERRELL L. HENDERSON (GC15)
January 30–February 8
Josephine Louis Theater

Wild Party
Music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa
DIRECTED AND CHOREOGRAPHED
BY MATT RAFTERY
February 13–March 1
Ethel M. Barber Theater

Danceworks 2015: Ties That Bind
ARTISTIC DIRECTED BY JEFF HANCOCK
February 27–March 8
Josephine Louis Theater

The Grapes of Wrath
by Frank Galati
Based on the novel by John Steinbeck
DIRECTED BY AARON SNOOK (GC15)
April 4–May 3
Ethel M. Barber Theater

The Waa-Mu Show: Gold
DIRECTED BY DAVID H. BELL
May 1–10
Cahn Auditorium

In the Next Room, or The Vibrator Play
by Sarah Ruhl
DIRECTED BY LAUREN SHOUSE (GC15)
May 15–24
Josephine Louis Theater

AMTP Workshop: La Révolution Française
French text by Alain Boublil
and Jean-Max Riviera
Music by Claude-Michel Schönberg
and Raymond Jeannot
English translation by Michael Mahler (Co4)
DIRECTED BY DAVID H. BELL
May 28–29 (tentative)

Visit www.communication.northwestern.edu/wirtz for more information and tickets.

In this issue

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School of Communication alumna and star of screen and stage Ana Gasteyer (C89) visited campus as the Homecoming Parade’s Grand Marshal in October. During her stay she made time to speak to a group of Northwestern students, including theatre majors and representatives from the student improv group Mee-Ow. Rives Collins, associate professor of theatre and one of Gasteyer’s former teachers, moderated the chat.

On the cover: Matthew Mueller and Dara Cameron (C06) in Asolo Rep’s spring production of Hero: The Musical (see page 6)
Northwestern’s 2011 strategic plan, We Will, identified design as one of 10 topical areas that will be most critical to the future of the University. Those of us who study the communication arts and sciences readily agreed with that decision. In rhetoric and poetics, from their historical origins to our present-day disciplines, the invention of new solutions has always been a central emphasis of teaching and scholarship. As inventio in classical theories and pedagogies, it referred to the art of building new arguments or poetic forms and defined a way of approaching communication that persists to this day.

Today, message design and interaction design form the core of communication studies. Devising, adapting, scripting, and scoring are all ways of designing new dramatic material, and of course the creation of drama crucially depends on the design of sound, lighting, costumes, scenery, locations, and myriad other aspects of production. Our faculty and students in communication sciences and disorders have a strong focus on translational science, in which the basic science of speech, language, learning, and hearing is transformed into new diagnostic tools, new therapeutic regimens, new augmentative and rehabilitative technologies, and new policy solutions.

In this issue of Dialogue we show how this pervasive and longstanding intellectual commitment to design has been transformed into practical effects by curricular and cocurricular incubators devised to encourage the development of new solutions. The school houses a growing number of such “greenhouses” in which faculty and students can develop their ideas. Some, like the intercollegiate debate program, are as old as Northwestern. Others, like the American Music Theatre Project and the new Sitcom Project, are relatively young. Some, like WNUR, were created by the administration, but many more—including Waa-Mu, Mee-Ow, StuCo, Studio 22, Niteskool, NSTV, and Inspire Media—emerged as generations of students sought spaces where they could create, test, and adapt new ideas.

And now our Office of External Programs, Internships, and Career Services (EPICS) is working with all our departments and with student activities to bring leaders from the creative industries to campus to advise students and faculty about how to turn their ideas into realities. Our curriculum offers new courses where both the theoretical and the practical sides of the creative process can be mentored by faculty and mastered by students. With help from our generous alumni community, we have been able to expand investment in faculty and student projects.

We know these curricular and cocurricular experiences create spectacularly effective opportunities for students to master the communication arts and sciences—and doing so is our core mission. But we are proud that in addition to nurturing students, we nurture creative solutions—and this issue of Dialogue focuses on the ideas our community has invented and the impact they have had on the world outside Northwestern.
In 2011 Northwestern University’s strategic plan set forth a platform of 10 strengths that will lift the University to even higher heights. This issue of Dialogue is the sixth in a series sharing the ways our School of Communication community contributes to Northwestern’s future.
DESIGN IS ONE OF THE GREATEST STRENGTHS OF OUR UNIVERSITY—
DISCOVERING CREATIVE, MULTIDISCIPLINARY SOLUTIONS TO LARGE, COMPLEX PROBLEMS.
ENGINEERING, BUSINESS, EDUCATION, AND THE ARTS
COME TOGETHER AS PROBLEM-SOLVING COMMUNITIES
CAPABLE OF TACKLING VIRTUALLY ANY CHALLENGE.
IGNITING THE SPARK
OF INNOVATION

Back in 2000, a man named Davy Rothbart found a handwritten note left on his car by someone he didn’t know—left for someone who wasn’t, in fact, Davy Rothbart. The note was filled with expletives and misunderstandings—but also personality, hope, and a story. Rothbart was hooked. That single message started a collection of found missives, fliers, and photos. The collection became a magazine, then a series of books. Then in 2007, with the help of Benjamin “Jamie” Salka (C99), Lee Overtree (C02), and Eli Bolin (C00), the collection started to become something altogether new: a stage musical.

This fall, Found: A New Musical enjoyed a highly successful run by New York’s Atlantic Theater Company, and some of the city’s top theatre critics found a new favorite. TimeOut New York gave the show a four-star review. The New York Post called it the “date-night show of the season.” Found even became a New York Times Critics’ Pick.

So how did a bunch of misplaced sticky notes, doodles, and Polaroid photos find legs as a “gloriously strange” (New York Times), “winsomely quirky” (New York Post), “form-exploding” (Theatremania) creation? How does any new innovation take place?

That’s right: innovation. Innovation is a word often reserved for science or business. But designing new creative work requires the same entrepreneurial drive, the same nimble thinking, the same team-building skills, the same time and space needed by invention in any industry. And—to paraphrase what they say about Ginger Rogers dancing the same steps as Fred Astaire only backwards and in high heels—innovation in the arts often happens under bright lights in front of an expectant audience, with the curtain rising promptly at eight.

FINDING INSPIRATION

The School of Communication has always been a center of innovation. Alumnus and faculty member Raymond Carhart (GC34, GC36) founded the field of audiology after returning to Northwestern from World War II with firsthand knowledge of how soldiers’ hearing could be rehabilitated. In the arts, legendary acting teacher Alvina Krause (C28, GC33) changed the way acting was taught—and influenced a generation of stars, including many alumni who remain household names.

Through the years, through all fields, alumni have been inventing and reinventing the world around us. Judi Sheppard Missett (C66) developed a new exercise program set to music that is still a top international franchise—Jazzercise. Just a few years ago, Zachary Johnson (C10) founded Syndio Social, a social data software company that this year was named one of the “100 Brilliant Companies” by Entrepreneur magazine.
In the world of television, Agnes Nixon (C44) invented a more contemporary kind of soap opera when she created the series *One Life to Live*. Garry Marshall (J56) ushered in a golden age of TV comedy with 1970’s *The Odd Couple*. Today Stephen Colbert (C86) is renowned for his invented persona, also named Stephen Colbert, and a new kind of performed satire that has earned him multiple Emmy Awards, while Greg Berlanti (C94) reinvented comic book heroes as TV heroes with *Arrow* and *Flash*, both for The CW.

In the theatrical realm, a group of School of Communication alumni founded the groundbreaking Lookingglass Theatre Company in 1988, and—within a few years of one another—alumni faculty members Frank Galati (C65, GC67, GC71) and Mary Zimmerman (C82, GC85, GC94) both earned Tony Awards for reinventing classic stories (*The Grapes of Wrath* and *Metamorphoses*, respectively). With roots in “creative dramatics,” a field first developed at Northwestern by alumna faculty member Winifred Ward (C1905), 10 alumni founded Story Pirates, a national arts education organization, in 2003.

In film, our alumni have always been pioneers, and not only as actors. Consider Thomas Hoegh (C92), who founded Arts Alliance and Arts Alliance Media, leading international companies in digital film financing, marketing, and distribution. They’re business people, like Emily Gerson Saines (C86), who formed the boutique talent management company Brookside Artist Management, and Jeff Kwatinetz (C87, GC87), who cofounded the talent management company The Firm and later the production company Prospect Park. Of course, they also make the pictures as well as the deals: Bill Bindley (C84) and Scott Bindley (C88) run Gulfstream Pictures for Warner Bros. Studios. In 2008 Spencer Silna (C07), Adi Shankar (C07), and Doug Saylor (J87) founded 1984 Private Defense Contractors, a film company known for action and crime features.

*(continued on page 6 ➤)*
Just these few examples help illustrate why the School of Communication is rising to the top of such lists as the Hollywood Reporter’s top schools for the study of drama and film. Our alumni make the best case that Northwestern is the incubator where tomorrow’s innovators in the communication arts and sciences develop.

