

Love My
 SMs



Winter 2017 | Volume 102 | Issue 1

Equity

Actors' Equity Association

NEWS

Want that audition? Go online. You can now sign up for Equity Chorus Calls and Equity Principal Auditions right in your Member Portal.

Joining Equity means access to healthcare and a pension, guaranteed workplace safety and even a few perks like discounts to yoga classes and car rentals—or signing up for auditions online and checking out stage manager submission notices thanks to the revamped Casting Call, now available in the Member Portal.

Beginning with Equity Chorus Calls (ECCs) this past August, followed by Equity Principal Auditions (EPAs) in December, members no longer have to come into an office city or call ahead for audition appointments. No matter where you are in the world (as long as you have WiFi) you can log on and sign up for auditions. It even works great on mobile devices.

Sign-ups for each audition start a week before the scheduled audition—at 9:30 a.m. for ECCs and at 12 p.m. for EPAs—and end at 2 p.m. on the business day prior to the audition for ECCs and at 12 p.m. for EPAs. For a chorus call, you'll receive your number; for a Principal Audition, you can choose a specific audition group (typically a 20-minute slot). Make sure your email address is up to date in the Member Portal (look under "My Profile") so you don't miss your confirmation email.

If you miss out on signing up for an EPA online for whatever reason, two appointments out of the six in each slot are always held back for walk-in sign-ups, which begin one hour prior to the start of each audition.

Understanding that plans can change, the system allows you to cancel an appointment online up to one hour before your scheduled time. Make sure you're on top of this, because two no-shows will result in losing online sign-up privileges for six months. Showing up late twice will have the same result.

Beyond the convenience of signing up for an appointment on the go, the new system offers some great time-saving tools. You can save multiple, different searches for quicker access in the future, customized by call type, contract type or location. You can save the listings you're most interested in revisiting in the "My Notices" section. And the main Casting Call page has quick links to find new notices, refresh your knowledge of audition procedures and leave feedback about how the online system is working for you.

To get even more information about the benefits of Casting Call and signing up online, go to members.actorsequity.org and watch the tutorial videos in [Casting Call](#).

CONTENTS

Winter 2017 | Volume 102 | Issue 1

In House

Read the many ways in which #EquityWorks for its members



6

HIGMEC

Two stage managers tell us how they got their Equity card



10

#LoveMySMs

We love our stage managers! Ira Mont, 3rd Vice President, speaks to the importance of stage managers



12

Across the Nation

Get to know the Twin Cities, an Equity Area Liaison City



18

#FWOS

The founding members of #FairWageOnstage talk about the campaign



8

Theater Spotlight

Meet Minneapolis' Guthrie Theater



11

Taking on a Challenge

Two stage managers share their experiences on fostering a career while working with a disability



14

After Orlando

Members came together to produce theatre to benefit the victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting



19

EquityNews

Editor
Josh Austin

Advisory Committee
Christine Toy Johnson
(Chair)

Diane Dorsey
Nicole Flender
Bruce Alan Johnson
Heather Lee

Kevin McMahon
Liz Pazik
Barbara Roberts
Melissa Robinette
Buzz Roddy
Joann Yeoman

Got a question or comment? Email
equitynews@actorsequity.org





From the President One Union

Hello from Denver! Our *Fun Home* tour had a two-week holiday layoff, which seemed like an awful lot of time to catch up on all the things at home that slip through the cracks when

you're working on the road. Of course, it turned out to be almost no time at all. The show continues to play well in large and small markets alike, and it's never far from my mind how fortunate I am to go to work eight times a week on a show that's just simply good. I continue to be a very happy actor.

But enough about me. It's hard to believe that it's already 2017, or that in just a couple short weeks our nation will inaugurate a new President. Regardless of your politics, it is a simple reality that Republican administrations typically make life more difficult for unions. For those who may be looking for concrete activities that will support the union movement—including, of course, Actors' Equity—there are some simple things that you can do.

First, patronize union businesses, and avoid those that are openly hostile to workers' legal right to organize. The AFL-CIO regularly puts out lists of union products, as well as "do not patronize" notices for companies that break labor laws and refuse to recognize bargaining units. If we want to have a union in another hundred years, and if we want the continuing legal ability to stand together for fair wages and working conditions, it's important to support both our own organization and our brothers and sisters in other industries. You can find the "do not patronize" documents here: <http://wp.unionlabel.org/dont-buy/>, and more information about union-made products here: <http://wp.unionlabel.org/do-buy/>. And if you really want to do a deeper dive on the big business of union-busting, start here: <http://theatln.tc/1GIz6UD>.

Second, be aware of your own rights in the workplace. Whether you are an actor or a stage manager, theatre is a collaborative art; the closer we get to opening night, the more the pressure mounts to throw the rules out the window. But consider this: if you go to a "quick fitting" during your break, even just out of a desire to help, you establish a precedent that will result in other

members being expected to work through their breaks as well. It is easier—and ultimately better—for everyone to follow the rules agreed upon in advance. If that fitting needs to be done, it will be scheduled at another time. A polite "I'm sorry, Equity has told me I need to take a break" or "I'll be happy to do that right after the break" usually gets the job done. It is not unprofessional or uncollaborative to expect the producer to adhere to the contract that he or she voluntarily signed in order to be able to employ you.

Along those lines: pay attention to your instincts in the workplace. If something feels wrong to you, it probably is. Equity has many channels of communication that are often underutilized. Deputies. Stage managers. Business reps. If you believe that there was insufficient (or no) notice of filming or photography, for example—whether in auditions, rehearsal or performance—we need to know about it. If you are sexually harassed, if you witness abusive behavior, if you are asked to do something unsafe, speak up through one of these confidential channels. And if you aren't getting the help you need for one reason or another, email me at president@actorsequity.org. Your representatives at Equity, both elected and staff, want to support you and keep you safe. One of the hallmarks of an effective union is that the members look out for and take care of each other. But we can't help you if you don't let us know what's going on.

And speaking of taking care of each other: in this issue, you'll be able to read a lot about stage managers. Stage managers, as I'm sure you know, are often unsung heroes. They occupy an incredibly challenging space as liaison between performers, crew and management, and are ultimately responsible for making sure rehearsals and performances happen consistently and professionally. So read on, and enjoy, and then thank your stage managers for all of their work. That is, if you can track them down between trips to buy highlighters and mechanical pencils.

Be well and buy union!

Kate Shindle

From the Executive Director Celebrating Our Stage Managers



Every performer loves stage managers. Stage managers are the artists who maintain the production. They keep time, keep the schedule, keep everyone on stage and on their mark. If you follow us on social media, you know that we have spent the past couple of months celebrating and highlighting Equity's stage managers with #LoveMySMs. We asked members to submit photos of themselves, or stage managers they have worked with, for us to celebrate. The result has been inspiring. We have heard from and showcased many of our stage managers who work across the country. We encourage you to continue sending us photos (send to jaustin@actorsequity.org) so that we can keep #LoveMySMs going.

While working at Actors' Equity I've had the opportunity to interact with many of the stage managers featured in this month's magazine. One conversation that stands out for me was with a stage manager who works Off-Broadway. She spoke about how stage managers are artists who "conduct" each performance. She said that every call she makes brings the show to life. That conversation helped give me a new perspective on how stage managers work and further solidified why they are so important to this industry.

Performers in a company depend in so many ways on their stage manager. Not only are they a wealth of information when it comes to your contract, rules and breaks, but he or she helps ensure your safety. Your stage manager is often the first line of defense in your workplace. (Make sure you talk to your Deputy as well if you encounter any issues. He or she is there to help and will make sure we know what is going on.) The fact that we represent stage managers as well as actors is good for the production and good for the industry.

This issue brings us stories of stage managers across the country. We hear from two stage managers who have disabilities, stage managers who have the added pressure of awards season, a stage manager who works full-time as a resident stage manager and another who is often working at various houses.

