

MASON GROSS

SCHOOL OF
THE ARTS

The Royal (blue) Treatment

RENOVATIONS AT NICHOLAS MUSIC CENTER
BATHE THE SCHOOL'S LARGEST PERFORMANCE SPACE
IN A NEW, BLUE HUE

Music alum
Peter Martin's quartet,
Third Coast Percussion,
has a song listed among
the 100 Best Songs
of 2018 by NPR.

Their cover
of Philip Glass's
Madeira River
came in at
No. 17.

Celebrate!

Art & design MFA
student **Jeanette Mundt**
and faculty **Steffani Jemison**
are among the 75 artists selected
to present work in this year's
Whitney Biennial, running
from May 17 through
September 22.

Alastair Macaulay
of *The New York Times*
named faculty **Pam Tanowitz's**
"Four Quartets" among the
best dance of 2018, calling it
"the most sublime new
work of dance theater
this year."

KEITH MUCCILLI



Opera News listed
faculty **Bob Aldridge's**
Sister Carrie
among the
"5 Best New Works
of 2018."

Organ faculty
Renée Anne Louprette had a
busy fall, performing solo recitals
at Royal Festival Hall in London;
the Walt Disney Concert Hall
in Los Angeles; and at the
Cathedral of Notre-Dame
in Paris.

Susanna Leiva, from left, Sarah Stein,
Marie Ferguson (in white), and Hanna Orr
in the Opera Theater Rutgers production
of Giacomo Puccini's *Il Tabarro*.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

I've just returned from London, where Associate Dean Lisa Baratta and I attended our acting students' production of *Measure for Measure* on the great stage of Shakespeare's Globe. The performance was the culmination of the students' six-month residency at this iconic institution, as part of our Rutgers Conservatory at Shakespeare's Globe program.

Upon review, *Measure for Measure* strikes one as a remarkably contemporary play. Angelo, an upright deputy to the Duke, propositions Isabella, who is training to become a nun. She replies that she will expose his unethical behavior to the world, only to have him declare haughtily that no one will believe her, for he is a powerful man of high standing. All this sounds very much like present-day #MeToo exchanges, and Shakespeare brings the issue to the fore once again at the end of the play, when the Duke imperiously proposes marriage to the now-vindicated Isabella. Shakespeare ends the play by having Isabella remain silent. Our Mason Gross production, brilliantly directed by Simon Dormandy, presented two takes on the Bard's cryptic close: One in which Isabella tacitly considers the Duke's offer, and one in which she slaps his face! This is what great theater is all about, and one couldn't have been prouder of our students' provocative reading of the play. See the play stateside when Rutgers Theater Company mounts a production here on campus April 26 through May 4.

While on the subject of theater, I want to note the passing of William Esper, long-time chair of our Theater Department and esteemed trainer of many of the nation's great actors. Bill was one of the last master practitioners of the Meisner technique, and after leaving Rutgers in 2004 he continued to run a highly successful studio in New York City. Bill's productions at Mason Gross were magical, and we were fortunate to have his artistic and administrative leadership for so many years. As one would say in the theater world, it was a great run. See more about Esper, with some faculty and alumni remembrances, on page 12 of the magazine.

In closing, I should mention that this year marks the end of my run as dean of the Mason Gross School, a position I have held since 2000. It has been an honor to lead the school for 19 years, to work with our remarkable faculty and students, and to put a good number of new programs into place (these are surveyed on page 17). A search for my successor is underway, and I am confident that we will have a new, visionary leader in place soon.

George B. Stauffer
— George B. Stauffer, Dean



ANDREA KANE

Jaevon Williams and Sophie Hearn from the Rutgers Theater Company production of Tennessee Williams's *Ten Blocks on the Camino Real*.



"I get more nos than I do yeses...
'Work ethic of an ant, skin of an elephant, and heart of a lion':
That's what's going to take you far."

— Dance alumna Shakira Barrera, Yo-Yo on Netflix's Emmy-nominated *Glow*.

