Happy Fall!

THIS MONTH

UPCOMING PRODUCTION: FOR COLORED GIRLS...

For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When The Rainbow Is Enuf, directed by student Ashley Jackson '14, highlights the trials and tribulations faced by women throughout the years. Continued on Page 2

ETC: LINE

Join us for an evening of theatre in a strange location, as senior Brandon Engelskirchen directs an ETC production of Israel Horovitz’ Line. What is an ETC? Find out here! Continued on Page 6

BLUE MASQUE HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Meet this year’s Blue Masque Hall of Fame’s Inductees! Continued on Page 7

ALUMNUS OF THE MONTH: BROOKE BEALL

Meet our Catawba Theatre Alumnus of the Month! Continued on Page 8
For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide
When The Rainbow Is Enuf

by Ntozake Shange will open in the FBC Theatre at Catawba College on Wednesday October 23 at 7:30 and will run until Saturday October 26. It is a choreopoem about Self Identity and liberation. Five women are uniquely bonded together by tragedy, pain, and female empowerment. Each woman is represented by a color of the rainbow. Not only do the colors represent their individual struggles, but also symbolize their unity.

-Katlyn Shaw ’15, Blue Masque Historian

Cast & Crew
Lady in Green: Caitlin Billings
Lady in Brown: Cheyenne Hicks
Lady in Blue: Tabitha Bass
Lady in Red: Tynia Brandon*
Lady in Yellow: Melissa Tarduno

Director: Ashley Jackson
Stage Manager: Ashley O'donnell*
Asth. Stage Manager: Cody Mangum
Costume Design: Shannon O'Donnell*
Lighting Design: Gyo Gamble
Light Board Operator: Greg Stoughton
Sound Board Operator: Cody Gasque
Technicians: Martha Brucker, Jura Davis

* Denotes membership in the Alpha Psi Omega Dramatic Honors Society

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Sit Down with the Director: 
Ashley Jackson

Q: What made you choose this show?
A: “I wanted to choose “For Colored Girls” because it has a story that is universal to women. All women have gone through some type of relationship issue; they all have something to overcome. I thought that Ntozake Shange painted the beautiful picture of women struggle and what it means to be a woman through her poems.”

Q: During auditions, it was said specifically that the show would be color blind casting, which I found interesting for this show. Do you believe the show will benefit having different races of women in it?
A: “I think either or whether I decided to color blind cast or have a full cast of African American women, I believe the story will still serve the purpose and the ultimate purpose is to show these women as beautiful and also damaged and how do they overcome those obstacles of abortion, of rape, those issues are not necessarily African American issues or exactly Caucasian issues, rather than women issues as a whole, but whether or not I decided to color blind cast or make it fully African American I believe that the story will still remain the same.”

Q: What about the show inspired you to make it a part of Catawba’s theatre season this year?
A: “I believe very strongly in womanhood and feminism and I wanted a show that showcased the strength of women and I really saw a need for a all women cast for this season and I also wanted to use a very strong piece that can not just showcase the talent that we have at Catawba, but also illuminate some of the issues that women face.”

Q: What do you want your audience to take away from this show?
A: “The most important thing I want my audience to take away from this show is that no matter the circumstance, no matter the issue, no matter the drama that is surrounding you, you’ll always have a way out. There’s always that rainbow, there’s always that path that can lead you to something better. On top of that, you make sure that you surround yourself with strong people that will edify your life and not take away because iron sharpens iron. So if you have a strong core of friends that understand your struggle, you will prevail no matter what.”

Q: Had you heard of this play before now or was it brand new to you?
A: “Oh yes, I have heard of this play before. I’m a big fan of urban theatre, African American theatre and years ago I read it before and then I saw Tyler Perry’s version of Colored Girls and it was just a little bit different, it’s a different take on For Colored Girls, but he uses a lot of the same language and so that really sparked my interest and I just knew that I wanted to do the show, I wanted to direct it. If I couldn’t act in it right away, I wanted to direct it because it’s such an enriching story especially because of when it was made. It was performed in 1974-75 and the issues that were going on then are still prevalent today. Ntozake Shange fully updated this version of For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Enuf to add elements such as the Iraq War, PTSD and how that affects the mind.”

Q: You were in Once On This Island last year and you were able to direct a One Act, but how is that different from acting and then going into directing? Is there one you like better?
A: “Oooooh gosh that’s hard, which one do I like better? I love them both and they actually go hand-in-hand in a way because as an actor you always have to think of the overall picture and how you fit in that puzzle and then as a director you have to see how all of the elements fit to create the world of the play. In regards to acting in Once On This Island and directing a One Act, those are experiences that I took with me, I used for this play. The elements that I learned about time management, about making sure I was organized and effectively communicating with my cast and my crew I took those elements from my one act and infused them to the full length play.”