2016 was a big year for Equity. Not only did we implement the new format of *Equity News*, we introduced the Equity News Center and ECC and EPA online sign-ups in the Member Portal, we negotiated strong contracts across the country. We also strengthened our commitment

to diversity and inclusion within our industry (look for more news and statistics in my next column).

As 2017 begins, we stand with our brothers and sisters in the labor community. Together, we will face challenges. As a union, we will work to protect your rights.

Now, more than ever, we need to stand together because we are stronger together.

Mary McColl



(a)



(b)



(c)

Equity Works

Theatre News & Notes

In the Central region, the EEO Committee and the Marriott Theatre co-hosted an event on Monday, Sept. 26 at the Loyola University campus with 24 people in attendance. Prior to a panel discussion facilitated by EEO Committee Vice-Chair E. Faye Butler, the guests mingled over appetizers provided by the Marriott. The panel educated the attendees about Marriott's history, corporate structure and employment at the Marriott, while also covering what it looks for in the casting process.

Arrow Rock, Mo. – Arrow Rock Lyceum Theatre has added new TYA programming to its schedule, providing 18 workweeks.

Ashland, Ore. – Mu Performing Arts production at the Consortium of Asian American Theaters & Artists (CAATA) Conference resulted in 15 workweeks.

Berwyn, Ill. – 16th Street Theater is celebrating its 10th season in 2017.

Beverly Hills, Calif. – Theatre Forty, Inc. will remount *The Manor* at Greystone Mansion for the 15th year with 17 Equity contracts and a salary increase.

Boulder, Colo. – Colorado Shakespeare Festival will operate on an LOA/LORT in 2017 and 2018 with salary increases and additional Equity contracts over the two years.

Chicago, Ill. – Firebrand Theatre will produce under the CAT Tier N agreement for the 2017-18 season.

Chicago, Ill. – Rasaka Theatre Company added a third show to its season, adding almost 20 workweeks. (Photo a)

Columbus, Ohio – Equity welcomes **Short North Stage** to the union family as a new Transitional SPT. The theater will add 29 workweeks for members.

Detroit, Mich. – Detroit Repertory Theatre celebrates its 60th anniversary season this year.

Gallatin, Mo. – Equity welcomes the new **Warren Miller Performing Arts Center**, operating on an SPT Agreement with health benefits.

Indianapolis, Ind. – Indiana Repertory Theatre is celebrating its 45th anniversary this season. (Photo b)

Kansas City, Mo. – Heart of America Shakespeare Festival will add an extra contract in its new two-year agreement. (Photo c)

Kansas City, Mo. – Musical Theater Heritage has increased its contract ratio, adding about 15 workweeks in its 2017 season and another 25 in its 2018 season.

Lone Tree, Colo. – Lone Tree Arts Center went from a single production to a seasonal agreement, adding 86 additional workweeks on an LOA/LORT. (Photo d)

Long Beach, Calif. – The Reiner Reading Series is converting from a Code to a four-year LOA/Per Performance Equity contract, with minimum Equity contract ratios, salaries and pension.

Minneapolis, Minn. – Theatre Elision, a company that produces primarily new musical works, will begin its first season as an Equity house this year.

Missoula, Mont. – The Montana Repertory Theatre will operate on an LOA/URTA for the 2017/2018 season with increases in salary, per diem and AEA contract ratio.

St. Louis, Mo. – Variety Children's Theatre has increased its union contract ratio, providing additional work.

San Francisco, Calif. – Theatre Rhinoceros has committed to a bargaining relationship with Equity as an MBAT theater.

St. Louis, MO – The Tennessee Williams Festival of St. Louis is set to begin its first season as an Equity theater this Spring.

Tracking What You're Owed

Eastern Region staff recovered over \$300 in salary for a member whose company contracted her for the incorrect rate. Staff also achieved over \$3,600 in missing vacation pay for Equity members working on various LORT, CORST and URTA contracts.

A stage manager in the Eastern Region was not paid for a week of Stage Manager Pre-Production as stipulated in his contract. Staff was able to get him his missing paycheck of \$932.

Staff in the East identified underpayment of stipends to members totaling \$600. Staff worked with the theater and got all of the members properly reimbursed.

Central Region Staff recovered \$256.67 in unpaid vacation pay to a stage manager, and resolved a vacation pay claim which gave four members approximately an additional \$600 each. Staff also recovered over \$500 in underpayments to a member due to incorrect salary recorded by Paymaster, plus another \$60 in unpaid tech week bump.

Central Region Staff resolved a series of proration errors in actors' salaries, resulting in an additional \$23,000 paid to members. Staff garnered \$600 in payments due to three actors who performed on a local morning TV show.

Western Region Staff recovered salary and benefits for one member in the amount of \$1,225 plus 6% pension and additional Supplemental Workers' Compensation.

Western Region Staff recovered a travel reimbursement for one member in the amount of \$1,970. Additionally, staff recovered over \$5,000 in unemployment payments and \$3,000 in vacation payments for members.

Western Region Staff recovered vacation pay for four members in the amount of \$660. Additionally, vacation pay was recovered for two members in the amount of \$548.



(d)

Pictured:

(a) The cast of Rasaka Theatre Company's production of *Vanya (Or, "That's Life!")* adapted by Lavina Jadhvani. Photo by Scott Dray.

(b) Indiana Repertory Theatre's production of *Finding Home: Indiana at 200*, featuring several Equity members. Photo by Zach Rosling.

(c) Equity members Phil Fiorini and John Renshouse in Heart of America Shakespeare Festival's 2015 production of *King Lear*. Photo by Brian Collins.

(d) The cast of Lone Tree Arts Center's *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*. Photo by Danny Lam.

(index page) Members Puja Mohindra and Rom Barkhordar in Rasaka Theatre Company's production of *Vanya (Or, "That's Life!")* adapted by Lavina Jadhvani. Photo by Scott Dray.



Members of #FairWageOnstage.

When grassroots organizing meets union negotiations

#FairWageOnstage

The grassroots #FairWageOnstage (#FWOS) movement scored a major victory in November 2016 when Equity signed a new agreement with the Off-Broadway League. We asked some of the leaders behind the campaign to share with us how a two-year process of organizing and advocacy resulted in this historic win.

While the motivation to seek fair wages lies in everyone's need to pay the bills from the work they do, the inspiration for the #FWOS campaign came at a January 2014 Equity Membership Meeting. Following a passionate discussion about the terms of touring contracts, members Carson D. Elrod and Nick Westrate found themselves in the elevator musing, "Why aren't we New York actors doing what those touring actors are doing?"

They reached out to their peers and began with a meeting of six actors at Elrod's apartment that soon expanded to bigger meetings of the group—now dubbed the "Off-Broadway Action Group"—at The Players club. Adam Green observed, "It ended up being necessary to give actors and stage managers a space to talk about economic insecurity within our profession—insecurity that happens while we're working."

"We came up with a long list of ideas," said Robert Stanton, "and kept circling back to low wages versus high cost of living." In November 2015, member Brian Meyers Cooper, head of the Equity Off-Broadway Negotiating Committee, reached out. "The crucial thing," noted Elrod, "was Brian asking us to come to the union and bring the conversations we were having in private into the union building."

In a marathon session, three members of #FWOS discussed their plan with Meyers Cooper, Senior Business Rep. Beverly Sloan and Business Reps. Stephanie Frey and Maria Cameron. Stanton said the trio presented 20 proposals, "but the three said they'd give up 19 of the items just for number one: a decent, living wage."

Realizing they needed a snappy name and memorable hashtag, Elrod proposed #LivingWageOnstage. Someone suggested #FairWageOnstage, and Stanton saw the value in substituting "Fair" for "Living"—recognizing "no one wants to be unfair. It's the 'F' bomb in a negotiation."

Soon, they had a logo, website and infographics (all designed by member Manoel Felciano) as well as an active online presence spearheaded by Westrate. "Working with no budget except for

the man-hours of passion to make a livable wage in the Off-Broadway arena," said Green, "we built an organizational, grassroots infrastructure, turned out (kinda) viral videos, got important publicity in major newspapers and websites and started a city-wide, if not national, conversation in our industry."

