Dear Friends of OSU Theatre,

When I characterize the year that just passed, three words come to mind: awards, partnerships, and research. I am delighted that faculty, staff and students have been acknowledged this year for their many accomplishments. From the recognition of Ph.D. student Briggs Cormier’s leadership role as President of the Council of Graduate Students, to Joe Brandesky’s teaching award, Jim Knapp’s Distinguished Staff Award, to MFA designer Brad Steinmetz’s selection by USITT as the Rose Brand Student Scenic Designer Award Winner, to Joy Reilly’s recognition by the Educational Theatre Association, the Department has had a distinguished year. We are delighted that such recognition is both local and national.

Research continues to be a priority for the department and it is particularly gratifying when it combines a variety of people and events. One of our creative projects this year included our first time collaboration with the Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design for our production of Sleep Deprivation Chamber. Not only did ACCAD students and faculty discover new ways of working in the context of live performance, so too our theatre team experimented with integrating interactive animation into our co-production. Research continued with our Adrienne Kennedy Symposium which attracted interest from around the campus and from scholars from outside Ohio. Having Adrienne Kennedy here to talk about her work when she received her honorary doctorate in June was one of the year’s many highlights.

I am a firm advocate of theatre as the quintessential collaborative art form and it is important for theatre’s future that we espouse this in a variety of ways. To this end partnerships have become central to our process of making and creating theatre. This year has been a rich one for new partners: Department of Chemistry, the College of MAPS, and the Office of Research co-sponsored our symposium on “Chemistry and Theatre”; the Department of Dance with The Fire Still Burns, and the Department of Comparative Studies and the Ohio Arts Council with the creation of our new course “Performance and Culture in Cuba.”

One of the unfortunate aspects of the last year is the shrinking economy which has affected all of us with continued budget cuts. This has forced us to reduce the size of Encore. Using our theatrical know-how, however, we will continue to feature Alumni News and Faculty and Staff News on our newly designed website which was launched in January 2003. So alumni and friends, please keep sending us your news!

Sincerely,

Shelley K. Ritter

Left to right, ACCAD members Fran Kalal, Maria Palazzi, Matt Lewis, and Jenny Macy ready the projector for a Sleep Deprivation Chamber.

Inset Photo

Playwright and OSU alumna Adrienne Kennedy received an honorary doctorate from the university in June, marking the 50th anniversary of her graduation. The Department of Theatre also performed her play, Sleep Deprivation Chamber, which she co-authored with her son, Adam.

[On the Cover]

OSU students tour Havana during a 10-day Cuba program in December 2002. The trip was the culmination of a new course, Performance and Culture in Cuba, in which students explored the culture, arts and creative performances of the Caribbean nation.

encore 2003
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Photographs from S-21
a Short Play by Catherine Filloux
Directed by Lesley Ferris
October 2-4, Roy Bowen Theatre

Jeffrey Solomon presents
Mother/SON and
Santa Claus is Coming Out
October 9 -11, Roy Bowen Theatre

Reverend Billy and the Church of Stop Shopping
October 22, Thurber Theatre

The POSTman Delivers.
Created and Performed by Robert Post
October 31 – November 1, Thurber Theatre

Coming of Age, by Morrie Brickman
November 2, Faculty Club

The Rimmers of Eldritch, by Lanford Wilson
Directed by Bruce Hermann
November 5 – 22, Roy Bowen Theatre

Rashomon, by Fay and Michael Kanin
Directed by Maureen Ryan
November 18 – 25, Mount Hall Studio Theatre

When will the September roses bloom?
By Goat Island Performance Group
Work-in-Progress Showings
January 22 - 24, Roy Bowen Theatre

Pentecost, by David Edgar,
Directed by Jonathan Putnam
February 25 – March 6, Thurber Theatre

School Tour: Rock 'n Roles from William Shakespeare, by Jim Luigs
Directed by Beth Dekker
Public Performances March 2 - 6

Candide, by Leonard Bernstein,
Directed by Stephen C. Anderson
Joint production of the OSU School of Music
and the Department of Theatre
April 23 – May 2, Thurber Theatre

Fate of a Cockroach, by Tewfik al Hakim
Directed by Nails Al-Atrash
May 12 – 28, Roy Bowen Theatre
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| 1. | **Twelfth Night**  
| 2. | **Conduct of Life**  
| 3. | **Comic Potential**  
| 4. | **Oxygen**  
| 5. | **Sueño**  
| 6. | **K-nowhere to run, no-w-where to Hide**  
| 7. | **Sleep Deprivation Chamber**  
| 8. | **The Fire Still Burns**  
After Words – A Post-Performance Discussion
Following the 2nd Thursday evening performance, an invited guest gives a brief response to the play and then leads a discussion with the audience and the production team. This year we were fortunate enough to have the following individuals participate in After Words:

Twelfth Night
Dr. Kaara Peterson
Guest Instructor, Department of English

Conduct of Life
Dr. Jill Lane
Assistant Professor, OSU Department of Comparative Studies

Comic Potential
Dr. Katherine Burkman
Professor Emeritus, Department of English and Artistic Director, Women At Play