Q: Have you found that you expected directing to be easier but it’s harder or vice- versa?
A: “It’s interesting because I entered this time, any time I take on a project, I enter with no expectations. I just try to see how things go. Everything that I take on has been different. I love this process For Colored Girls. I would say that there’s necessarily a part that’s easier and a part that’s harder, it’s just different for every little element, every project that I take on is completely different.”

-Interviewed by Leanna Hicks ’16
Ntozake Shange

...was born Paulette L. Williams in Trenton, New Jersey on October 18, 1948. At the age of eight, she and her family moved to the previously racially segregated St. Louis, Missouri. As a child, she and her three siblings were bused to a white school where they were the victims of racism and racist attacks. However, her family encouraged her artistic education and often entertained many inventive guests such as Miles Davis, Chuck Berry, and Dizzy Gillespie in their home.

By age 13, her family returned to New Jersey where she graduated from Trenton Central High School. She enrolled at Barnard College in 1966 where she later graduated cum laude in American Studies. She earned her master’s degree in the same field from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

Shange’s college years were far from enjoyable. During her first year at USC, she married, although, it did not last. Depressed over the separation, she developed a strong resentment and alienated herself resulting in an attempted suicide. By 1971, she had come to terms with her depression and changed her name. In Xhosa, one of the official languages of South Africa, her name Ntozake means “she who has her own things” or literally, “things that belong to her”. Her last name, Shange, means “he or she who walks/lives with lions” which means “the lion’s pride” in Zulu, the most prevalent language of South Africa.

Shange moved to New York City in 1975, where in that year her first and most recognized play, For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf, was produced Off-Broadway. Colored Girls first began in 1974 as a stirring performance by Shange and four of her close friends in a women’s bar, the Bacchanal, in Berkeley, CA. The play was a 20-part poem which chronicled the lives of Black women in the United States. As they moved and danced, they recited Shange’s poems about coming of age, heartbreak, sexual assault, and redemption.

The “choreopoem” moved to Broadway to earn Tony and Grammy Award nominations, as well as an Obie Award. It was published as a book in 1977 followed by a film in 2010 directed by Tyler Perry. Shange has since then written many successful plays including an adaptation of Bertolt Brecht’s Mother Courage and Her Children in 1980. Her work has continuously impressed critics; as Richard Eder wrote in the New York Times, “more than anything else, she [Shange] is a troubadour. She declares her fertile vision of the love and pain between black women and black men in outbursts full of old malice and young cheerfulness. They are short outbursts, song-length; her characters are perceived in flashes, in illuminating vignettes.”

She and her sister, Ifa Bayeza, recently released the novel Some Sing, Some Cry in 2010. Her individual poems, essays, and short stories continue to appear in numerous magazines including The Chicago Tribune, VIBE, and Essence Magazine.

-Emily Olszewski ’15

For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When The Rainbow Is Enuf

By: Ntozake Shange
Directed by: Ashley Jackson

October 23-26
7:30pm
Florence Busby Corriher Theater
$5, General Admission
$4, Students & Senior Citizens

Please call (704) 637-4481 to purchase tickets or buy online at www.catawba.edu/theatretix

WARNING: Due to thematic elements, this show may not be suitable for children.
Tynia Brandon

Working with Ashley has been a great experience. This is a director that knows what she wants and will not waste any time getting it. Throughout the entire process she always made it clear how passionate she was about this piece and I definitely think her passion inspired us as a cast.

Something everyone should know is that the play is NOTHING like the movie! The language of this piece and all the poems are meant to be interpreted by individual women who play these characters. As far as the interracial cast we didn’t rally touch on that very long because we decided that this play could be about any woman who is going through a hard time in her life. The specific issues that are dealt with in the play are pretty heavy but any and every woman can relate to some aspect of this show no matter their race.
HERE at Catawba, the theatre department offers several performance opportunities outside of the mainstage season. Not only that, some experiences also allow students to be the driving and creative force that gets the projects off the ground. This semester, one student has taken one of those opportunities and hit the ground running. Beginning this month, Brandon Engelskirchen (pictured right) will begin rehearsals for his ETC.

Q: What is an ETC?
A: Funnily enough, an ETC is an Experimental Theatre Series. It is a production that is proposed by a student and involves only students that aren’t currently involved in a main stage production.

Q: How do you get your ETC approved?
A: You have to fill out an application for approval and submit it to the faculty. After you’ve submitted, if they want to see your presentation, they set up a time during a production board meeting to view your proposal. From there, they discuss it and decide whether or not they will approve it.

Q: Do you have to have a faculty advisor to supervise the project?
A: Craig Kolkebeck is my faculty adviser for directing. There are four dances in the show so Meredith Fox is my supervisor for dance as well as the choreographer.

