

Folio

SUMMER 2009
MLitt/MFA



A BI-ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF MARY BALDWIN COLLEGE'S
MASTER OF LETTERS/MASTER OF FINE ARTS
IN SHAKESPEARE AND RENAISSANCE LITERATURE IN PERFORMANCE
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE CENTER

Annual Awards Recognize Scholarship, Skill

The MLitt/MFA Ariel Award — named for the magical spirit in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* — was awarded to master of fine arts graduate **Bob Jones** during Commencement ceremonies May 24 for his outstanding service to the MLitt/MFA program. Jones showcased his mastery of comedic characters onstage as the Nurse in American Shakespeare Center's high school touring production of *Romeo and Juliet* in fall 2008, and demonstrated his directing skills in his MFA directing production, Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II*. Jones attended University of Texas at Austin before enrolling at Mary Baldwin, and he performed and directed numerous times in that university's Shakespeare at Winedale summer touring company. He has traveled with the Winedale troupe to London several times, and performed with them at Gray's Inn in fall 2008.

An interactive educational Web site on *Hamlet* texts earned **Chelsea Phillips** the 2009 Andrew Gurr Award for outstanding thesis. Developed as her master of fine arts dramaturgy project, the site (www.mbc.edu/shakespeare/hamlet.asp) is a resource for the first and second *Quartos* and the first *Folio*. Her intense research is demonstrated in annotated scripts that contain information ranging from social history to staging history, supporting the study of the play in performance and in its original context. Phillips earned her BA in English from Bryn Mawr College in 2005 and will soon begin a doctoral program at Ohio State University, where she has been awarded a teaching assistantship.

Skin Deep: Scholars Discuss Race and Beauty on the Early Modern Stage

By Casey Caldwell

The interrelated issues of performativity, beauty, and race on the early modern stage were the focus of a LoLOPalooza festival — a reference to the phrase “original practices” — discussion on the Blackfriars Playhouse stage. Dr. Farah Karim-Cooper, Dr. Andrea Stevens, and Mary Baldwin College student Matthieu Chapman explored the role our body and its outer presentation, our skin, plays in theatricality in that period.

Karim-Cooper, education lecturer for London's Globe Theatre, started the discussion with a claim many students of Shakespeare might find surprising: on the stage (and perhaps in life in general) our bodies precede our words. Many of us study Shakespeare because of our love of his language, and may believe that for Shakespeare the words always precede the

body, or image, of the speaker. Karim-Cooper linked this to a stronger statement that — in a theatrical context — character equals body, thereby subverting basic assumptions about the relationship between the visual presentation of character and the vocal articulation of character on stage.

Karim-Cooper's focus on the human body and, more specifically, its skin, led to an intriguing perspective on theatrical beauty in the early modern period. She argued that the constructed (cosmetic) status of beauty on stage was incongruent with the era's neo-platonic ideal of beauty as natural or essential. Cosmetic beauty, or prosthetic beauty constructed from materials such as makeup or wigs, was considered secondary to an ideal beauty

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MFA Actors Return to Nature with Shakespeare's *As You Like It*

By Glenn Schudel

Dr. Ralph Alan Cohen, professor in MBC's Master of Letters/Master of Fine Arts in Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature in Performance (MLitt/MFA), directed a cast led by MFA acting candidates in this year's acting showcase selection, *As You Like It*.

(continued on p 7)

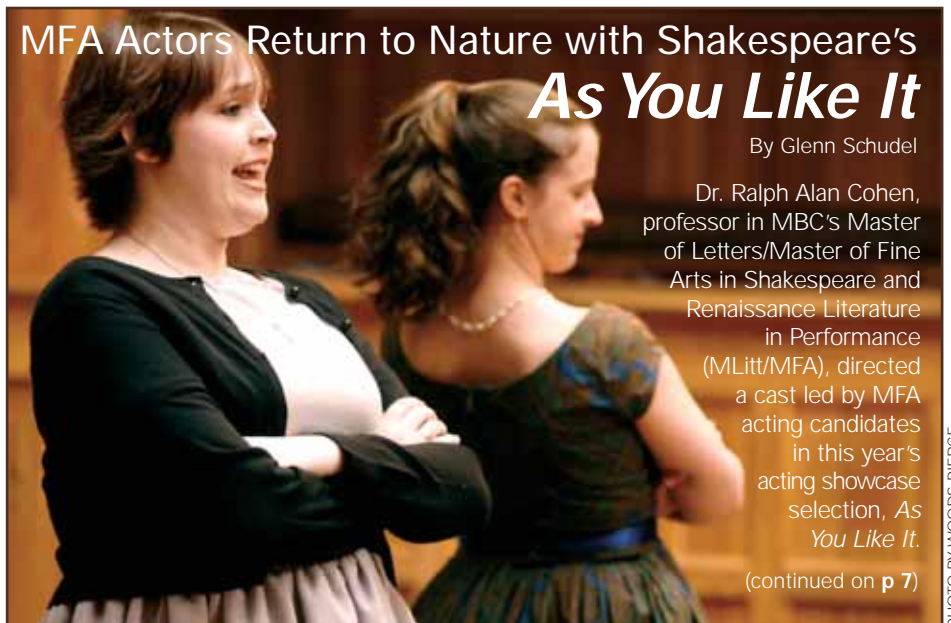


PHOTO BY WOODS PIERCE

FROM THE DIRECTOR

April 23, 2009 William Shakespeare would have turned 445 years old. You would need to multiply that number by the hundreds to even approximate the number of books, articles, biographies, histories, plays, films, and poems that have treated him and his works during the last four centuries. Critiqued from every conceivable angle, translated into every tongue (Folger Shakespeare Library owns an Esperanto *Hamlet*, called, naturally, *Hamleto*), what more could possibly be said about the Sweet Bardic Swan of Avon, Soul of his Age and Cultural Colossus of ours?

