



Seattle Pacific University's

Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts Newsletter

creators

Spring 2010

Backstage With Bonnie at the Adelphi

The debut of “Love Never Dies,” Andrew Lloyd Webber’s multi-million dollar sequel to “The Phantom of the Opera,” has overtaken the historic Adelphi Theatre in London’s West End.

Backstage, behind the innovative Coney Island sets, back where the imagination believes the Phantom lurks to again lure a now-married Christine to sing for him, a small army of stage magicians conjure the illusions that make audiences go wild over Webber’s musicals. Within that army is a battalion of costumers, including 10 dressers assigned to the 32 actors to ensure that a multitude of costume changes happen flawlessly.

One of those dressers is Bonnie Prather, a 2007 graduate of Seattle Pacific University’s theatre program. At age 24 a professional costumer in one of the world meccas of live theatre, Prather heaps the credit for her good fortune onto the shoulders of the theatre faculty at Seattle Pacific.

“As wardrobe manager my junior year and costume shop manager my senior year, I gained an amazing amount of knowledge in historical fashion, the technical skills to build them, and, above all, the confidence needed to pursue this job professionally,” she says. “And every morning, there was Professor Don Yanik to pester me with, ‘So, when are you applying to grad school?’”

She doesn’t think she would have done so without his prodding. With his support, however, she was accepted into the Arts University College at Bournemouth (England), where last year she received her master’s degree in costume design.

After graduation from Bournemouth, while living and job-hunting in London, she discovered

that one of the wardrobe staff members on “Love Never Dies” was a friend. They had met during Prather’s week of work study on the production of “Les Miserables” at London’s Queen’s Theatre. She was recommended to Webber’s wardrobe manager and 15 minutes into the interview Prather was hired.

Little wonder she spent a while wandering about Covent Garden “grinning like a madwoman.”

Prather adds, “Pretty crazy to think that about six and a half years ago I was nervously interviewing for a position in the SPU costume shop mostly because I was terrified of the power tools in the tech shop. And pretty much unable to sew on a button!” Lucky for her, she not only learned how to attach buttons and make straight hems, but also how to drape and draft her own patterns, manage others, and design her own shows.

Because when the curtain rises on eight performances a week, she must follow a small number of actors throughout the show, and keep their costumes and accessories organized. She’s there to help with back zippers, corset lacings, and shoes on the slower changes, but the quick changes she does herself. The actors race backstage where she waits with costumes equipped with time-saving devices like Velcro or snap closures, and shoes laced with elastic. When some of those changes last but 30 to 60 seconds, and one just 8-10 seconds, the pace borders on frantic.

She guarantees her actors are neat and tidy, no

Continue on back



“Love Never Dies” boasts a king’s ransom of lavish staging, special effects, and soaring music. Dresser Bonnie Prather makes sure that after every quick change, costumes adorn actors perfectly.



That’s Prather in the werewolf prosthetic that she designed, applied, and acted in for the part of Sam Wolf in a professor’s doctoral film project called “Tooth and Claw.”

Dancing and Singing on Two Continents

Ever heard of an “ilimba,” “ng’oma,” or a “filimbi ya mulanzi?” They’re three traditional Tanzanian musical instruments of the wagogo people of Dodoma in central Tanzania, and Kedmon Mapana can play them all.

Mapana is at Seattle Pacific University studying for a doctoral degree in education with a music focus. He performs his cultural instruments, as well as dances and sings, for workshops, schools, and churches in the Seattle area and around the world. Mapana’s passion is music education; more specifically, the music of the Gogo culture in Tanzania.

For Mapana, who grew up in Chamwino, a small village in the middle of Tanzania, music has always been a part of life. His parents were musicians with no formal training. “My father drummed and danced around always,” Mapana says. Later, the son was happily surprised to find out that teaching music was something for which he could go to school.

How he traveled more than 9,000 miles to Seattle, Mapana calls “a long story.” He first earned an undergraduate degree at Tanzania’s University of Dar es Salaam, then a master’s degree. In the course of his studies, he was introduced to Barbara Lundquist, a music education professor emerita at the University of Washington (UW). Lundquist was so struck by Mapana’s passion and skill in music and teaching

that in 2007 she offered to pay his way to the United States for advanced studies. Mapana accepted.

