



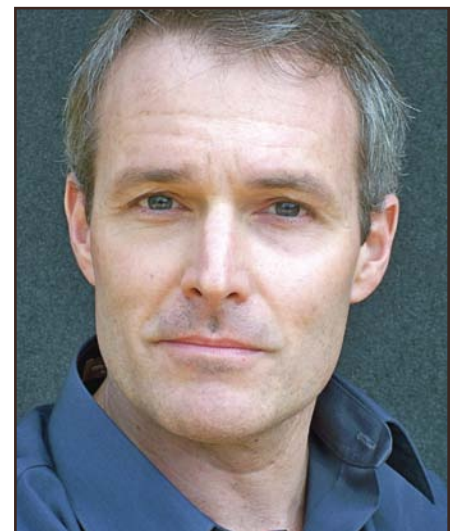
Davies Fosters Collaboration as New Faculty Member

By Andrea Kelley

This fall, Mary Baldwin College's graduate program in Shakespeare and Performance welcomed new faculty member Matthew Davies. A perfect representative of the program's desire to marry scholarship with stagecraft, Davies earned his MA in English from University of Texas (UT) at Austin in 2006 and expects to complete his PhD from the same institution in 2011. Aside from his more purely academic pursuits, Davies also has 15 years of professional acting and directing experience in cities all over the world. When asked how Staunton, Virginia compares to London, Paris, Glasgow, and Austin, Davies admits that he is not usually a "small town guy," but that he is enjoying its "all-weather beauty and quirky charm."

Davies, born in Wales and raised in Bath, first became interested in pedagogy during his days as a performer. While studying the connections between scholarship and practical theatre, Davies spent two summers assisting former MBC guest professor James Loehlin at UT's Shakespeare at Winedale program. While there, he made the acquaintance of several students — including Bob Jones '09, Linden Kueck, and Maxim Overton — who would later study in the graduate program at Mary Baldwin.

His long list of theatrical credits, his impressive teaching resumé, and his scholarly pursuits convinced the faculty search committee that he was a perfect fit for MBC. During his interview visit, his presentation on the influence of the



Davies

(continued on p 7)



Dr. Carole Levin

Saints, Witches, and Madwomen Captivate Visiting Professor's Pupils

By Glenn Schudel

The visionary writings of medieval nuns, transcripts from early modern witch trials, and Freud's case studies may not seem to have much in common at first glance, but all of these documents found their way onto the syllabus for last summer's social history class, *Saints, Witches, and Madwomen*, taught by visiting professor Dr. Carole Levin. Eleven students — including program members, alumni, and American Shakespeare Center actors — took part in the month-long collo-

quium discussing the lives of women in Euro-American culture from the beginnings of Christianity through the 20th century. The unusual breadth of the readings served to enhance the students' understanding of the roles of women in the Renaissance.

"The class provided great insight into the real lives of women — religious, noble, and common — who served as the inspirations for the early modern playwrights," said Christina Sayer '08.

(continued on p 7)

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Under Construction

There are two ways to get better: gradually, and all at once. And you don't get to choose. In a recent conversation, a student casually commented that, "the program is young and still changing." True enough, but constant programmatic change is not a function of youth. A graduate program is a living thing, and it is our job — all of ours — to be constantly, daily implementing adjustments to evolve a curriculum, a faculty, and a program that provides a rich, challenging, rewarding culture for every student that passes through Rose Terrace and the Blackfriars.



At the same time that we make minute adjustments — a new policy here, a revised course title there — we also will from time to time contemplate more major renovations. This is one of those times. A group of faculty, staff, alumni, and ASC actors are currently engaged in a major overhaul of our third year (Master of Fine Arts) experience. Our aim is to develop an experiential MFA thesis that is more nearly allegiant to the historical period at the heart of our enterprise than our current model affords.

Rather than take classes that reiterate at a more advanced level courses that students take during their first two years (Directing III, Acting III, etc.), in the future the MFA class will form a Masters' Company and embark — immediately after earning their MLitt — on a year-long group thesis project that will proceed through linked modules guided by appropriate faculty and artists. The Master's Company will take on a rigorous year of production work — with as many as four different shows — which will culminate in a week-long festival in the spring.