**ENTREPRENEURS IN THE CLASSROOM**

One reason: Innovation is part of the curriculum. That focus is also mirrored by a faculty filled with active thinkers and doers (see page 9). New spaces and renovations are giving our students and faculty the physical environment they need to gather and share ideas. All this, plus co- and extracurricular activities (see page 10) that give students the reins, help build an ideal incubator for new ideas, connections, and collaborations.

Examples? Take communication studies professor Irving Rein’s course Development and Marketing of Popular Culture, in which students pitch ideas for sitcoms, then form teams to refine ideas, write portions of a pilot, act out scenes, and develop a media kit for their show, including 30- and 60-second commercials.

“They do the whole thing,” said Rein, who has been teaching the course for many years, sometimes with guest lecturers such as Kwatinetz. “Not many places have the students and the alumni to make this work.” Former students of the class have gone on to big things, including **Jeremy Latcham (C03)**, who took the class, assisted with another section of it, and is now an executive producer for *Avengers: Age of Ultron* and *Guardians of the Galaxy.*

Michael Mahler (C04) and Aaron Thielen had a quirky, movie-ready story idea: a struggling comic book artist fights his own demons in the real world, where heroes are not all that easy to find. Except Thielen, artistic director of the Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire, and Mahler, a Chicago-based composer and lyricist, didn’t want to pitch their story for the silver screen. They wanted to set it to music.

“It’s very tricky creating an original musical,” Mahler said. “It’s often easier to start with a movie or book, because the story is already set. With a new work, we’ve got to make sure the story tracks and demands to be sung, and that requires a lot of fine-tuning.”

With production costs at an all-time high and critics and audiences expecting perfection, creating an original musical is harder than ever. It’s no wonder Broadway has become crowded with musical
revivals. But the American Music Theatre Project is working to change that by allowing new and original works the space and air to breathe, develop, and evolve.

Created in 2005 at the School of Communication, AMTP was the brainchild of now-retired Northwestern theatre professor Dominic Missimi and theatre and film producer Stuart Oken, former cohead of Disney Theatrical Productions. Designed to help nurture and develop original work, AMTP has been the incubator for a host of new musicals. In 2011 Mahler and Thielen’s Hero: The Musical was invited to become an AMTP work in progress.

Mahler describes it as an incredible opportunity to refine the show and to see how it could be improved. “The AMTP workshop was instrumental in getting it to the place it is now,” said Mahler, who wrote the music and lyrics. “We had a dedicated couple of weeks, with really incredible actors, and we got to hear our production come to life. We got to see what was working and what wasn’t. We really restructured the whole thing. We threw out songs and wrote better ones, and it finally felt like, at the end of that, we were onto something.”

And they were. Hero’s first professional production, directed and choreographed by Northwestern theatre professor and Donald G. Robertson Director of Music Theatre David H. Bell for Marriott Lincolnshire, won the 2012 Joseph Jefferson Award—Chicago’s answer to the Tony Awards—for best new work—musical. Hero also recently finished a successful run at the Asolo Repertory Theatre in Sarasota, Florida. Mahler said the productions wouldn’t have been possible without the development at AMTP.

“To have a laboratory, to have all these facilities at your fingertips, and nothing stopping you from writing other than the writing itself, is just priceless,” said Mahler. “We learned so much. Every opportunity, we got to see it with fresh eyes.”

Not only did the AMTP workshop help the writers hone their work, but it also offered students the opportunity to work with professionals, including alumni in pivotal roles. Workshop cast members included Northwestern alumni Heidi Kittenring (C95), Alex Goldklang (C12), Kelley Abell (C12), Jon Harrison (C12), Dara Cameron (C06), and Brad Weinstock (C06). Also involved were School of Communication associate professor Anna Kuzmanic (GC04) as costume designer and theatre lecturer Ryan Nelson as music director.

Kittenring, Goldklang, Abell, Harrison, Cameron, Nelson, and Bell reprised their roles for the Marriott production, and Cameron, Weinstock, Kuzmanic, Nelson, and Bell returned to Asolo Rep.

Bell, also AMTP’s artistic director, said stage artists are drawn to the program’s creative process. “An incubator is exactly the right word for AMTP,” he said. “And that’s why it’s so important for the world of music theatre. There are very few places to develop new work right out of the gate. At AMTP the very first thing you get to do is hear a first or second draft read by a company of actors who sing the roles. To be given the opportunity to hear and see your work performed aloud is a real gift.”

It’s an opportunity that’s being noticed by major players in the world of musical theatre who yearn for a space to explore their own creativity. This past fall two-time Tony Award winner Larry Grossman (C60) brought his Scrooge in Love to AMTP for a workshop. This spring AMTP hosts Claude-Michel Schönberg and Alain Boublil, creators of Les Misérables and Miss Saigon, for a new English version of La Résolution Française—a musical they wrote 30 years ago that has never before been produced in English. Bell said it will be a great opportunity for students to work with Broadway heavy hitters, but the visiting artists also benefit from space and time to reinvent their work.

Missimi agreed, saying that opportunities are rare for taking a risk with new work for musical theatre, especially given Broadway’s lack of support for risky and adventurous work. “We have built an innovative and adventurous laboratory for the arts,” Missimi said. “We have seen more than seven major musical productions grace our stages, and over a dozen readings and workshops of musicals-in-progress. Many of these projects have gone on to future production and development opportunities across the country, showcasing Northwestern’s students, faculty, and staff far beyond our campus.”

Heidi Kittenring (C95) and Erich Bergen at the Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire in Hero: The Musical, winner of the 2012 Joseph Jefferson Award for best new work—musical
There’s funny business over in the Department of Radio/Television/Film, too, where the school’s Sitcom Project is now in its fourth year. Students review the format closely, develop ideas on their own, and then collaborate on a single idea they cast and film. A bonus: The student executive team gets a spring break trip to LA to tour sets and get tips from the pros, including Sitcom Project supporters Julia Louis-Dreyfus (C83, H07) and Brad Hall (C80).

The real-life concerns of working media artists are woven throughout the radio/TV/film curriculum, and not just at the undergraduate level. In the MFA program in Writing for the Screen and Stage, students learn to tell stories—“keeping in mind the idea of how they’ll make their own way as a media maker,” said department chair and professor David Tolchinsky. “How will you present yourself and your ideas? They need to be able to talk about their stories at any time.”

**ENTREPRENEURS OUT IN THE WORLD**

The Waa-Mu Show may be one of our best examples of student entrepreneurship. Student-led since 1928, the show remains the greatest opportunity for Northwestern students interested in stage and stagecraft to put theory into practice. Today’s Waa-Mu students receive extra guidance before launching the show, though, to help them produce a full-book musical on a schedule much tighter than that of any Broadway production. The writing of the annual show is the product of the students enrolled in the quarter-long course Creating the Musical, taught by David H. Bell, professor of theatre and the Donald G. Robertson Director of Music Theatre.

“Aside from the clear writing skills that are developed, our students emerge from the process with a genuine understanding of collaboration, compromise, and achievement,” Bell said. “The key attribute of music theatre writing at Northwestern is opportunity—opportunity to learn how musicals are created from inception, through the creative collaboration to workshops and readings, and ultimately, to the ability to see their work fully produced in front of them. It is an educational package that I think is unrivaled anywhere.”

**FINDING SUCCESS**

That package also includes the American Music Theatre Project (see page 6). One of AMTP’s success stories, in fact, is the “form-exploding” Found: A New Musical. Among the many twists and turns that led Found to New York success was an AMTP residency in May 2013. Overtree, Bolin, and Tony-nominated book cowriter Hunter Bell came to campus to workshop the fledgling musical with music theatre students, and they found the School of Communication an ideal place to create.

“Workshopping Found at AMTP was a watershed moment for our team,” Overtree said. “Northwestern provided an incredible array of talented, resourceful, generous, hardworking, and accommodating faculty and students to help us reach our goals. AMTP provided the Found creative team with a focused, safe space to take creative risks, fail, and then try again. Our show wouldn’t be where it is today without the help of AMTP.”

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*Found as performed by School of Communication students Chris Herr (C13) and Zach Sorrow (C13) for the American Music Theatre Project*
Innovating on the page

Our creative community serves as an incubator for new work by our faculty members, including teachers who write for stage and screen. Enjoy a sneak peek at what our truly innovative writers have in the works.

Thomas Bradshaw’s Carlyle was recently performed at Chicago’s Goodman Theatre as part of its New Stages Festival. His newest play, Fulfillment, commissioned by New York’s Manhattan Theatre Club, received a reading at London’s Soho Theatre in December.

Zayd Dohrn’s film Happy Camp is currently being cast through Bedlam Productions (The King’s Speech) with director Peter Webber (Girl with a Pearl Earring) attached. His new play Bedlam had its first readings in New York this fall.