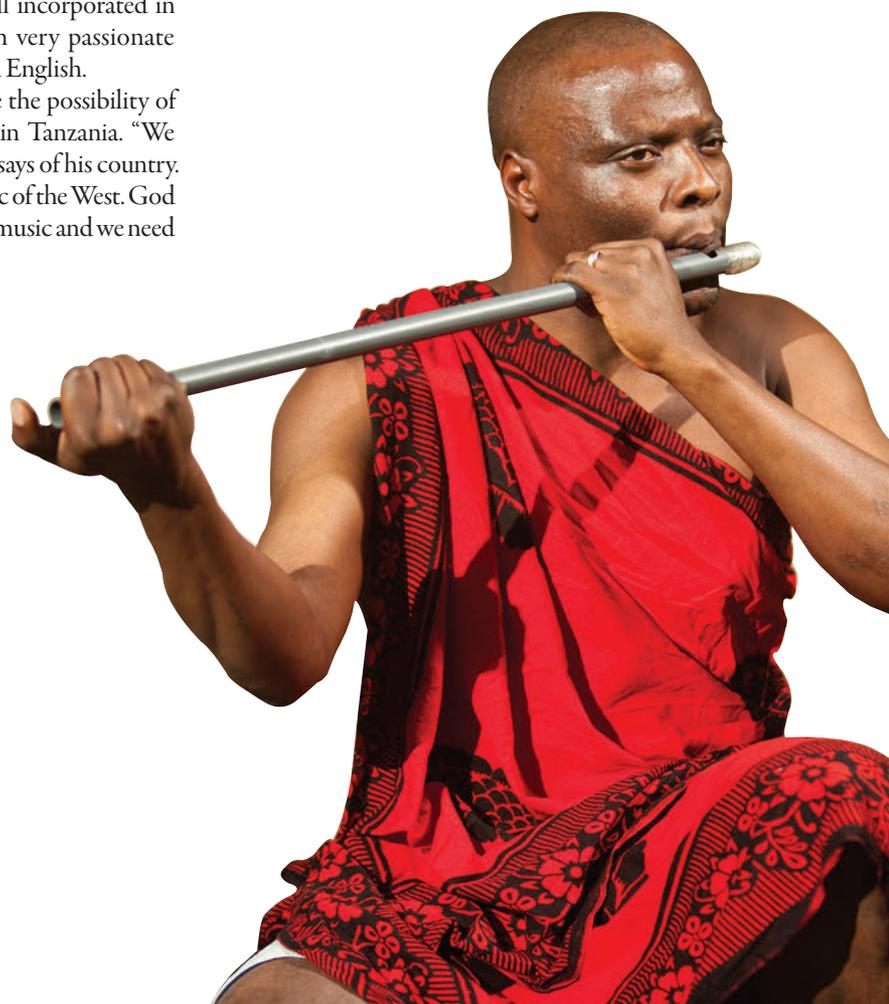
Shortly after his arrival, Lundquist introduced Mapana to her former student, Ramona Holmes, chair of the music department at Seattle Pacific. Both women encouraged him. Impressed with SPU, he decided to apply in 2009. He was accepted, but first had to learn English as a third language (Gogo and Swahili are his first and second). He went through a quarter of ACE (American Cultural Exchange Language Program) at SPU, and discovered “the teachers are very helpful.”

Now that he’s working on his doctoral degree, Mapana says that he’s interested in two things. He wants to go back to Tanzania and make sure that singing and dancing are well incorporated in Tanzanian school curricula. “I’m very passionate about that,” he says in his focused English.

Second, he wants to examine the possibility of creating a Gogo cultural center in Tanzania. “We are very rich, musically,” Mapana says of his country. “But people are shifting to the music of the West. God gave Tanzanians their own gift of music and we need to use it.”



Kedmon Mpana, solidly supported by his family, is passionate to preserve the music riches of his Tanzanian culture.



Music Therapy Opens Doors

Earn your Board Certified Music Therapist designation! Now fully accredited by the American Music Therapy Association, the bachelor of arts degree in music therapy at Seattle Pacific University is the first and only program offered in Washington state.

Music therapy is an established health care profession that uses music within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs in people. Applications to SPU’s music therapy major are increasing.

The number of career openings for music therapists exceeds the number of qualified candidates. Music therapy is used to heal and help all ages and conditions, from young children with autism to adults recuperating from surgery to elderly people suffering from Alzheimer’s disease.

Learn more about SPU’s music therapy program at www.spu.edu/musictherapy.