The renovated MFA will enable us to offer a unique degree in theatre-making, one true to and inspired by the practices of playing companies in the English Renaissance. The MFA experience will challenge each student to deploy and demonstrate expertise in dramaturgy, acting, and directing rather than, as in our current model, completing a thesis project that requires each to show proficiency in a discrete discipline.

There are enormous challenges before us, since such a MFA model alters the very architecture of our program. But I believe that that work is worth doing, since the overall goal of these proposed alterations is to strengthen the integrity of our program and to take advantage of our unique position and resources. In other words, the ultimate goal of this proposal is to guide us towards a becoming of who we already are.

I am pleased to have Matt Davies — whom we welcome in this issue — as a new faculty member. His experience with Actors from the London Stage and the Shakespeare at Winedale troupe has already proved invaluable as we think through and implement our new-model MFA. The point of change — gradual or all-at-once; minute or major — is not just to become different, but to get better. The program is young, but whether this program is 10 or 100, we will always be changing, adapting, and evolving into a new program. The opposite of evolution is stasis. And stasis is what killed the dinosaurs.

— Dr. Paul Menzer



'Tailgate Shakespeare' Tours Rural Virginia

By Katy Mulvaney

When Barry Edelstein, director of the Shakespeare Initiative at New York's Public Theater, presented a talk and Q&A session at Blackfriars Playhouse in fall 2009, he mentioned the Public's early days of touring parks and performing plays on the back of a flatbed truck. It's hard to remember with whom I actually made eye contact at that moment, but four of us — Jeff Chips, Clara Giebel, Linden Kueck and myself — all had the exact same reaction: "Let's do that!"

By the end of the night we had planned everything — except where in the world we would get a flatbed — in the giddy way one does when a new idea feels so possible. We had the season mapped out: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* paired with *A Winter's Tale*, and suggested casting for each of us. For example, the height disparity between Linden and myself suggested a hilarious casting of Helena and Hermia, respectively. All we needed now were the resources to actually pull it off.

Despite our excitement, organizing the logistics felt like a long, uphill road (pun intended) until Sara Landis '09, artist educator at the June Bug Center in Floyd, Virginia, heard about the idea. She advocated for the project with the center's administrators, and they agreed to sponsor the tour, help book performance venues, and provide access to costumes, props, and musical instruments. Sara soon joined the company, along with MBC students Amanda Noel Allen, Brian Falbo, and Paul Rycik. The chaos of touring two shows with extreme doubling was alleviated after second-year student Amy Bolis stepped in as stage manager.

A Winter's Tale, directed by Katy Mulvaney with assistance from Linden Kueck, premiered in Stuart Hall's King Theatre on June 19. *Midsummer*, directed by Jeff Chips with assistance from Clara Giebel, opened on July 24 at Camp Roanoke. Other venues on the tour ranged from the mountaintop Valhalla Vineyards to the Dumas Center in Roanoke, Virginia. The experience was exhilarating, moving from *Midsummer* on a soccer field on a Saturday to a graveyard amphitheater for *Winter's Tale* on a Sunday.

Hiccups happened along the way. Amanda's opening performance as Bottom, Oberon, and Egeus in *Midsummer* occurred while she was battling viral pneumonia. We performed our final *Midsummer* on the road in makeshift costumes because I had forgotten to pack our actual costumes in the car. And at one point, Amanda and I were convinced we were going to die while lost on a dark country road. I will always remember the sweltering sun beating down on our black-clad cast, the stars and s'mores at Camp Bethel, and the thrill of turning to my friends in the audience at Edelstein's presentation, all of us having the same crazy idea at the same time.

ASC Theatre Camps

By Laurie Riffe

The Mary Baldwin College-American Shakespeare Center (MBC-ASC) partnership took center stage during ASC's annual theatre

camps for aspiring young actors and directors. Several MLitt/MFA students had the opportunity to work with participants and gifted ASC actors, giving back to the program while developing and refining their own teaching and directing skills. Doreen Bechtol, an MFA student who serves as director of youth programs for ASC, was instrumental in coordinating the partnership. All of these summer experiences for MLitt/MFA students exemplify the MBC-ASC partnership at its finest.