A lot.

As I write, the students of the Mary Baldwin College MLitt/MFA program are giving the lie to any easy notion that everything worth saying about Shakespeare and early English drama has been said. Consider just a few of the thesis projects that MBC students recently buttoned up:

- Matthieu Chapman's comprehensive critique of the long-held critical canard that no Africans ever appeared upon the stages of early modern England. His powerfully argued thesis, "Playing Darkness: Rethinking the Portrayal of Black Characters on the Early Modern Stage," makes it virtually impossible to make casual or unconsidered claims about the place of black men and women in the entertainment world of the English Renaissance.
- Dawn Tucker's archival research into the richly connected world of tumbling and playing in the period, titled, "Ye Players & Ye Tomlers: Acrobatics on the Early English Stage," makes the case that troupes of tumblers toured to the same towns, played in the same venues, and enjoyed the same financial rewards as troupes of players. Indeed, in many cases, it is impossible to discern the difference between troupes of tumblers and players, causing any student of early English drama to reevaluate what is called for by plays that call for "feats of activity."
- Christine Schmidle's fascinating work on "English Actors in Germany in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: The History and Texts of the English Comedians," quite literally enlarges the scope of our understanding about the travels (and travails) of early English playing companies and the texts they performed. Mapping the movements of English playing companies to Germany and beyond, Christine investigated the German texts they left behind and provocatively hypothesizes about the performance practices of English actors before German audiences.

To cite is not to exhaust, for these three projects merely represent the kind of integrated archival and practical work conducted under the auspices of MBC's Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature in Performance program. I cannot predict a year from now precisely what projects will be moving toward fruition, but I can promise that we will celebrate Shakespeare's 446th birthday with a richly diverse range of provocative research, generated by the remarkably productive students of the MLitt/MFA program. Happy Birthday Shakey, and many happy returns.

— Dr. Paul Menzer



Ever-Enthusiastic Blunt Finds Home on Blackfriars Stage

By Glenn Schudel

Rick Blunt first appeared professionally on the Blackfriars Playhouse stage in 2004, when he was asked to step into the role of Snout in the Actors' Renaissance Season production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After graduating with his master of fine arts in acting from Mary Baldwin College (MBC) in 2006, he performed in two additional Renaissance seasons with American Shakespeare Center (ASC)

"for the phone company ... climbing telephone poles in Chicago," he said. He moved to Baltimore with his older sister, and immediately began searching for Shakespeare programs on the east coast. His love of Shakespeare developed early. "My sisters weren't afraid of liking Shakespeare. They'd come home from school talking about how cool he was, and that opened me up to liking him."

Also driving his love of Shakespeare was an actress he saw in a touring production of *Romeo and Juliet*. "Juliet was so pretty and interesting. I wanted to find out how I could get to know girls like that."

He immediately fell in love with Staunton and the Shakespeare and Renaissance literature program at MBC. "I liked the smallness and the newness of the program. The faculty has time to get involved, to allow you the freedom to fail without actually letting you fail."



PHOTO BY JUSTIN SCHNEIDER

In characteristic style, Rick Blunt '06 poses in a costume for Hymen-as-Elvis used in the MLitt/MFA production of *As You Like It*.

before being asked to join its touring troupe. Despite getting a late start in acting — his first community theatre performance came at the age of 21, when he was cast as Christopher Sly in *The Taming of the Shrew* — he quickly found his niche.

When asked what he sees himself doing in the future, Blunt said, "I'm too happy doing what I'm doing right now to think about that. I'm learning so much just by doing it. You amass a real, practical knowledge of these plays and this type of theatre by working on this stage."

Before coming to Staunton, Rick was working

Most recently, Blunt performed a trio of roles as part of ASC's Stark Raving Sane summer tour. He lit up the Blackfriars stage as Rosencrantz in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Rosencrantz in *Hamlet*, and Dromio of Syracuse in *The Comedy of Errors*. He previously acted with Richmond Shakespeare Theatre, Heritage Theatre Company in Illinois, and Hampstead Stage Company in New Hampshire. This summer, he takes his one-man show *Boatloads of Shame*, co-produced by fellow alums Robert Gibbs '07 and Heidi Grumelot '07, to New York and Los Angeles.

Thesis Project Festival Educates, Entertains

By Glenn Schudel

The week-long 2009 Thesis Project Festival, held on the Blackfriars Playhouse stage in February, encouraged this year's graduating master of letters (MLitt) and master of fine arts (MFA) candidates to showcase the hard work that went into their final projects. Seventeen half-hour presentations and two staged productions looked at early modern theatre from literary, editorial, and performance perspectives before large crowds of Mary Baldwin students, visiting scholars, and community members. Each presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session moderated by Dr. Paul Menzer, director of Mary Baldwin's MLitt/MFA program, or Dr. Ralph Alan Cohen, MLitt/MFA professor.

