

Backstage Pass

January 2009

Join us for *The History Boys*

The Minnesota State Mankato Department of Theatre & Dance will begin the second half of its Main-stage season with Alan Bennett's multiple award-winning play "The History Boys," presented in the Andreas Theatre.

Performances are 7:30 p.m. Jan. 28-Feb. 1 and 4-7, with 2 p.m. matinees Feb. 1 and 8.

At a boys' grammar school in Sheffield, England, eight boys are being coached for the Oxbridge entrance exams. It is the mid-1980s and the main concern of the unruly bunch of bright teenagers is getting out, starting university and starting life. At the heart of "The History

Boys" is four teachers, each with a contrasting outlook on teaching and school.

After a highly successful London run, the play went to Broadway and was made into a movie. Note: This play contains mature themes.

"The History Boys" is directed by Department of Theatre & Dance Chair, Paul J. Hustoles. It features junior transfer student David Wasylik at "Hector" (the role portrayed by Richard Griffiths on stage and film) and two graduate students, Michael James and Susan Vee Hansen, plus senior and North Mankato native Micah J. L. Kronlokken, as faculty members. Wasylik and Kronlokken

were Semi-Finalists at the regional Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival held last week at the University of Kansas in Lawrence.

Among the awards received were 2005 Olivier Award for Best New Play and the 2006 Tony Award for Best Play.

Individual tickets for "The History Boys" are \$14.50 regular, \$13.00 for senior citizens, youth 16 and under and groups of 15 or more, \$10.00 for current Minnesota State students. Tickets are available now online at MSUTheatre.com.

Or call the Theatre & Dance Box Office between 4 and 6 p.m., Monday-Friday at 507-389-6661.



FOR YOUR INFORMATION **Andreas Seating Configuration**

Corner, the same as "Arsenic and Old Lace" and "Enchanted April." Anyone in Section II will directed to use the back staircase.

The cast (left to right):
Front row: Clayton Rutschow, Rudolph Searles III, Aaron Alan, Steven Mark Crisp.
Middle row: Susan Vee Hansen, David Wasylik, Michael James, Micah J. L. Kronlokken.
Back row: J. Alexander Coe, Eric Mayson, Joseph Crook, Jameson Pieper

Actors, designers excel at KCACTF Festival

Twelve Minnesota State Mankato actors were among the nearly 400 competing for the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship at the 41st annual Region V Festival Jan. 18-23 at the University of Kansas at Lawrence. From that field, six advanced to the Semi-Finals round while three competed in the Finals round.

Finalists graduate students **Lolly Foy** and **Andrew Umphrey**, and senior undergraduate **Jared Oxborough**.

Advancing to the Semi-Finals were **Micah J. L. Kronlokken**, **David Wasyluk** and **Mollie Fischer**.

Other student actors and awards received were:

Oxborough (senior BFA): Best Musical Theatre Actor in the Final Round

Umphrey (3rd year MFA): Best Musical Theatre Actor in the Semifinal Round

Umphrey (3rd year MFA): Best Classical Actor in the Final Round
Technical and Design Awards:

Ben Inniger (2nd year MFA): National Barbizon Award for Sound Design for *Hamlet* (advances to Kennedy Center)

Allen Shannon (3rd year MFA): National Barbizon Award for Scene Design for *Lysistrata* (advances to Kennedy Center)

Shannon (3rd yr MFA): 1st place in the Regional Scene Design competition for *Hamlet*

Grant Merges (3rd yr MFA): 1st place in the Regional Lighting Design competition for *How I Learned to Drive*

Jeff Smith (senior BA): 1st place in Poster Design for *Cloud Tectonics*

Christine Thompson (2nd yr MA): Runner Up, National Critics Institute

Thompson (2nd yr MA): Runner Up, Dramaturgy for *Lysistrata*

Steve Smith (faculty) Region V National Teaching Artist Grant Award Nominee in Lighting Design

Nikki Swoboda (2nd yr MFA):

Irene Ryan Nominees

Dancing at Lughnasa



J. Alexander Coe and Lolly Foy

Miss Saigon



Andrew Umphrey, Craig Daniel Stastny

Hamlet



Micah J. L. Kronlokken, Claire Wellin

Lysistrata



Tristin Rupp and David Wasyluk

Thoroughly Modern Millie



Mollie Fisher and Jared Oxborough

Harvey



Michael James, Deanne McDonald

Selected to participate in the SSDC Directing competition

Invited Showcase Scenes (but did not participate): *Hamlet* and *Thoroughly Modern Millie*