The summer began with a three-week session of **Young Company Theatre Camp** for ages 13 to 15. Campers performed in one of three Shakespeare productions while exploring voice, text, movement, stage combat, music, and *com-media* techniques. MFA candidate Laurie Riffe directed an original preshow comprised of music, dance, and Shakespeare's text with the assistance of first-year MLitt student Kimberly Maurice. Also during the session, MLitt student Clara Giebel served as a graduate artist for ASC actor Kelley McKinnon's production of *Love's Labour's Lost*, MLitt student Jeff Chips served as a graduate artist for ASC actor Josh Carpenter's production of *As You Like It*, and MLitt student David Santangelo served as a graduate artist for ASC actor Dennis Henry's production of *Richard*

III. Laurie Riffe and Glenn Schudel, MFA students, served as text coaches for participants in all three productions; additionally, Riffe taught master classes in Linklater voice technique and Schudel delivered a lecture, "Speaking Meter, Acting Rhetoric." Second-year MLitt student Michael Hollinger assisted ASC actor Chris Johnston with music classes. Additional guest lecturers included Chips, who spoke to the students about ASC's production of *The Taming of the Shrew*, and Santangelo, who hosted a discussion on ASC's *Othello*.

Midsummer Day Camp, which served students ages 8 to 13, also employed many MLitt/MFA students. Throughout the week, campers participated in classes such as clown, stage combat, dance, music, art, and theatre games, in addition to rehearsing and performing. Riffe served as camp director, supported by MLitt student Katy Mulvaney as camp coordinator. Daniel Kennedy, an MLitt student and ASC actor, taught clown techniques to the students. MLitt student Asae Dean and alumna Sara Landis '09 served as co-directors for the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. MFA student Bonnie Morrison served as music director for the camp with assistance from Clara Giebel as music coordinator. Linden Kueck, an MLitt student, served as art teacher and graduate artist for the week. Other graduate artists included second-year MLitt students Brian Falbo and Jeff Chips.

The final camp session of the summer was **Young Company Theatre Camp** for ages 16 to 18. Bechtol directed the preshow for this group of students, assisted by Hollinger. Riffe



directed a production of *Julius Caesar*, assisted by Mulvaney. Giebel assisted ASC actor Jeremy West on his production of the first half of *Antony and Cleopatra*, while Chips assisted ASC actors James Keegan and Thomas Keegan on their production of the second half. In addition, Geibel served as guest lecturer on *Taming of the Shrew* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, hosted a salon, and led discussions with the campers. Hollinger assisted ASC actor Ben Curns with stage combat classes. Riffe taught master voice classes, and Schudel served as text coach and co-hosted a discussion on culture and difference in *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. Santangelo served as a dramaturg for all three productions in this session.



Taking Directing to a New Level with Giles Block

By Tony Tambasco

In spring 2010, Directing II students in the MLitt/MFA program were graced with the professorial talents of Giles Block. Block has served as master of verse at Shakespeare's Globe in London, and his extensive directing resumé includes the critically and financially successful 1999 Globe production of *Antony and Cleopatra* starring Mark Rylance as the famous queen.

After two sessions of discussions about Shakespearean text, the class focused on practical directing. Most of the class periods were devoted to multiple rehearsal sessions, usually occurring simultaneously in different rooms. Block

structured the 11-person class so students could sit in and observe each others' processes. In addition, Block offered directing students opportunities to visit his Staunton residence and chat with him about their work.

Despite having already had a long and successful career, Block believes that there has been no better time than now to work in the field of classical theatre.

"I envy you," he said, explaining that he finds the adaptations and non-Shakespearean drama we are producing now to be more exciting than his work on text. Block's experience, training, and generous spirit gave students a sincere appreciation of studying with such an eminent visitor.

(l to r) Brian Falbo as Balthazar, Laurie Riffe as Hieronimo, Johnny Adkins as Lorenzo, and Katie Crandol as Bel-Imperia perform the play-within-the-play in sundry languages.



PHOTO BY WOODS PIERCE

Wits' Production of *The Spanish Tragedy* Delights

By Amanda Noel Allen

When I walked into Stuart Hall's King Theatre on August 30, I braced myself for the pile of bodies I knew would ensue as I watched that evening's performance of Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*. Of course, I expected excellent performances by my friends and classmates, since they were under the able direction of second-year MLitt student Asae Dean.

I was not, however, expecting an evening of so much laughter and delight.