Q: Why did you choose to propose an ETC this semester?
A: I’m not sure of the exact number, but maybe seventeen to twenty people got cast this semester and sixty-nine people auditioned. So I felt like this was the best time to get an ETC approved because they do it so that people who have not gotten many performance opportunities will get those opportunities. I felt like a large percentage of the theatre students didn’t get an opportunity to do what they wanted to do so I gave them that opportunity.

Q: Tell us a little bit about the piece you’ve chosen, Line by Israel Horovitz. Why did you choose this play?
A: The reason I chose the show is because it speaks to me specifically, but on top that, it was one of the first shows that I read in high school when I started doing theatre. This was the first show that I read without the intention of performing; I just read it. It speaks to me because the show is about how hell is other people. It’s not a place; it’s having to deal with other people.

Q: What is your concept for the piece?
A: The show is about five people who don’t know each other and they’re all waiting in the line. They all have different ideas of what they’re waiting in line for. So nobody really knows what they’re waiting for. My idea is that four of these people have died and are in hell. The fifth person is Satan and he’s putting these four people through their torture while in hell. The torture being waiting in line and having to deal with these other people.

-Maggie Saunders ’15

Cast & Crew
Molly: Leigh Butler
Fleming: Trey Irby
Arnall: George Glass
Dolan: Mark Highsmith
Stephen: Conway Hahne
Stage Manager: Avery Philemon
ASM/Sound Board: Samantha Myers

Line
by Israel Horovitz
Directed by Brandon Engelskirchen
Sunday, November 3, 4:00pm
(in front of) Canon Student Center
Cindy Gudger Baldwin has been a leader on the North Carolina theatre scene for 40 years. Her proudest moments have come from her long work with children’s theatre. Currently a teacher at the Claxton School for the Arts and Humanities in Asheville, Baldwin, among other responsibilities, directs musicals using over 100 4th and 5th graders.

Baldwin has also stage managed Western North Carolina educational, community, and professional theatre productions for decades, including those at the Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre, North Carolina Stage Company, and Asheville Community Theatre, where she has directed as well.

Among Baldwin’s many other and varied Asheville theatre related activities are yearly responsibilities with their Bele Chere Festival, work with an all-female comedy group, LYLAS, and casting responsibilities for commercials and movies filmed in the area.

Nancy Pipkin-Hutchinson is currently on the faculty of the International Academy of Design and Technology in Sacramento, Calif., where she teaches courses relating to sketching, drafting, construction, and the design of theatre costumes. In addition, Pipkin-Hutchinson is a very busy California Bay Area costume designer.

With theatre graduate study at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of California-Davis, Pipkin-Hutchinson has performed professional costume design responsibilities in Sacramento, Calif., for B Street Theatre, Sacramento Theatre Company, Capital Stage, and California State University.

She has also designed for California’s Aurora Theatre Company, Sierra Repertory Theatre, The Foothill Theatre Company, Falcon’s Eye Theatre, and Solano Youth Theatre, among many others. Pipkin-Hutchinson’s professional responsibilities in wardrobe, cutting, shop management, as well as other costume related areas, are extensive.

Mike Wiley is a professional actor, playwright, teacher, and originator of one-man plays.

Wiley, as writer, director and actor, tours his numerous one-man shows to theatres, community centers, and schools throughout the Southeast. With a Master of Fine Arts degree from the professional acting program at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, he uses his many theatre talents to bring audiences to a Montgomery bus boycott or a Jackie Robinson major league baseball game or the trial of the man who murdered Emmett Till.

During this year, the film version of one of his plays took the best film award at the Black International Film Festival. This fall, Wiley has acted in an August Wilson play, as well as started work on the filming of yet another screen adaptation of one of his plays. Next spring, he hopes to create a one-man production in which he will play, among others, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk and Nina Simone.

Bethany Sinnott taught Catawba College Shakespeare classes every semester for 41 years. She also worked on all but one of the theatre arts department’s Shakespearean productions during those years.

Sinnott also served Catawba students as director of the Hurley School of Humanities, chair of the department of English, and director of the college honors program. Among other honors, she was selected for Catawba’s Swink Award for outstanding classroom teaching and the Trustee Award for outstanding service to the College.

With faithful attendance at almost all of the Catawba theatre productions over her years, amounting to several hundred, Sinnott was selected to be an honorary Blue Masque member and later made an honorary Blue Masque patron.
I graduated from Catawba College in May with a BFA in Theatre Arts Design and Production. I am currently a production intern at Lexington Children’s Theatre in Lexington, Kentucky. LCT is an interesting place to work in that they have four different kinds of shows that they put on, all directed to different kinds of audiences and age levels. The Summer Family Musical this year was *Shrek*; this production invites families to audition together and have the chance to perform together. For this production, I put my carpentry skills to the test. I wasn’t too shabby at it, so those two years of being a Scene Shop Assistant paid off. I also painted one side of the proscenium wall of our three-quarter thrust space. Along with being an electrician, I became the sound mixer for mics, something I had never done before. It was definitely an interesting and educational experience.