When introducing the festival on February 15, Menzer called attention to the unique opportunities the event provided. For graduating students, it offered the chance to present and defend their work in a public forum. For the audience, it made accessible the rigorous scholarship undertaken by each presenting candidate.

Students took full advantage of the opportunity, presenting a wide range of topics — from the roles of tumblers and musicians on the early modern stage to new ways of editing texts to the uses of Machiavellian characters and prostitutes in the plays of that era — often with the help of colleagues who performed scenes from the period. MFA directing candidate Lauren Mignogno presented her production of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* on the second night and again at the close of the festival.

The audience applauded generously at the close of each presentation, asked relevant questions, and enjoyed refreshments provided by University Wits. Plans are already underway for next year's crop of MLitt and MFA students to present at two distinct festivals; one will take place November 9 and 10, and another March 21–23. The full texts of all candidates' theses will be available at Grafton Library and in the MLitt/MFA archives at Rose Terrace in fall 2009.

Mignogno Explores World of Children's Companies with *Pestle*

By Glenn Schudel

Intrigued by the history of early modern “boy companies,” Lauren Mignogno, master of fine arts directing candidate, directed a cast largely comprised of children ages 11 to 18 to capture the spirit of boisterous comedy in Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. The young companies were characteristic of performances at St. Paul's Cathedral and the original Blackfriars Playhouse, which made Mignogno's staging on Staunton's recreated Blackfriars particularly meaningful.

Pestle was unpopular when first performed in 1607, possibly due to its satirical look at early modern class relations or its meta-theatrical elements — “audience members” (who are really actors themselves) invade the stage and bribe the actors into altering the play to suit their taste. Mignogno's decision, in her words, “to return the script to the hands of talented youth in the only replica of its

original playing space,” met with better results. The production played to two large, enthusiastic houses during the Thesis Project Festival.

Graduate students Matthieu Chapman, Chelsea Phillips, and Justin Schneider performed important supporting roles and Glenn Schudel served as stage manager.



The cast — including many young local students — of Lauren Mignogno's production of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, which was performed twice during the 2009 Thesis Project Festival.

2009 THESIS PROJECT Festival

Betwixt the Acts: Act Divisions and Interludes on the Blackfriars Stage,
Erin Baird

Divers Personated So Naturally: (Im)personation on the Early Modern Stage, **Nolan Carey**

Playing Darkness: Rethinking the Performance of Race on the Early Modern Stage, **Matthieu Chapman**

Online Dramaturgy,
Jacob “Raven” Claflin

The Development of the Machiavel as an English Dramatic Archetype,
Brett Gann

“Silk Only Distinguisheth Us:” Early Modern Clothing and Costume,
Anna Gonzalez

Madness and Mobility in King Lear,
Reesa Graham

Prostitution 101: Whores on the Stages and Pages of Early Modern London,
Kitty Keim

Shakespeare as Novelty on the American Stage, **Sarah Klingbeil**

The Knight of the Burning Pestle, directed by **Lauren Mignogno** ([read more on this page](#))

Dramaturgy as an Educational Tool,
Christine Parker

Mobled Queen is Good: Creating an Educational, Interactive Hamlet Website and Exploring Hamlet's Texts,
Chelsea Phillips

Female Sexual Transgression and Onstage Execution in Early Modern Drama, **Victoria Reinsel**

Barabas Reincarnated: Hidden Jews in Early Modern English Drama,
Mollie Reznick

The Value of a Close Read: Meter and Pronouns in Shakespeare's Proposal Scenes, **Cassie Robertson**

In Spite of All the People: Editing and Formatting a Theatrical Edition of Shakespeare, **Justin Schneider**

English Actors in Germany: Their History and Text, **Christine Schmidle**

Ye Players & Ye Tomblers: Acrobatics on the Early Modern Stage, **Dawn Tucker**

Visiting Scholar Explores 'Playing Spaces'

By Rachel Kohler

Opening the spring semester's LoOPalooza — a witty play on the phrase “original practices” — a presentation by visiting scholar Sarah Dustagheer explored the relationship between performances at the original Blackfriars Playhouse and Globe Theatre. Her talk, *Analyzing Theatre Space: Differences in Playing at The Globe and the Blackfriars, 1599–1608*, described how she used the venues' modern reconstructions in London and Staunton, respectively, as laboratory space.

The Blackfriars was Shakespeare's original indoor theatre; the Globe was an outdoor (roofless) venue. Her research, in combination with a detailed analysis of the repertory of the Lord Chamberlain's and the King's Men in those spaces, led her to the discovery of some fundamental differences between performances in the two distinct spaces.

She explained that different theaters contain different architectural spaces, which — in juxtaposition with the fic-



Sarah Dustagheer

tional space of the play — can create a fundamentally different theatrical experience. The collective repertory of theatrical pieces performed in a particular space creates an imaginative space as well, Dustagheer said. The Blackfriars and the Globe, therefore, are each endowed with distinct imaginative spaces. She clarified

these differences with a list of characteristics shared among early modern plays written for outdoor playhouses, and a contrasting list of characteristics of those written for indoor spaces.