KCACTF Certificates of Merit (presented by Region V Responders):

David McCarl (faculty) for Costume Design for *Hamlet*

Inniger (2nd yr MFA) for Sound Design for *Hamlet*

McCarl (faculty) for Costume Design for *Thoroughly Modern Millie*

Paul Finocchiaro (faculty) for Direction/Choreography for *Thoroughly Modern Millie*

Swoboda (2nd yr MFA) for Asst. Direction/Choreography for *Thoroughly Modern Millie*

Eric Mayson (sophomore BA) for Musical Direction/Composition for *Lysistrata*

Shannon (3rd yr MFA) for Scene Design for *Lysistrata*

Amanda Rozmiarek (senior BFA) for Scene Design for *Harvey*

Minnesota State Mankato Department of Theatre & Dance

Masson to be Andreas Guest Artist

During residency, he will cast piece for spring concert



Gabriel (Gabe) Masson will be in residence at Minnesota State Mankato Feb. 15-21 as an Andreas Guest Artist. During his stay, he will audition and rehearse a piece that will be included in the Fall "Spring Collection" concert, will present an Advanced Modern master class and have an informal showing open to the public.

Masson's career as a choreographer, performer and teacher spans 25 years. He has toured the world in the companies of Hannah Kahn, Rosalind Newman, Lucinda Childs and Doug Varone, as well as dancing in specific projects with various choreographers including Peter Pucci, Mark Morris and Michele

Pogliani (Italy).

Masson has an international reputation as a teacher and has taught and performed at festivals worldwide including the American Dance Festival, USA and Korea; The Edinburgh Festival, Scotland; and the Sao Paulo Biennial, Brazil. He is on the rotating faculty of several prestigious dance festivals here in the States including the Bates Dance Festival.

After receiving a Master of Fine Arts from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts he was on faculty there from 1990-1995 and from 1997-2001 he served as artist-in-residence at the University of the Arts, in Philadelphia, PA.

Alumni catch us up on what they've been doing

For more, visit MSUTheatre.com and click on "Alumni."

Danae Schniepp, B.A., Spring 2002

Danae has remained busy working as a stage manager and assistant stage manager at The Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis. She has been there for nearly six years, working on over 20 productions. Her work has also been showcased at The Park Square Theatre (with fellow alum, Dani Bennet Teuber), The Jon Hassler Theater, The Guthrie Theater and she will add The Mixed Blood Theatre later this winter. Danae is a proud member of Actor's Equity Association.

Andrea Bilkey, B.S., 1995

Education Since MSU: MFA Lighting Design from University of Wisconsin

- Madison, 2002

In the fall of 2002 I began teaching at Texas Tech University. This past spring I was granted tenure, and am enjoying my first year as an Associate Professor. In the meantime I've designed lighting and sound for many of our productions, and for a local singer/songwriter/playwright/director, affording me a lucky opportunity to meet many people that I never dreamed I would meet. Also, this past year I began serving on the light lab committee for USITT's lighting commission. While it is busy and hectic, nothing beats a west Texas sunset!

Michael Fillbrandt, B.S., 2004

Education Since MSU: Hamline University, 2008-present

2005: married Jessica (Haug)

Fillbrandt 2006; inspired by my role as Donald in "You Can't Take It With You" (2004), decided to adopt a baby corn snake named Skulle Heller; 2007-present: Worked as a Special Education paraprofessional at Oak-Land Junior High School in Lake Elmo, MN. Also serve as the Drama Club director. 2008 - present: Attending Hamline University in Saint Paul, pursuing a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree to get my teaching license for K-12 Theatre and Dance.

Jennifer (Steiskal) Johnsen, B.S., 2004

I got married to a wonderful guy this last September 2008. Been doing Theatre in the Twin Cities since 2005. Been in such shows as "The Tempest,"

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Alumni stay busy in theatre and film projects

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“The Hollow,” “Anton In Show Business,” “Evita!,” “Second,” and I am currently working on “Cabaret” for Chameleon Theatre Circle. I am also working a 9-5'er as a Customer Service Rep for 3M's Disability Program with a part-time job at Lane Bryant in Roseville. Hopefully in 2010 I will be enrolling in graduate studies somewhere in the Cities or Minnesota area for a Masters in Theatre Arts.