The Fire Still Burns
Dr. Neil Gordon-Jacobs
Associate Professor, Germanic Languages and Literatures
Dr. Maria Ignatieva wrote and directed Space Mystery for our eighth annual Theatre for Young Audiences production. Performances took place in the Civic Center, downtown Lima. We presented our first Winter Showcase in late February 2003. Students from the Acting and Directing classes presented short excerpts, scenes, and improvisations in a chamber setting. A Spring Chamber Theatre production of Mixed Emotions, directed by Dr. Ignatieva, was performed at Dean Violet Meek’s house. It featured a performance by Martha Farmer, former OSU—Lima theatre professor, and was in part a farewell to Dean Meek and her residence, site of several performances during her twelve year tenure as Dean in Lima. A delegation of Honors 100 students, led by Dr. Ignatieva, traveled to Columbus to observe one of Bruce Hermann’s classes and meet with Dr. Lesley Ferris during the Spring. Dr. Joe Brandesky directed Moliere’s The Imaginary Invalid during Spring 2003. It was the last production to be performed in Reed Hall Auditorium prior to a major renovation and enlargement of the space, thanks to the generosity of Martha Farmer. Completion is expected by February 2004. Czech scenographer Jaroslav Malina is slated to design the inaugural production of The Cherry Orchard in the newly renovated theatre (Spring 2004). This will mark Professor Malina’s third production collaboration on the Lima Campus.

Our search for a tenure-line designer/technical director came to fruition with the appointment of Brad Steinmetz (MFA 2003, OSU) to our faculty. We are very happy to have Brad join us in Lima and are already benefiting from his expertise regarding the ongoing renovation/construction of our auditorium.

Four students were recognized with Spring 2003 awards at OSU-Lima. Janera Torres received the Arts Divisional Award (sponsored by the Music and Theatre faculties) while Theatre Departmental awards went to Anne Maag, Joshua Parker, and Janera Torres. Several students received financial grants that enabled them to travel to the Prague Quadrennial: Janera Torres, Anne Maag, Danielle Axton, Chase Shreefer, and Laura Mawhorr.

Dean Violet Meek ended her Lima tenure with the successful Ohio and its People, a Bicentennial Tent Show in June 2003. Theatre students and alumni created and performed original solo pieces on the lives of famous Ohio residents. Left to right: Kendrick Hardy as Jesse Owens, Tiffany Soule as Harriet Beecher Stowe, Lise Evans as Annie Oakley, and Damian Bowerman as John D. Rockefeller.

Music and Theatre faculties) while Theatre Departmental awards went to Anne Maag, Joshua Parker, and Janera Torres. Several students received financial grants that enabled them to travel to the Prague Quadrennial: Janera Torres, Anne Maag, Danielle Axton, Chase Shreefer, and Laura Mawhorr.
The theatre program at OSU-Mansfield continues to be very active, under the direction of Larry J. Evans. The 2002-2003 Theatre Season included three major productions, all of which used a combination of students and community talent. The fall production was Thornton Wilder’s Our Town, which was also scheduled for two performances for the Richland County Children’s Theatre Foundation. The winter production was the murder-mystery musical Something’s Afoot (with David Tovey as music director/conductor). And the spring production was Philip Barry’s comedy The Philadelphia Story.

The theatre department and the campus drama club (Ohio Eta Chapter of Theta Alpha Phi) worked together on supporting the three theatre productions and also sponsoring the spring theatre banquet at which several awards were given, including the Gerry Rice Theatre Award to theatre major Kyle Sturts and the James Lewis Technical Theatre Award to Gretchen Ashbrook.

In the winter quarter, the reading was a condensed version of the most famous drinking party in history, Plato’s Symposium. The largely undergraduate audience enjoyed the presentation, and was perhaps inspired to turn its own revels to a more philosophical level. The production was The Mound Builders by Lanford Wilson, which achieved its desired goal of tapping into local interest in the Native American mounds in Newark.

The year closed with one of the most successful readings ever staged: selections by one of America’s most popular humorists, Dave Barry. The cast of readers struggled mightily to maintain a professional demeanor, but the material was just TOO FUNNY at moments! The final production was an evening of one-acts: Christopher Durang’s Mrs. Sorken; David Ives’s English Made Simple, Dr. Fritz, and Sure Thing; and A.R. Gurney, Jr.’s The Problem. Mrs. Sorken featured Newark theatre professor, Dave Williams, in full drag as Mrs. Sorken, a performance greeted by his students with gasps and giggles.
The Department of Theatre kicked off a season of productive guest artist residencies by hosting Actors from the London Stage in October 2002. Professional British actors Jason Baughan, Paul McCleary, Jamie Newall, Eunice Roberts, and Jax Williams spent a week in the department teaching classes and performing one-person shows. The residency culminated in public performances of Much Ado About Nothing, in which the five actors played every role in the script, with minimal sets, costumes, and scenery.