Dustagheer's presentation sparked lively discussions among MBC students and faculty. As her research progresses, she hopes to continue to make discoveries that are valuable to the MLitt/MFA program and to the general theatrical community.

Dustagheer hails from England, where she earned a BA in English language and literature from St Anne's College, Oxford University. She earned an MA in Shakespearean Studies: Text and Playhouse through a unique collaborative program between King's College London and Shakespeare's Globe. Dustagheer continues her research on Shakespeare's early modern “playing spaces” through a four-year collaborative doctoral award at King's College London and Shakespeare's Globe.

Adkins' Directing Enlivens 'Sad Story of the Death of a King'

By Paul Rycik

Master of fine arts degree candidate Johnny Adkins' direction of *Henry IV, Part Two* on the Blackfriars Playhouse stage in March was a fresh and exciting take on a play that exemplifies the risk-

taking and genre-breaking spirit engendered by the MLitt/MFA program at Mary Baldwin College. The production featured Nolan Carey as Falstaff, Bob Jones as Prince Hal, and Solomon

Romney as the titular king.

Combating what might be the common perception of Shakespeare's histories — “sad stories of the deaths of kings” — Adkins' director's notes detail how he employed contemporary music, raucous comic shtick, and elaborate costumes to highlight the “passion, humor, and heartache” inherent in the play. He never allowed the audience to be complacent and made the contrast between the play's emotional highs and lows all the more effective.

The production made Shakespeare accessible to the audience with its clever use of physical comedy, music, and the actors' deep understanding of the text. From the shabby utopia of the Boar's Head Tavern to the battlefield to the tangled web of palace intrigue in Henry's court, the play highlighted the spirit of Shakespeare's text and introduced its audience to the rich world contained in the play. Adkins paid special attention to the universal theme of the pain involved in growing up.

Henry IV, Part Two

Cast and Crew
(MLitt and MFA students):

- Casey Caldwell
- Eliza Hofman
- Sarah Keyes
- Sarah Lewis Klingbeil
- Sara Landis
- Cass Morris
- Bonnie Morrison
- Lauren Shell

Brett Gann, assistant director
Katie Crandol, stage manager

William Shakespeare's
Henry IV pt. 2

March 16 & 17, 2009
BLACKFRIARS PLAYHOUSE

A MASTER OF FINE ARTS THESIS PRODUCTION
DIRECTED BY
Johnny Adkins

Exploring Theatre History Through Performance: Canada's The Queen's Men

By Bonnie Morrison

American Shakespeare Center is not the only theatre company that “does it with the lights on.” Scholars and theatre companies around the globe are looking at original practices as a way of discovering more about early modern theatre practices. One of those scholars, Dr. Peter Cockett of McMaster University's School of the Arts in Toronto, recently held a seminar in the Blackfriars Playhouse Tyson Education Room — named in honor of Mary Baldwin College president emerita Cynthia H. Tyson — during which he gave a packed house of MLitt and MFA students a tour of the inner workings of his company, The Queen's Men.

The original Queen's Men was an all-star troupe of players, active in the 1580s, commissioned by Elizabeth I to tour England and disseminate nationalist sentiment and propaganda through performance. Cockett — inspired by *The Queen's Men and Their Plays* by Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean — recreated The Queen's Men with a group of professional Toronto-based actors. Like the original Queen's Men, the company consists solely of men. Cockett explained that his company is not an attempt to recreate the past, but a way to explore the past and test current hypotheses.

In fall 2006, The Queen's Men, under Cockett's direction, presented three of the plays that comprised the original troupe's repertory: *The Famous Victories of Henry V*, *King Leir*, and *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*. Thorough research of early modern rehearsal and staging practices aided Cockett in the presentation of these plays, which toured throughout Canada and were showcased at an international conference.

Cockett shares the project's discoveries with scholars, students, and theatre practitioners the world over at www.the-queensmen.ca. The Web site contains interviews with Queen's Men actors, biographical information about the original troupe, and performance research. There is no doubt that it will be a valuable research tool for those interested in original practices.



PHOTO BY WOODS PIERCE

Anna Gonzalez '09, right, shows off her two hand-sewn early modern costumes, worn here by Jeremiah Davis and Dawn Tucker.

MFA Graduate Anna Gonzalez's Costumes Create Lively Conversation

By Jeremiah Davis

In silk and linen costumes painstakingly constructed by recent master of fine arts graduate Anna Gonzalez '09, modern actors find their range of motion dramatically altered. Close physical proximity between actors and the ability to bend or sit are rendered nearly impossible. The garments are constructed with a permanent bend in the arms.

She intended it that way.

Gonzalez's research and scholarship is featured in her thesis project, 'Silk Only Distinguisheth Us: Early Modern Clothing and Costume. Gonzalez found that the costume peculiarities had an enormous impact on actors' movements and blocking choices, and her presentation excited curious and skeptical audience members when she presented at the Thesis Project Festival at Blackfriars Playhouse and at the Southeastern Theatre Conference. The cut and fabric of her costumes are as authentic as possible, encouraging a particular carriage of the arms, commonly seen in the portraiture of the early modern period. The costumes give a physical experience similar to that of an early modern actor.