Erik Gernand’s play The Beautiful Dark was seen in Madison, Wisconsin, last January (the play’s fourth US production) and has been optioned for a London production this year. In March his A Place in the Woods will be given a staged reading at the Barrow Group in New York. Gernand is currently writing The Kneeling Position, a play about a high school bullying victim who 20 years later confronts the bully, now a candidate for Congress.

Rebecca Gilman is working on a commission from the Audubon Society about the life of Mabel Loomis Todd, a conservationist (and editor of Emily Dickinson’s poems) who was instrumental in the development of Audubon Society programs on Maine’s Hog Island. While working on the play, Gilman was the first artist-in-residence on Hog Island.

Brett Neveu’s play The Opponent was the first show produced by A Red Orchid NYC, Red Orchid Theatre’s new New York outpost, last summer. With composer Josh Schmidt he is workshopping The Searchers, a musical adaptation of Alan LeMay’s western novel, with New York’s Atlantic Theater Company.

Michael Rohd is working on The Compass, to be presented at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre in spring 2016 as part of the Steppenwolf for Young Adults program.

Laura Schellhardt’s new play The Comparables will premiere at Seattle Repertory Company in March. Her play Auctioning the Ainsleys will launch next year’s mainstage season at People’s Light Theatre in Philadelphia. Her new work about the electric chair, commissioned for Chicago’s Goodman Theatre as part of the Goodman–Chicago Dramatists partnership Playwrights Unit, was recently given its first workshop.

David Tolchinsky is writing a feature-length horror film, Cassandra, with Josh Shader (C99) and Scott de Las Casas as producers and Gabriel Hardman (graphic novelist and visualizer for such films as Inception and The Dark Knight) as director.
WHAT CREATES SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION SUCCESS STORIES? WE ASKED A HANDFUL OF PROMINENT ALUMNI ABOUT HOW THE SCHOOL PREPARED THEM FOR THE LEADERSHIP ROLES THEY HAVE TODAY.

David W. Zucker (C86) participated in NSTV, Studio 22, Niteskool, and WNUR while on campus; today he’s president of Scott Free Productions and the executive producer of CBS’s The Good Wife. He has received five Emmy nominations. Early experiences taught me that no matter what role you had—director, writer, part of the crew—and whatever ambition you had, developing experience in any one area served you later. In any creative endeavor, you have to identify people with whom you enjoy collaborating. The value of confidence in those you work with and the desire to keep learning come directly from the experience I had at Northwestern.

Robert Conrad (C55) worked at WNUR and Chicago radio stations as a student. He is president of Radio Seaway, which in 2001 donated the Cleveland classical music station WCLV—cofounded by Conrad in 1962—to make it a public station. I learned an awful lot at Northwestern. Classes in oral interpretation improved my presentation on the radio, and a class in writing for radio taught me things about audience analysis. WNUR was only 10 watts at the time. You could make mistakes because very few people were listening. It was a place to experiment.

TV producer Laverne McKinnon (C87) worked on the Waa-Mu Show for three years and was a Waa-Mu cochair her senior year. The Waa-Mu Show was my first experience understanding how to target a bifurcated audience. The Waa-Mu audience is both students and alumni: The students want their current experiences reflected in the sketches, and the alumni want a sense of nostalgia. As a producer I’m constantly challenged by the taste of executives who buy content that sometimes is quite different from what the audience they program for wants or expects.

Entrepreneur Michael McGee (C10) cofounded the Starter League, a Chicago-based school that teaches how to code, design, and build web apps. During my time in the School of Communication, I discovered that my education wasn’t confined to a classroom. I live and breathe off experiential education, and I had the opportunity to flourish in the radio/television/film program. The process of taking ideas in my head and making them a reality was honed at Northwestern and has played a big part in creating the Starter League. Our school has adopted the principles that I learned at the School of Communication—apply what you learn to solving meaningful problems.

Emmy-nominated Jimmy Kimmel Live! executive producer Jill Leiderman (C93) worked on the Waa-Mu Show for four years. Waa-Mu has a rare magical aura that electrically charges it—both on stage and off. I feel so lucky to have been given a four-year shot so early in my career to sample what being a professional performer might entail. That tool kit continues to serve me well now as a producer. I have great empathy for performers who are expected to consistently deliver with every appearance, so I work hard to give them all the ingredients they need to feel supported and do their best work.
Garry Mathiason (C68) is a senior class-action litigator and strategist at Littler Mendelson. As a Northwestern student he was a top debater in the Northwestern Debate Society, teamed with David Zarefsky (C68, GC69, GC74), now professor emeritus and former dean of the School of Communication. Northwestern's debate program has been highly successful from its origins, and many of its participants go on to be successful. It encourages creativity, diligence, critical thinking, speaking abilities, and leadership, all mixed together. In my experience, four years of debate was as valuable or more valuable than law school because it teaches you to be as prepared as you can for any contingency.

Deborah Hayes (C71, GC73) is the Kelley Family/Schlessman Family Scottish Rite Masons Chair in Childhood Language Disorders at Children's Hospital Colorado, where she is also chair of audiology, speech pathology, and learning services and cochair of the Bill Daniels Center for Children's Hearing. In addition, Hayes is a professor at the University of Colorado School of Medicine.

The most important component of my experience at Northwestern was the personal support and advising that I received from my professors. Earl Harford was my adviser, but all the faculty in the audiology program were approachable, available, and sincerely interested in the development of the students into thoughtful and responsible professionals.

Bill Bindley (C84) cofounded Gulfstream Pictures, a film production and financing company with a first-look deal at Warner Bros. Studios. As a student he was involved with several student extracurricular groups, including the fledgling music-video producing group Niteskool. Bindley directed the first Niteskool video for "Ambition" by Eric Mandell (BSM86) and Francis Banish, who later formed the band Security.

I was friends with Niteskool founders Jon Shapiro (C87) and Eric Bernt (C86), and we put the whole production together using a pretty massive cast—actors, dancers, extras—and shot all over downtown. It was totally seat of our pants (we had no cover set in the event it rained), but I watched it recently, and—as a manic, kind of non sequitur series of images—it holds up, primarily because of the great song we were shooting against.

Jason Moore (C93) staged the Dolphin Show as a junior. The Tony-nominated director of Avenue Q, he is now directing Tina Fey and Amy Poehler in the film The Nest, to be released this year. Working on the Dolphin Show was great prep because it's a Broadway-sized house, and getting to direct a musical with real sets and moving scenery is rare. The only experience that preps you to do that on Broadway is to do it similarly somewhere else on the same scale—and it afforded me that chance to learn at an early age.

At Northwestern Andrew White (C87) was one of a group of students who launched what would become Lookingglass Theatre Company. Today he's the artistic director of the Tony Award–winning theatre. Our teachers at Northwestern gave us not only rigorous training and incredible tools; more than that, they gave us the courage and inspiration to dare to rethink theatre itself—to not be content with the current definitions of it, but to look at ourselves as potential creators of a new vocabulary. We were given permission, license, and encouragement to dare to think of ourselves as not just actors but theatre creators—with the skills and wherewithal to create from scratch, to adapt a novel, to rethink what a theatre event should look and feel like.
Faculty focus

Vardeldur, a film by Melika Bass (MFA, School of the Art Institute of Chicago), was screened at the 52nd Ann Arbor Film Festival in March. A recent Illinois Arts Council Fellowship winner, Bass was recently listed as one of Chicago's top film artists by Newcity. Also on the list were faculty members Thomas Bradshaw and Kyle Henry and alumni Joe Chappelle (GC86), Scott Dummler (C93), and Maria Finitzo (GC08).

This Has Been to Space, a documentary by Clayton Brown (MFA, Northwestern University), premiered at Chicago's Adler Planetarium in February, and his feature film The Believers was broadcast in Thailand and Slovenia that same month. Earlier this year Brown also gave a presentation about documentary storytelling and science for the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Joshua Takano Chambers-Letson (PhD, New York University) won the Outstanding Book Award from the Association for Theatre in Higher Education for his A Race So Different (New York University Press). In a Colloquium on Ethnicity and Diaspora event on campus in May, he gave a presentation on how various Pacific populations express discontent through performance, visual art, and other avenues.

Jasmine Cobb (PhD, University of Pennsylvania) spoke on “Slavery on Screen” for the American Cultures Colloquium spring-quarter faculty seminar on campus.

Muckrakers, a play by Zayd Dohrn (MFA, New York University), received its West Coast premiere at the Art of Acting Studio in Los Angeles in April. Dohrn was named one of the “25 to watch” by Chicago’s Guild Literary Complex in May.

Elizabeth Gerber (PhD, Stanford University) received a Microsoft FUSE Lab Research Award for “Sharing Human-Powered Mobility to Improve Societal Efficacy and Efficiency,” a project with Haoqi Zhang of the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science, where Gerber is the Allen K. and Johnnie Cordell Breed Junior Professor of Design. She runs Design for America, whose process guide was recognized with a Core77 design award for educational initiatives.

