



# The Stage Door: Musical Theatre at SHSU

Volume I, Issue II

April/May, 2014

This is your backstage pass into current events and highlights from the Musical Theatre Program at Sam Houston State University. Come behind the scenes as we reveal the very latest happenings in and around our dynamic program.

### Inside this issue:

New York Senior Showcase	2
Many Thanks!	2
The Broadway Artists Intensive	2
Production Highlights	3
Student and Alumni News	3
In Our Community of Artists	3
Q the Music	4

## From the Head of Musical Theatre



Each year, we are privileged to welcome our friend and colleague, Dave Clemmons to campus for a talk

-back and audition workshop with our graduating seniors. Dave is a sought after teacher, music director/vocal coach, lecturer, casting director and audition consultant. Dave is an advising faculty member at The New York School of Film and Television, a faculty member of the Making It On Broadway Intensive Series and a faculty member of The Performing Arts Project. His experience and expertise make his observations and advise invaluable to these students who are embarking on their careers in the performing arts.

The conversation always takes

delightful turns and the stories Dave shares are inspiring and eye opening. This year, the focus seemed to keep coming back to music of the newest generation of musical theatre writers. Students are drawn to the very latest in published materials. While dot com downloads of digital sheet music have replaced the banging pianos of the "song pushers" at Tin Pan Alley, like George Gershwin and Irving Berlin (pictured right), the desire to get our hands on the newest theatre songs has not changed!

"I want to say at once that I frankly believe that Irving Berlin is the greatest songwriter that has ever lived.... His songs are exquisite cameos of perfection, and each one of them is as beautiful as its neighbor." - George Gershwin  
Come hear the music!

*Laura*



Dave Clemmons



## Announcing a New "Platform Performances" Series

We are always seeking ways to immerse our musical theatre majors into the great works of the Musical Theatre Canon. This fall, we will launch a new series of performances that will enable students to experience a wider range of genre, composers, and musical styles.

*Platform Performances* will include shows created with only a platform and simple pieces like chairs, boxes or stools. The focus will be on the songs, sketches and pieces that make

up the performance.

Performances could be in the shape of concert versions of shows, staged readings, musical revues, or themed sketches of different shows.

All events included on the Platform Performances series will be free and open to the public.

The *Platform Performances* season will be announced soon including dates, times, and locations.



## 2014 New York Senior Showcase



**Showcase Seniors:** (from left to right) Trace Pool, Tyler Martin, Daniel Rosales, Audrey Wilson, Seth Cunningham, Danny Dyer, Caleb White and 2013 alumni Katy Butler (insert).

Rehearsals are well underway for this year's Showcase show. The cast has built their show around the idea of escape. Join us for our home performance on Thursday, May 1 at 5 p.m. in our Showcase Theatre. Please consider supporting our seniors by becoming a sponsor. When sponsoring a senior, you are aiding one of our aspiring artists to participate in this capstone experience. If you would like to receive our Sponsor-A-Senior program information brochure, please contact Dr. Laura Avery at 936.294.3404 or lka005@shsu.edu.

This year's Senior Showcase show will take place at 7 p.m. on Monday, April 28 at The Network, 242 W 36th, (3rd floor) New York. To reserve your seat, please contact Dr. Laura Avery at 936.294.3404 or lka005@shsu.edu.

Learn more about our Showcase cast at their [website](#):

*“Jacob has graciously given of his time and talents”*

### Many thanks!

For many years, the Musical Theatre Program has enjoyed collaborating with music director and vocal coach, Jacob Carr. Jacob has graciously given of his time and talents in numerous musical productions and department events. Jacob was music director for *bare: a pop opera*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, and *Spring Awakening*. He is currently working on our upcoming April musical, *Hair*.

In addition to the many contributions he has made at

Sam Houston, Jacob has also worked with Stages Repertory Theatre, Unity Theatre, Texas Repertory Theatre, Aeon Theatix, HITS Theatre and TUTS The Humphreys School. His music direction credits include *Jesus Christ Superstar*, (starring Tony Award winner Ben Vereen), *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *The Light in the Piazza*, *I Love You Your Perfect Now Change*, *Hello Dolly*, and *Thirteen*.



This spring, we wish Jacob well as he moves his career to New York City. Many, many thanks go to Jacob for his tireless support of the Musical Theatre Program. We wish you the very best in your career pursuits!

## Coming this summer to SHSU



Sam Houston Musical Theatre is proud to host The Broadway Artists Intensive this June. This 3 week program is for talented students who are highly motivated to pursue a professional career in the

performing arts. The mission is to foster talent and creativity in all areas of musical theatre through self discipline and technique, while exposing students to passionate and dedicated industry pros who share their knowledge and expertise acquired along their own path to Broadway. Curriculum includes Acting, Vocal Technique, Vocal Repertoire, Ballet, Jazz, Theatre Dance, Tap, Audition Technique, Stage

Combat and Improvisation. The Broadway Artists Intensive faculty is comprised entirely of Broadway veterans. Students will be instructed by Broadway performers, Music Directors, and Casting Directors, as well as TONY Award winning Directors and Choreographers.

[Video audition deadline extended to April 15!](#)



## Production Highlights

We are in high gear rehearsing and designing our April production, the iconic rock musical *HAIR*. This energetic, high spirited musical is a product of the 1960's anti-war and sexual liberation movements which gave rise to the hippie culture. The racially integrated cast, the use of rock music, and the involvement of the audience made *HAIR* a ground breaking musical.

Our creative team includes Penny Hasekoester (director), Kiira Schmidt (choreographer),

and Jacob Carr (music director).