The cast found so many comedic moments that the tragic ones became even more devastating. The description cheekily coined by Shakespeare to describe *Pyramus and Thisby* seemed equally appropriate to this production: "very tragical mirth." Still, this play was anything but a farce and most definitely was not performed by rude mechanicals, but by a skillful cast that included MLitt/MFA students Johnny Adkins, Rin Barton, Jeff Chips, Katie

Crandol, Brian Falbo, Amanda Devlin Knowlton, Maxim Overton, Laurie Riffe, and Melissa Tolner, with alumni Bob Jones '09 and Jay Knowlton '06. Technical aspects of the play were supervised by stage manager Amy Bolis.

The audience was engaged throughout the evening, wondering what might come next and filling the theatre with alternating moments of gasps and laughter.

The cast deftly communicated the complex plot, including everything from political intrigue to smoldering flirtation; from power plays to revenge; from devastating mad scenes to a court masque delivered in diverse languages for which actors learned bits of text in French, Italian, Greek, and Latin. The nonstop action of the play was supplemented with chilling song choices such as Johnny Cash's "God's Gonna Cut You Down" and Beth Orton's "I Wish I Never Saw the Sunshine." Tragical mirth indeed.

King John Wraps Up Intense Spring Semester

By Sarah Chang

The program closed its spring 2010 semester with Master of Fine Arts (MFA) director Jemma Levy's production of *King John*. Due to a condensed production period that spanned the end of the semester and the beginning of May Term, Levy auditioned and cast the production in early January to give those involved sufficient time to prepare. She also held a few early rehearsals in the spring for individual character work and for smaller scenes that would need the most attention. When rehearsals officially began, she artfully led the cast to a fast-paced, high-stakes production.

Planning for the production began in fall 2009, when Levy and MFA actor Laurie Riffe, who portrayed Constance, began working with visiting faculty member Giles Block. Riffe delivered a gripping performance of the crazed despair her character experienced when bereft of her son, Arthur.

Inspired by the early modern practice of cross-gender casting, directors in our program often feature females as male characters. Levy did cast women in some of *King John's* male roles, but — with the exception of a female student who played Arthur — she encouraged women to embrace their femininity. Addresses were changed from "sir" to "miss," and while all the nobles battled in army pants and combat boots, "Dame" Salisbury's blouse bore delicate lace that in no way hindered her fierceness while wielding a rapier.

The production also featured the talents of Amanda Allen, Zachary Brown, Casey Caldwell, Nolan Carey, Jeffrey Chips, Katie Crandol, Jeremiah Davis, Brian Falbo, Michael Hollinger, Andrea Kelley, Sarah Keyes, Linden Kueck, Bonnie Morrison, Maxim Overton, Melissa Tolner, and Daniel Trombley. Glenn Schudel and Clara Giebel offered primary production assistance, and American Shakespeare Center actor Benjamin Curns created the fight choreography.

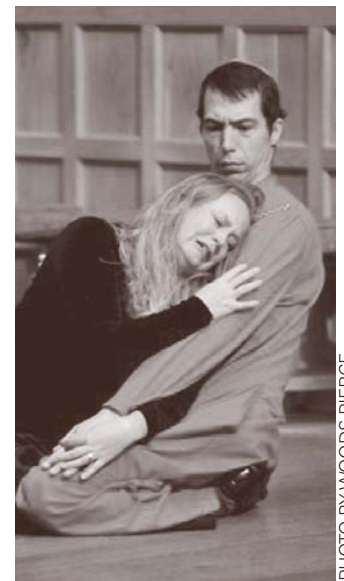


PHOTO BY WOODS PIERCE

(l-r) Laurie Riffe as Lady Constance despairs over the loss of her son in the arms of Zachary Lyon Brown as Cardinal Pandolph.

SHAKESPEARE AND PERFORMANCE



PHOTO BY GRANT MUJDE

(l-r) MFA student Bonnie Morrison as Iras and Richmond Shakespeare Festival actors Thomas Cunningham as Clown, Shirley Kagan as Cleopatra, and Sarah Jamillah Johnson as Charmian, in Richmond Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.



PHOTO BY WOODS PIERCE

(l-r) Jeremiah Davis, Jeff Chips, David Santangelo, Sarah Klingbeil (in coffin), Erin Baird, and Amanda Allen perform *Pericles* at the Blackfriars Playhouse.