A Place in the Woods, a new play by Erik Germand (MFA, Northwestern University), was given a staged reading at Chicago Dramatists at the beginning of the year. Germand’s play The Beautiful Dark received a reading at the Barrow Group in New York City last spring.

Rebecca Gilman (MFA, University of Iowa) was named one of Northwestern’s three 2014 Charles Deering McCormick Professors of Teaching Excellence. “I am thrilled and honored to receive this award and grateful for the support of the University, my colleagues, and especially my students,” said Gilman. Her impressive body of work includes such critically acclaimed plays as Luna Gale, given its world premiere this year at Chicago’s Goodman Theatre and already remounted by the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles.

Impolite Society, choreographed by Jeffery Hancock, was a winner at this year’s American College Dance Festival Association’s North Central Regional Conference. The piece was performed at the Kennedy Center in April as part of the festival’s three-day gala.

Before You Know It, a PBS/ITVS documentary film edited by Kyle Henry (MFA, University of
Ana Kuzmanic (MFA, Northwestern University) designed the costumes for Russian Transport, which ran last February to May at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre.

Molly Losh (PhD, University of California, Berkeley) has been named the JoAnn and Peter Dolle Chair in Learning Disabilities in the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Henry Godinez produced and starred in Raquel Carrío’s Pedro Páramo, a play he produced and starred in as part of the Goodman Theatre’s Latino Theatre Festival. A collaboration between the Goodman, Northwestern, and Chicago’s Museum of Contemporary Art, the production was also seen in Montreal in June as part of the Hemispheric Institute Encuentro.

Texas at Austin), premiered at SXSW last year, was theatrically released in May, and opened nationwide this summer. Henry was the inaugural artist-in-residence in July at Austin’s Arts+Labor. The Chicago Digital Media Production Fund—a project of the Voqal Fund, administered by Chicago Filmmakers—awarded him a grant to complete The Half-Life of War, his documentary short on forgotten war monuments and memorials.

Hamid Naficy (PhD, University of California, Los Angeles) was interviewed on WBEZ’s news program Worldview in February about his book A Social History of Iranian Cinema and the influence of movies on that country’s society and culture.

Brett Neveu (BA, University of Iowa) participated in the Storefront Playwright Project during Chicago Theatre Week in February.

Miriam Petty (PhD, Emory University) was awarded a 2014 Career Enhancement Fellowship for Junior Faculty from the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. “Refusing the Happy Ending,” her article about the Oscar-winning film 12 Years a Slave, appeared in the Huffington Post in February. She also curated “Mama & Papa Lala: A Retrospective,” a collection of films by Camille Billops and James Hatch, for Emory University.

Dassia Posner (PhD, Tufts University) won the Cambridge University Press Prize, awarded by the American Society for Theatre Research, in February. She also served as the dramaturg for Russian Transport, which opened at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre that month.

Irving Rein (PhD, University of Pittsburgh) coauthored The Sports Strategist: Developing Leaders for a High-Performance Industry (Oxford University Press) with Ben Shields (Co3, GC04, GC08) and Adam Grossman (WCAS04).

Megan Roberts (PhD, Vanderbilt University) has been named the Jane Steiner Hoffman and Michael Hoffman Assistant Professor in the Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Michael Rohd (MFA, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University) was selected as one of 50 community leaders nationwide for National Arts Strategies’ Chief Executive Program.

Jeffrey Sconce (PhD, University of Wisconsin–Madison) moderated an on-campus discussion with actor James Franco in March. In September theartcareerproject.com named Sconce one of 15 noteworthy art professors in Chicago.

Founded by dance professor Billy Siegenfeld, pictured here with Jordan Batta (C04), the Chicago dance company Jump Rhythm Jazz Project (jrjp.org) is celebrating its 25th year with classic company performances and new work in shows and special events around the city.

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Communication scholars take top awards at NCA Conference

School of Communication faculty members D. Soyini Madison (GC89) and Noshir Contractor and recent alumna Kimberly Singletary (GC13) received prestigious communication awards in November at the 2014 National Communication Association conference, held in Chicago.

Madison, professor of performance studies, received the NCA’s 2014 Lilla A. Heston Award for Outstanding Scholarship in Interpretation and Performance Studies. The award is given annually for outstanding published research and creative scholarship during the previous three-year period. Madison was recognized for her lasting contributions to the discipline, not only through her published work but also through the multitude of students in her classes enacting ethnographic and performance approaches to studying issues that matter. She earned her PhD in performance studies at Northwestern.

Contractor, professor of communication studies and the Jane S. and William J. White Professor of Behavioral Sciences in the McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science, received a 2014 Distinguished Scholar Award. Supported by the Mark L. Knapp Distinguished Scholar Fund, the annual award recognizes NCA members for a lifetime of scholarly achievement in the study of human communication. Recipients are selected to showcase the communication profession. Since 1992 those previously recognized as NCA Distinguished Scholars nominate and elect members to join this select group.

Singletary, now a lecturer in the School of Literatures, Cultural Studies, and Linguistics at the University of Illinois at Chicago, received the 2014 Gerald R. Miller Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award for her dissertation, “Blackness Personified: Images of US Blackness in Contemporary German Public Culture.” Singletary received her PhD in rhetoric and public culture from Northwestern.

Freda Love Smith (MA, Nottingham Trent University) signed a book deal with Agate to write Red Velvet Underground, a book of recipes influenced by her career as a rock drummer.

The Witch (Miriam A. Laube) gets a bit rough with Rapunzel, played by Royer Bockus (C12), in Into the Woods at last summer’s Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Also starring Miles Fletcher (C11) as Jack, the production was directed by theatre associate professor Amanda Dehnert, with costumes by theatre professor Linda Roethke.

Jacob Smith (PhD, Indiana University) was involved in Project Unite, which late last year connected people from 100 countries through the Indian radio service Tharanga to help celebrate the centennial year of Indian cinema.

The cover of the catalog for The Presence of Absence, an exhibition at Chicago’s Hairpin Arts Center curated by David Tolchinsky (MFA, University of Southern California) and Debra Tolchinsky (MFA, School of the Art Institute of Chicago), won an award of excellence from the University and College Designers Association. The catalog was designed by Ken Pagni of the Department of University Relations. David Tolchinsky also recently won an Illinois Arts Council Fellowship. He was commissioned to write the screenplay for Sisters, a film about an elderly woman facing a new life in a nursing home, for Fork the Man Productions; filming began this summer.

Ellen Wartella (PhD, University of Minnesota) has been named a University of Minnesota Distinguished Alumna, the first from the university’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

James Webster (PhD, Indiana University) authored The Marketplace of Attention: How Audiences Take Shape in the Digital Age (MIT Press).

The Cambridge Companion to African American Theatre, edited by Harvey Young (PhD, Cornell University), won the Excellence in Editing Award from the Association for Theatre in Higher Education. In March, Young moderated a discussion on race and identity in American culture at Emerson College. The event was part of the ongoing “Clarifying Conversations” series, sponsored by the National Communication Association.
New faculty

TENURE TRACK

**Ariel Rogers** is an assistant professor in the Department of Radio/Television/Film. She is the author of *Cinematic Appeals: The Experience of New Movie Technologies* (Columbia University Press, 2013) as well as articles on widescreen cinema, digital cinema, and special effects in classic Hollywood. Her research interests also include spectatorship, new media, melodrama, and women in film. Rogers has taught media and film studies at the University of Southern Maine and The New School and was a Mellon postdoctoral fellow in cinema studies at Colby College. She holds a BA in film studies and philosophy from Columbia University and a PhD in cinema and media studies from the University of Chicago.

**Shayna Silverstein** is an assistant professor in the Department of Performance Studies. A 2013–14 Mellon postdoctoral fellow at the University of Pennsylvania Humanities Forum, she received her BA in history from Yale University and her PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of Chicago. Her research examining Syrian popular dance music in relation to body, gender, and nation has received substantial support from Fulbright-IIE, the University of Chicago, and the US Department of Education. Silverstein has published articles on theory, methods, and case studies in the fields of anthropology, ethnomusicology, and Middle East studies. Her previous university-level teaching includes classes at Northwestern’s Bienen School of Music.

**Christine Brennan** is a visiting assistant professor in the Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. She is a developmental cognitive neuroscientist and speech-language pathologist interested in investigating the brain systems supporting language development and speech processing. Her work bridges communication sciences and disorders, cognitive science, and educational neuroscience with applications to basic and applied research in the field of speech-language pathology. Brennan’s recent work has focused on how the auditory cortex encodes phonemes, how it synthesizes phonemes into words, and how these processes are affected by experience. She earned her PhD and MA in communication sciences and disorders at Northwestern.

**Gina DiSalvo** is a lecturer and academic adviser in the Department of Theatre. She holds a BA in English from the Catholic University of America, an MA in theatre studies from Ohio State University, and a PhD from Northwestern’s interdisciplinary program in theatre and drama. Her research interests include theatre history, dramaturgy and new play development, dramatic theory and criticism, and Shakespeare. DiSalvo is the author of “The Framing of the Shrew,” a chapter in *Chicago Shakespeare Theater: Suing the Action to the Word* (Northern Illinois University Press, 2013), edited by Regina Buccola and Peter Kanelos.