As negotiations began, Eastern Regional Director/Assistant Executive Director Tom Carpenter invited members to observe—in a show of solidarity—the negotiations team. First 20, then 50 members showed up. "It was crystal clear that the entire community was focused, awake, paying attention, and demanding that there be systemic change in priorities for how theaters pay actors and stage managers Off-Broadway," said Elrod.

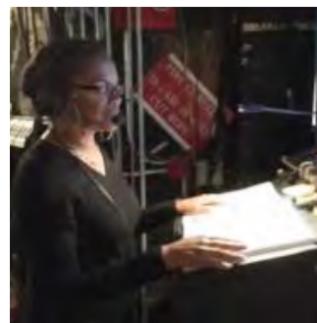
Meanwhile, #FWOS organizing continued, "amassing 1,700 names, 500 of them interconnected via text message," according to Stanton, "in a network member Jeff Biehl built in case we would have to demonstrate or strike." These lines of communication were important in other ways; Green noted the structure of a network (as opposed to a hierarchy) became key to their tactics and strategy: "A lot of our internal decisions grew out of conversation and consensus within our group, trying to give everybody's opinion equal weight."

Over the summer, the group gathered over 1,100 signatures on a letter it hand-delivered to management while Westrate solicited video testimonials from members. "Over 200 members looked directly into the cameras of their phones or computers and told their community why a fair wage onstage was important to them," Westrate said. "They shared their financial challenges and their deep and abiding commitment to making work in the Off-Broadway theaters of New York." Those videos are still available to watch on the #FWOS website and Facebook page.

Stanton said that as negotiations continued and rumors of a strike began to swell, members of #FWOS connected with performers working Off-Broadway at the time "in order to hear their concerns, show our support and organize them."

Elrod underscored the importance of continuing to get more members involved in their union: "There is simply no power or point in a union if the workers who make the product don't understand their collective needs and their collective power and demand that the union be responsive to them. [#FWOS] was a beautiful case of membership uniting, standing up and demanding that the union do something, and the union listening very carefully and then aggressively advocating on behalf of those members in need."

Lisa Dawn Cave Member since 1984



It's like I got my card twice.

When the Billie Holiday Theatre did *Golden Boy* in 1984, I got my card replacing a dancer who, at the last minute, wasn't able to do it. They asked her if she knew anyone, and she recommended me. I went and auditioned for Lewis Johnson and got it—and that's how I got my card.

I went to college for concert dance, but I could sing, too, so I was always interested in musical theatre. To get out and be able actually to get a job in musical theatre within a year of graduating was pretty cool, and to get my card then meant I was on my way to what I was going to be doing. It was exciting.

I switched to stage managing in 1994 when I was performing in the national tour of *Guys and Dolls*. I started off in the show as one of the Hot Box Girls, and then in the second year when the swing was leaving, I asked to be moved to her position because my knees were starting to hurt. I was in my 30s—not old, but older for a dancer—and I thought, “What am I going to do when my body says, “You can't do this anymore?” I wanted to stay in the theater, so I started talking to the stage managers on my show and asking them if I could watch them load in, just to see what the backstage stuff was really about.

Then, unfortunately, I was in a really bad car accident. I never went back to tour because my foot and knee were too messed up. My doctor said my healing had plateaued, and he didn't think I would be able to do eight shows a week as a full-time dancer anymore, which was devastating.

When that happened, I realized it must mean I would have to concentrate on making the job transition, and that's what I did. I called friends who were stage managers. I lucked into the right place, right time, right person, because the employers of *Show Boat* on Broadway needed four stage managers. They already had three and were looking for one more, and believe it or not, they wanted a black female to fill out the team because they wanted diversity on the stage management team to match the diversity in the cast. They called my friend Clayton Phillips, and he said he knew somebody who had never done it before, but knows the business. I went to four interviews with people like Hal Prince—and I got the gig. And from that point on I was able to learn hands on. This has been a very rewarding career—from dancing to singing and then switching over to stage managing.



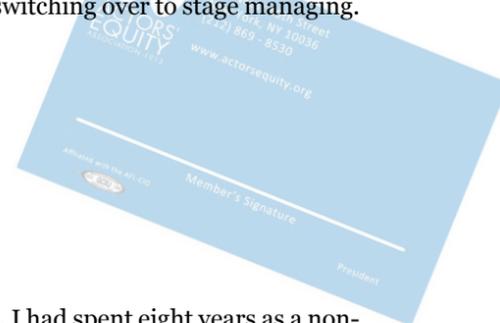
Alex Murphy Member since 2015

September 2015, Kansas City, Mo.: At this point in my career, I had spent eight years as a non-union stage manager, worked at several Equity theaters and accrued 30 weeks toward Equity membership. Oddly enough, the one Equity theater I hadn't worked at in some capacity, Kansas City Actors Theatre, hired me as a non-Equity ASM for its first production of the season, *The Gin Game*.

While working as the ASM, I received a call from the theater's production manager. The second show of its season, *At Home at the Zoo*, had just wrapped up casting the last role in the show. It turned out the actress cast to play that character had initially been hired to serve as the stage manager for the show—so this left a vacancy. My production manager was able to find an Equity stage manager to run rehearsals, but he would have to leave the show the week it moved to the theater to start another production elsewhere. Since my production manager was well acquainted with my desire to turn Equity, he offered to put me on contract to take over the show from tech week through the end of the run.

This was a theater that I had never worked at before, but all within my first season there I worked as an ASM, got my Equity card to replace a stage manager and was offered the SM position on the last show of that season.

I am currently the Resident PSM at Kansas City Actors Theatre and just wrapped first rehearsal for our third show. I feel nothing but pride every time I open my wallet and see my blue (for now) Equity card, and I will continue to feel that way for many colors to come.



Guthrie Theater



Photo by Dan Norman

▼ Guthrie Theater's cast of *The Parchman Hour*.

We asked the staff at the Guthrie Theater to tell us about themselves. This is what they had to say:

As Minneapolis' Guthrie Theater approaches the halfway mark of its 2016-2017 season—its second under the guidance of Artistic Director Joseph Haj—the 53-year-old regional theater flagship is redoubling its commitment to diversity, inclusivity and an expanded role in the Twin Cities community. We have a newly implemented policy that each and every production feature a diverse creative team and a significant partnership with Minneapolis Public Schools (through which every ninth grader will attend, at no cost, a performance of the Guthrie's upcoming production of *King Lear*). We have our groundbreaking Level Nine Series that prioritizes highly affordable ticket prices, a breadth of creative voices and free community conversations—the Guthrie is swiftly manifesting Haj's vision for a broadly impactful arts organization.

“Our mandate for the Guthrie's next 50 years is not to discover how to make

exceptional theatre,” says Haj. “We know how to do that. Our mandate is to create a theatre that is inclusive and inviting and that reflects the growing diversity of the community we are charged to serve.”

It's a call to action that is being heard and embraced by every department at the Guthrie, from education to marketing to the theater's tight-knit stage management team, led by Production Stage Manager Tree O'Halloran.

“My commitment to our five staff stage managers is to provide them with work throughout the season,” says O'Halloran. “And that work has historically been show-specific—you come to the theater when your contract starts, you focus on your production, on a job well done and then you leave. Expectations are changing. If our SMs are on contract and in the building,

(Continued on page 23)



We love our  Stage Managers



A stage manager is a vital role that I view as the central hub of both the production and the company. We are responsible for facilitation, communication, collation, collaboration and administration. We are the protector, the sounding board and disciplinarian of the company. The stage manager is the eyes, ears and, I believe, the heart and mind of the producer and director when they aren't in the room.

I thought I was going to be an actor. I joined the union in the spring of 1987. I scored my first contract at the Theater Factory St. Louis, an SPT company. Having done some stage management work, I was hired for the company's summer season to not only perform in several shows, but to also stage manage several others.