Gonzalez said the research and application for her most recent costume project went through a number of phases, each giving birth to new ideas

and additional steps in an already lengthy process. “Initially, I wanted to create an illustrated glossary of early modern clothing terms,” but through the encouragement of her advisors, Jaq Bessell, MLitt/MFA associate professor, and Terry Southerington '72, professor of theatre, she decided to tie the research directly to performance. Gonzalez studied the work of Janet Arnold and Jean Hunnisett and began to gather — with financial support from the MLitt/MFA program — as much natural-fiber material as she could to construct two hand-made early modern costumes. The work began in October 2008 and was not completed until February 2009. Gonzalez and more than a dozen volunteers worked nearly 900 hours to cut, hand stitch, knit, and sew the two featured costumes.

Gonzalez graduated *summa cum laude* from Lawrence University with a BA in English. She has since completed three graduate thesis projects in seven years, the first at the Shakespeare Institute at Stratford-upon-Avon, and two subsequent projects at Mary Baldwin College. She earned the Andrew Gurr Award for outstanding thesis in 2008 for her MLitt project, Philip Massinger's

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Mayberry Shares Theater Company's Story

Katherine Mayberry '09 visited students in the MLitt course Careers in the Professional Theatre this spring to discuss the development of Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company, which she helped found as an undergraduate at Grand Valley State University. Since Mayberry's graduation from the MLitt/MFA program, she has spearheaded Pigeon Creek's expansion from a summer production company to a year-round performing company. During the 2009 season, Pigeon Creek will produce six full-length plays, tour each production to multiple venues in Michigan, provide educational programming for Michigan high school and university students, and tour its all-female production of *Julius*



Katherine Mayberry

Caesar at Horse Trade Theater in New York City, where fellow alumna Heidi Grumelot '07 is a producer.

Costumes, continued from p 7

Believe as You List: A Performance Edition.

Gonzalez worked professionally as assistant wardrobe supervisor for Glimmerglass Opera and Royal Shakespeare Company, as well as head wardrobe supervisor for a production of *Silence* by Moira Buffini at the Royal Shakespeare Company Fringe Festival. During her tenure at Mary Baldwin, she continued to work professionally as wardrobe supervisor for Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival and American Shakespeare Center and has served as head designer for numerous MBC graduate productions, including *Henry VI Part 3*, *Edward II*, and *As You Like It*.

Gonzalez extended special thanks to those who worked tirelessly to create the costumes, to her advisors, and to those who worked with her as actors. "It is a true testament to this program that I was able to find people who were so supportive of my project that they were willing to get up at 7:30 a.m. to

Skin, continued from p 1

that was not artificial. Boy actors who played women on the stage were at the center of her discussion. The visual presentation of boy actors was artificially altered with cosmetics to present a prosthetic beauty on stage. Karim-Cooper contextualized the roles the characters played by boys as sexual intermediates between adult male and female characters.

Assistant Professor of English at University of Illinois Andrea Stevens was more interested in the way bodies and skin tones created specific effects. Stevens spoke about how makeup played a role similar to special effects in our modern movies. One of the most powerful claims in her presentation was the idea that alterations to the skin of the performer were fundamental to character and race on stage in early modern theatre, even more so than a costume change. Stevens also explained what she

called threshold devices, or ways in which makeup and other devices on stage were used to both mark and facilitate the transformation of character. For example, a character assumed to be a Moor (of Arab descent, with a dark complexion) who begins to remove his makeup on stage would have had a powerful effect on the audience due to its fundamental link to the construction of character. Stevens also discussed the practical issues created by the use of makeup, such as the difficulties involved in removing blood from costumes or finding the right mixture of ingredients that would have kept an actor's makeup from running during a performance.

Wrapping up the afternoon was MBC master of fine arts candidate Matthieu Chapman, who challenged the idea that black actors did not appear on stage during the early modern period. He also discussed the use of blackface and other skin effects used in the representation of race. Chapman cited evidence that Marlowe's *Tamburlane* and Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* may have had black actors. Unlike portrayals of Africans in many early modern plays, the "Blackamoors" referenced in stage direction of *Love's Labour's Lost* do not seem to be placed on stage primarily because of their race, nor as a foci of racial difference which would have made them the objects of power and exploitation. In conclusion, Chapman's presentation proposed that the racial binary of black and white on the early modern stage may not have been as black and white as many think.



PHOTO BY JEREMIAH DAVIS

(left to right) MFA student Matthieu Chapman and visiting scholars Dr. Andrea Stevens and Dr. Farah Karim-Cooper take their places on the Blackfriars stage to discuss the influence of race, beauty, and makeup on the Early Modern stage.



PHOTO BY WOODS PIERCE

Dawn Tucker models Anna Gonzalez's silk costume, made entirely by hand.

figure out how to tie doublet points and pin a dress onto a farthingale quickly." She is also "grateful to study in a program that allows a student the opportunity to explore specific areas of scholarship and stagecraft at Blackfriars Playhouse."

Her next project will be to supervise the wardrobe building at Heritage Theatre Festival in Charlottesville, Virginia. She also hopes to present her MFA costume project to faculty and students at the Shakespeare Institute in 2010.

Theatre Professor Shares Enthusiasm for Original Practices Staging

By Andrea Kelley

It would take longer to extol the accomplishments of Dr. Frank Hildy than this *Folio* has room, which is one of the reasons that Mary Baldwin College and American Shakespeare Center were so honored to host him as a guest in spring 2009. For now, let it suffice to say that he is chair of the department of theatre at University of Maryland, and since 1984 he has been director of the research archive at Shakespeare Globe Center (USA). For more than a decade, he has co-edited the influential *History of the Theatre* with Oscar Brockett.