**Michael Attie** is a lecturer in the Department of Radio/Television/Film and the associate director of the department’s new master of fine arts program in documentary media. His most recent feature documentary, *In Country*, was given its world premiere at the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival and its Canadian premiere at Hot Docs in Toronto. Attie’s previous work has been shown at major film festivals, including SilverDocs, San Francisco International, and the Black Maria Film + Video Festival. A 2013 Sundance Documentary Film Program fellow, he was named one of the Independent’s “10 Filmmakers to Watch in 2014.” Attie holds a BA in history from Vassar College and an MFA in documentary film from Stanford University.

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Natalie Lenzen is a lecturer in the Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders and a clinical supervisor in Northwestern's Center for Audiology, Speech, Language, and Learning. Previously Lenzen was an audiologist at the Boys Town National Research Hospital in Omaha, Nebraska. She studied communication sciences and disorders at Saint Louis University and received her doctor of audiology degree from Washington University in St. Louis.

Ryan T. Nelson is a lecturer in the Department of Theatre and the music director of the Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts. He also serves as the music supervisor for the school’s American Music Theatre Project and the famed Waa-Mu Show. Ryan is the resident music director at the Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire, where he has music directed dozens of productions, including the world premieres of Hero, For the Boys, and Andrew Lloyd Webber: Now and Forever. His work on A Chorus Line and The Light in the Piazza at the Marriott has been recognized with Joseph Jefferson Award nominations. Nelson has also conducted and orchestrated productions at Chicago Shakespeare Theater and Florida’s Asolo Repertory Theatre. He has been on the Northwestern faculty for more than a decade, previously as an assistant professor in the Bienen School of Music.

Andrea Reed is a lecturer in the Department of Communication Studies and the associate director of the Northwestern Debate Society. Previously she was the director of debate at the University of Kentucky and director of the Tournament of Champions, a premier high school policy-debate national tournament. She has also coached debate at the University of California, Berkeley, and as a graduate assistant coach at Wake Forest University, where she cocoached the 2008 National Debate Tournament championship team and the 2009 NDT second-place team. Her research interests include argumentation theory, visual rhetoric, and cultural studies. Reed studied international relations at Michigan State University and earned a master’s in communication at Wake Forest University.

Judith Roman is a lecturer in the Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders and a clinical supervisor in Northwestern’s Center for Audiology, Speech, Language, and Learning. A licensed speech-language pathologist, she is an ASHA board-recognized specialist in child language. Her background includes extensive experience with early intervention as well as preschool and school-aged children, certification in providing neurodevelopmental treatment, and private practice. She earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees in communication sciences and disorders at Northwestern.

Anthony Shook is a visiting assistant professor in the Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders. His research explores the effect of bilingualism on language comprehension and general cognitive abilities—the extent to which two languages interact within a single language system, the effect of this interaction on cognitive and neural function, and what this can ultimately reveal about general human communication. Shook studied brain and cognitive science at the University of Rochester and received his master’s and PhD from Northwestern University.
His recent and forthcoming articles in the Journal of American Studies, RadioDoc Review, Sounding Out, Journal of Sound Studies, Critical Quarterly, and Velvet Light Trap address subjects ranging from horror and film noir to radio documentaries and Game of Thrones. Verma holds a BA in English from McGill University and a PhD in history of culture from the University of Chicago, where he developed a media aesthetics core curriculum and taught as a Harper-Schmidt post-doctoral fellow.

Nathan Waller is a lecturer in the Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders and a clinical supervisor in Northwestern’s Center for Audiology, Speech, Language, and Learning. A licensed and certified speech-language pathologist, she previously worked as an inpatient rehabilitation and acute-care clinician at Iowa’s Genesis Medical Center and as a diagnostician at the Medical College of Wisconsin’s Child Development Center, a multidisciplinary clinic. Working with a developmental pediatrician and clinical psychologist, she provided therapy to children with a variety of speech and language diagnoses and educated observing medical residents. Sindelar’s primary clinical interests are pediatric language and fluency. She earned her BS in speech and hearing science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and her MS in communication disorders and sciences at Eastern Illinois University.

Neil Verma is a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Radio/Television/Film. Verma is the author of Theater of the Mind: Imagination, Aesthetics, and American Radio Drama (University of Chicago Press, 2012), which won the Best First Book Award from the Society for Cinema and Media Studies.
Alumni achievements

Class notes are selected from stories of alumni featured in the media as identified by the University’s Office of Alumni Relations and Development and updates sent to Dialogue by mail or by email at dialogue@northwestern.edu.

1940s

Newton Minow (C49, L50, H65) and Howard Trienens (EB45, L49, H95) received the first Northwestern School of Law Distinguished Alumni Awards in September 2013. President Barack Obama (H66) sent them a personal congratulatory message. Colleagues at the law firm Sidley Austin, they have worked together for almost 65 years. Both are Northwestern life trustees and Northwestern Alumni Association Alumni Medal recipients.

1960s

Judi Sheppard Missett (C66) is the founder and CEO of Jazzercise, which was ranked number 27 on Entrepreneur magazine’s 2013 Franchise 500.

1970s

Terry Bayer (C71), the chief operating officer at Molina Healthcare, was appointed to the California Water Service Group board of directors in February.

“Golden Hands,” a story by Elynne Chaplik-Aleskow (GC71), was published in the anthology Grandfather, Father & Me (Hidden Brook Press, 2013).

James A. Backstrom (C73) received the Legion of Merit upon his retirement as a US Navy captain in the Judge Advocate General’s Corps last September after more than 30 years of commissioned service in the Navy Reserve.

1980s


Robert J. Elisberg (C74) wrote the novel The Wild Roses (Third Road Press, 2013).

Andrea Gellin Shindler (GC74) is the founder and executive director of the Foundation for Human Potential.

Judy Belk (C75) was appointed president and chief executive officer of the California Wellness Foundation in April.

Art Collins (C75) wrote the book A Cautionary Tale: The DWI Trial of Stephen Mole (CreateSpace, 2013).

G. Marc Baumann (C77, KSM79), SP Plus Corporation’s chief financial officer, was named the company’s president and chief operating officer in January.

Jill C. Lessard (C78) became the director of operations at the Community Media Center in Marin, California, last summer. “Make Your Mark,” a video segment that she coproduced for Marin TV’s Seriously Now, won a Hometown Media Award at the 2013 national conference of the Alliance for Community Media.

Clancy Brown (C81) and Julia Louis-Dreyfus (C83, H07) were invited to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Megan Mullally (C81) starred in Annapurna, staged at New York’s The New Group, with her husband, Nick Offerman.

Mark S. Hobeck (C82) is the producing artistic director of Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, New Jersey. The theater concluded its 75th season in June.

The Qualms, a new play by Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright Bruce Norris (C82), received its world premiere at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre this summer. The production featured cast member Kate Arrington (C97), costume design by Janice Pytel (GC99), and scenic design by associate professor Todd Rosenthal.

Kele Baker (C83) is the Argentine tango choreographer for the BBC show Strictly Come Dancing (the UK equivalent of Dancing with the Stars). In addition to choreographing and staging dances for BBC, Sky1, and numerous stage productions, Baker organizes London’s Dance Al Fresco, a series of outdoor ballroom-Latin-tango events benefiting the Royal Parks Foundation.

John Logan (C83) wrote the book for the new musical The Last Ship, with music and lyrics by Sting. Featuring Fred Applegate (C77) in a leading role, the show premiered in June at Chicago’s Bank of America Theater before moving to Broadway.

Muffin Top: A Love Story, cowritten and directed by Cathryn Michon (C83), opened in June, with Michon leading the ensemble cast.

Lisa Keston Danielpoor (C84) is the chief operating officer of Gooseling, a startup that develops apps to teach social and life skills with video games.

Terry Franklin (C84) has cowritten the screenplay Sick, which chronicles the heroic efforts of LGBT activists, led by the late Barbara Gittings, to successfully persuade the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders in 1973.

Stephen J. Lambright (C85) joined SP Plus Corporation’s chief operating officer in January. The company’s president and chief executive officer in January.

Stephen Mole (C86) is the president and chief operating officer of the California Wellness Foundation in April.

1990s

Anna Gunn (C90) stars in Fox TV’s new series Gracepoint.

Lisa Long Pilger (C90) is the vice president and director of local media at RPA, a Los Angeles–based advertising agency. She recently received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Atlanta Broadcast Advertising Club.

Dina Robbins London (C85) was ordained a rabbi after completing her studies through the Jewish Spiritual Leaders Institute. London is serving the Jewish community in Lake Zurich, Illinois, as a concierge rabbi.

Dermot Mulrone (C85) starred in the TV series No Man’s Land and Crisis and appears in the upcoming films Careful What You Wish For and Sacrifice.

