

Region 2

All About
Dramaturgy
and
CriticismOCI and
Guy Fawkes?!Issue 4
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2011KENNEDY CENTER
AMERICAN COLLEGE
THEATER FESTIVAL

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Remember, Remember,
the 10th of January
(OK. It doesn't rhyme. We'll work
on it)

Everyone in England and millions in America know who Guy Fawkes was. Hidden beneath the floor of Parliament the day before King James I was to speak to the leaders of England, Guy Fawkes was found sitting on a pile of gunpowder with a match in his hand. He was ready to blow the whole thing up with one strike of his match on (one would imagine) a slow burning fuse.

The O'Neill Critics Institute at the KCACTF festival for region 2 hosted two years ago at Indiana University of Pennsylvania was a bit like Guy Fawkes when you think of it. Huddled (actually sitting in comfortable chairs around a table) beneath the Waller Hall Mainstage (where actors and not mere kings were strutting their stuff) was a group of 12-15 co-conspirators that few people knew about. These were the OCI critics, and like Guy Fawkes, they too felt deeply about the world around them and wanted to take action to make the world—in this case the world of the theater—better.

But here is where we part from Guy Fawkes. The weapon the OCI critics used was far more powerful and dangerous than just a pile of gunpowder. They had ideas and thoughts about the theater and the plays they had seen in the theaters above and next to them. Instead of the heavy-handed “muscle” of

explosives, they had the words they had generated on their word processors, and they had insights on the plays and on theater in general. Together they shared their reviews, they argued about the plays, they worked to help each other become better writers and more clear-eyed critics.

And where Guy Fawkes merely wanted to destroy something, the OCI co-conspirators never wanted to simply blow up the theaters. Rather, they always knew that they wanted to make the world of theater better by being honest about what they saw. They celebrated successes and also pointed out places where a play or production was disappointing and not as successful. They did so not to destroy but to give guidance and direction to their fellow theater professionals so that they could create better plays and better productions in the future.

In 2012, KCACTF is again coming to Indiana. If you have an interest in using words to analyze, critique, and improve the theater, join us. We will again be hidden away beneath the theater ready to create our own sort of explosions.

Are you
ready to
light the
fuse?



Registration

Anyone can participate in OCI. A student does not need to be nominated by a respondent or anyone else.

We prefer, however, that students register ahead of time. This allows us to plan for space. It also allows us to send materials to students ahead of time if we need to. If our Guest Critic thinks that it would be helpful for students to read some material before they come to the Festival, we can get that information to the students.

The easiest way to register is to go to the KCACTF-2 website and use the registration form: <http://www.kcactf2.org/critics.html> and send it to Ralph Leary at leary@clarion.edu.

What to Bring

The most important things to bring are a passion for good theater and an active inquiring mind.

However, student critics are strongly encouraged to bring a laptop computer with wireless capability. Students should know that much of the writing they will do occurs at night, after they have seen an evening show. There will likely not be late night computer access on the Indiana University campus.

In addition, we have been told to try to make OCI "green" by reducing the amount of paper we print and copy. We hope to have students submit and receive drafts electronically, and they will need a laptop to do this. Thus, not having a laptop will make the experience more difficult and frustrating. If students do not have a laptop with wireless capability, they should see if they can borrow one from the school library, technology support office, or academic department.

As a critic, students should be able to get guest access to the wireless network at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Also, the host hotels have free internet access, so students can do work in their rooms.

Great theater and arts critics aren't just born. They have to learn their craft. This is where OCI, the O'Neill Critics Institute, comes in. OCI is dedicated to help students learn and further develop their skills as critics. It helps them learn their craft so they can become good critics.

Every year at our Festival, students who sign up for OCI meet together with our Guest Critic in five or six sessions. Together, we talk about how to write good reviews, we watch the invited productions together, and we talk and write about the plays we have seen. Throughout the process, our Guest Critic gives invaluable feedback and insights to help the students learn how to write good reviews.

It is an intense, exhausting, and exhilarating



Contact

If you have any questions or want to talk to me more about OCI, please contact me. I will be happy to respond to faculty and student inquiries. Ralph Leary, Department of English, Clarion University, Clarion, PA 16214, 814-393-2533, E-mail: leary@clarion.edu

How the O'Neill Critics Institute at the KCACTF-2 Festival Works

seminar in theater criticism! We create a close group in which everyone helps everyone else try to become better at this difficult craft.

In the last day of the festival, students turn in their best review, and our Guest Critic selects one student to go to the Kennedy Center and one student to be an alternate. More important than this, though, is the learning and growth that occurs during the OCI sessions. Students typically say that this is one of the most educational, most enjoyable experiences they have ever had.

Encourage those who like to think about theater and who want to write about theater to join us. Also, please forward this to the English and Journalism departments on your campus and to the editors of your school paper. If you can, save room on the bus for your critics when you come to the Festival.