Hildy was welcomed in Hunt Gallery by Dr. Paul Menzer, director of MBC's MLitt/MFA program, and an interested crowd of graduate students. Our curiosity quickly turned into excitement as Hildy wove humor and personal experience into a presentation that looked into the history

of theater architecture and the myriad ways in which Shakespeare has breathed life into venues through the centuries. From the stark staging of Greek revivalists, to sumptuous prosceniums, to modern-day actors' and scholars' varying definitions of elements that denote (dreaded phrase) original practices, Hildy imparted information both broad and detailed.

Hildy's true gift to Mary Baldwin College graduate students, however, was one of enthusiasm. I would wager that no one checked their watches during his speech, and, for most of us, the presentation was over too soon. We thank Hildy, not only



PHOTO BY JEREMIAH DAVIS

Dr. Frank Hildy discusses the recent boom in original practice staging.

for the vast information he shares and the paths he has cleared for future research, but for reminding us that the goal is not the collection of information, it is the pursuit of passion.



As You Like It, continued from p 1

Audiences enjoyed Eliza Hofman as Celia; Sara Landis as Adam, Le Beau, Sir Oliver Martext, and Phoebe; Solomon Romney as Duke Frederick and Jaques, and Lauren Shell as Rosalind.

Fascinated by the notion of Shakespeare "simply having a good time" while writing *As You Like It*, Cohen used music of the recent past and inventive staging — such as a wrestling match and Touchstone's "fishing trip" — to bring the "pervasive comic spirit" of this play to the fore. In the

final moments, Hymen-as-Elvis, played by Matt Chapman, provided a highlight of both the play's musicality and its "gleeful disregard for plausibility," Cohen said.

MLitt/MFA students Johnny Adkins, Erin Baird, Casey Caldwell, Matthieu Chapman, Jeremiah Davis, Anna Gonzalez, Bob Jones, and Paul Rycik played supporting roles to showcase their colleagues' work. Bob Jones served as assistant director, Erin Baird as stage manager, Anna Gonzalez as dramaturg and costume designer, and Jeremiah Davis as music director.



PHOTOS BY WOODS PIERCE

On the cover: Lauren Shell, left, as Rosalind, and Eliza Hofman as Celia. Clockwise from upper left: Matt Chapman, as the god Hymen, blessed the lovers' unions Las Vegas-style from the balcony. Members of the cast of *As You Like It* perform Buddy Holly's song "Everyday" during a interlude. Eliza Hofman takes a dramatic pose in her role as Celia.



UPCOMING EVENTS

THESIS PROJECT FESTIVALS

November 9 and 10, 2009
March 21–23, 2010

Blackfriars Playhouse

Join students in the Master of Letters and Master of Fine Arts in Shakespeare and Renaissance Literature in Performance as they work toward their degrees during creative performances in fall and spring. MFA directing student Alicia Huber will exhibit her directorial work during the spring festival.

MFA DIRECTING PRODUCTION

March 29 and 30, 2010

Blackfriars Playhouse

MFA directing student Brett Gann will present two performances of a yet-to-be-announced play.

MFA ACTING PRODUCTION

April 11–12, and 19–20, 2010

Blackfriars Playhouse

Jacqueline Bessell, MLitt/MFA associate professor, will direct MFA acting students in the program's annual acting showcase at the Blackfriars Playhouse.



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“...Where have *you* been gadding?”

CURRENT STUDENTS

Casey Caldwell completed a directing internship with American Shakespeare Center (ASC) for *Much Ado About Nothing* and served as assistant director for three plays at Shakespeare at Winedale at University of Texas: *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Cymbeline*, and *Richard III*.

Jeremiah Davis is a camp coordinator for ASC's Young Company Theatre Camp this summer. His duties include lecturing, acting training, text coaching, assisting in combat master classes, and administrative work. Davis also served as assistant director and text coach for the University Wits' summer production of *Macbeth*.

Brett Gann completed a directing internship at ASC, assisting with *Titus Andronicus* in the summer as well as *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* for the touring troupe and spring season.

Alicia Huber directed *Julius Caesar* for Pigeon Creek Shakespeare Company, (www.pcsakespeare.com) managed by MFA alumna Katherine Mayberry '09. The company, based in Grand Haven, MI toured the state this summer and performed at Kraine Theater in NYC, where Heidi Grumelot '07 works for Horse Trade Theater Group.

This summer, **Bonnie Morrison** played Malcolm, Lady Macduff, and

a witch in the University Wits' tour of *Macbeth*. Morrison also has an internship for the Midsummer Day Camp at ASC.

Victoria Reinsel will have several roles in the 2009 summer/fall season at American Shakespeare Center's Blackfriars Playhouse, including Hero in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus*, Anne Page in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Lady Mortimer in *Henry VI, Part 1*, and the ingenue in *The Rehearsal*.

Paul Rycik played Macbeth in the University Wits' summer production of *Macbeth* and worked on a promotional video for the MLitt/MFA Web site.