Students and Alumni Spread Wings in Richmond Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*

By Bonnie Morrison

Richmond Shakespeare Festival employed the talents of several Mary Baldwin College MLitt/MFA students and alumni in its July 2010 production of *Antony and Cleopatra*. Bob Jones '09 directed the play with the assistance of Master of Fine Arts (MFA) student Glenn Schudel as master of verse and assistant director. The production featured the onstage talents of alum Nolan Carey '10 as Pompey and Eros, MFA student Bonnie Morrison as Iras and Octavia, and second-year Master of Letters (MLitt) students Zach Brown (Enobarbus) and Maxim Overton (Soothsayer, Menas, and Dolabella).

Richmond Shakespeare presented *Antony and Cleopatra* at historic Agecroft Hall, a Tudor manor house built in the late 15th century that was dismantled and shipped from England to Richmond in 1928. The historic site features an outdoor stage in a courtyard area of the house, allowing a modern performer to explore many of the challenges an early modern actor may have discovered when performing in the outdoor spaces of manor homes and inns.

Jones' previous work with Richmond Shakespeare includes critically acclaimed turns as Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing* and Fluellen in *Henry V*, and he made his Richmond directing debut with this production. Jones steered professional actors from Richmond, Staunton, and Farmville through the challenges of performing one of Shakespeare's most complex plays during a record-breaking heat wave. Several area theatrical reviewers singled out actors from Mary Baldwin for their performances. Cast and crew members gained an invaluable chance to apply the knowledge acquired from study at MBC as well as the opportunity to make connections in a new theatre community, connections that will be vital as they pursue roles after graduation.

Guest Artist Packer Adds New Elements to *Pericles* Performance

by Laurie Riffe

MLitt/MFA students blossomed while performing *Pericles* under the direction of legendary guest artist Tina Packer, accomplished actor and director, and founding artistic director of Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Massachusetts. The rehearsal process began with an intensive workshop on Linklater voice techniques and movement explorations led by Shakespeare & Company's assistant director of training Dave Demke.

Students and faculty responded well to the exploratory approach Packer took to the original practices-inspired "house style" common to shows at Blackfriars Playhouse and many student productions. While Packer and Demke did indeed give us "*Pericles* with the lights on," the evening also included bits of dialogue that were ad libbed or interpolated from other early modern plays; a dance break performed to recorded music; large, undulating swaths of colorful silk representing scenic elements; and

more than 40 incidental music cues.

The cast of *Pericles* included MFA students Nolan Carey as Pericles, Victoria Reinsel as Marina, Sarah Klingbeil as Thaisa, Christine Schmidle as Symonides, Erin Baird as Dionyza and Cerymon, and Kitty Keim as the Bawd. Female MFA students also collectively served as Gower, the chorus. MLitt students Amanda Noel Allen, Zachary Brown, Jeff Chips, Jeremiah Davis, Asae Dean, Brian Falbo, Michael Allen Hollinger, Thadd McQuade, Bonnie Morrison, Laurie Riffe, Paul Rycik, and David Santangelo joined the cast in a variety of supporting roles.

Students also provided technical and backstage support for the production. Jeremiah Davis served as assistant director and music coordinator, Asae Dean served as assistant to the director, Brett Gann was stage manager, Laurie Riffe served as text coach, and Amanda Devlin Knowlton worked as costume and properties designer.

The Merry Devil Finally Debuts at Philly Fringe

by Tony Tambasco

The idea for this show was conceived in guest professor Roslyn Knutson's Shakespeare's Theatre class in fall 2009 — my first semester here. I have been working towards a new edition of the anonymous early modern playtext *The Merry Devil of Edmonton* ever since. I had also been trying to muster a company of actors to bring a show to the Philadelphia Fringe Festival for some years now, but had not been able to find the right company or the right play ... until it all came together this year.

Touring *Merry Devil* to the Philly Fringe was a good experience. It is easy to become content with the safe environment we have here in Staunton, but the fact is that there is only one re-creation of Shakespeare's original indoor playhouse in the world, and if we are to make the most of our training and experience, we need to look for ways to bring our work to new audiences.