On October 16 actress Kate Mulgrew, best known for her roles as Captain Janeway on Star Trek: Voyager and Mary Ryan on Ryan’s Hope, dropped in for a visit with the Department of Theatre. Herman LeVerne Jones, an African American theatre specialist, gave a presentation on African American theatre to Anthony Hill’s two courses on cultural diversity and led an acting workshop in October 2002. Mr. Jones has directed, produced and performed in numerous productions throughout the United States and abroad. He is presently Artistic Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Herman LeVerne Jones Theatre Consultant Agency, Inc.

Professor Walter Puchner, Chair of the Department of Theatre Studies at the University of Athens, Greece, came to campus in October to address the topic of Ancient Greek Drama. On October 28 he gave a lecture entitled: “The Revival of Ancient Greek Drama in Europe,” and on October 30 he led a seminar. Professor Puchner came to OSU as a Senior Visiting Scholar under the auspices of the University Seminars Program of the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (U.S.A.). His lecture and seminar were co-sponsored by the Department of Theatre and the Department of Greek and Latin.

Theatre and film producer Jeff Sharp, perhaps best known for the Academy Award-winning Boys Don’t Cry, led a discussion with students prior to screening Boys in Thurber Theatre in November. Sharp also took time to speak with theatre students about his career as a producer. The event was part of Student Affairs’ Late Night Programming Initiative, and was co-sponsored by the Department of Photography and Cinema Alumni Society.

Theatre students and faculty. Mulgrew, whose husband Tim Hagan entered the Ohio gubernatorial race in 2002, made a tour of schools throughout Ohio in the autumn. She spoke about her history as an actress, her experiences in both New York and Los Angeles, and her current projects. Mulgrew was a dynamic speaker with a distinct passion for life and acting. She spent much of her time encouraging students to be confident and bold in pursuit of their careers. During the Spring of 2003 Mulgrew performed off Broadway in Tea at Five, a one-person show about the life of Katherine Hepburn.

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Playwright Tom Dulack visited The Ohio State University Department of Theatre in November to discuss his book, In Love with Shakespeare: A Literary Memoir. The book, published in 2001, is a humorous, irreverent and provocative look at the various ways Shakespeare’s plays are used – and abused – in today’s culture. Dulack, a professor of English at the University of Connecticut, is the author of a dozen plays, including Solomon’s Child, Diminished Capacity, Breaking Legs, Capital Crimes, Bright Wings and Catherine. His visit was co-sponsored by OSU Libraries.

Bina Sharif, New York based playwright and performer, visited OSU for a week-long residency in January 2003. In addition to visiting theatre and women’s studies classes, Ms. Sharif offered a workshop for theatre students. Ms. Sharif also performed her provocative and timely solo piece, Afghan Woman, which explores the perspective of a burqa-clad woman in war-torn Afghanistan. Following the first performance of Afghan Woman, United States to produce plays that reflect the diversity of our society, especially plays by women of all colors, and to hire more women directors, with the goal that an average of half the plays produced in any given season be written by women, half directed by women. The TRI has been named as the group’s archive.

During a post-show discussion moderated by Ted Ziter (left), guest artist Bina Sharif (center) talks about her drawings and work with respondent Fawzia Afzal-Khan.

Dr. Fawzia Afzal-Khan, from Montclair State University served as respondent. The residencies were sponsored by the Department of Theatre in conjunction with the Coca-Cola Student Project Fund, the Department of Comparative Studies, the South Asian Initiative, the Office of International Affairs, and Women in Development.

Catherine Filloux was our annual Thurber Playwright-in-Residence. Ms. Filloux has received a wide array of national and international awards for her work, which has been performed in the U.S., France, and Cambodia, and includes libretto and oral history as well as plays. During her Winter quarter residency she taught a course on playwriting. Catherine was instrumental in starting a group called “Women Count Call for Equal Representation” which called upon all theatres in the
The TRI sponsored two exhibitions with the first opening in October, in conjunction with Ohio State’s Historic Costume & Textiles Collection. “Dressing the Part: On and Off the Stage” was on display through May, 2003, in the Gladys Keller Snowden Galleries, located in the Geraldine Schottenstein wing of Campbell Hall. The exhibit included a number of renderings from the Daphne Dare, Toni-Leslie James, Gerald Kahan, Paul Stiga, and Sylvia Westerman collections, and several costumes from the Twyla Tharp Archive. Nena Couch co-curated the exhibition with Gayle Strege, curator of the Historic Costume Collection. Val Pennington prepared the renderings for exhibition. Several of Dennis Parker’s designs from OSU Theatre were exhibited and Dennis wrote one of the catalog essays.

“Some Sort of Somebody”: Ohioan Elsie Janis on the Stage and in the Trenches,” a major exhibition curated by Nena Couch and prepared by Val Pennington, took place January through April 2003 in the Philip Sills Exhibit Hall in the Thompson Library. Material from the exhibition was drawn from the Elsie Janis Collection of the Laura M. Mueller British and American Theatre and Film Collections. We’re grateful to Ms. Mueller for her generosity in sharing her rich collections with all of us, and particularly for sharing her enthusiasm for the life and career of Elsie Janis (1889-1956), the Columbus native who became an international sensation in vaudeville, on stage and screen, and as a writer, director, and song writer.