Shannon Schultz completed the new May Term thesis seminar, and embarked on a road trip in the Pacific Northwest with her mom. She taught a week-long Shakespeare workshop for young actors at Curtain Call Performing Arts in San Leandro, CA. Schultz wants her peers to know that it is possible to earn money doing what we love.

Glenn Schudel directed the University Wits' summer tour of *Macbeth*, worked as text coach on Maryland Shakespeare Festival's production of *The Tempest*. His role as dramaturge is showcased in EndStation Theatre Company's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, playing July 7-26.

ALUMNI

Kris Ayers '08 spent summer 2008 at Theater at Monmouth in ME. Kris worked primarily as an assistant stage manager, and also served as assistant director and fight choreographer (unarmed) for *The Winter's Tale* and *The Merchant of Venice*. She directed the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet* as pre-show entertainment (performed on the roof of the box office) and co-taught at a theater day camp. After moving to New York City in September 2008, she stage managed for Daniel Gwartzman Dance Company. Ayers also worked for Prospect Theater Company's off-Broadway run of a new musical, *Golden Boy of the Blue Ridge*. The show got a great review in the *New York Times*. "It was pretty exciting," she said. In June, she began stage managing a new play festival for Gallery Players in Brooklyn.

Megan Dzaack Bayonet '08 and husband Chris welcomed new baby Emma on February 3. Bayonet is also enjoying her work in the acquisitions department at MBC's Grafton Library.

Patrick Bentley '08 is having a great time living and working in Seattle. This summer, he performs as Grumio in Balagan Theatre's production of *The Taming of the Shrew* and Adriana in *The Comedy of Errors* with GreenStage. Seattle's summer Shakespeare in the park series.

Andrew Blasenak '08 completed the first year of his PhD in theatre history, literature, and criticism at Ohio State University. He acted in Sophie

Treadwell's *Machinal*, directed a new play, and taught high school and college students in a workshop production of *The Winter's Tale*. Blasenak's scholarly credits include papers delivered at Mid-America Theatre Conference and American Society of Theatre Research conferences and work with Richard Dutton on a new edition of Thomas Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the Exchange*. This summer he plays Petruchio in Maryland Shakespeare Festival's *The Taming of the Shrew*.

Angela Boyle '07 and **Francis Boyle '07** are proud to announce the establishment of Good Grief Shakespeare, their educational company. Visit the Web site (www.goodgriefshakespeare.com) for updates and for fun. New Gate Celtic Theatre Company has invited the Boyles to direct a production of *Romeo and Juliet*, which opens in September 2009.

Rick Blunt '08 finished his roles in ASC's Stark Raving Sane tour in June 2009. He will spend the rest of the summer performing his one man show, *Boatloads of Shame*, in New York City and Los Angeles. Blunt will join ASC's Rough, Rude, and Boisterous tour in the 2009-10 season to play Lord Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*, Parolles in *All's Well That Ends Well*, and Rafe in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Read a feature about Blunt's work on page 2.

Kim Brigner '08 teaches English at Chungdahm Institute in Gangneung, South Korea.

Sarah Budge '08 is enthusiastic about the amount of theatre work available in Seattle. In April Sarah began rehearsals for a production of *The Taming of the Shrew* which is performed outdoors on the famous Fremont Troll. Budge was excited to play a boy again as Tranio in Balagan Theatre's *The Taming of the Shrew*. She will also be in a production of *As You Like It* in Olympia, WA. Sarah also worked as a wine representative for Vino Volo, a wine bar in the SeaTac airport that specializes in wine flights. In short, her days are full of wine, and her evenings are full of Shakespeare.

Alex Carney '04 directed Maryland Shakespeare Festival's tour of *Shakespeare Alive: WILL POWER*, which was seen by more than 20,000 Maryland middle-schoolers. He also directed the Festival's Bare Bard production of *The Tempest*. Carney's other directing work includes *The Ballad of Sweeney Todd: the Demon Barber of Fleet Street* at Spotlighters Theater in Baltimore. Alex is safely ensconced in a new apartment in the Bronx, and he'd love to hear from classmates.

Mary Coy '06 actor-managed *Richard III* at Hamner Theater in Nellysford, VA. She played Richard, and recent MFA graduate Christine Parker '09 served as dramaturg. Coy's seventh year of introducing young people to Shakespeare's plays was spent teaching *Macbeth* to sixth graders at Nelson County Middle School. Look for her article "Pointing to Performance: Elizabethan Punctuation and the Actor's Breath" in the 2009

Voice and Speech Trainers Association journal *Moving Voice*.

Evan Crump '06 teaches at Bowie State and has acted in many productions in DC — most recently *Native Son* at American Century Theater (with Julie Roundtree '06). He is in three shows at Chesapeake Shakespeare Company this summer.

Eliza Hofman '09 played Viola in *Twelfth Night* for Delaware Shakespeare Festival in Wilmington, DE. After that, she married and relocated to Chicago.

Corey Vincent Holmes '08 is working in Washington DC as assistant artistic director of a ballet company and competitive dance team. Holmes is also working on a ballet piece based on *The Tempest* and a modern dance inspired by Laban Movement theory.

Bob Jones '09 played Fluellen in *Henry V* at Richmond Shakespeare Festival, and then directed *Cymbeline* for the first session of ASC's Young Company Theatre Camp (YCTC). He also lectured and taught classes in the second session of YCTC. In addition to performing in Maryland Shakespeare Festival's Bare Bard Series production of *The Tempest*, Jones will play the Fool in their next Bare Bard production, *King Lear*.

