



Inclusions

Making the arts accessible
to people with disabilities

Arts Access • PO Box 25044, Raleigh, NC 27611 • (919) 833-9919 • Fall 2006

More Gigs, More Describers

Arts organizations in the Triangle seem to spring up like mushrooms. We are called upon for more and more audio description gigs – sometimes three on the same day. And we are ever short of describers.

Many people have asked how we select and train new describers. It's a complex process and not everyone is cut out to do this work. It requires an excellent vocabulary, fast reflexes and the ability to take several evenings to prepare for each performance. We now describe opera and ballet, which require specialized skills.

We put candidates through an audition to be selected for training. AD trainer Elizabeth Kahn conducts an intensive weekend workshop to teach and provide initial coaching of the basic AD skills: saying what you see; staying between the lines for a play or film; not interpreting, summarizing or intellectualizing; working with music and dance; handling sight gags and fast-paced comedy; and how to set up and use the AD equipment.

The classes always include at least two AD patrons, one completely blind and one with visual impairment to let the trainees under-

(See **Training** on page 3)



Describer Training Class (l. - r.) Meg Dietrich, Les Seitz, Smythe Richbourg, Martha Keravuori, Elizabeth Kahn, Lisa Brady, Rene Cummins, Paula Hodgson, Marty Gainous Smith and Jenny Edmonds

President's Perspective

I hope this newsletter arrives at a time when you can sit down, relax and read about upcoming arts events. I am Shawn Faircloth, the new president of Arts Access. Arts Access has been improving the accessibility to the arts since its founding in 1982.

Every year it has served an increasing number of people with disabilities. Although many people know us through our flagship audio description program, we are always behind the scenes helping to raise the awareness of the general public about disabilities and the

(See **President** on page 3)



Audio Described and Sign Interpreted Performances

This schedule is subject to change. Please contact theaters for ticket, parking and accessibility information. Also, check the Arts Access Web site at www.artsaccessinc.org for updated listings. Audio description users are encouraged to arrive 45 minutes before shows to obtain listening equipment and to hear program notes.

Audio Description Schedule

Tues Oct 24, 8 pm, *The Underpants*, PlayMakers Repertory Co., Paul Green Theatre, Raleigh Rd., Chapel Hill **SI**

Sun Nov 5, 3 pm, *Bourbon at the Border*, University Theatre, Thompson Theater, Dunn Ave, NCSU Campus, Raleigh

Sat Nov 11, 2 pm, *The Music Man*, NC Theatre, Memorial Auditorium, Progress Energy Center, Raleigh

Sat Nov 11, 8 pm, *After the Fall*, Studio Theatre of Jones Auditorium, Meredith College, Raleigh

Fri Nov 17, 8 pm, *Blowfish*, Raleigh Ensemble Players, Page Walker House, Cary

Sat Nov 18, 2 pm, *Balanchine & Mozart*, Carolina Ballet, Progress Energy Center, Raleigh

Sat Dec 2, 7:30 pm, *Einstein's Dreams*, Burning Coal, Leggett Theatre, Peace College, Raleigh

Sat Dec 2, 8 pm, *The Rat Pack*, Broadway Series South, Memorial Auditorium, Progress Energy Center, Raleigh

Tues Dec 5, 8 pm, *Tuesdays with Morrie*, PlayMakers Repertory Company, Paul Green Theatre, Chapel Hill **SI**

Sun Dec 10, 1 pm, *Cinderella*, Raleigh Little Theatre. Fletcher Theater, Progress Energy Center, Raleigh

Sun Dec 10, 2 pm, *A Christmas Carol*, Theatre in the Park. Memorial Auditorium, Progress Energy Center, Raleigh

Fri Dec 15, 7:30 pm, *A Christmas Story*, Cary Players, Old Cary Elementary School, Academy St, Cary

Wed Dec 20, 7:30 pm, *Nutcracker*, Carolina Ballet, Memorial Auditorium, Progress Energy Center, Raleigh

Sun Dec 31, First Night Raleigh, locations to be announced

Sat Jan 13, 2007, 2 pm, *Monet Impressions*, Carolina Ballet, Memorial Auditorium, Progress Energy Center, Raleigh

Jan 17, 7:30 pm, Vocal Recital by James Longmire, Carswell Auditorium, Meredith College, Raleigh **SI**

Jan 27, 7:30 pm, *Pentecost*, Burning Coal, Leggett Theatre, Peace College, Raleigh

***SI** = Sign interpreted.

The Arts Access web site has a new look. (Thank you, Fred Brack.) For updates about additional described or sign interpreted shows, open caption and described movies and news relating to the arts and disabilities see www.artsaccessinc.org

(President, cont. from page 1)

arts, as well as helping arts organizations throughout the Triangle learn to make their venues more accessible and welcoming.