Response Training – Coming Soon to a School Near You!

You'd like to learn how to be a respondent for KCACTF Region II? Sessions will include specific approaches to response, protocols, and a guide to the forms. All participants will attend a registered KCACTF production, followed by a response to the show.

In the Western part of Region 2? Response Training Session at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, October 7&8. Contact Brian Jones: brjones@iup.edu for information on this session.

Closer to DC? Response Training Session at McDaniel College coming soon. Contact Elizabeth van den Berg: evandenb@mcDaniel.edu

Chris Rawson

OCI, Region 2 is pleased to announce that Chris Rawson, senior theater critic of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, will again join us as Guest Critic. Rawson has been the primary theater critic at the Post-Gazette since 1983 and was our Guest Critic in 2000, 2001, and 2007. He is not only an excellent critic but also an experienced teacher, very supportive of student critics -- responsive to their work, sensitive and insightful. It will be exciting to work with him again.

Chris Rawson became Post-Gazette theater critic in 1983 and theater editor in 1990, covering theater with reviews, previews, columns, news stories and obituaries. He generally reviewed about 170 plays a year, mainly in Pittsburgh but also New York, London and Canada. In 2009 he transitioned to senior theater critic and is now reviewing just once or twice a week, while doing regular podcast theater interviews for the Post-Gazette website (www.post-gazette.com/theater). Rawson continues to lead Post-Gazette theater tours to Broadway, London and Canada and review plays there.

A native of Rhode Island, Rawson inherited a love of theater from his parents (his father acted in Hollywood and on Broadway). He was educated at Harvard (B.A.), where he did a lot of acting, and at the University of Washington (Ph.D.) and came to Pittsburgh in 1968 to join the University of

Guest Critic

Pittsburgh English Department, where he still teaches Shakespeare, criticism, Irish drama and especially August Wilson, on whom he has just co-written a book, *August Wilson: Pittsburgh Places in his Life and Plays*. He studied directing at Carnegie Mellon University and was drama critic at WQED-FM from 1980-93. He has just finished his second term as chair of the American Theatre Critics Association (during which he organized a conference at the O'Neill Theatre Center) and is on the executive committee of the Theater Hall of Fame and the editorial board of *Best Plays*. His wife, Mary, is an actor and acting teacher who was a long-time producer at WQED-TV and played a character on *Mister Rogers*. They have four grown children.

You can find hundreds of Rawson's reviews at <http://www.post-gazette.com/theater/>



Is There a Dramaturg in the Room?

Welcome to a new year of dramaturgy at KCACTF region 2! My name is Lisa Wilde, Resident Dramaturg at Rep Stage and Director of Theatre at Howard Community College both in Columbia, Maryland. I am happy to be joining the KCACTF Region 2 team as the new Chair of Dramaturgy. As a dramaturg, I see myself as both the bridge between the text and the production team and then the bridge between the production and the audience. As someone who works both in professional theater and in the academic world, I look forward to exploring and developing bridges between those two realms.

One of my favorite aspects of dramaturgy is the opportunity to continue expanding my liberal arts education, researching and learning about topics as diverse as Restoration England, the My Lai massacre and Tet offensive, the Barrymore family, and the competition among music directors in Bach's Leipzig, to name just a few. Sometimes, however, research and writing can feel isolating, and the regional conference provides a great opportunity for student dramaturgs to meet and discuss the variety of methods and experiences they've encountered, as well as receiving professional feedback on their work and hearing more about opportunities in theater beyond the undergraduate level.

This year's guest dramaturg is Erin O'Malley, who has been working on some very current approaches to dramaturgy, including site-specific

works and long-distance or virtual dramaturgy. From Richmond, Virginia, she is contributing to a production of Macbeth in Scotland! She will discuss this experience and other ways that technology is helping make our work more global.

Whatever your experience of doing dramaturgy has been and the style or range of your production work, I encourage you to compile a portfolio and submit it by December 9, 2011, and then to join us in Indiana, PA for the January Festival. Take part in the Guerilla Dramaturgy and Dramaturgy Initiative described on the next page.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions:

Dr. Lisa Wilde

Howard Community College
10901 Little Patuxent Parkway
Columbia MD 21044

lwilde@howardcc.edu



Lisa Wilde, chair of dramaturgy for KCACTF Region 2, with Robyn Quick, former chair

GUERRILLA DRAMATURGY

One exciting way to dive into the activities at our region 2 festival is through Guerrilla Dramaturgy. Our guerrilla dramaturgs receive a crash course in everything from production dramaturgy to theatrical collaboration to new play development – all in one activity! In cooperation with NPP, dramaturgs conduct research relating to a new play and then collaborate with a playwright, director and actors on a public reading of the play.