Stephen Colbert (C86, H11) will succeed David Letterman as the host of The Late Show in 2015.

Stupid Fe*king Bird, a play by Aaron Posner (C86), won the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play and the Outstanding Resident Production Award in April at the Helen Hayes Awards in Washington, DC. The cast featured Katie DeBuys (C04).

Sex with Strangers, a play by Laura Eason (C89), ran at New York City’s Second Stage Theater this summer. The production was directed by David Schwimmer (C88) and featured Anna Gunn (C90). The artistic director of Second Stage is Carole Rothman (C70).

Michelle Grabner (G89) was ranked second in Newcity’s “Art 50: Chicago’s Visual Vanguard” list of influential museum directors, gallerists, curators, writers, and critics. She was the curator for the 2014 Whitney Biennial at New York City’s Whitney Museum of Art.
Katie Dawson (C92), assistant professor of theater and dance at the University of Texas at Austin, received a 2013 Regents’ Outstanding Teaching Award. Triangle, a new musical written by Tom Mizer (C93) and scored by Curtis Moore (BSM95), opened in March to raves at the Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma. Mary Kate Barley-Jenkins (GC94) works with producing director Tom Arvetis (C96) as the executive director of Adventure Stage Chicago, a professional theatre company that creates and tells heroic stories about young people. John Corbett (GC94) was listed in Newcity’s “Art 50: Chicago’s Visual Vanguard.” He cofounded the gallery Corbett vs. Dempsey, named the city’s best overall art gallery by Chicago magazine in 2013. A faculty member at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago since 1988, Corbett recently joined the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art’s board of advisers. Nsenga Burton (C95), chair and associate professor of communication and media studies at Goucher College, is the founder and editor-in-chief of the Burton Wire, an online publication that explores world news, culture, and opinion with an emphasis on the African diaspora. In July she received the Ray Taliaferro Entrepreneurial Spirit Award from the National Association of Black Journalists.

NUEA West

NUEA West continued its storytelling series with “Luck…A Storytelling Event” at the Lillian Theater. It featured stories by Roni Geva (C02), Rati Gupta (WCAS06), Joe Hauler (GJ98), Kevin Martin King (C80), Jackie Laine (C08), Jennefer Ludwigsen (C99), Rebecca Russ (C04), Jennifer Schuster (C02), Scott Speiser (C00), Stella Stahl (C11), and Tenere Williams (WCAS99). Throughout the spring and summer, alumni peer groups led a series of small-group workshops for NUEA members. Peer group leaders included David Rodwin (GBSM96) on crowdfunding, Gayla Kraetsch-Hartsough (C71) on film festivals, Jen Howell (C07) on feature writing, Rati Gupta on writing from real life, Amanda Krieg Thomas (C07) on film and TV music, Robin Faerber (C94) on television, Danita Patterson (C90) on producing, Keith Harrison (BSM08) on multimedia production, and Shira Rockowitz (C02) and Jackie Laine on networking. In May the group hosted a voiceover workshop with Tish Hicks (C88) and visited The Queen Latifah Show, where Robin Thede (J01) is the head writer. In June NUEA West cosponsored Chicago Comedy Night in LA with performers Prescott Tolk (GJ98), Jen D’Angelo (C10), Emilia Barrosse (J13), and Peter Spruyt (C84). Also that month, the “Screenwriting, Novels, and Back Again” panel cosponsored with the NU Club of LA featured Kukoff as well as Todd Carney (J94) and Wade Carney (C97), Cindy Chupack (J87), Joel Joseph (WCAS70), and Dani Shear (C87). In August Sam Bennett (C85) led the workshop “Get It Done,” based on his book of the same title. In September NUEA West hosted its annual LA|NU Showcase, this year with the theme “The Late, Late LA|NU Show” in honor of School of Communication alumni taking over late-night talk shows. The event starred Shawn Boyd (C96), Melissa Brandzel (C94), Amanda Christensen (C01), Colton Dillion (C11, McC13), Erica Everage (C10), Louisa Franks (GC10), Roni Geva (C02), Katie Hall (C04), Matthew Hays (J13), Rebecca Lincoln (C97), Julie A. Lockhart (C96), Brendan McNamara (C00), Johanna Middleton (C11), Gabriel Ray (WCAS09), Brendan Scannell (C13), Tracy Smith (C13), Adam Welton (C08), and Tenere Williams. It was written by Josh Fingerhut (C05), Karen Fisher (C13), Marc Goldsmith (C88), Liz Kenny (KSM10), Kevin Martin King (C80), Stephanie Kornick (C10), Paolo Mazzucato (C88), Ilana Peña (C13), Amy Reed (C13), Caitlin Schneiderhan (C12), Jennifer Schuster (C02), Dani Shear, and Amy Thorstenson (C13) and directed by Todd Aaron Brotze (McC96), Josh Fingerhut, Sarah Jane Inwards (C13), Alec Ziff (C13), Steve Marvel (C84), Jato Smith (WCAS95, KSM 97), and Karolyn Szot (C10).
Northwestern stars were bright at the 66th annual Primetime Emmy Awards ceremony August 25. Among the winners were School of Communication alumni Julia Louis-Dreyfus (C83, H07), Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series for *Veep*; Stephen Colbert (C86, H11), Outstanding Variety Series and Outstanding Writing for a Variety Series for *The Colbert Report*; and Anna Gunn (C90), Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Drama Series for *Breaking Bad*. Nominees included Maria Ferrari (C01) for *The Big Bang Theory*, Jill Leiderman (C93) for *Jimmy Kimmel Live!*, and Seth Meyers (C96) as writer for last year’s Golden Globes ceremony. Meyers hosted the program and, in a memorable skit, took to the streets with Billy Eichner (C00) to see if New Yorkers knew anything about the Emmy Awards.

**Emmy winners**

Julie Levitas Greenhouse (C95) was appointed the chief revenue officer at the social media platforming company WayIn in February.

Rusty Ross (C95) performed on the recently released Broadway cast recording of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical*. He was a member of the original 2006 cast.

Mitch Apley (C96), senior director of broadcast productions for AbelsonTaylor, a healthcare advertising agency, will lead the firm’s new film studio, Dose.

Ellis Arjmand (FSM84, GFSM86, GC96), a professor at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, has been appointed chief of otolaryngology at Texas Children’s Hospital in Houston.

Tara W. Duhy (C97), an attorney at Lewis, Longman & Walker in Palm Beach, Florida, was named a “rising star” by the *Daily Business Review*, which recognizes the region’s 40 most promising lawyers under age 40.

Erin Feinberg (C97) has cowritten *DieHards* (Anthropy Arts, 2013), which includes essays by Bruce Spingsteen and Rush drummer Neil Peart. The book features more than 100 photos by Feinberg, who spent a decade documenting the character and culture of fans who attend live music shows.

Sarah Gubbins (C97, GC08) has been named a core writer by the Playwrights’ Center, a play development organization. Gubbins’s new play *Cocked* headlined the Ignition Festival at Chicago’s Victory Gardens Theatre this summer.

Maura Johnston (C97) was named the inaugural journalism fellow at Boston College’s Institute for Liberal Arts earlier this year.

David Scholnick (C97) is the director of Mayors Against Illegal Guns, the nation’s largest gun-violence prevention organization.

Jennifer Rudenick Ecklund (C98), a partner at the Dallas law firm Thompson & Knight, was again named one of Texas’s “future stars” by *Benchmark Litigation*.

Kent Eiler (C98), a captain in the US Air Force Reserve Judge Advocate General’s Corps, was hired by the Tully Rinckey law firm for its military law practice group. He also served as counsel for the Constitution Project’s Task Force on Detainee Treatment.

Phil Zepeda (GC98) was named director of communications at the Robert R. McCormick Foundation in August.

Justin Donne (C99) was appointed regional operations executive for the Prince’s Trust, a charity for disadvantaged youth that was established by Prince Charles in 2013.

Rachel Schaefer (C99) became the assistant vice president for prospects development and campaign management at the University of Central Florida Foundation earlier this year.

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Michael R. Walsh (C95) is the chief security officer and head of research and development for Coupons.com, which filed for an initial public offering in January.

Kim O’Brien Carmel (C00) founded Kim Carmel Writing & Design in 2007. A freelance graphic designer and writer, she specializes in the arts, education, and sustainable fishing industries.
Jennie E. Eisenhower (C00) starred as Lucille Frank in Parade at Philadelphia’s Arden Theatre in fall 2013.

Tara Harvey (C00) completed her doctorate in comparative and international development education at the University of Minnesota in May. In July she became manager of intercultural learning and curriculum development with the Council on International Educational Exchange.

Aurin Squire (C01) recently received the Juilliard School’s Lila Acheson Wallace Playwright Fellowship. Last June Squire’s play Frefalling was awarded the Fiat Lux Play Award by Faith Performances in Rochester, New York.