Alan Woods and Nena Couch represented the TRI at the annual Margo Jones Medal presentation in the summer of 2002. The Medal went to Mel Gusow, longtime New York Times critic and theatre writer. The presentation took place at the Eugene O’Neill Center in Connecticut where former medalist James Houghton is now artistic director.

Under the auspices of the Dance Heritage Coalition with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation, Jessica Tupá (who was project archivist last year for the Bebe Miller Collection) received a fellowship in dance documentation and preservation, training first at the Institute, and then working at BalletMet of Columbus, developing a plan to establish and maintain an archive of that professional dance company’s work.

As a consequence of the International Senior Theatre Festival, senior theatre collections and activities have blossomed at the Institute. Senior theatre companies around the world are now sending programs, and the Institute is the official archive for Columbus’s own Footsteps of the Elders and Senior Repertory of Ohio (Grandparents Living Theatre).

The Eileen Heckart Drama for Seniors Competition, established to honor the actress and to encourage more writing for senior theatre, generated a great deal of interest: 470 plays were submitted in the three categories (full length, one act, and ten minute plays), and were read by a large number of volunteer judges. Winning plays were announced on July 2, 2003, and received staged readings at the Short North Playhouse at the end of July in association with Red Herring Theatre Ensemble, Footsteps of the Elders, and Senior Repertory of Ohio Theatre Company/Grandparents Living Theatre.

We are very excited to report that the renovation of the Main Library is moving ahead, and the current plans include moving the Lawrence and Lee Institute and the Cartoon Research Library into the renovated William Oxley Thompson Library to join the special collections already there, Rare Books and Manuscripts and the Hilander Research Library.

The Institute’s collections continue to grow. For more details on this year’s acquisitions please visit our web site (www.lib.ohio-state.edu/triweb/).
The Undergraduate program has more than doubled over the last few years! Dan Boord continued as the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Departmental traditions continued with the Welcome Back Pizza Party, Take Out Theatre, Backstage Live, the Writing Company, and the undergraduate productions of Arkansaw Bear and Comic Potential. At the end of Winter Quarter, the Writing Company, an on-going support group for actors who like to write, presented a performance of their original works.

At the 2003 Richard J. and Martha D. Denman Undergraduate Research Forum, Lindsey Carr tied for first place in the Arts/Architecture category for her honors project titled Staging Nontraditional Theatre in a Traditional Community. Also representing the Department with honors projects based in the Arts/Architecture category were Allyson Morgan, Leah Reddy, Joey Schultz, and Amy Tzagournis.

At the End of Year Celebration, which had its largest turn-out ever, the Department recognized various undergraduates, graduates, faculty and staff for their achievements. At the close of the Celebration, over $11,000 in scholarships were awarded to members of the undergraduate body. Following the Celebration, an undergraduate ensemble of writers and performers presented the fifth annual Backstage Live. The evening was a blend of emotional and comedic moments as the fifteen member ensemble presented monologues, musical numbers, and parodies.

New and returning undergraduates get the 2002-2003 year off to a great start at our annual pizza party. Standing, left to right: Allyson Morgan, Joey Schultz, Dan Boord, Joe Maloney, Jillian Burgos, Chris Dickman, Karen Michelle Friedman, Jonathan Barnes, Bonnie Milligan, Nicholas Redinger, Amy Kern. Seated, left to right: Peter Schwartz, Chis Lee, Jodi Genter.

Congratulations, Class of 2003! Pictured here are a few of our record number of 2002-2003 graduates! Kneeling, Eric Mayer, Megan Fellers. Standing, left to right: Amy Kern, Casey Burns, Rebecca Rhinehart, Peter Schwartz, Lindsay Rehage, Sarah Reese, Laura Butler, Jennifer Bach, Sarah Brinker, Dean Evans, Jodi Genter, Heather Burley.

The company of Backstage Live 2003 performs a scene about Camp Sunrise, the summer camp program in Ohio that caters specifically to the needs of children affected by HIV infection and AIDS. All proceeds from this year’s Backstage Live benefited Camp Sunrise.

Left to right, Doug Avery, Colin Sweet, and Aiyana Marcus in The Arkansaw Bear, our Winter 2003 school tour.
Theatre and Science: Combining Elements Symposium

On March 6, 2003, in a symposium entitled Theatre and Science: Combining Elements, theatre practitioners and scientists met to discuss the interrelations of their fields through OSU’s production of Oxygen.

The Wexner Center’s Performance Space was full with standing room only. Moderated by OSU Professor of Philosophy Allan Silverman, the symposium touched on a variety of topics, including the state of the field of science, women in the field, and the genesis of the play itself.

Other distinguished panelists included:
- Dr. Gideon Fraenkel, OSU Professor of Chemistry
- Dr. Susan Olesik, OSU Professor of Chemistry
- Bruce Hermann, OSU Assistant Professor of Theatre and director of Oxygen.
- Special guests were the playwrights of Oxygen:
  - Dr. Carl Djerassi
  - Stanford University Professor of Chemistry and inventor of the birth control pill

Dr. Roald Hoffmann
- Cornell University Frank H.T. Rhodes Professor of Humane Letters and Nobel Laureate.
- Prior to the symposium all participants saw the department’s production of Oxygen, and earlier on the day of March 6, designers had a private presentation of their work for the authors.