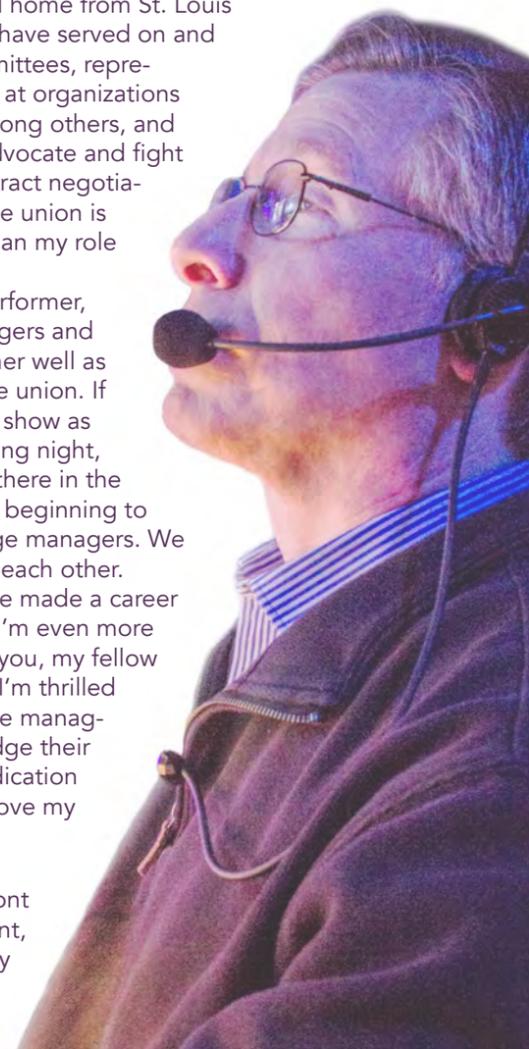
Stage managing came naturally to me; one, because I like to know everything that's going on and two, in addition to being organized, I like to make things work. When I was a student at Circle in the Square, I spent a lot of time watching *Present Laughter* from the booth with PSM Michael Ritchie. I became the friend who could help light a cabaret or assist in stage managing a showcase. Between '87 and '88, I started getting calls and job offers for stage management. Without looking for it or realizing it, I transitioned from actor to stage manager. It was and is a perfect fit.

Getting to be on both sides of the curtain has helped shape my union tenure. I currently serve as the 3rd Vice President of Equity. I believe that many of the qualities that make me a good stage manager make me a good union leader. I thoroughly enjoy all of the intricacies of how our union works. I joined my first committee (Developing Theatre) the minute I returned home from St. Louis in 1987. Since then I have served on and chaired several committees, represented our members at organizations like the AFL-CIO, among others, and have continued to advocate and fight for members on contract negotiations. My role with the union is not much different than my role in the theater.

Having been a performer, I believe stage managers and actors serve each other well as members of the same union. If you view the life of a show as first rehearsal to closing night, only two groups are there in the room every day from beginning to end—actors and stage managers. We bring out the best in each other.

I am proud to have made a career as a stage manager. I'm even more proud to serve all of you, my fellow brothers and sisters. I'm thrilled to celebrate our stage managers and to acknowledge their tireless work and dedication to the production. I love my fellow SMs!

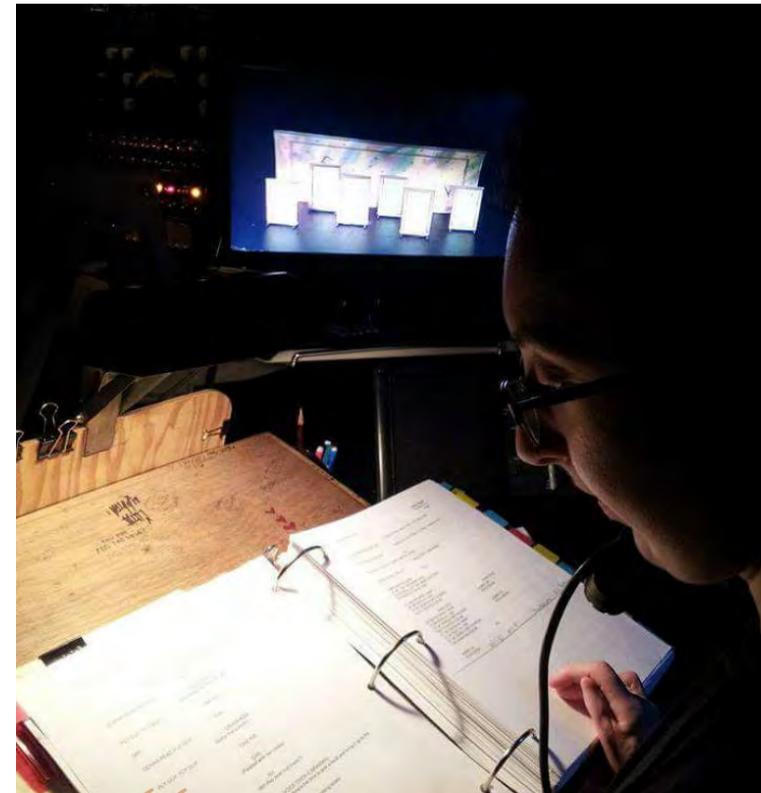
– Ira Mont
3rd Vice President,
Actors' Equity



Stage Managing with a disability

Members Philip B. Richard (pictured) and Elizabeth Salisch share what it's like working with a disability in this industry.

By Josh Austin



When Philip B. Richard II had his worst epileptic seizure to date, he was at work. He fell, landing hard on his chin. He broke both sides of his jaw and lost two teeth. After visiting the hospital and leaving with a wired-shut mouth, he returned to work that day.

"I was told I couldn't do my job with my mouth wired shut, and I couldn't get workers' comp since my epilepsy was pre-existing," he said. "But just like with everything else, I told them I could do my job and I was back to work that same day—blending my food and eating from a turkey baster."

That was prior to becoming an Equity member. Richard has been a union stage manager for just under one year—and is flourishing. He was born with epilepsy, a neurological disability that affects over 3 million Americans, and causes unpredictable seizures. For Richard, his longest span without an episode has been 12 years. But, like anyone with a disability, and in particular working as a stage manager, there have been a lot of "figure it out for yourself" moments.

"The theatre has always been a place that I felt that I fit in and belong," he said. "I've never wanted to do anything else." That's meant, for Richard, figuring out bus rides or walking routes (he's not allowed to drive a car; though, he noted, Equity doesn't allow that to affect the hiring of a stage manager) and working effectively with strobe lighting (which can trigger a seizure). "I always make sure that my disability never stops me from doing what I want."

Elizabeth Salisch was born orthopedically impaired. Between the ages of one to six years old, she went through 15 surgeries to make her hands functional.

And though Salisch said that she is unable to operate a drill gun, "I am highly adaptable to finding ways to do what I need to do, whether it's finding another way or by knowing how to find the right person to help me. This is very useful as a stage manager."

Salisch saw her first Broadway show when she was just five years old. Immediately, she knew she wanted in. Attending the University of Pittsburgh as a Theatre Arts major, she found stage management from asking how she could be involved. "I fell in love with stage management because it not only fits my personality,

but is one of the few positions that sees the journey of the production from the very beginning to the very end."

Though both Salisch and Richard admit that Equity has made their lives easier (for Salisch, it's saving for a pension and health benefits; Richard is grateful that the union has taken major strides to protect those with disabilities and to ensure they are not discriminated against), Richard acknowledged that those in the industry might have precon-

"I always make sure that my disability never stops me from doing what I want."

– Philip B. Richard

"I would tell someone else who may have a disability if they want to stage manage, or do anything else in the theater, they should go for it."

– Elizabeth Salisch

ceived notions about workers with disabilities. Perhaps, he said, people believe those with a disability can't handle the stress of the job. "Stage managers have so much that we do on a daily basis and a lot of that is last-minute along with being fast-paced," he said. "That is the normal level—for those with disabilities, it adds another layer, but it's not impossible."