The next kind of show LCT does is Tour, where three to four resident actors travel around Kentucky in a van loaded with two full sets and costumes for two different productions and perform in school cafeterias, libraries, and gymnasiums. Currently our Tour productions are *Anansi the Spider* and *The Paper Bag Princess*. *Anansi* was already complete when I got here, but for *The Paper Bag Princess*, I color matched and charged the technique for one 16’x9’ and two 3’x9’ drops, as well as a door and window unit, all built and painted in a week.

Discovery shows are the next set of shows LCT does. We just closed *Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse* and we will begin the build for *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* soon. This kind of show invites the community to audition, but also includes some performance interns. They do two weeks of shows: six days a week, two performances a day at 10AM and 11:45AM for schools, and on weekends are performances for the public. We pulled *Lilly’s Purple Plastic Purse* from stock from the 2008 design, but soon realized there were four different paint techniques for what was supposed to be the same kind of stone. So I was charged with color matching and technique matching from this set. It was definitely an interesting experience, but it was a lot of fun.

The last kind of show LCT does is a Regional Tour, which is a lot like normal Tour, but they have one show with a larger set and perform in actual theatre spaces and venues that have lighting capabilities. This is also a three-actor production, but they are assisted by a stage manager to run the lights and sound. *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* is our current Regional, and I was given the opportunity to be the lighting designer for when they come back in house in a few weeks. This has been the most challenging experience upon leaving Catawba. I was challenged by a new space and an unfamiliar director, but I, as well as my mentor and director, am very pleased with the result. We have also, as a theatre, overcome the challenges of our new (and very sensitive) fire alarm system. Since this show uses both haze and fog, we have set the fire alarm off three times during tech. Oops. But don’t worry; we called the fire department ahead of time.

My experiences at Catawba prepared me tremendously for this internship. I am a scenic artist and electrician by trade, but I’ve done my share of carpentry, sound, props, and even some rigging at Lexington Children’s Theatre. My advice to current students is to take advantage of all of the opportunities provided to you by Catawba and use it as a chance to grow. Do something you can be proud of and that will make an impact on others. Take chances and ask questions.

And if you are interested in Theatre for Young Audiences definitely apply, especially for the education program during the summer where you cast, direct, design and perform a mini-play every week with a new group of young people.

-Coordinated by Morgan Summers ’16
Just a few reminders:

Have you read our student blogs?

As a way to reach out and let parents and prospective students know what it’s like to be a theatre major at Catawba, we have begun a blog with posts written by a few of our very own, very talented, very busy theatre majors. Check it out!
http://www.catawba.edu/gallery/2013/blog/theatre/

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Buy tickets!
www.catawba.edu/theatretix

Do you have a friend or loved one in a Catawba College or Blue Masque theatre production?
Do you want to show your appreciation for all of their hard work?

Then purchase a Blue Masque Break-a-Leg Gift for just $6.00!

Break-a-Legs include a beautiful mylar balloon with an equally exquisite red carnation and a personalized note.

To have a Break-a-Leg delivered to your loved one, please send $6 in cash or check to:

These can be purchased by placing $6.00 (checks made out to "The Blue Masque") in Chelsea Retalics' campus mailbox, number 335.

Thank you!
Chelsea Retalic
The Blue Masque Treasurer

Where Are the Diamonds?! Improv Troupe

Catawba College’s one and only improv troupe Where are the Diamonds?! was founded in 2007 by Jordan Hunt, Paul Saylor, and Aaron Ganis and believe it or not is still around. While the troupe was sad to say goodbye to the graduating seniors, the returning members: Allison Andrews, Katlyn Shaw, Lara Williams, and Michelle Newberger are happy to welcome some fresh faces onto the team. The new members for the 2013-2014 Season are Brandon Engelskirchen, Eric English, George Glass, Greg Stoughton, Leigh Butler, Matthew Ensley, Jordan Clifton and Morgan Summers. The team meets weekly to hone their improv skills by playing various games and working on different forms of improv. After a very successful past season with such hit shows as An Evening with Channing Tatum, we are all looking forward to another exciting year. The team plans on doing two performances this semester alone and is opening up one rehearsal a month the school population so that everyone has the chance to do some awesome improv. Keep an ear out for our open rehearsals or “Playdays” and of course our shows!

Be sure to mark your calendars and check out our upcoming productions!

Little Shop of Horrors
by Ashman & Menken
Directed by Joe Hernandez
Hedrick Theatre
November 15-16 @ 7:30pm
November 17 @ 2:30pm
November 21-23 @ 7:30pm

Call the box office at (704) 637-4481 or visit www.catawba.edu/theatretix to purchase tickets for any of our shows!