The symposium was co-sponsored by the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, the Department of Chemistry, Honors/Scholars Program, the Wexner Center for the Arts, the Department of Theatre, and the Office of Research.

Barbara Zuck,
The Columbus Dispatch
5/23/2003
This year several of our alumni answered the call to reconnect with the department and our students.

John Fields (MA 1960s) appeared as Albert Soady in CATCO’s production of Escanaba in da Moonlight, alongside alum Damian Bowerman (MFA 2002). After graduating from OSU John went on to a distinguished professional acting career, playing nearly all of the major Shakespearean roles.

In January of 2003 Toni-Leslie James (BC 1979), one of Broadway’s busiest designers, took time to chat with current MFA design students during their trip to New York City. The trip was arranged by Dennis Parker.

While visiting Columbus to receive an award from Westerville High School in May, Ohio native Gigi Rice (BFA 1987) took the opportunity to talk with Theatre faculty, staff and students. Ms. Rice’s most famous role was as Carly on The John Larroquette Show which ran for four seasons. She was also a regular on Frasier. She has a new comedy called Do Over in which she plays the mother Karen. She is married to actor Ted McGinley and lives in Los Angeles.

Brenda Laurel (PHD 1986) delivered the annual Lawrence and Lee Lecture in May. Brenda’s been at the cutting edge of the theory, practice, and aesthetics of computer assisted virtuality for over two decades - ever since she convinced Professor Don Glancy that looking at the ways theatrical theory applied to computer technology was a terrific topic for her dissertation. Brenda’s most recent book is the fascinating Utopian Entrepreneur; more information about it and her current work/activities at her website, www.tauzero.com/Brenda_Laurel/.

Kris Jones (MFA 2002) returned to the department to design the lighting for our Spring quarter production of The Fire Still Burns.

For more information please visit: www.the.ohio-state.edu. If you’d like to share your expertise with the department, we’d love to have you! Feel free to contact Laura Sipe, Alumni Liaison, at sipe.9@osu.edu or 614-292-8241.
Plans to celebrate Adrienne Kennedy’s work and career in the theatre began over three years ago with a committee that worked on nominating her for an Honorary Doctorate. Alan Woods wrote the initial nominating letter and supportive external letters came from Edward Albee and Margaret Wilkerson. The OSU team that worked on the nomination came from two colleges: the College of the Arts and the College of Education.

Since June 2003 marked the 50th anniversary of Adrienne Kennedy’s graduation from Ohio State, the OSU team decided to focus on spring 2003 for a variety of activities. The department with its first time collaboration with the Advanced Computing Center for Art and Design (ACCAD) produced her play Sleep Deprivation Chamber which was co-authored with her son, Adam P. Kennedy. Connected to the production was the Adrienne Kennedy Symposium on May 9 which took place at the Wexner Center’s Film/Video Theatre. Anthony D. Hill convened the symposium which featured keynote speaker Paul Jackson from Miami University. Other featured speakers included Margaret Lynch, Cleveland-area writer and programmer of the Great Lakes Theatre Festival Adrienne Kennedy events in 1992; Caroline Jackson Smith who directed Kennedy’s Funnyhouse of a Negro during the retrospective of Kennedy’s work by the Signature Theatre Company in 1995; and Maurice E. Stevens from OSU’s Department of Comparative Studies. The design team presented material on the visual aspects of the production and three people served as respondents: Valerie Lee, Chair of OSU’s Department of English, Ruby C. Tapia, OSU Department of Women’s Studies, and John Harris from OSU Theatre.

Adrienne Kennedy returned to the department on June 12 when she spoke to students, faculty, staff and friends in a “In Conversation with Adrienne Kennedy.” The last time she visited the department was in 1989—her first visit back to campus since her graduation—which sparked memories that resulted in her award-winning The Ohio State Murders. On Friday, June 13 Adrienne Kennedy received the Honorary Degree Doctor of Literature. In September 2003 she received an additional honor: the Anisfield-Wolf Lifetime Achievement Award.

Alan Woods gently kept encouraging me to come back to Ohio State, and I’m really glad that he did that, because it’s definitely fulfilling a circle.

—Adrienne Kennedy

Adrienne receives the hood of her honorary doctorate during the Spring Commencement. Adrienne later described the ceremony as one of the highlights of her life.
Associate Dean Charles Hancock presents Adrienne Kennedy with the College of Education Hall of Fame award during a luncheon held in her honor.

Playwright Adam Kennedy with the cast of Sleep Deprivation Chamber on their closing night performance: May 23, 2003.

People from across campus and the nation came to the department to hear Adrienne Kennedy’s talk on June 12. Pictured here are: (standing, left to right): Lesley Ferris, Anthony Hill, incoming PHD student Monica White, June Antoine (president of Cleveland’s Adrienne Kennedy Society), Kendrick Hardy, Alan Woods, Joe Kennedy, Etta Kennedy, and Adrienne Kennedy (seated).