Salisch has stage managed many young audience productions. She noted that the students most often ask her what happened to her hands. "My response to them, and to anyone who perceived people with a physical disability as being different, is that we are the same and I can do the same things as you, but I look different just like some people have brown hair and some may have blonde."

Richard also pointed out that those with a disability tend to have a preconceived notion about themselves: They assume they can't do something when all they have to do is find another path.

And for those with disabilities thinking of entering the world of stage management, both Salisch and Richard would say "follow your dreams."

"For someone with a disability, it can be harder, but don't let it stop you," Richard said. "Never, never let your disability stop you. Work with it. Think outside the box. I've never let anything stop me."

Dear Stage Managers, Thank you.

"To be an SM is to run an adult daycare at times. Colleen Nielsen knows that a balanced amount of respect while maintaining an organized and safe environment to explore the human condition is its own art. You are so essential to the success of our storytelling. Thank you!"

– Iris Elton

"Jill Gold is always a class act. She's a family woman with kids my age, so I can relate. She always has a smile on her face and kind words for everyone, and she seems to truly love actors. My last Equity job was *Empire* with McCoy Rigby and I was very excited to hear she was helping steer the ship."

– Richard A. Bulda

"There is no better SM around than long time stage manager Pat Adams at the Wilma Theater—and I think she has been there almost 20 years. Another wonderful Philadelphia SM who is now at Delaware Theater Company is Marguerite Price. These are two exceptional women, devoted union SMs and the backbone of theatre in the Philadelphia area."

– Nancy Boykin

"Before the last show of the week, Stephen Milosevich (production stage manager for *Hir*) would play disco over the monitor at our places call. He is the most organized, most professional goofball I've ever met."

– Tom Phelan

"Bryan Rodney Bauer is one of the most inspiring young stage managers I have met. While juggling a main stage production at Playwrights Horizons, he facilitated an organized, warm room for us to create Michael R. Jackson's *A Strange Loop*; I cannot wait to work with him again!"

– Larry Owens

"I have to give a shout out to the amazing Kate Bartels. Kate is always professional, always smiling and she always gets the job done! There's nothing better as an actor than knowing that the stage manager is on top of everything, and with Kate, there's never a question!"

– Amy Alvarez

"Craig Horness is the PSM at Ford's Theater, and I was lucky to do five seasons of *A Christmas Carol* with him. He keeps the show in shape and keeps the company in great spirits, and is a fantastic human."

– Vishal Vaidya

Getting into the business

Two stage managers talk about starting their careers and mentoring those who are up-and-coming in the industry

By Stephanie Masucci

Equity member Cheryl Mintz, the current Resident Production Stage Manager for McCarter Theatre in Princeton, N.J., knew in high school that she wanted to be a stage manager. “In 11th grade I had the opportunity to stage manage *The Crucible*, and that opened up my theatrical world and changed my direction. I had very positive undergraduate theatre experiences at SUNY Stony Brook and University of Loughborough in England, all of which led me to the Directing & Stage Management MFA at the Yale School of Drama.”

Yale proved to be a definitive experience for Mintz. Over the course of three years, she worked with over 300 passionate students and was able to network (a very different in the 1980s, she noted). After graduation she began her professional career with the National Theatre’s production of Athol Fugard’s *The Road to Mecca* at the Spoleto Festival USA in Charleston, S.C., and then returned to New York City with a new production of the play, in her first Equity Production Contract as a PSM.

On the flipside, becoming a stage manager was a career member Hope Villanueva accidentally fell into. “It was under one of the first directors that I worked for in Los Angeles that I realized this job appeals to both my desire to be around and create art, as well as my organizational sensibilities,” she said. “Becoming an Equity member wasn’t easy, though. “Since I started as a PSM and fell into job after job, I couldn’t get into an EMC program when I wanted to join the union because I was ‘overqualified.’ Thankfully, a production manager in D.C. was willing to take a chance on me and offer me my first Equity contract as a PSM. I’ve been doing the D.C. thing ever since and even get to pick up an NYC project once a year or so.”

In 1984, Mintz first observed Susie Cordon backstage when she was the production stage manager for *Noises Off* on Broadway. Fast forward to 1991, when Cordon brought her in to be the rehearsal stage manager for Artistic Director Emily Mann’s production of *The Three Sisters*. “She remembered me, and seven years later that networking paid off. A perfect example of ‘you never know where you might get a job from.’ The McCarter was having a challenging time mounting its then-new production of *A Christmas Carol*, and Susie had to focus her energies upstairs, thus bringing

me in for the next production that was in rehearsal. I was 29 years old, and Susie was an impeccable role model. There were few first-class female production stage managers in the ‘80s and early ‘90s, and Susie was one of them.” Mintz has since built a deep collaborative relationship with Mann, having done 31 productions together at McCarter and the Kennedy Center and on Broadway.

While Villanueva also believes networking is a key tool for success in this business, when it comes to job searching, she uses Equity’s Casting Call and other resources, even when she has a job. “I’m grateful that in the last year or so, I’m starting to get directors or companies to ask for me.” She also offers advice to those who may be

just starting on this path: “Be flexible and be nice. Anyone can learn to be organized or do the paperwork or call a show with enough practice. The hardest thing will be being gracious and efficient, even when you’re being treated badly. You help set the tone for the whole production, and if you can keep a lightness and kindness to you, I believe the show ends up being a healthier place for everyone.”

The success of her staff is something Mintz takes great pride in, “and the 40 interns that have passed through the McCarter Stage Management Internship inspire me to no end. Last year, during my 25th season, I decided to step back and evaluate what my interns don’t learn while at McCarter. I contacted two dozen past interns asking that question. Out of that feedback I have created some master classes, which I conduct with the current interns, such as Opera Stage Management Boot Camp, and the Business of the Business. I definitely have my systems for doing things, but the interns shake things up, and keep me fresh and constantly re-evaluating things.”

For Villanueva, the “post show glow” is her favorite part of being a stage manager. “When everyone knows it came off great and the audience loved it or were moved, it feels like a job well done. I also enjoy tech more than most, I think. Unless there’s a crazy hurdle, I feel like it’s the time when I actually learn to do my job on the show instead of just supporting the learning of everyone else.”



Cheryl Mintz



Hope Villanueva

Photo by Jacob Smith/Lumberjack Studios
Photo by T. Charles Erickson

Get me to the stage on time

The road to the Tony Awards as told by stage managers

Councillor and stage manager Marjorie Horne sat down with three Equity stage managers—Peter Hanson, Bess Marie and Michael Passaro—to talk about getting their casts and productions ready for the Tony Awards.

Marjorie Horne: What are your experiences from the time nominations are announced to getting into the theater for that week?

Peter Hanson: It’s complicated if your show opens late in the season. You barely get a chance to catch your breath—you’re trying to think about understudy rehearsal, bringing the swings up to speed—and you’re immediately having to figure out your number for the Tony Awards, rehearse it, show it to the Tony producers, and all those things that happen in the run-up.

Bess Marie Glorioso: What’s unfortunate is the performers are running on empty, especially those who are nominated. It’s also difficult when you have stars in your show who are not nominated, or when your show doesn’t get any nominations and you’re asked to perform.

Michael Passaro: When we did *How to Succeed* and Dan [Radcliffe] wasn’t nominated for Best Actor in a Musical, everyone was tiptoeing around this. To his credit, he pulled the company together and said, “Listen, I’m so proud of the show and what we’ve all done here. We should celebrate the fact that John Laroquette and Tammy Blanchard and the show and all these things are nominated. Don’t worry about me. I know the people are coming to see this show because of the movies I’ve been in, and if I can have one person develop a lifetime of theatregoing because they came to see us in this show, then my job is done.” That was the greatest thing to turn that whole situation around because it can be so fraught with pressure and jealousy.

Horne: What’s your relationship to the creatives in building the number for the awards show?

Passaro: With *Bright Star*, once the producers decided to do the opening number, we had to determine how many of the cast we’d bring; would we include the swings, were we bringing all the musicians or just the ones that were visible in the house? Were they going to bring the scenic unit from the theater, were they going to build a separate one or bring a modified one?