Amy J. Ludvigsen (C03) is the new executive director of Door Shakespeare, a professional theater in Door County, Wisconsin.

Katie Debuys (C04) appeared in the Helen Hayes Award–winning production of Stupid F*cking Bird this summer in Washington, DC, and in a September revival of Sam Shepard’s Fool for Love at Round House Theatre in Bethesda, Maryland.

Jessica Michan (C04) is an adjunct lecturer in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences’ communications department at the University of Houston–Downtown. She also serves as press secretary for Houston mayor Annise Parker.

Torri Stuckey (C04) has published Impoverished State of Mind: Thinking Outside da Block (Cover Three Publishing, 2012), an empowering book for teenagers and young adults living in urban poverty. A former Northwestern football player, Stuckey was a member of the 2000 Big Ten Championship team.

Lyssa Mandel (C05) premiered her solo show A View from the Bitch Seat at the People’s Improv Theater in New York City in November.


Zoe Perry (C05) performed in the Steppenwolf Theatre Company’s production of The Way West in April.

Bob Turton (C05) played Bottom in a production of A Midsummer Night’s Dream that toured China this summer and was seen at the Actors’ Gang in Los Angeles in August.

Kerry Bishe (C06) starred in AMC’s Halt and Catch Fire, a story of the personal computer revolution.

Free Havana, a documentary produced by Leigh Jurecka (GC06) with Cuban filmmaker Eliée Perez Anguera, received a special screening at Chicago’s Facets Cinematheque in March.

Joanie Schultz (GC07) directed the Midwest premiere of Samuel D. Hunter’s Rest for Chicago’s Victory Gardens Theater this fall.

Casey Wortmann (C08) was admitted into the Actors Theatre of Louisville’s Apprentice/Intern Company.

Susan Ericsson (GC09) was granted tenure in the College of Arts and Sciences at Concordia University Chicago earlier this year.

Caitlin Kunkel (GC09) cocreated the new sketch comedy show The Big Combo with comedian Jason Rouse. The show ran in March at the Action/Adventure Theatre in Portland, Oregon.

Eugenio Vargas (C09) played a role in String, performed in the National Alliance for Musical Theatre’s annual Festival of New Musicals this October.

2010s

Uprising, a play by Gabrielle Fulton (GC10), was given a showcase presentation as a winner of the first Reiser Atlanta Artists Lab project through Atlanta’s Alliance Theatre. Her film Ir/Reconcilable will run on HBO in February as part of the premium channel’s American Black Film Festival.

Quarterback Mike Kafka (C10) was signed to play football for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in February.

Katie Gore (GC11) has founded Speech IRL, a flexible intensive speech-therapy practice in Chicago. Among the clinic’s many services is her pilot program for providing solutions to adults who stutter.

Chocolate Hearts, a film by Harrison Atkins (C12), premiered at SXSW earlier this year. Daniel Johnson (C12) was the coeditor and sound designer; Alejandro Ovalle (C13) and Ben Gojer (C12) worked on special effects; Drigan Lee (C12) was the first assistant director; and Allie Gallerani (C11) played a leading role.

Brian Bohr (C12) appeared at the Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire, Illinois, this summer in Cats and as Jesus in Godspell, which also featured Lillie Cummings (C13), Nate Lewellyn (C10), Christine Mild (C03), and current students Eliza Palasz (C15) and Zachary Piser (C15).

In June Derrick Clifton (C12) became the first editorial fellow at New York’s PolicyMic, a news and analysis site aimed at millennials.

Forked, a screenplay by Dan Ochwat (GC12), has been optioned by Gold Line Films in Los Angeles.

Mila Ortiz (GC12) is collaborating with theatre director Marc David Pinate on a staged documentary for Tucson’s Borderlands Theater. Her new play A Tucson Pastorela ran in December at Tucson’s TCC Leo Rich Theatre.

Dollop, a film by Greg Porper (C12), was screened at the 2014 Phoenix Film Festival in April.

Karen Fisher (GC13) became a script development intern at AMC Networks earlier this year.

Keeper, a film by Stacy Moon (C13), received its European premiere as part of the Raindance Film Festival.

Jocelyn Szczepaniak-Gillece (GC13) has joined the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee faculty as an assistant professor of English and film studies.

Creepers on the Bridge, a short film by Collette Ghunn (C14) about street harassment of women in Egypt, went viral online this year and will be expanded into a feature-length documentary, The People’s Girls.

Michael Silberblatt (C14) directed and performed in “Six Americans” this summer at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, as part of a celebration of the US Presidential Scholars, a program that recognizes distinguished graduating high school students.

Madeline Weinstein (C14) made her Broadway debut in October in the Roundabout Theatre Company’s production of The Real Thing.
In memory

Bette K. Martin (C37) of Evanston, Illinois, on March 16 at age 99

William D. Foster (C40) of Peoria, Illinois, on July 18 at age 95

Ralph B. Senderowitz (C41) of Allentown, Pennsylvania, on May 30 at age 94

Vera Ward (C43) of Evanston, Illinois, on May 19 at age 92

Jean E. Bountis (C44) of Pleasanton, California, on June 27 at age 90

Mary Ellen McCarthy (C44, GC45) of Webster Groves, Missouri, on March 19 at age 91

Ruth B. Powell (C44, GC46) of Highland Park, Illinois, on April 25 at age 91

Elaine Harris Woodward (C44) of Naples, Florida, on March 3 at age 91

Helen Houx Hubbell (C45) of Des Moines, Iowa, on June 1 at age 91

Natalie Harris Seliber (C45, GC46) of San Mateo, California, on February 13 at age 91

Evelyn E. Tintera (C45) of Georgetown, Texas, on May 16 at age 90

Doris H. Chortek (C46) of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on March 29 at age 89

Sara R. Condie (C46) of Wilder, Vermont, on August 18 at age 92

Aileen Dickinson (C46) of West Columbia, South Carolina, on April 8 at age 88

Mack Newberry (C46) of St. Augustine, Florida, on August 8 at age 89

Marie Bjorkman Smith (C46) of Tryon, North Carolina, on January 29, 2014, at age 88

Molly Doran Cahill (C48) of Oceanside, California, on January 9, 2014, at age 86

Elizabeth Good Pollack (C48) of York Harbor, Maine, on March 18 at age 87

Col. James D. Smith (C48) of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on March 16 at age 91

Julie M. Gollrad (C49, GC57) of Evanston, Illinois, on February 7 at age 86

James F. Huffman (C49, GC49) of Flint, Michigan, on June 19 at age 92

Robert Scholz (C49) of Janesville, Wisconsin, on April 9 at age 88

Frances Ann “Pat” Schlater Simpson (C49) of San Antonio, Texas, on May 12 at age 87

William R. Wolfard (C49) of Dallas, Texas, on May 30 at age 89

Robert Calhoun Woolson (C49) of Winnetka, Illinois, on April 18 at age 92

Ulysses A. Carlini (GC50) of North Platte, Nebraska, on August 24 at age 89

Edward L. Nemeth (C50) of Birmingham, Alabama, on May 11 at age 88

John P. Bartelme (C51) of Menlo Park, California, on May 6 at age 88

Charles R. Corson (C51, GC52) of Naples, Florida, on January 2, 2014

Donald T. Counihan (SESP49, GC51, GC56) of Tuscon, Arizona, on July 27 at age 86

Dan L. Dunlap (C51) of Mendota, Illinois, on March 25 at age 85

Lorane Wright Katz (C51) of Laguna Woods, California, on April 30 at age 84

Charlotte J. Nolan (C51) of Harlan, Kentucky, on May 15 at age 85

Nancy Brown Johnson (C52) of Fort Collins, Colorado, on April 21 at age 83

Richard S. Reeder (C52) of Bluffton, Ohio, on June 16 at age 87

Beverly Kallman Weber (C52) of Joliet, Illinois, on September 9 at age 83

June M. Anderson (C54) of Hendersonville, North Carolina, on August 13 at age 82

Ruth Larson Mankin (C54) of Lewes, Delaware, on July 3 at age 81

Frederic A. Neyhart (C54, GC56) of Freeport, Illinois, on June 23 at age 82

Col. David L. Anderson (C55) of Anacortes, Washington, on February 26 at age 81

John Bowdidge (GC55) of Springfield, Missouri, on April 3 at age 84

Jeanette Sias (GC56) of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, on April 15 at age 81

Illene K. Maurer (C57) of Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 9 at age 78

Lori Hanley Moody (C57) of Stamford, Connecticut, on August 9 at age 79

Diane Stoakes Mackey (C58) of Little Rock, Arkansas, on December 15 at age 76

Donald E. Williams (GC58) of Matthews, North Carolina, on April 23 at age 90

Carolyn (Fox) Miller (GC59) of Fort Wayne, Indiana, on July 31 at age 79

Joan D. Buchanan (C60) of Brick Township, New Jersey, on June 9 at age 75

Elinor Karpf-Hager (C61, GC65) of Moorpark, California, on October 21, 2013, at age 73