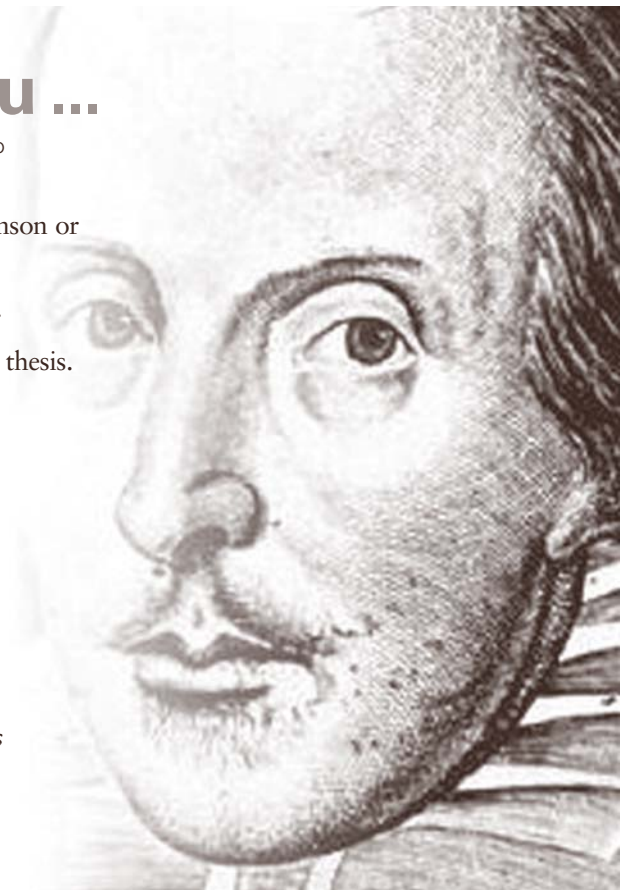
So how did we do? I eavesdropped on the audience as they exited our Philly venue, a belly dancing studio called Studio 1831. A favorite remark I overheard was that the play was "better than Shakespeare." I was also pleasantly surprised to find that our production was reviewed in *Philadelphia City Paper*, whose critic called it "remarkably clear, clever, [and] well-acted." I was pleased to meet audience members who were already fans of American Shakespeare Center, and I was honored that Dr. Knutson came to see the production at the Blackfriars Playhouse in September when we returned from Philly.

I am proud of the cast and happy with the work we did on this show. It was a valuable learning experience for all involved, and — perhaps more than any other project of which I've been a part — required us all to pool the expertise of our individual disciplines. While it might be a stretch to call this an exercise in Shakespeare, our production of *The Merry Devil* stands as a testament to the sort of work Mary Baldwin College's MLitt/MFA program can produce.

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

Compiled by Amanda Noel Allen, Katy Mulvaney, Monica Tedder, and David Santangelo

- #10 ... hear the word "contemporary," and immediately think of Ben Jonson or Christopher Marlowe.
- #9 ... make up your own swear words by adding 'S to almost anything.
- #8 ... talk about how excited you are when you get a new ILL for your thesis.
- #7 ... intend to name your future child Oberon, Prospero, Perdita, etc.
- #6 ... show up at political rallies with signs that say, "No Small Beer!"
- #5 ... regularly threaten to tickle someone's catastrophe.
- #4 ... liken your life to a *Slings and Arrows* episode.
- #3 ... bake cookies for the library staff as a thank you for excusing late fines on thesis books.
- #2 ... have seen three productions of *The Taming of the Shrew*, three productions of *Pericles*, and two productions of *Titus Andronicus* within the last 14 months.
- #1 ... have forgotten there's a way to do it without the lights on.



English Conference Offers Students Scholarly Audience

By Casey Caldwell

As one of four MLitt/MFA students selected to present at the 2010 College English Association (CEA) conference, I was thrilled to share my work with literary scholars from all over America. Held in San Antonio, the conference was an exciting, edifying experience.

We traveled halfway across the country, stayed in a nice hotel, and spent our days with no other responsibilities than to listen to other people talk about intellectually stimulating material and engage in challenging question and answer sessions, while drinking all the free coffee we wanted. We then joined the ranks of presenters and delivered our talks to our peers, each of us supporting our colleagues from Mary Baldwin as they delivered papers. I was proud of our contributions to the conference.