Kiira joins us as a guest artist. She has enjoyed a successful career in New York having appeared in the

Grammy and Tony Award-winning *Anything Goes*, *Irving Berlin's White Christmas*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, and *Follies*, which she was also fortunate to represent in the 2012 Tony Awards. She has

also served as associate choreographer to Emmy Award Winner Joshua Bergasse on NBC's hit TV show *SMASH*. We are excited to have her here to work with our students!

*Hair* will run from April 23-26 in the Erica Starr Theatre. For tickets, please visit or call our Box Office at 936.294.1339.

<http://www.shsu.edu/academics/theatre/tickets/>



## Student and Alumni News

Our alumni have exciting careers in fields including Broadway productions, tours, film, television, and choreography. Explore our featured alumni profiles on our online ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT page at [www.shsu.edu/academics/theatre/alumni/](http://www.shsu.edu/academics/theatre/alumni/).

In June, Musical Theatre alumni John Ryan Del Bosque and Cole Ryden will appear in the TUTS Underground production of *Hands on a Hard Body*.

Current musical theatre majors, Amanda Parker and Katie Porterfield will appear in the Stages Repertory Theatre production of *Xanadu* set to start their run in May.

Alumni Greg Graham is returning to Broadway this October with the revival of *On the Town*. Greg has been named Choreography Consultant for the project set to open at the Lyric Theatre. This year marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of this iconic musical

comedy created by the legendary creative team of Leonard Bernstein, Betty Comden, Adolph Green, and Jerome Robbins. The Lyric Theatre will be reopened after a renovation being completed by its new owners, Ambassador Theatre Group. This classic Broadway theatre, right on 42nd Street in the heart of Times Square, is the perfect spot to bring this big, brassy musical comedy back to The Great White Way.

*"New York, New York!  
It's a helluva town!"*

**"Alumni Greg  
Graham  
returning to  
Broadway"**

## In Our Community of Artists

Summer 2014 is fast approaching! The College of Fine Arts and Mass Communication offers a variety of summer camps for Jr. High through College aged students.

**Department of Theatre and Musical Theatre** (High School / College) is hosting The Broadway Artists Intensive for talented students who are highly motivated to pursue a professional career in the performing arts. June 9-28.

**Department of Dance** (Girls ages 10 - 13) is hosting Now & Next Dance Mentoring Project. An exciting week of dancing, learning, and mentoring with college dancers and professional dance artists. No dance experience required. July 7-11 from 1:30-4:30 p.m.

**Department of Art** (Jr. High / High School) is hosting Animation Creation Day Camp. Students will spend the day learning to make drawings that

move. Working with professional artists, participants will learn to express themselves through animation. All the tools needed to create animated drawings will be provided. All students need to bring is their imagination! June 16-20 8:30am - 5pm. \$250 fee includes lunch and supplies. Contact SHSU Dept. of Art (936-294-1314) or [shsuart@shsu.edu](mailto:shsuart@shsu.edu)

**The School of Music** (Middle School / Jr. High / High School) offers a wide variety of campus for music students. The faculty is comprised of outstanding educators and provides an inspiring and educational experience in a supervised, safe environment. Various dates in June & July 2014.

2014 Summer Camp Programs

at SHSU

ART • DANCE • MUSIC • THEATRE



## Our Spring 2014 Production Schedule

Produced by  
**Musical Theatre at SHSU**  
Dr. Laura Avery,  
Head of Musical Theatre

Box 2297  
Sam Houston State University  
Huntsville, TX 77341-2297  
Phone: 936/294-3404  
Fax: 936/294-3898  
E-mail: lka005@shsu.edu

### Find Us Online:

[www.shsu.edu/academics/theatre/programs/musical-theatre/](http://www.shsu.edu/academics/theatre/programs/musical-theatre/)



### Erica Starr Theatre

#### **Hair**

Music by Galt MacDermot  
Lyrics by James Rado and Gerome Ragni  
Directed by Penny Hasekoester  
April 23 - April 26, 2014



### Showcase Theatre

#### **Stonewater Rapture**

by Doug Wright  
Directed by Adriana Dominguez  
April 1 - April 5, 2014

#### **Dog Sees God**

by Bert V. Royal  
Directed by Tyler Martin  
April 1 - April 5, 2014

#### **NY Senior Showcase**

Thursday, May 1 5 p.m.  
Free Event

Our box office is located in the University Theatre Center, 1740 Bobby K. Marks Drive and 17th street. For tickets, call the box office at 936.294.1339.

## Q the Music Fund

As we enter our twentieth year, we are challenged to continue creating top-notch performances amidst rising production costs and steady budgets. To ensure the future of these live entertainment events, we are seeking major funding for our musicals' orchestras and professional sound design. Consider becoming an Underwriter of our **Q the Music** fund.

This fund will be used to help cover the cost of our live musicians and their professional sound designer. As much as we've accomplished in our rich history, there is still much to be done to maintain our competitive place in the market.

Your donation is a gift for the future ... a gift that helps ensure quality musical productions for our Musical Theatre Program,

its students, alumni and our community... a gift that will tell the story of the Department of Theatre and Musical Theatre so future generations understand the superior education and programing offered at this great institute.

Please consider becoming an Underwriter of the **Q the Music** fund. By partnering with us in this capacity, you will assist us in furthering our mission to develop outstanding theatre artists with the professional skills, intellectual vigor, and creative resources necessary to excel and thrive in the Performing Arts of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

For additional information regarding corporate or individual underwriting of the orchestra, please contact: Dr. Laura Avery, Head of Musical Theatre at 936.294.3404 or lka005@shsu.edu.