During the President’s dinner for the recipients of honorary doctorates, Adrienne (seated) and her son Joe Kennedy (standing, right) meet Vice Provost of Minority Affairs Mac Stewart and his wife Tena.

Adrienne Kennedy chats with MFA Acting student Kendrick Hardy, who played Teddy Alexander in the department’s Spring 2003 production of Sleep Deprivation Chamber, during a book signing on June 12.

Margaret Lynch shows images of the Cleveland of Adrienne Kennedy’s childhood at the symposium in her honor.
The Department of Theatre's unique international collaboration with the Ludwig Foundation of Havana, Cuba made major strides during the 2002-03 season. For the first time in OSU history, a group of students participated in an officially sanctioned, study abroad program in Cuba! The class "Performance and Culture in Cuba" was developed in large part by Co-resident Director Jill Lane (Comparative Studies) in conjunction with Co-resident Director Dan Gray (Theatre).

The course was divided into two sections. The first was a ten-week overview of performance and culture in Cuba presented through a series of books, articles, films, performances, guest lectures, student presentations and discussions. Featured in the curriculum were: a residency by Cuban/American performance artist Leandro Soto that included his performance of E Pluribus Unum and an exhibit of his work at the Hopkins Hall Gallery; a lecture by Coco Fusco, a playwright and NY based interdisciplinary artist (Fusco also moderated the Afterwords that followed Soto's performance); and a trip to the Cincinnati Playhouse to see Eduardo Machado's play Havana is Waiting. This would serve as preparation for the ten-day intensive "in-country" portion of the course developed and offered through the Office of International Education.

The 16 students, two resident directors, Lesley Ferris (Chair), Mary Tarantino (Resident Lighting Designer), Michela Shigley-Giusti (OIE) and Mary Gray (OAC) departed December 13th for sunny Havana. The 10-day trip included many highlights for our culture-hungry group. Among them were: lectures, workshops and discussions with prominent artists and scholars; touring the historic areas of Havana’s old city, attending such theatre performances as the Cuban version of Vagina Monologues; a visit to the National Gallery with its vast and complex collection of Cuban Art; a private screening of Fernando Perez's film Life is Whistle followed by a conversation with the film maker; a trip into the heart of Cuba to visit the influential theatre artists of Teatro Escambray and experience a taste of their communal work and life; and exploring the colonial city of Trinidad. This was indeed a trip that will never be forgotten.

Performer and designer Leandro Soto discusses his work with leading Cuban American performance artist Coco Fusco. Leandro donated his multimedia piece, Liborio Wants to Escape, to the TRI during his residency with the department in Autumn 2002.
The OSU students were the most prepared and intellectually curious of any students we have hosted in the past.

– Fernando Saez, Ludwig Foundation, Havana, Cuba

One of Leandro Soto’s paintings, featured in an exhibit in Hopkins Hall during his Autumn quarter residency with the Department of Theatre.

The Cuba study abroad group on an observation tower of an 18th-century sugar plantation near the city of Trinidad. Clockwise from center: Jill Lane, Mike Holmes, Melissa Bialko, Emily Alexander, Abbey Rose, Lise Evans, Lindsey Buescher, Emily Sanders, Beth Josephson, Ben Sullivan, Dan Gray, and Brad Steinmetz.

Left on the set for Leandro Soto’s E Pluribus Unum, Leandro (right) and Coco Fusco (center) discuss the piece. This Afterwords discussion followed a performance and was moderated by Lesley Ferris (left).

(Above) Leandro discusses his work and portfolio with MFA design students. Left to right: Leandro Soto, Brad Steinmetz, Betsy Cutler, Jim Hutchison, Megan Kimball.
Senior Theatre League of America Conference and Festival 2002

After three years of planning, the first International Senior Theatre Conference and Festival in the USA was hosted at Ohio State as a collaboration between Theatre and the School of Medicine’s Department of Geriatrics/Gerontology. Joy Reilly, who served as chair of this event, had been the original U.S. delegate to the first European World Congress of Theatre and Aging in 1991 in Cologne, Germany. At that time, the German government invited Reilly to present her original musical I Was Young, Now I’m Wonderful performed by Grandparents Living Theatre. Since that first congress, the USA had organized three national conferences at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas and in 1999 with Walt Disney World in Orlando.

The Conference and Festival took place in Drake on August 18-22, 2002. It had 200 delegates, and performances by seven overseas companies from Australia to Holland. A team of conference planners, including representatives from Geriatrics/Gerontology, the Ohio Agency on Aging, Senior Repertory of Ohio (formerly Grandparents Living Theatre) and Footsteps of the Elders, received funding from the Ohio Arts Council to develop a Conference of workshops, masterclasses, guest artists and academic papers and presentations about Theatre and Aging. The Native American company Spiderwoman headlined, performing a new work using their technique of Storyweaving, and taught masterclasses. OSU’s Health Sciences physicians taught workshops on cutting edge research about healthy aging. Main stage performances were held in the Thurber Theatre and Roy Bowen Theatre — one of the highlights being a new dance theatre piece premiered by Karen Bell, Dean of the College of the Arts and Vicky Blaine, emeritus professor and past chair of the Department of Dance. Exciting interdisciplinary experimental work was demonstrated each hour in the intimate New Works Lab. On the third afternoon a festival of new award-winning mini plays encouraged delegates to create inter-global productions that demonstrated (again) that theatre crosses all boundaries.