People from all areas of English scholarship were invited to submit papers related to the conference theme, *Voices*. My paper, "Teaching Through Performance: Imagination and the Pedagogy of the Vocal Image," explored the effects that teaching through performance can have on students' voices, both in terms of "thinking with their voice" and in developmental terms via the way their self-image is tied to their voices.



During the same panel, MFA directing student Brett Gann presented a paper entitled, "'Behold, I'm gone; My body taken up': The Body as Stage Property in the Plays of Thomas Middleton;" MFA dramaturg Justin Schneider delivered "'Let the door be lock'd': Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and the Use of Doors on the Early Modern Stage;" and MFA actor Matthieu Chapman presented his groundbreaking work, "The Appearance of Negroid Races on the Early Modern Stage 1550–1660."

Early Modern Stage 1550–1660."

While in Texas, the four of us heard papers on a wide variety of topics ranging fairly far afield of early modern drama, including a panel on various ways of thinking about voice in Walt Whitman's poetry and a postmodern deconstruction of the new *Star Trek* movie.

Next year's conference, in St. Petersburg, Florida, March 31–April 2, will explore the theme *Fortunes*. I encourage all fellow students — whether they consider themselves primarily academics or theatre practitioners — to submit an abstract to the conference. You will gain a lot from this experience, and will have a lot of fun to boot.

Saints, Witches and Madwomen, continued from p 1

Students examined a variety of primary source documents, including historical records, plays, short stories, and advertisements, in order to "read" the roles of women in western culture.

"The focus of the class on societally 'labeled' women facilitated both a targeted and extremely engaging exploration of the interaction between gender and culture," said second-year student Melissa Tolner.

The class culminated with student presentations and discussions, including papers on the historical legacies of marginalized queens, the works of female religious leaders, adaptations of medieval sacred music, and new readings of Victorian novels. Katie Crandol, a third-year student, presented a reading of an original play, involving some of the disparate historical figures studied by the class. Students look forward to Dr. Levin's next visit to Staunton in March 2011.

Levin led the class during the sabbatical of Dr. Mary Hill Cole, the program's resident history professor. Levin, the Willa Cather Professor of History at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UN-L), and Mary Baldwin College's Commencement speaker in 2007, is a distinguished educator, author, and editor. Before joining the faculty at UN-L, she taught at Arizona State University and State University of New York at New Paltz. She has written and edited several books, including *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (1994), *Dreaming the English Renaissance: Politics and Desire in Court and Culture* (2008), and *Ambiguous Realities: Women in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (1987). In 2009, she co-curated the Folger Shakespeare Library exhibit, "To Sleep, Perchance to Dream," examining beliefs and rituals surrounding sleeping and dreaming in the Renaissance.

Davies, continued from p 1

Essex Rebellion on the dramatic works of contemporary playwrights Shakespeare, Heyward, Chapman, and Daniel was well-received by students, faculty, and community members.

When asked about his work on this year's curriculum upgrade for MBC's Shakespeare and Performance Master of Fine Arts program, Davies stated that the committee is still working on the details, but that productive and ground-breaking changes are afoot. First on the list is creating an atmosphere of collaboration — both within the student body and in the community at large — similar to that of early modern playing companies. This, he hopes, will allow students more control of their creative processes and, in turn, of the ways in which they structure their MFA thesis projects.



Poster photo from the MLitt/MFA 2010-11 Acting Production, Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, in which four actors played the role of Kate: (l to r) Andrea Kelley, Katie Crandol, Sarah Chang, and Amanda D. Knowlton. Thadd McQuade played Petruchio.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MFA ACTING PRODUCTION

Desdemona: A Play About a Handkerchief
 Directed by Mary Coy
7:30 p.m., December 3 and 4
 Fletcher Collins Theatre,
 Mary Baldwin College

MFA DIRECTING PRODUCTION

Romeo & Juliet
 (featuring an all-male cast)
 Directed by Shannon Schultz
8 p.m., February 7 and 8
 Blackfriars Playhouse

SPRING THESIS PROJECT FESTIVAL

March 20 and 21
 Featuring *Timon of Athens*,
 MFA Directing Project by Edward Sheehan. March 20.
 Also includes MLitt presentations.



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