

NEWSLETTER

International Dance Artist in Residence at UALR!

This weekend, our esteemed Guest Artist, Mr. Shouze Ma, will be arriving to set a piece on our students for the Spring Concert. Auditions have been held, the cast has been announced (<http://ualr.edu/theatre/dance-StudentInfo.html>), and all are excited to begin. Mr. Ma will be choreographing, teaching master classes and working with the faculty.

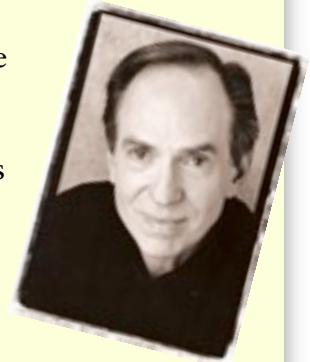
Currently, teaching at Arizona State University, Shouze has also done residencies at the University of North Carolina, the University of Alabama, and the University of Minnesota. A founding member of Guangdong Modern Dance

Company (GMDC), he is also the founder and Artistic Director of the Visionary Dance Company. Mr. Ma's creative work has been hailed by critics and dancers in China, India, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Japan as well as the in the United States.



It's The Straight Goods

"The halls are alive.... This week sees the scholarship interviews and auditions for theatre and dance- an all day event; the arrival of Shouze Ma, our Guest Artist who will be setting a piece on our dancers for the spring concert, the continuing bustle in the shops as *Kate Crackernuts* draws nigh, (If you haven't taken a peek into the costume shop to see the explosion of form and idea coming from the head of Don Bolinger, do make time to stop by!), and the new playwrights submission drew to a close with 23 writers scurrying to meet the deadline! The semester is well under way!!"



Editor in Chief

Ross Jackson

An Interview with Greg Balch

One of the things that makes this department so unique is our familiarity with one another. With there being so many new majors, we've decided to take time to interview a new student for the newsletter. With that being said, here is our first student interview. Greg Balch, our first subject, is a dance major.



What brought you here to UALR's Theatre and Dance Department?

I was looking for a physical movement experience while I was attending college, and I started with a few leisure science courses. The next thing I know, there was a new Dance Major being offered, and I was excited to be a part of it.

Tell us about one of your most memorable moments here, so far.

Wow, just in the first semester of the major being available, a student choreographed concert was to be produced in the Fall. I was ecstatic to be able to perform with my classmates, to be a part of their choreography, and also to choreograph a dance for them. The whole performing experience with my new classmates will always stick with me.

What is it like making the crossover from dance to acting in *Kate Crackernuts* this semester?

The crossover has been amazing. There was never a stigma that I was just a dancer in the play. The actors quickly accepted me, and I love performing with them. I believe that this experience will open me to performing in ways that I never knew were in the cards.

What is one of your favorite things about the Department?

The constant laughter and animated emotion.

Tell us a little about the experience you've had being a Dance major.

This experience has been completely different than anything I have ever done. This opportunity has allowed me to grow not just as a dancer, but as a performer. I am excited as to what is to come.

A Letter From Alexis Qualls!

Hi everyone!

Want one reason to learn everything in theatre? On off-off Broadway - you do everything. Working on *Cell* was quite the experience. It's a long, dark, Irish play, but the four women I was given the opportunity to work with made it fun. I got back to my theatre generalist roots a bit. I hung the lights and helped build the set, I ran lights and sound, and was a quasi-house manager as well. Our little theatre was quite fun



to work in though. The only bathrooms for the audience? Those were located backstage. Talk about making pre-show intermission fun! I won't bore you with rehearsal stories, but it was great to watch this group of ladies bring the story to life as part of a celebration of Irish theatre. We also were able to have the playwright present for one of the performances. Before we opened, the ladies did a reading for a charity here in New York. It is an organization that helps women in prison transition back to the real world and helps them learn how to best take care of themselves and their children. The ladies that came to the reading really connected with the material and were able to give the actors feedback about the story and how realistic it was.

So I continue on with work. I would like a happy ending though. The shows that I have worked on since May? People die in every, single, one of them. It's a little depressing. I get teased by my classmates about my love of musicals - but sometimes a song goes a long way towards making things better.

This is my final year at Columbia. The goal this year is to do my thesis. I hope to find a show that I am with from rehearsals through performances. The thesis is a 20 page paper on the experience. I will be graduating May 18, 2010 with my Masters in Stage Management. It seems like only yesterday I was getting started. I've still got a bit of road left in front of me, but it's been a wild ride!

Hugs,
Alexis

Fringe Festival Plays Submitted!

Thank you to the following Playwrights who submitted a total of 23 plays for consideration!

- Nicole Bridges
- Robert Bruno
- Mellisa Carrion
- Johnathan Eller
- Jenny Fuerst
- Eric Gangluff
- Suzi Garcia
- Jaala Holmes
- Sandra Jackson
- Sophie King
- Lena Marshall
- Simone-Renee
- Shamus A. Ridgell
- Samuell Smith
- Brianna Wesley
- Tyler Whiteside
- Jeff Wright

The selected plays will be announced February 10th.



Greg taking a little down time with Sydney Ippolito.



Gregory Balch, Sarah Kerr, Michael White