Hanson: To take an eight-minute-long number and reduce it to three and a half minutes means work for the creatives, the musical team and the choreographer before we even show it to the actors. You have a number in your bones that you’ve been doing for a couple months, and now we’re asking you to do a surgical snip here in musical time and then go to this 15 bars and then go to this, and it gets complicated. When the producers of the Tonys are out in the house with their video cameras, you want them to look good.

Glorioso: There’s nothing like it.

Passaro: Particularly at the dress rehearsal, you get to see a lot of people you haven’t seen in a while. It’s a small industry, but we all have our shows and we all have our lives—we don’t ever see each other that much. It’s a wacky day, and many of my most cherished memories of doing Tony Awards are the morning rehearsals.

Hanson: One of my great memories from *Evita* was that we were coming on stage, and as we headed up with Elena Roger in front, coming off stage was Patti LuPone, who originated the role of Evita. Those two women jumped into each other’s arms and had this incredible introduction to each other.

Glorioso: It’s fun, too, when they do the backstage stuff. During *Once*, they wanted to do outtakes when going to commercial break, so they were showing some of my cast members warming up, and I just happened to be there because Cristin Milioti needed her spray for her throat. I was there giving Ricola out, and next thing I know my phone is blowing up in the middle of the night with, “Oh my God, oh my God, you were just on TV!”

Passaro: I became interested in theatre because of the Tony Awards, in the days when the only Broadway we got to see in upstate New York was the Thanksgiving Day Parade and the Tony Awards. My mother was watching television one Sunday night the year that *A Chorus Line* opened the awards with that incredible number, and I said, “I want to do that.” To be able to participate at this level is such a thrill and an honor, I can’t even describe it.

To read the full discussion, visit the Equity News Center in the [Member Portal](#).



Meet the Twin Cities



Photo by Rich Ryan



Photo by Heidi Bohnenkamp



Photo by Dan Norman (index photo, c)



Photo by Rick Spaulding/History Theatre

Photos: (a) Equity members in the Mixed Blood performance of *Barbecue*. (b) The three silly girls in Chanhassen Dinner Theatre's *Beauty and the Beast*. (c) Traci Allen Shannon and David L. Murray, Jr. in Theater Latte Da's *Ragtime*. (d) The cast of History Theatre's *Night Has a Thousand Eyes*. (Index page) The cast of *Ragtime* at Theater Latte Da.

Get to know Minnesota's Twin Cities, also known as Minneapolis and St. Paul. An Area Liaison City (cities) of Equity, the Twin Cities boast a fantastic theatre scene, a tight-knit community and an energized committee to welcome and guide you. Here are some things to know about the region and the industry, directly from the members of the Minneapolis/St. Paul Area Liaison Committee.

Working in the Twin Cities

On working in the region

"There is a real sense of community, not just among the theatre people, but among all artists in the Twin Cities." – Paul Coate
"You can own a house, have a dog, raise a family, see great shows, hear great music all while working in this business. And there's an international airport and the Mall of America here." – Greta Grosch

On rewarding experiences working in the region

"Our performing arts community has such rich integrity, both in work environment and quality of product." – Norah Long
"The genuine appreciation of the audience is constant." – Barry ZeVan
"The amazing new works that are in this town are astounding. Wonderful writers abound in Minneapolis." – Jen Burleigh-Bentz

On staying in the area

"It has a phenomenal balance of artistic excellence, abundant opportunity, low crime, low pollution, affordable cost of living, transportation ease, diversity, an ethic of inclusivity and kind people." – Norah Long
"It's an affordable place to pursue a career while surrounded by a community of support." – Greta Grosch

Around Town

On where to eat (on or off the tourist's radar)

Al's Diner; Izzy's; Matt's Bar (ask for a "Juicy Lucy"); The Bachelor Farmer; any microbrewery; The Baker's Wife; Victor's 1959 Café

On where you might be working

Chanhassen Dinner Theater; History Theatre; Guthrie Theater; Ordway Center for the Performing Arts

On getting to know the area, visit

Minnesota History Center; History Theatre; James J. Hill House; Mill City Museum

On what you won't find anywhere else

Aforementioned "Juicy Lucy"; Walker Art Center's Sculpture Garden; The Mall of America

Theatre for Good

After Orlando



By David Levy

Photo and index page photo by Eve Zausner

Philadelphia Theatre Company & University of the Arts presents a reading of *After Orlando*, featuring Equity members, to help the victims of the Orlando shooting at the Pulse nightclub.

When tragedy strikes, everyone responds individually. For Equity member Blair Baker and Zac Kline, co-Artistic Directors of Missing Bolts Productions, their response to the Pulse nightclub massacre in Orlando, Fla., last June was to make art. "You have this urge to do something as an artist," Baker told *Equity News* in December, "but you can feel, 'What can I do as an actor?'"

Realizing her emotional state in the wake of the Orlando shooting mirrored that of the character she had played in Caridad Svich's *The Hour of All Things*, Baker suggested reaching out to Svich to get to work on some kind of artistic response. Kline had previously collaborated with Svich in creating *24 Gun Control Plays* in 2013. "It started from a place of deep urgency to want to do the project," Kline explained, "but also from Blair's incredible passion balanced with my efficiency."

They initially contacted about two-dozen playwrights asking for three-minute plays addressing any aspect of the tragedy. Kline had learned from the *24 Gun Control Plays* that a call for five-minute plays resulted in ten-minute plays; they hoped the call for three-minute plays might produce the desired result. "We got some really wonderful responses from folks saying, 'Three minutes? I can't do three minutes!'" Kline said. But once the writers got to work, they found their way into the form. "When you distill it down to a construct like that, it creates something really wonderful."

The result is a stylistic mix ranging from open-text pieces to choral poems to traditional one- to two-person scenes.

The writers themselves were similarly diverse, including Latinx, gay and trans writers, as well as writers from a broad geographical area—including 10 playwrights from Orlando. And that initial list of two dozen playwrights grew to over 80 by the time all was said and done. "It's a combination of folks we invited and others who, along the way at various readings, have happened to connect with us," Kline explained.

The process of getting from page to stage began just as

the call to playwrights went out. As soon as the initial press release about readings to be held in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Orlando was published, Baker and Kline were flooded with inquiries from around the globe.

"That became the impetus for us to use Caridad's resources, cold-calling people and connecting with friends along the way," Kline said. "As folks contacted us, we were reaching out to the world saying, 'OK, we have a reading in Illinois; we need to have one in Missouri. There's a wonderful queer playwright and activist, Joan Lipkin, in St. Louis. Let's talk to Joan.' And Joan's making a reading happen. It's been snowballing like that. We've been keeping our eye on geographical diversity. New York is our artistic home; New York is very important to us, and it's important for a number of reasons that these plays are heard in New York. But it's equally important that these plays are heard in Los Angeles, and it's equally important that these plays were heard at Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska."

In New York, Missing Bolts partnered with Daryl Roth Productions, which had previous experience presenting benefit productions such as *Love, Loss, and What I Wore*. Beyond providing space at the DR2 Theatre, Roth's general management team was able to handle making arrangements with Theatre Authority (see sidebar on page 23).

Through the generosity of Equity members and the participating playwrights, companies around the United States were allowed to perform *After Orlando* royalty-free between Sept. 12 and Jan. 31, provided that all events were either free of charge or any ticket sales went directly either to one of the funds designated to help victims in Orlando or a local LGBTQI+ organization. It was important to Baker and Kline that this community-based project allow participating companies to partner with local community organizations rather than lock them into donating to a central fund.

(Continued on page 23)

In Memoriam

"Were I to die and go to heaven and find it populated by actors, I would not be unhappy."