Katherine Mayberry '09 traveled with Bard to Go — a touring program of Grand Valley (MI) Shakespeare Festival — to the Sapperlot Festival in Brixen, Italy in May 2009. The cast of

“... Where have *you* been gadding?”

Grand Valley State University students was the only North American group invited to the festival. The show was a compilation of Shakespeare scenes that were previously performed in high schools throughout Michigan.

Ann Pleiss Morris '05 continues her PhD work in English at University of Iowa. She is working on a dissertation that examines American cultural understandings of Shakespeare and the social uses for these texts in the 21st century. Morris is instructor and program associate in literature at the university, and serves as adjunct instructor of literature at Mount Mercy College. Ann was a fellow in the Obermann Institute for Public Engagement at University of Iowa.

James Mainard O'Connell's '08 many hats during the 2008–09 academic year included: assistant technical director at Columbia University; director and technical director at Ridgewood High School's New Players Company; actor and scholar for Maryland Shakespeare Festival's Bare Bard experimental play series (Camillo in *The Winter's Tale* and Edgar in *King Lear* and working on a paper on the subject); and freelance technical

theatre work for two New York City off-off Broadway productions. O'Connell presented papers at American Society for Theatre Research and Southeastern Renaissance Conference; the latter will publish his paper in *Renaissance Papers* this summer. He is also a member of ASC's Globe II research team and recently joined the Actors Equity Association.

Jason Narvy '05 completed his fourth year at University of California, Santa Barbara, and is writing the final chapter of his dissertation. He taught a theatre class called Isla Vista Live — part student production company, part instruction on producing theatre — and another in advanced acting. Narvy also taught Shakespearean Verse Through Performance for the College of Creative Studies. He implemented a Shakespeare in the Park series in the student ghetto of Isla Vista (adjacent to Santa Barbara) and directed *Twelfth Night* and *Julius Caesar* there. Narvy received a summer (2009) research fellowship and was nominated for Teaching Assistant of the Year by the university's academic senate.

Anna Northam '08 is busy busy being mum to little Piper — or Anya

Piper Lillian Pownall. Northam traveled to Weimar, Germany, with Jaq Bessell to conduct a workshop at the April Deutsche Shakespeare-Gesellschaft. She will teach another workshop at the Globe Theatre in Neuss, Germany this summer.

Lauren Shell '09 will travel to China in August to teach English at Shandong Yingcai University. She will also serve as artistic advisor for the university's theatre/dance troupe. Shell was offered an opportunity to be on a television show there, but she is not sure if she will have time — check the next *Folio* gadding column to find out!

Eve Speer '09 teaches humanities and English at Stratford University while living in Springfield, VA. She also teaches theatre appreciation at Northern Virginia Community College. Speer was awarded teacher of the year in 2008 at the Virginia Career College Association conference. She is developing a few projects with Lesley Larsen '07 involving Shakespeare's women and Edgar Allan Poe — not at the same time, although that might be fun! Eve directed a community production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Alexandria.

Brett Sullivan Santry '07 welcomed first child, Ivy Jacqueline, in January 2009 (on the *thirteenth* night); he is happy to share at <http://ivyjacqueline-santry.blogspot.com>. Santry is preparing for his third year as theatre program director at Stuart Hall School while pursuing his MFA at Mary Baldwin part time. He is developing the curriculum for a brand-new course at Stuart Hall, a year-long acting intensive called Shakespeare in Performance, with plans for field trips to Blackfriars Playhouse as well as guest artists, lecturers, and workshop leaders from the MLitt/MFA community. He performed in Bob Jones' '09 MFA production *Edward II*. Brett looks forward to continuing his Lylyian studies as director of *Endymion*, *the Man in the Moon* for ASC's Young Company Theatre Camp. It was Santry's pleasure to see some of his students on the Blackfriars stage in *Coriolanus* directed by Edward Sheehan, and others in Stuart Hall's production of *As You Like It*, directed by MFA candidate Johnny Adkins. Rounding off an exciting year of early modern and Shakespearean initiatives was groundbreaking for King Theater's own *frons scenae*.

You know you're a Shakespeare geek when ...

Contributed by Andrew Blasenak, Evan Crump, Sarah Henley, James Mainard O'Connell, Christine Parker, and Cassie Robertson

- # 10 ... you use “Shakespeare” as a password.
- # 9 ... you say you're getting a tattoo of Shakespeare's signature and your Shakespeare geek friends ask, “Which one?”
- # 8 ... you may not be up-to-date on current events, but you can recite the Tudor lineage.
- # 7 ... someone asks to borrow a Shakespeare anthology and you ask which one he/she wants.
- # 6 ... you scan your child's bedtime stories, just to keep things interesting, and find that Dr. Seuss was a literary genius!
- # 5 ... you can spend more than 15 minutes straight talking about assonance and alliteration. Moreover, you're deeply confused when others don't share your enthusiasm.
- # 4 ... a layperson unwittingly quotes Shakespeare and your mouth opens and you cite the play from which the quote comes.
- # 3 ... you think bum rolls and ruffs are hot.
- # 2 ... you accidentally end conversations with a rhyming couplet.
- # 1 ... you know that a little death is a good thing.