The Arts Access Board appreciates all that the theater venues, our financial supporters and our volunteers do to make this possible. You make up an enormous team who help Arts Access behind the curtain We want you to know your contributions are noticed and we're happy you have joined our "cast."

The Board meets once a month to ensure that Arts Access continues to serve in the arts community in its unique way. We not only discuss how to make plays, movies, ballet and opera more accessible, but also how we can reach out to fine arts and music organizations, where there is still much to accomplish.

One of the assets of this board is the members' different perspectives and expertise toward the same effort. We have members who are "number crunchers," public speakers, writers, artists and people with disabilities, all of whom contribute to a lively interchange of ideas. Sharing our viewpoints enables the entire board to understand and appreciate the arts and to explore all aspects of promoting accessibility.

As president, my personal goal is to make this a true "full-cast" production with: playbills to spread the word, ushers to show us our way, performers to present the show, and stagehands to efficiently support our efforts; and, of course, an audience to take advantage of our offerings. We hope you will join us in one or more of these capacities.

Shawn Faircloth
President

(Training, cont. from page 1)

stand how their descriptions are perceived by their real audience. Then all our trainees are assigned to experienced describers who serve as mentors, conducting practice sessions with videos, bringing them to their own assignments, and serving as basic support.

The trainees begin service immediately: first handing out receivers at performances, meeting the public and troubleshooting. They then go on to work as "Secondary" describers, developing a script of program notes with background, costumes, sets – everything visible – so that our patrons can easily orient themselves as the performance begins. In January, the trainees will move on to their first play-by-play descriptions.

Congratulations to our seven new describers: Lisa Brady, Meg Dietrich, Jenny Edmonds, Marty Gainous Smith, Paula Hodgson, Martha Keravuori, and Smythe Richbourg. And a big thank you to Les Seitz and Rene Cummins for their contribution as a model audience, and to Rene for offering her offices for the training – and, of course, to board member Kellie Harris who kept the class in food and drink during the workshop.

Contributors 2006

Arts Access is grateful for all contributions of any size. Thank you!

Kathy & Fred Brack
Betty Camp
Linda Curtis

Shirley & Harvey Gold
Elizabeth & Joe Kahn
Linda & Ace Ornt
Jane Stikeleather
Jan Tu



Making the arts accessible
to people with disabilities

Arts Access
P.O. Box 25044
Raleigh, NC 27611-5044

Nonprofit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit No. 341
Raleigh, NC

Arts Access is funded in part by the City of Raleigh based on recommendations of the Raleigh Arts Commission, and is supported by United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County, with funds from the United Arts campaign and the North Carolina Arts Council, an agency funded by the State of North Carolina and the National Endowment for the Arts.



Please let us know if you do not
wish to receive this newsletter
by calling (919) 833-9919

Arts Access Members

These arts organizations have become
"Friends of Arts Access" for 2006-2007.

- Artspllosure
- Broadway Series South
- Burning Coal Theatre Company
- The Carolina Ballet
- Cary Players
- Meredith College
- NC Museum of Art
- The North Carolina Theatre
- NC State University Theatre
- PlayMakers Repertory Company
- Raleigh Ensemble Players
- Raleigh Little Theatre
- The Opera Company of North Carolina
- Theatre in the Park
- The Town Players of Garner

Singer James Longmire to Perform

Every year, Arts Access sponsors a live performance related in some way to the arts and disabilities. Bass-baritone Dr. James Longmire, who has been blind from birth, has carved out a successful career as a performer in North and South Carolina and as a voice teacher in Raleigh.

Accompanied by pianist Susan Timmons, Longmire will give a recital of songs from the classical, Broadway musical and African-American spiritual repertory at Carswell Auditorium at Meredith College on January 17, 2007 at 7:30 pm, free admission.

**To receive this newsletter
in large print,
call 919-833-9919.**