— Playwright Ben Hecht

Jane Alderman	James Hummert	Owiso Odera
Ron Anderson	Ann D. Hurst	Myrna Paris
Alexis Arquette	Beth Jacoby	Jon Polito
Patricia White Barry	David L. Kaplan	Bernard Pollock *
Gene Bayliss	Maxine Karell	Richard Reed
Elaine Blakely	Joyce Krempel	Michael J. Rush
Rene Ceballos	Stephen Largay	Robert Steven Ryan
Joan De Marrais	Mary Louise *	Scott P. Sambuco
Alfred Dennis	Pat Lysinger	Irma Sandrey
Gwen Edwards	Craig C. Macnab	Louis Schaefer
Jason Edwards	Larkin Malloy	Sybil Scotford
Robert Evans	Marilynn Maltby	Brett Smiley
Ned Farster	Carlo Michael Mancini	Laurie Sondermeyer
Jean Gillespie	Tom Martin	Harry Spillman
Scott Glascock	Michael Masee	Robert Stattel
Ron Glass	Marilyn McDonald	Thomas M. Suda
Tammy Grimes	Jane McDonough	Robert Vaughn
Robert Hancock	Kevin Meaney	Kimberly Ver Steeg
Ann M. Harris	John Mineo *	David Washburn
David Harryman	Frank Modell	Russ Weatherford
Cecilia Hart	Patrice Munsel	Billie Worth
Florence Henderson	Cooper Neal	Noah Witke
John Sydway Henson	Bill Nunn	
John Hostetter	John O'Curran	

*Denotes Equity Councillor

Reported between Sept. 1 and Nov. 30, 2016

Letters received from paid-up members on subjects of concern to Equity members will be considered for publication in Equity News, provided that they are no greater than 175 words in length. Letters selected for publication may be edited for space requirements. Actors' Equity Association reserves the right to decline to publish letters at its sole discretion. When multiple letters on the same topic are submitted, the Editor may decide to select a smaller number of representative letters for publication. Letters must be signed and must provide preferred contact information for verification purposes, but names may be withheld from publication in certain limited circumstances, at a member's request. Opinions expressed in Letters to the Editor are not necessarily those of Actors' Equity Association.

Save the Date: National Membership Meeting

The following date has been set for the National Equity Membership Meeting:

Eastern Region	Central Region	Western Region
April 24, 2017	April 24, 2017	April 24, 2017
2 p.m. ET on the 14th floor (Council Room) of 165 West 46th Street in New York City.	1 p.m. CT in the Chicago Board Room (Third Floor) at 557 West Randolph St. in Chicago.	11 a.m. PT at I.A.T.S.E. Local 80 Meeting Hall, at 2520 W. Olive Avenue in Burbank.

This meeting will include Equity candidate speeches for the 2017 National Council Election, as well as reports from the President and the Executive Director.

For members with disabilities who would like to request an accommodation to participate in the Membership Meetings, please contact National Director of Governance Allison Bodwell at 212-869-8530, ext. 318, two weeks prior to the meeting.

Letters to the Editor

In Remembrance

Billie Worth

Born Oct. 20, 1916, her last performance was on Dec. 3, 2016. We are a four-generation, professional theatre family. She was married to actor Donald Burr.

Replaced Mary Martin in national tour of *Annie Get Your Gun*; original cast of *South Pacific*, most revered as the lead in London Company of *Call Me Madam*, where she honorably performed a command performance for the Queen.

Doing *Very Warm for May*, Worth borrowed her costume with pink blouson pants to audition for Richard Rodgers. He asked that she return next day wearing a dress. Billie said, "Worried about my legs?" Billie pulled up one pant leg, and pointing, said "And the other one's just like it." She was hired on the spot.

Daughter Leslie Burr Howard threw her 100th birthday bash. The highlight was watching Leslie feed Aunt Billie the lyrics to "You Can't Get a Man with a Gun."

— Penny Worth

Remembering our Councillors

Mary Louise

Mary Louise, who joined the union in 1954, passed away last year. Within Equity, she went on to become an Eastern Regional Chorus Councillor from 1965 until 1969. During her tenure with the union, Louise also served on the Production Contract negotiating team, the Paul Robeson Citation Committee and the 2001 Eastern Regional Nominating Committee.

As a performer, she was seen in the original productions of *House of Flowers*, *The Long Dream*, *Funny Girl* and *Sweet Charity*, and continued working on Broadway up until the 1975 revival of *Hello, Dolly!* Louise continued acting regionally in productions across the country, including several Theatre for Young Audience productions.

Paul Marin

Paul Marin, an Equity member since 1954, passed away earlier this year. An accomplished performer of stage and screen, Marin performed regionally on several contracts as well as on Broadway in such productions as *What Every Woman Knows*, *Fair Game*, *The Tenth Man*, *Gideon* and the original production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. On screen, the actor took part in films including *Private Benjamin*, *Hardcore* and *Being There*, as well as several television shows such as *Three's Company*; *Murder, She Wrote*; *Ellen*; and *Nowhere Man*.

Serving as a Western Regional Principal Councillor from 1965 through 1968 as well as from 1976 until 1981, Marin served on several committees and sub-committees during his tenure as an Equity member. His first appointment was to the WCAB Appeals Board in 1964. Additionally, Marin worked on the Dramatic Stock Negotiating Committee, the Constitutional Review Committee and the Stock and Off-Broadway Committee.

John Mineo

Former Equity Chorus Councillor John Mineo, who served on Council from 1969 until 1975, passed away on Nov. 19, 2016, after years of battling prostate cancer. At the time of his death, he was working in Japan alongside his wife, Kyo, and their son, Aren.

Mineo was a well known performer in the Broadway community, working in over 15 Broadway productions, including the revivals of *Chicago* and *Zorba* as well as the original companies of such productions as *Barnum*; *Pippin*; *A Chorus Line*; *Sugar* and *Hello, Dolly!*; among several others. On screen, the actor appeared in such work like *Under Hellgate Bridge*, *Mighty Aphrodite* and *Pippin* (for which he also served at the assistant choreographer).

A fantastic dancer, Mineo worked with students and professionals alike, training, teaching and assisting performers in perfecting their craft.

Randy Phillips

Former Eastern Regional Principal and Chorus Councillor, as well as the Association's elected Treasurer, Randy Phillips died in March 2015 at the age of 89. Phillips served as an Eastern Regional Chorus Councillor from 1967 until 1972 and as a Principal Councillor from 1972 to 1977. In 1973, Phillips was elected to the post of Treasurer, and he served in that role until 1982. The actor's first foray into union service was in 1958, when he was appointed to the Night Club Committee. From there, he worked on the Tellers' Committee, ACCA, Production Contract Committee, House Affairs Committee and the Constitutional Review Committee, among several others.

On stage, Phillips was in the original productions of *How to Succeed...; Mame; Skyscraper*; and *Hello, Dolly!* On television, he was in *Wonder Woman*, *Charlie's Angels* and *Hart to Hart*.

Bernard Pollock

Bernard Pollock, a union member since 1946, passed away in September 2016 — working in the union up until that time. A dedicated union performer and stage manager, Pollock served as an Eastern Regional Principal Councillor from 1974 until 1992. Dedicated to many facets of the union and ensuring that the organization was working hard for its members, Pollock joined several committees, including the Paul Robeson Citation, the National Stage Managers, Constitutional Review and the Production Contract team.

He stage managed several Broadway productions, including *Is There Life After High School?*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *Will Rogers' USA* and the original production of *The Odd Couple* (also serving as the understudy to Roy/Vinnie), among several others. As a classical actor, he appeared in *King Lear* (1950), *Oedipus Rex* (1946) and *King Henry IV, Part II* (1946).

Madeleine Sherwood

Perhaps best known for bringing the character of the Reverend Mother Superior from *The Flying Nun* to life, member Madeleine Sherwood passed away on April 23, 2016, at her home in Saint-Hippolyte, Quebec, Canada. She was 93 years old. She made her Broadway debut in *The Chase* in 1952. She went on to originate the roles of Abigail Williams in *The Crucible*, Mae in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and Miss Lucy in *Sweet Bird of Youth*, among others. She also took on Mae in the film version of Tennessee Williams' award-winning production.