Guerrilla Dramaturgs do not need to bring anything to the festival other than intellectual curiosity and a desire for an exiting collaborative experience. A laptop is useful, but not required. Students can sign up to be guerrilla dramaturgs when they arrive at the festival. They will be given their assigned play the first night and will be part of that play's production team for the rest of the festival. The research will be done at the host school, using the resources of the library. Guerilla dramaturgs will also have ample time to participate in other workshops and festival activities.

Encourage your students to join the fun! Enter the Student Dramaturgy Initiative or become Guerrilla Dramaturgs at this year's Festival!

Student Dramaturgy Initiative

Those who have already created dramaturgical projects on their campuses are encouraged to enter the Student Dramaturgy Initiative. Jointly sponsored by the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas, The Association for Theatre in Higher Education and the KCACTF, this awards program is open to any student who serves as the dramaturg on a production or who submits a dramaturgy class assignment. All students who enter their material for consideration have the opportunity to talk about their work with our region's guest professional dramaturg in a public review session. That session then serves as a learning opportunity for anyone who wants to know more about effective production dramaturgy. Our regional winner will receive **\$100** and a **one-year membership in both ATHE and LMDA**. In addition, the student is invited to the Kennedy Center where he or she has the opportunity to work with professional dramaturgs at the national festival. For more information about entering work in the Student Dramaturgy Initiative visit our website at :

<http://www.kcactf2.org/dramaturgy.html>

All About Hotels

Festival
Information

HOST hotel:



Holiday Inn, Indiana - Singles and doubles \$107. Guaranteed rate cut off date is Monday, December 19th, 2011. Includes free wireless internet, pool, restaurant and bar. Phone reservations may be made by calling 724-463-3561, using the group name "Kennedy Center". Web reservations - use group name "KEN"

<http://ichotelsgroup.com/redirect?path=rates&brandCode=HI®ionCode=1&localeCode=en&GPC=KEN&hotelCode=IDIPA&PMID=99801505>

AUXILIARY hotels:



we love having you here.*

Hampton Inn, Indiana - 2 queen beds \$109, includes free breakfast buffet, free wireless internet, 100% non-smoking. Guaranteed rate cut off date is December 20th, 2011. *Reservations must be called in to 724-349-7700, using the group name KCACTF.* Information on the hotel at www.indiana.hamptoninn.com - please do not use the website to make reservations



Quality Inn and Suites, Indiana - Singles \$84, doubles \$109. Guaranteed rate cut off date is December 14th, 2011. Includes free breakfast buffet, free wired internet, microwaves and refrigerators in rooms, and a full service bar. A limited number of smoking rooms are available. *Reservations must be called in to 724-349-9620.* Information on the hotel at <http://www.qualityinnindianapa.com/> - please do not use the website to make reservations



we love having you here.*

Hampton Inn, Blairsville, PA - Please note this hotel is about 10 minutes from campus, and our bus shuttle service WILL NOT travel to Blairsville, so those staying here must have their own transportation. Doubles and triples \$114; Suites \$124; includes free breakfast buffet, free wireless internet, 100% non-smoking. Guaranteed rate cut off date is December 20th, 2011. Reservations must be called in to 724-459-5920.

Information on the hotel at

<http://hamptoninn.hilton.com/en/hp/hotels/index.jhtml?ctyhocn=BLAPAHX> -please do not use the website to make reservations.

Please note the cut off dates for guaranteed room rates - some as early as December 14! Room rates are exclusive of taxes and fees, currently about 9%.

**As of October 1, Registration for Associate Productions is \$275,
Participating Productions cost \$350**

**Register Your
Shows**

Please recall Region 2's ample consideration policy. We require 30 days advance registration in order to ensure securing respondents for your show. We will do our best to find you a respondent if you register within the 30 day window. If a respondent cannot be found, please send an archival video of your production to the regional chair for response. Participating Productions that open after December 1st, 2011 will be considered for Festival 45, January 2013.

To register your production, please go to :

http://www.kcactf.org/KCACTF.ORG_NATIONAL/Production_Registration.html

KCACTF REGION 2

FESTIVAL 44

January 10-14, 2012

Indiana University of Pennsylvania **cut and paste the following link to register for the festival:**

http://www.arts.iup.edu/theater/KCACTF2_regform_festival_2.html

Early Bird Registration \$65 – deadline November 10, 2011

Registration \$75 – Deadline December 10, 2011

Late Registration \$85 – between December 10, 2011 and January 14, 2012

A \$10 late payment fee will be assessed for invoices not paid within 30 days of registration

Student Volunteer Grants are available for those interested in helping out at the regional Festival. Apply for a 10 hour, 20 hour or Area Leader Grant, and receive discounted or free registration! How to apply? Register by the Early Bird Deadline , and click the appropriate Volunteer Level

You'll be sent an application form

DEADLINE TO APPLY IS NOVEMBER 10, 2011!!