Steve Corona, MA student 2004-06

Last year I appeared in the film “Hamlet 2” as Horace, one of the redneck wireworks riggers. Also last year I was an ensemble member in the Mother Road Theatre's premier production of “The Odyssey.” I just finished filming the Lifetime Movie of the Week “Georgia O'Keeffe” with Jeremy Irons and Joan Allen in which I played the artist John Marin. I played a CSI on the TV show “In Plain Sight,” which will air this summer on USA. Also last year I dialect coached Gerard Butler on the action film “Game” and Helen Mirren on her film “Love Ranch.” Besides working in the film and theatre biz, I am also expecting my first child in July.

Tanya (Peterson) Laumann, B.S., 2004
Employer: Park Nicollet Medical Center

Married in 2006; freelance directing for various children's theatre companies; a wee bit of acting (“The Lovely Liebowitz Sisters,” Plymouth Playhouse/Troupe America); paying off student loans!

Erin Drevlow, B.A., 2005

After graduation I moved home to Bismarck, ND, and staged and costumed Bismarck's first full-length opera since the late 1920s. The produc-

tion was “The Magic Flute” and I had the pleasure of working with a guest artist from Juilliard. I then moved to New York where I played “The Baker's Wife” in “Into the Woods” in an off-off Broadway house. I was even reviewed for the role! Then I went on two tours with Hampstead Stage Company, which is a Children's Theater Company that only does Classical literature. I had the joy of playing “Robin Hood” and various Greek Gods in the two shows on my first tour and then “King Arthur” and “Lady Macbeth” in my second tour. I then came home to Bismarck and directed the first production of a new company to Bismarck called “Capital Shakespeare.” I directed “Twelfth Night.” (I ended up having to play “Fabian” as one of my actors had to drop out; directing yourself is not easy.) I then choreographed and costume designed “School House Rock Live Jr.” I played “Sister Robert Anne” in “Nonsense” and will be teaching a class in Musical Theater this fall. I am looking into attending graduate school in the 2009 school year.

Jessica (Haug) Fillbrandt, B.S., 2005

Since graduating I've stage managed for St. Croix Festival Theatre in St. Croix, WI; New Breath Productions in Saint Paul; and I was the technical director for Brave New Workshop for almost a year. I currently live in Saint Paul and am considering alternative career options, which prompted my return to school this fall to pursue my interest in French.

Chris Kind, B.S., 2005

Since graduating I married Angelyn Eve Faust (BFA 2006) and moved to New York where we both currently live. I have worked with C.L.I.M.B. Theatre, The Mechanical Division, Seasons at Bunker Hills St. Croix

off-Broadway, Park Square Theatre, The Gallery Players, Playhouse on the Green and am currently on a tour with NetWorks in a production of “The Wizard of Oz” playing the Tin Man, the role he played at Mankato. When not working a show I am employed by Big Apple Singing Telegrams. I also made a movie musical called Show Goons that includes many MSU alums. <http://webpages.charter.net/notnorm/films.html>

Philbert Warren, BFA, 2006

Phil has been working steadily throughout Wisconsin as a freelance technician. He has been spending his summers on beautiful Chequamegon Bay on the south shore of Lake Superior. He will be returning to Milwaukee this fall to serve as the Light Board Op for the Skylight Opera Theatre. Phil has recently enjoyed a trip to Eastern Europe visiting countries such as Poland and Romania. He is hope to travel again soon, possibly somewhere in Asia or the South Pacific (not the musical).

Mick Coughlan, BFA, 2007

After graduating, I packed up and moved out to Utah to work for the Utah Festival Opera as a Properties Artisan. I left Utah for Washington, DC, although with some minor complications (my truck broke down). I was the Stage Properties intern at the Shakespeare Theatre Company. The work there is predominantly classical theatre, so I'm getting to put all of my theatre history knowledge to good use. After the internship, I accepted the position of Properties Run Crew at the Shakespeare Theatre Co. for one of their two theatres. In my abundance of spare time (ha!) I have been overhiring at Signature Theatre and working on several shows as a Properties Artisan.