

## From The Artistic Director, PAUL MESHEJIAN:

This is the first of what we hope will be regular, seasonal newsletters to keep you up-to-date on the most recent happenings with PlayPenn and PlayPenn Conference Writers. We have closed the books on PlayPenn's 2006 Conference and for the second year (only our second ever) the work of the conference was engaging, productive, successful and as much fun as a bunch of theatre artists would want to have in the heat of July in the city of brotherly love.

Once again, the activity of the conference took place at the Adrienne Theatre where we were graciously hosted by Seth Rozin and InterAct Theatre Company. One aspect of PlayPenn's mission is to bring together writers, directors, dramaturgs, actors, designers and production interns in the interest



of fostering the kind of cross-fertilization that can lead to new creative intimacies. At the 2006 conference, fifty artists came to know one another in the anticipated concentrated environment that marks the character of PlayPenn's development conference.

This year's conference writers each made substantial progress with their work, taking full advantage of the resources provided by PlayPenn, resources we believe are unsurpassed by any other development opportunity in the United States.

In each issue of *The New Play Times* we will endeavor to keep you apprised of our alumni's activity by giving you the news of their progress.

# Where Are They Now?

## J.T. ROGERS



JT Rogers' play MADAGASCAR received the 2005 Pinter Review Prize for Drama, which included its first publication by the University of Tampa Press and a related public dramatic reading. MADAGASCAR has also been published by Oxford University Press. It was also a finalist for the ATCA's Steinberg New Play Award and performed at the Summer Play Festival (SPF) in New York City in Summer 2005. Madagascar will receive an all-star multiple night reading on the main stage of the Pasadena

Playhouse with Robert Foxworth and Michael Lerner. His most recent play, THE OVERWHELMING, developed at PlayPenn's inaugural conference is currently touring the United Kingdom in an Out of Joint production after completing a sold out run at the Royal National Theatre, London. The play will be seen in a major New York production in the 2007 season. His play WHITE PEOPLE will be produced in the Spring at the New Rep in Boston.

## LUCY THURBER



Immediately after leaving PlayPenn, Lucy went to the Williamstown Theatre Festival to workshop her play MONSTROSITY followed by time at The Orchard Project working on the 24 Hour Plays. This winter her play STAY will be produced by Rattestick Theatre in New York directed by Jackson Gay. There will soon be a workshop production of her play BOTTOM OF THE WORLD at the DR2 space with WET directed by PlayPenn alum Brian Mertes.

## JORDAN HARRISON

Among the busiest of PlayPenn's alumni is Jordan Harrison. In the Fall of 2005 his play *FINN IN THE UNDERWORLD* was produced by Berkley Repertory Theatre, directed by Les Waters. Then in Late Winter, he worked on *ACT A LADY* at Playwrights Horizons in New York with Anne Kauffman (PlayPenn alum and Jordan's collaborator). That workshop was followed by a reading of the play at the Tokyo International Arts Festival. *ACT A LADY* (a PlayPenn 2005 conference selection) received its world premiere at Actors Theatre of Louisville's Humana Festival for New American Plays. *ACT A LADY* has production upcoming at Illusion Theatre in Minneapolis and Portland Center Stage and will soon be published by Playscripts, Inc. For the past seven months Jordan has been Playwright in Residence at The Empty Space Theatre in Seattle as part of a NEA/TCG Residency Grant. While in residence he wrote a new play *DORIS TO DARLENE: A CAUTIONARY VALENTINE*. His new play *AMAZONS AND THEIR MEN* was a recently workshopped at this Summer's PlayLabs in Minneapolis. And he has recently completed the first draft of the book for a musical based on H.G. Wells *Invisible Man*. Just to tire you (and Jordan) out, there was an extended run of his play *THE MUSEUM PLAY* at Washing-



## GINA BARNETT

After being invited to attend PlayPenn's 2006 Conference Gina saw production of her play *AFTER ALL* at Hudson Stage, directed by Dan Foster, director for Gina's conference play *A SCREAM*.



## ERIC PFEFFINGER

After finishing up at this past summer's PlayPenn, Eric Pfeffinger been tweaking his children's play, *LOST AND FOUNDLING*, which just started rehearsals at Childsplay in Arizona and will then go on to be produced at the Geva Theatre in the Spring.

## PETER MORRIS

Since being invited to attend PlayPenn's 2006 conference Peter saw his play *GUARDIANS* produced by New York City's Culture Project after a successful, award-winning production at the London Fringe Festival and *MARGE* at New York's Summer Play Festival (SPF). Peter also contributed as a writer to *GONE MISSING* a radio theatre piece presented by The Civilians. He is currently working on a miniseries adaptation of Roald Dahl's *Tales of the Unexpected*, to be directed by Robert Altman for the BBC, co-produced by Altman's Sandcastle5 and BBC2.



# *The Latest Draft*

Over one hundred and fifty writers have submitted samples in the interest of having their full-length plays considered for invitation for PlayPenn's 2007 development conference. This year we have seen a remarkable leap in the number of submissions and the breadth of quality in the work being submitted. We have had to increase our pool of readers by fifty percent in order to fairly and adequately evaluate the fifty percent increase in full scripts that have been invited for consideration. While numbers fluctuate cyclically, and often on what can seem to be an arbitrary basis, we could not be more pleased that the quality and quantity of

the work that is crossing the transom is up. Readers and staff alike are looking forward to the always-stimulating experience of discovering what is on the minds of those who are writing and what and how they're writing about it.

This part of PlayPenn's selection process is always the beginning of the "play" part of our name. The "penn" part comes later. And once we put them together...

PlayPenn looks forward to announcing finalists in early Spring, 2007.