Giving Voice to Voice Majors

The new head of vocal studies, Cherie Hughes, likens herself to glue. As in the glue that binds voice students and their professors. Her job is to assist voice majors with the larger repertory issues in fulfillment of their degree requirements.

“Our voice students contribute in so many ways,” says Hughes. “They have gone on to major graduate schools, artistic training programs like the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, become Kindermusik instructors, and perform throughout the area in local productions. Music can be a very difficult path and I am thrilled to support them as they start that journey.”

Hughes holds a doctorate in vocal performance from the University of Oregon, a master’s degree in violin performance from Texas Tech, and performed seriously on the piano as a child. She is also passionate about classical East Indian dance.

“The chance for our voice students to acquire other musical and artistic skills is one of the great strengths of our Christian liberal arts program,” Hughes concludes. “Not only does it make them a better musician but opens so many more doors in an already difficult music market.”



Cherie Hughes

Taking Design Downtown

Some people are surprised to learn that senior Julia de Boer was raised on a farm, the fifth of six children. Or that she started SPU as a pre-nursing major, only to switch to visual communications (vis-com) her sophomore year. Inspired by people and causes, she believes her graphic design skills can effectively spread the word concerning matters she cares deeply about.

The city of Seattle provides a crucial piece of her education. Seattle Pacific University's metropolitan setting allows students access to a wide variety of internships with companies and agencies that help student interns both hone their skills and fulfill corporate expectations.

"I work for Urban Impact (UI) about nine hours per week," says de Boer. UI is a Christ-centered organization in the city's impoverished Rainier Valley area that helps strengthen families through education, healthcare, and economic renewal.

De Boer's hands-on UI internship, a requirement of her major, has provided varied challenges. She has worked on invitations for a major annual fundraiser and a redesign of the UI newsletter. "They have quite a few more projects for me to work on after that."

She has learned a great deal about how to work with clients. "There are many times when I must explain the reasoning behind design decisions, reasons that after spending so much time in design classes seem obvious to me." De Boer is refining her approach so that she can meet a client's needs in the best way possible.

Associate Professor Karen Gutowsky-Zimmerman works aggressively with the SPU Centers for Career and Calling, and Applied Learning, to provide vis-com students with internships and mentoring relationships geared to their abilities and interests.

"This year, more than 70 percent of our vis-com students took advantage of the Mentor Program through the Center for Applied Learning (in the School of Business and Economics), which pairs them with professionals in the field," says Gutowsky-Zimmerman. "Over time, our students have found internships with top high



Assistant to the manager in multimedia production, senior Eric Duong documents digital assets and develops cross-reference systems for Puget Sound Energy. He found the internship through Whitney Maass (right), who graduated from SPU in 2008 and is PSE's principle graphic designer.

end companies and design firms, including PRO Sports Club, Hovie Hawk, Microsoft, a number of nonprofits, and several interactive media firms. One student was part of a movie shoot; another found a spot at EVO sports gear."

Vis-com students learn how to prepare professional resumes and how to assemble portfolios of their work for maximum effect. While Seattle Pacific provides the leads, it is the student that must win the position.

SPU hosts the largest Northwest chapter of the American Institute of Graphic Arts and this spring a special one-day event will place student designers "under the gun" and put their skills to the test. "Branded: 12 Hours From Idea to Identity" is a collaboration between designers and selected teams entered in the annual Social Venture business plan competition. The collaborators have from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. to develop a finished brand that captures the solution to a social need, a solution created by

the business entrepreneurs.

"Our vis-com graduates can compete with graduates from the state school programs," concludes Gutowsky-Zimmerman. "It means I really push them." The students who secure those coveted intern positions in the city are grateful she does.



Senior Julia deBoer, a vis-com major, re-designed the newsletter for Urban Impact, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping impoverished families.

Trumpet Prof Seeks New Music

SPU Assistant Professor of Trumpet Brian Chin started playing the trumpet in the 6th grade. He quickly became interested and by 7th grade he was already teaching other willing students. High school brought a life crisis when he realized that his by-then-beloved instrument was supplanting his dream of becoming a doctor like his father.

Before long he was studying with world-class musicians, including soloist Allen Vizzutti and Peter Bond of the New York Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. By age 24 Chin had become principal trumpet for the Tacoma Symphony Orchestra.

Fast-forward 10 years. He has earned a doctorate in musical arts in trumpet from the University of Washington. He performs and records frequently with the Seattle Symphony, Seattle Opera, and Pacific Northwest Ballet. He has performed, in fact, all over the world — including Europe, South America, and Asia. This summer, he will add Australia when he heads to Sydney for the 35th annual conference of the International Trumpet Guild.