Becoming an Equity member in 1950, Sherwood served as an Eastern Regional Councillor from 1983 until 1993. Sherwood is also well remembered for her activism and union spirit. The actor was arrested in 1963 during a Freedom Walk in Birmingham, Ala. The council commended Sherwood for her bravery and her critical role in fighting for civil rights in the South and throughout the country.

Status of the Equity-League Pension & Health Benefits Fund Annual Trustees Report to the Equity Council

Pension Fund

As of the most recent fiscal year, which ended May 31, 2016, the funded percentage of the Pension Plan was 109.5% with an actuarial value of assets of \$1.67 billion. The year-end figures from 2015 were 120.8% and \$1.64 billion, respectively. The decrease in the funded percentage was impacted by the pension plan improvements adopted in 2015 and a flat year in investment returns (-0.1%). As of the current plan year, which began June 1, 2016, returns have been favorable, and the Investment Committee has been working with Fund professionals to realign portfolio allocations to assess manageable risk for improved performance.

There are 45,186 participants in the Pension Plan, 7,612 of whom are currently receiving pensions.

Health Fund

Keeping the Health Fund stable presents its challenges given the high inflation rate of medical costs. As of the plan year ending May 31, 2016 we show assets of \$119 million with 12.8 months of reserves. Those reserves have been eroding over the years (16 months in 2014, 15 months in 2015), a cause for concern. Out-of-network claims are a significant cost driver, and the Trustees are continuing to work with Cigna and plan professionals to identify the most highly utilized out-of-network providers and devise strategies to bring them in-network.

As you most likely know, eligibility for health coverage was lowered by one week. As of December 1, 2015, 11 workweeks earned six months of coverage and 19 weeks earned 12 months. Our actuaries had calculated that the new rule would result in a 6% increase in those who became eligible, which has turned out to be the case, resulting in approximately 350 additional members per quarter. However, the overall number of members who actually took coverage has declined slightly. In the past three years, 73% of eligible members enrolled. Since the new rule took

effect, enrollment has been 70%. It does not appear at this time that the members who enrolled with 11 or 19 weeks have produced an unusually high number of claims. The impact of the eligibility change will continue to be monitored. It is unknown at this time if the 11/19 rule will continue past the initial period, which expires in September 2019.

TeleMedicine is a field that has been growing in popularity in recent years and can produce significant savings to health funds. Our Fund now provides this service through Cigna's MDLive. We encourage all covered participants to enroll. There is no cost to do so, nor is there any obligation to use this benefit. However, if a member is already enrolled and needs a consultation at a time that he/she is away from home or at a time of night when medical offices are closed, there will be fast and convenient access to a certified doctor by phone or by video (depending on what is allowed by state law). More information is available on the Fund's website www.equityleague.org. And, of course, questions can be answered by the Equity-League Fund staff.

The Trustees will continue to work with plan professionals to explore various efficiencies to control costs without compromising care. The joint mission of the Equity-appointed Union Trustees and the Broadway League-appointed Employer Trustees is to be careful fiduciaries of plan assets in order to provide quality benefits to the maximum number of Equity members who are working in covered employment.

On behalf of my fellow Equity Trustees—Stephen Bogardus, Doug Carfrae, Brian Myers Cooper, Steve DiPaola, Malcolm Ewen, Francis Jue, Mary McColl, Ira Mont, Nick Wyman and Mark Zimmerman—I submit this annual report to the Equity Council.

Fraternally yours,
Madeleine Fallon

Area Liaison Hotline System

Call 877-AEA-1913

Equity has a national toll-free hotline system for members who live in area liaison and office cities. The number is 877-AEA-1913, honoring the year of Equity's founding.

Each area liaison city has its own extension, where members can access news and information in their region.

(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913.

(2) Dial your area extension:

- 810 Albany
- 811 Atlanta
- 812 Austin/San Antonio
- 813 Boston
- 814 Buffalo/Rochester
- 815 Chicago
- 816 Cincinnati/Louisville
- 817 Cleveland
- 818 Dallas/Fort Worth
- 819 Denver
- 820 Detroit
- 821 Florida – Central
- 822 Florida – South
- 823 Houston
- 824 Kansas City
- 825 Las Vegas
- 826 Los Angeles
- 827 Milwaukee/Madison
- 828 Minneapolis/St. Paul
- 829 Nashville
- 830 New Orleans
- 831 New York
- 832 Philadelphia
- 833 Phoenix/Tucson
- 834 Pittsburgh
- 835 San Diego
- 836 San Francisco
- 837 Seattle
- 838 St. Louis
- 839 Washington D.C./Baltimore

Theater Spotlight - (Continued from page 11)

we want them to look at the Guthrie holistically and to be part of the greater organization.”

Ultimately, it means seeing theatre with fresh eyes, something that the Guthrie SM crew makes a habit of doing. From show to show, the veteran quintet shifts between stage management and assistant stage management duties, between booth and backstage, regularly affording themselves new perspectives not only on the art, but also on the job itself. That constant process of self-education allows the SMs to better support one another, as well as the Guthrie's stage management interns and trainees. On a more global scale, it has primed the team for receptiveness to uncharted territory at a theater that's growing outward while creating space for a multitude of viewpoints.

And according to O'Halloran, who will be in the stage manager's seat for Haj's production of *King Lear* later this month, that palpable sense of openness among her colleagues, and around the Guthrie in general, can't help but invigorate everyone involved: “There's this feeling of transparency and possibility in the building, and I love that. It's an energy that's genuinely infectious. Basically, it's a really exciting time to be around the Guthrie.”

— Justin Quinn Pelegano, Guthrie Theater Publications Manager

After Orlando - (Continued from page 19)

After Orlando is part of a larger trend; similar national theatrical responses to police brutality and voter suppression have been produced recently. Seeing this kind of activist theatre on the rise, the duo offered some advice to those who might want to put together projects of their own. “I think you have to move quickly,” said Blair. “Unfortunately, tragedy occurs and you want to mourn, but the national consciousness moves too fast.”

Kline added, “Democracy is so important in this type of project. You don't do this alone. You don't make any theatre alone. It's also important to remember there's room for it, if you believe in it.”

“Trust that the words of the play are enough to have an impact,” Blair said. “It doesn't have to be perfect—it just has to be out there.”

Understanding Theatre Authority

Theatre Authority is an independent nonprofit organization made up of representatives from all the performing unions that vet benefit performances before union members donate their time. Theatre Authority ensures not only that the money raised is indeed going to the stated charitable purposes, but also insures volunteer performers in the event of an accident, since workers' compensation does not apply to volunteer situations. Although it is often benefit producers who file Theatre Authority requests, it is incumbent upon union members themselves to either work on a contract or know that a code or waiver is in place.

This year, Theatre Authority has seen 126 union members take part in a dozen benefits for Orlando, raising over \$175,000, from the Broadway company of Fun Home's wildly successful concert at the Philips Center for the Performing Arts in Orlando last July, to more modest efforts from theater companies around the country such as Boston Theater Company's August benefit and, of course, numerous efforts from the greater Orlando area's theatre community.

Have you visited the Equity News Center?

Make sure to visit the Member Portal daily for union news, volunteer opportunities, announcements and upcoming events.

Recent updates include:

- Council Resolutions
- Liaison City News
- Updates on Contract Negotiations
- How-to Videos on EPA and ECC Sign-Ups
- Equity Awards
- Union Updates

Members.ActorsEquity.org

EQUITY NEWS (ISSN: 00924520) is published quarterly by Actors' Equity Association, 165 West 46th St., New York, NY 10036. Telephone: (212) 869-8530. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y. and additional mailing offices. Copyright 2016, Actors' Equity Association. Postmaster: Send address changes to Equity News, 165 West 46th St., New York, NY 10036.

EquityNews

165 West 46th St.
New York, NY 10036

Address Services Requested
Second Class Postage
Paid in New York, NY

Welcome to our newest members!



At a recent stage manager reception, we welcomed our newest card-carrying stage managers to the union.

For upcoming events, receptions, membership meetings, seminars and discussions, make sure to visit the events section and Equity News Center at members.actorsequity.org.