Probably the most significant outcome of the Conference was the ratification of the new Senior Theatre League of America (STLA), an official national association to be administered by the 75-year-old Educational Theatre Association (EdTA), which has added lifelong learning to its umbrella organization. In addition, the Lawrence and Lee Theatre Research Institute is now the home of the Senior Theatre Collection, as well as the Eileen Heckart Drama for Seniors competition. As a result of the event, the growing senior theatre movement, the Conference, and the Department were recognized in American Theatre and in Time magazine. The next conference is January 2004 in Las Vegas. You can visit the STLA senior theatre website at www.seniortheatreleague.org.

Comparative Drama Conference

The 27th Comparative Drama Conference took place on April 24-26, 2003 in downtown Columbus with Stratos Constantinides serving as the Conference Director. The keynote speaker was Biodun Jeyifo from Cornell University whose paper was titled “Drama and the Formations of Postcolonial Studies.” Kenneth Goings, Chair of the Department of African and African American Studies, presided over the keynote address with OSU faculty John Conteh-Morgan and Francis Abiola Irele responding. The conference ended with a round table discussion entitled “American Theatre and the African Diaspora” that was chaired by Harry Elam from Stanford University. Discussants included Anthony Hill (OSU), David Krasner (Yale), James Hatch (NYU), Samuel Hay (Lafayette College), Tish Jones (University of Iowa), Eileen Morris (Kuntu Repertory Theatre) and Sandra Richards (Northwestern).

About Twelfth Night

“Inventive, playful, silly, sexy and swooningly romantic. Director Maureen Ryan’s beguiling production of Shakespeare’s gender-bending romantic comedy brims with color, personality and eclectic wit.”

Michael Grossberg, The Columbus Dispatch - 11/14/02
Joe Brandesky, Lima Campus, was honored by the United State Institute for Theatre Technology with the 2003 Herbert D. Greggs Award for writing excellence for his outstanding article “Spectacular St. Petersburg: 100 Years of Russian Theatre Design” published in the Spring 2002 issue of Theatre Design and Technology magazine. A second honor came to Joe as he was also selected as one of the 10 faculty members to receive the 2003 Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching. Teaching award recipients are inducted into the Academy of Teaching, which provides leadership on improving teaching at Ohio State. Joe joins Joy Reilly as the second faculty in our department to be honored in this manner.

J. Briggs Cormier (PHD) received the Office of Student Affairs and Ohio Union Outstanding Graduate Student Award, as well as the Graduate School Leadership Award in recognition of his two consecutive terms as President of the Council of Graduate Students. Both are leadership awards intended to recognize graduate students who have proven themselves as leaders and excelled at service within the Ohio State community. These two are the highest recognitions of service and leadership for graduate students at Ohio State.

Jim Knapp was one of 12 staff members from throughout the OSU campus to be selected for the 2003 Distinguished Staff Awards. This award includes a cash prize, an addition to the individual’s base salary, and a crystal trophy. Jim’s excellent service to students, faculty and staff as our resident computer guru, production coordinator, theatre technology teacher, and assistant technical director all combined to bring his nomination to the top of the list of the seventy-two other nominees from throughout the sixteen thousand staff members. All of us who have had the pleasure of working with Jim know of his devotion to helping students and his tenacious problem solving abilities, and now the university at large has recognized these talents.

Joy Reilly received two major awards for her work in establishing the Senior Theatre League of America and producing the International Senior Theatre Festival in the summer of 2002. The Educational Theatre Association, the largest educational theatre organization in America, granted her the Presidential Award for helping “steer the course through the establishment of the Senior Theatre League of America and its culmination in this past summer’s Senior Festival.” The Central Ohio Theater Critics Circle’s ninth annual citations included: “The International Senior Theatre Festival and Conference produced by Joy Reilly and Senior Repertory of Ohio (formerly Grandparents Living Theatre) at Ohio State: for helping to raise central Ohio’s visibility with the first international theatre festival in Columbus history and for promoting the growth of theatre devoted to the experiences and concerns of older adults.”

Brad Stairnmetz (MFA 2003) was recognized by the United States Institute for Theatre Technology as the 2003 winner of the Rose Brand Award for Scene Design at the 43rd Annual Conference and Stage Expo held in Minneapolis. The Rose Brand award is one of ten awards for Designers and Technicians which are given by USITT to those just completing their degree programs who demonstrate excellence in a specific area of the performing arts. The award includes a cash prize, recognition at the annual conference, and an opportunity to meet with the award sponsors. In addition Brad also was selected for the highly competitive Young Designer’s Forum.