There, as part of the conference's "new music" component, he will perform a piece he commissioned from composer Daniel Bukvich as part of the Universal Language Project. Chin founded the



Brian Chin

Project five years ago after teaching a master class in Thailand and experiencing the music's power to transcend language and cultural barriers. Chin says, "I'm looking for a new sound for the 21st century."

Playwright Sings Student's Praises

The Sunday Times of London called playwright Deborah Brevoort's *The Women of Lockerbie* "tense with a scorching sense of drama." *The New Yorker* called it "a moving, thoughtful exploration of how grief changes over time." Anticipation couldn't have been higher when in January, Brevoort herself was in the audience to watch the Seattle Pacific University student cast bring her vision to life.

Her reaction to the performance that was part of SPU's 49th Mainstage season? She was, she says, "simply knocked out by it ... "A genuinely moving, beautiful, graceful production ..."

Brevoort not only thought the production "was exquisitely designed (by Professor of Theatre Don Yanik) and directed (by Associate Professor of Theatre Andrew Ryder)" but that the student cast "succeeded in cracking the light out of the play, even in the darkest moments."

The play, inspired by the 1988 terrorist bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 with all lives lost, portrays the remarkable crusade of the women of Lockerbie, Scotland, to claim and wash the clothes of the victims as a gesture of communal healing and closure.

It was, says Brevoort, "one of the best productions of the play I have seen to date..."

Backstage with Bonnie



Bonnie Prather, as Lucy in SPU's "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown," not only acted in the production but created her own costume.

Continued from front

stray threads or lint, all buttons buttoned correctly, wigs on straight, before they race back on-stage. Quick fixes? Because this is a dance show, there will be popping buttons and the unexpected holes in fabric, which she has learned to repair on the fly.

"It just doesn't happen that often, that an American comes in and gets hired for a London production," says Yanik. "But Bonnie really found herself in theatre. She didn't know a lot coming into the SPU program yet became one of the best managers I ever had."

Prather says the opportunities at SPU helped her achieve in every way, including the 2006 study abroad quarter she spent in the British Isles. While studying Shakespeare and Virginia Woolf with English majors, she reveled in the theatrical world of Stratford-Upon-Avon and London itself. She left SPU having designed four major shows and assisted Yanik on several main stage productions,

including of "She Stoops to Conquer" and "The Runner Stumbles."

And because Seattle is a theatre town, and SPU has extensive contacts in that community, she found real world experience dressing, stitching, and designing at a variety of union theatres, including ACT and Intiman, and even for a production of "Dante's Inferno" at the Museum of Glass.

"By the time I graduated," she says, "I had an excellent resume already built. There were several job offers from many of the theatres, and in such a volatile job market."

Today she lives in a world class city and devotes herself to cast members of a hot new show who count on her to keep them looking fine for thousands of watching eyes. She happily admits the love of theatre is in her blood. She is, to quote the Phantom, "past the point of no return."

Spring Arts Calendar



March 12 Concert Choir and Chamber Singers Concert

First Free Methodist Church (adjacent to campus).

April 9 Thalia Symphony Concert

*First Free Methodist Church (adjacent to campus).

April 22-30, and May 1 Is He Dead?

**by Mark Twain, adapted by David Ives. This recent 2002 discovery among Twain's papers is a fictionalized version of French painter Jean-Francois Millet's faked death perpetrated to increase the value of his paintings. Matinee May 1, 2 p.m. E.E. Bach Theatre.

May 14 Wind Symphony Concert

First Free Methodist Church (adjacent to campus).

May 25-29 The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fair(I)y (stupid) Tales

**by Kent Stephens, adapted from the book by Jon Scieska. Familiar fairy tales gone awry. See how things could have turned out. Matinee-only May 29, 2 p.m. McKinley Backstage Theatre.

* Ticket required. Call Thalia Box Office at 206-281-2048.

** Ticket required. Call Fine Arts Box Office at 206-281-2959.

All performances are open to the public and begin at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise indicated. For ticket and other information, www.spu.edu/finearts, or call 206-281-2959.

Visit our website!
www.spu.edu/finearts

Pop goes the button in London.

Open up with new head of voice.

Ponder a playwright's review of SPU actors.

Hear the trumpet sound: Australia calling!



Inside!

creators