G. Lane Ware (C61) of Wausau, Wisconsin, on June 5 at age 75

Frances Budd Cole (C62) of New York, New York, on August 29 at age 76

Jack M. Minkow (C68) of Winnetka, Illinois, on May 25 at age 68

Susan H. Wolf (GC70) of York, Pennsylvania, on February 12 at age 66

Mary Mortimer Bosley (GC71) of South Orleans, Massachusetts, on March 20

Mary Lou Zeiloth Sundberg (GC71) of Lake Forest, Illinois, on June 1 at age 73
Rex Eugene Peterson (C75) of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on February 19 at age 61

Richard G. Johnson (C76) of Franklin Park, Illinois, on September 2 at age 61

Jane Wade Blalock (GC77) of Orlando, Florida, on April 8 at age 74

Richard A. Livingston (GBSM64, GC77) of North Manchester, Indiana, on June 13 at age 78

Bruce A. Barnhart Jr. (C82, GJ84) of St. Louis, Missouri, on February 28 at age 54

William R. Brooks Jr. (C86, KSM90) of New York, New York, on March 30 at age 50

Bernard G. Yvon (C86) of Chicago, Illinois, on September 6 at age 50

Richard A. “Ric” Roe (GC88) of Huber Heights, Ohio, on May 10 at age 54

Tanji D. Dewberry (C98) of Orange, New Jersey, on April 13 at age 37

Joseph Cavolick (GC02) of Northbrook, Illinois, on August 18 at age 70

Andrew Cray (C08) of Washington, DC, on August 28 at age 28

Grant Oakes Green (C08) of Grenada, Virginia, on June 21 at age 28

Martha Hyer (C45), an Oscar-nominated actress who starred alongside the likes of Frank Sinatra and Humphrey Bogart, died May 31 in Santa Fe, New Mexico, at the age of 89. Hyer’s big break came in 1954 with a role in the Humphrey Bogart–Audrey Hepburn–William Holden film Sabrina. She went on to appear in films with Bob Hope, Rock Hudson, and Tony Curtis. Hyer was nominated for an Academy Award as best supporting actress for her role in the 1958 film Some Came Running, starring Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Shirley MacLaine. Northwestern’s Hal and Martha Hyer Wallis Theater is named for Hyer and her second husband, film producer Hal Wallis, to whom she was married from 1966 until his death in 1986. In her later years Hyer spent her time painting and hiking.

Jerilyn Ann Logemann (C63, GC64, GC68), the internationally recognized communication sciences research pioneer and revered School of Communication and professor of otolaryngology–head and neck surgery and neurology in the Feinberg School of Medicine. Her research interests included the management of voice disorders, normal swallowing physiology, and the assessment and treatment of speech and swallowing dysfunction in treated head and neck cancer patients and the neurologically impaired. Logemann developed the modified barium swallow test, a less stressful alternative to a typical radiographic swallowing study that is now a standard diagnostic tool.

James F. Coakley (GC64), professor emeritus of theatre in Northwestern’s School of Communication, died on June 18 at age 80. Coakley earned a bachelor’s degree at the Carnegie Mellon Institute of Technology in 1955. From 1956 to 1958 he served as a cryptographer in the US Army Signal Corps. After receiving a master of arts degree from the University of Minnesota in 1959, he came to Northwestern, where he earned his PhD in theatre in 1964. Coakley taught and participated in theatre productions at Loyola University and the Goodman Theatre in Chicago and then at the University of Michigan before joining the Northwestern faculty in 1971. In addition to directing plays for Northwestern’s University Theatre, Coakley taught theatre history, interpretation, stage directing, theory, criticism, Shakespeare, and the development of dramatic art and guided student research and dissertations as the coordinator of graduate studies from 1972 to 1980. He retired in 2005.
Donors make a difference in professional development

Donors to the School of Communication enjoy giving where they can see results. In giving to support student professional development, these donors receive immediate gratification—and gratitude—from the students who benefit.

Sending students into the world

Barbara Molotsky (WCAS65) chose to attend Northwestern because she thought she might become a star—but soon found her niche in appreciating the arts rather than performing. She changed her major, graduated, and got into the business of making stars—in public relations. Today when she visits campus, it’s to support students who know what they want to do but need help getting there.

Molotsky’s generous gifts to the School of Communication have provided an endowment to assist students who need financial help for internship experiences. Students with limited means can be left out of some of the most competitive and valuable internship opportunities in LA and New York. Thanks to funding by Molotsky, School of Communication students have enjoyed internships at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Creative Artists Agency in LA, and production companies on both coasts.

Molotsky’s funding is the crucial difference in making high-caliber internships possible, said April Quioh (C14), who had a stuff-of-dreams opportunity at Comedy Central in New York City in 2013.

“Unfortunately, I had exhausted pretty much all my financial avenues and would have had to turn down the internship,” the radio/television/film major said. “I learned about marketing television from the best cable network in the country. The following summer I was asked to intern with them again in their Los Angeles offices. None of this would have been possible without Barbara Molotsky.”

For Molotsky, who loves fostering young talent, the payoff is watching students do well. “I like to see people develop in their careers,” she said. “And I love meeting the students.”

Paying forward gratitude

As a student, David Lefkowitz (C82) took full advantage of his Northwestern experience. He joined the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity and was involved with the Waa-Mu Show, Associated Student Government, and the Daily Northwestern. He also served on the board of A&O Productions and interned with the American Civil Liberties Union. Lefkowitz even fondly remembers battling the winter chill on icy street corners while canning to raise money for Dance Marathon.

“Extracurricular activities were a huge part of my college experience,” Lefkowitz said. “They were lots of fun but also gave me a chance to apply what I was learning in the classroom to the real world. Because of the sacrifices made by my parents, I was able to do all those things and didn’t have to work, but I realized there were a lot of students who didn’t have those same opportunities.”

Lefkowitz both honored his parents and helped future generations of Northwestern Wildcats when he created an endowed fund to support the student experience. The funds have provided wide swaths of School of Communication students with access to professional development programming, including classes, workshops, and visiting artist panels.

Lefkowitz’s Northwestern experience propelled him to a stellar career as a securities lawyer. After earning his law degree at Georgetown University, he joined Weil, Gotshal & Manges, where he had served as a summer paralegal while a Northwestern student. He helped WGM build a vibrant London office and grow into a major player on Wall Street.

“Northwestern gave me a set of tools that enabled me to continue to grow personally and professionally—long after I left,” Lefkowitz said. “Luckily for current and future Northwestern students, that’s a gift he’s still paying forward.”
Scrofano at the S.I.T.E. of new theatre

Los Angeles–based scenic and multimedia designer and Northwestern alumna Shannon Scrofano (C01) visited campus in May as the 2014 Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Artist-in-Residence. Scrofano interacted with graduate students in the School of Communication’s master of fine arts programs in theatre direction and design as they mounted the first S.I.T.E. (Surprising Intersections of Theatre in Evanston) Festival. The festival was a suite of three site-specific plays produced in nontraditional theatre spaces around Evanston: a vacant building on Howard Street, Evanston’s first craft brewery, and an 18-hole golf course.

The Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Visiting Artist program was established through a gift by Wirtz’s grandson W. Rockwell “Rocky” Wirtz (C75).

Lennix speaks as Abelson Artist

Harry Lennix (C86), star of the successful NBC drama The Black List, returned to campus October 25 as the 2014 Hope Abelson Artist-in-Residence. In an event cosponsored by the Chicago Humanities Festival, Lennix spoke as part of the panel “Black Theater Is Black Life,” moderated by theatre associate professor Harvey Young and also featuring Chuck Smith, resident director at Chicago’s Goodman Theatre. The panelists spent an hour discussing their own experiences across diverse topics that ranged from their love of Shakespeare to the future of black theatre.

As the panel took questions from the audience, one struggling young African American actor said she was tired of people telling her about the roles she couldn’t play. “I hear the pain in your voice,” Lennix told the young woman. “But I don’t think you have to stand against something. Stand for something. To hell with the people who tell you no. Go and make the roles you want happen for yourself.”

The Hope Abelson Artist-in-Residence Program was established in 1990 through a gift from the late Hope Altman Abelson (CB30).

Dhar speaks on gains in hearing research

Faculty member Sumitrajit Dhar gave the ninth annual Roxelyn and Richard Pepper Lecture in Communication Science on May 14.

Dhar is a professor in the Pepper Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders and a fellow of the School of Communication’s Hugh Knowles Center. He studies the physiology of sounds created in the inner ear with the goal of developing better diagnostic tests for hearing loss. His lecture, “The Two Pieces of the Hearing Loss Puzzle,” discussed early detection and better access to care. “Thirty-six million Americans and 360 million people worldwide have significant hearing loss,” Dhar said. “Only one in five of these individuals seek treatment, and those who do often wait as many as seven years to do so.”

The annual lecture is made possible through a gift from Roxelyn (C53) and Richard Pepper (McC53), who attend the lecture every year.