Jim Knapp (left) and Executive Vice President Ed Ray (right) congratulate Jim Knapp.
On May 23, 2003 over 150 friends and colleagues gathered in the lobby of the Drake to view the exhibit “Teaching by Design” which celebrated the thirty-year teaching and design career of Dennis A. Parker. Parker joined the OSU faculty in the fall of 1985 and has served as the Resident Costume Designer ever since. In addition, Dennis was the acting chair of the department in the interim period between former chair Kathleen Conlin and current chair Lesley Ferris. On June 30, Dennis officially retired from the university and is just now beginning to enjoy his retirement years.

“Teaching by Design” featured eighty framed costume renderings, twelve dressed mannequins, and hundreds of unframed renderings highlighting Dennis’ prolific costume design career. The exhibition also featured a sale and auction of all of this impressive body of work with proceeds to benefit the Roy Bowen Theatre Fund. Over $6000 was raised by this most generous gift from Dennis.

Theatre bug bit Dennis in 1962 in a theatre course at Port Huron Junior College. He played Tom in a production of The Glass Menagerie and later that year saw his first professional stage production, a tour of Gypsy starring Ethel Merman. He then sought an undergraduate degree in design and art education from the College of Architecture and Design at The University of Michigan. After a three-year stint as a junior high school art teacher, Dennis returned to the University of Michigan seeking his Masters Degree with an emphasis on Design.

During these years Dennis was exposed to some of the best regional theatre in the country with the residency of the Association of Producing Artists at Michigan, as well The Stratford Ontario Shakespeare Company. Zelma Weisfield, longtime costume designer at Michigan was his mentor, and he was assigned Camelot as his thesis production. The costume budget for the show was $2000 and it was 1968! (Our costume thesis productions today often have $2000 budgets.)

His first academic position was as an assistant professor and resident costume designer at Eastern Michigan University. He followed his appointment there with an appointment as the faculty costumer at Boston University. At BU, he worked with several professional directors including Ward Baker, Michael Howard, and Alan Schneider.

After four years at Boston, Dennis joined the faculty of Mount Holyoke College for Women in Massachusetts.

Joy Reilly with the costume she wore in the Department of Theatre’s production of Mame. Hers was one of the realized costumes showcased in the Teaching by Design exhibit.

Alumna Gigi Rice and Dennis Parker with the costume for Reno Sweeney that Gigi wore in our production of Anything Goes in Spring of 1986.

Speech! Speech! Dennis Parker takes the stand to offer his remarks at his retirement celebration.

Teaching by Design:
In 1978, Dennis passed the entrance exam for The United Scenic Artists of America in the costume design division. Although he really loved Holyoke, in 1981-82 Dennis returned to the University of Michigan to complete the now available Master of Fine Arts Degree to get the credentials he needed to teach at the graduate level.

With his MFA complete, he was hired as the founding costume designer for the fledgling Master of Fine Arts program at the University of Maryland. Despite promises of new facilities and extended recruiting money, the developing program was very slow to get started. After three years, Dennis decided to join a more established MFA program, and was hired as the Resident Costume Designer for Ohio State.

Throughout his academic career, Dennis has maintained an active professional career as well. Dennis’ costume designs have appeared on the stages of The Nebraska Repertory Theatre, Players Theatre Columbus, The Contemporary American Theatre Company (CATCO) of Columbus, and the Asolo Theatre Company in Sarasota, Florida. His work has frequently been exhibited at the USITT regional and national conferences as well as the 1987 Prague Quadrennial International Scenography Exhibition. In addition, he is a seven-time Peggy Ezekiel Award winner for Outstanding Achievement in Costume Design and was named The Fred and Howard Artist of the Year at CATCO for their 2001-02 season.

After sixty-three university costume designs, twenty-nine professional productions, twenty-three productions as costumer, and eight productions as producer, Dennis is more than deserving of his anticipated rest. Dennis says that his plans for retirement are “sleeping in,” but after he gets “tired of all of that” he plans to return to Ohio State to occasionally teach the stage makeup course. Congratulations Dennis, Ohio State is a better place because of your work here!

In the summer of 2003 Lesley Ferris, assisted by Bruce Hermann, led 17 students on a whirlwind 5-week trip to London. During their stay they attended classes on American and British theatre, saw 25 shows at theatres like the National and the Royal Court, learned all about famous landmarks and quiet neighborhoods on personalized guided tours, and met with leading British theatre practitioners. Have a look at some of the highlights - and mark your calendar for summer 2005, when the program will travel again!

For more information on the London Theatre Program, visit: http://www.the.ohio-state.edu/1_academics/level_3_academics/international/london/london.htm
We want to hear from you!
Please fill out the form below and return it to us by June 1, 2004. Information received by that date will be included in the 2004 issue of encore!

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I would like to make a contribution to the Department of Theatre.
Enclosed find my contribution to the:
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Honoring Parker And Kennedy

This year the department celebrated the retirement of esteemed Resident Costume Designer Dennis A. Parker, and a very special homecoming for renowned playwright Adrienne Kennedy.