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JODY SOMERS

THE (ROYAL) BLUE TREATMENT

After nearly four decades, Nicholas Music Center undergoes extensive renovations

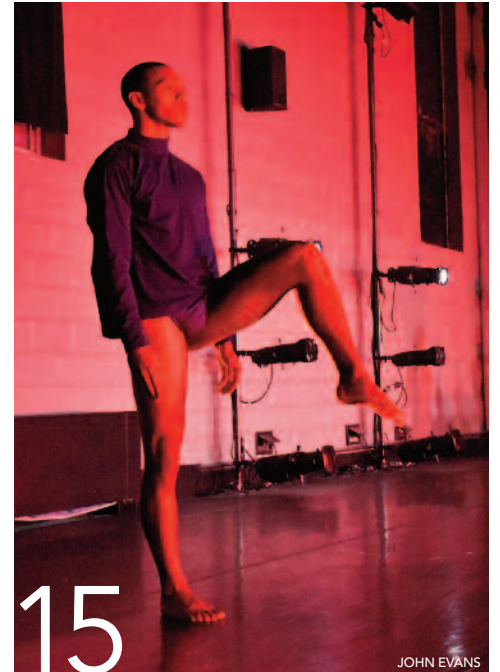


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YOUR BRAIN ON MUSIC

Opera singer Renée Fleming visits campus to discuss music's effect on the brain



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TAKING THE LEAP

Aaron Lewis transferred to the Dance Department with a background in art that continues to feed his work

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ON THE COVER

The Nicholas Music Center Rededication Concert, September 30, 2018.
Photo by Jody Somers.

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The Royal (blue) Treatment

“ IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE THAT WE HAVE A SPACE THAT ALLOWS US TO GIVE THE [BEST] PERFORMANCE POSSIBLE — THIS SPACE DOES THAT. ”

— Flute student
Schuyler Thornton

EXTENSIVE RENOVATIONS RETURN NICHOLAS MUSIC CENTER TO ITS "ORIGINAL GLORIOUS STATE"

BY RISA BARISCH

Nicholas Music Center, the largest performance space at the Mason Gross School, recently underwent extensive renovations that included reimagining the concert hall and lobby in a new blue palette and extending the stage. A construction crew spent June through August sanding, sawing, and ripping up carpet, while in the parking lot, a parade of 740 red seats made their way to a cavernous dumpster.

The school celebrated on September 30 with a free concert by the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra, Rutgers Voorhees Choir, Rutgers University Glee Club, and Rutgers Kirkpatrick Choir, as well as members of the Marching Scarlet Knights. The repertoire? Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue," naturally, as well as Modest Mussorgsky's "Coronation Scene" from the opera *Boris Godunov* and Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture.

After 37 years of heavy use for music performances, film screenings, lectures, convocations, and other school and community events, it was time for a face-lift, says Dean George B. Stauffer.

"These renovations return Nicholas Music Center, the flagship venue of the school, to its original glorious state," Stauffer says. "It was designed by the distinguished architect Pietro Belluschi, and it reflects the high hopes that Rutgers President Edward Bloustein and Mason Gross founding Dean Jack Bettenbender had for the school."

Belluschi's roster of other projects includes Alice Tully Hall in New York City, the Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, and the Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in Baltimore. He completed the 740-seat arts center at Rutgers, named in honor of a gift W. Cary Nicholas made in memory of his wife, Marjorie Bruce Nicholas, in 1981.

In addition to the elegant aesthetics, the construction added much-needed stage space—an additional 460 square feet—that will allow the school's larger ensembles, including the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra, Rutgers Wind Ensemble, and Opera at Rutgers, "room to breathe," says Mark Piotrowski, production stage manager for Nicholas Music Center.

And though the seating was cut by 36 to make room for the stage extension, the new configuration "brings our audience closer, making the concert hall feel more intimate,"



PHOTOS BY JODY SOMERS

Facing page: Faculty Daniel Epstein performing George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue." Above, Maestro Kynan Johns conducts the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra to a packed house.

explains Piotrowski, who worked daily with the construction crew to make sure everything—trash receptacles, circuit drops, conduit lines—was put in its proper place.

The new stage also allows for a more professional setup of the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra, which presents an annual concert series of six symphonic programs, a main-stage opera, and two popular programs.

"By extending the stage, we will finally have enough depth to adopt a normal professional configuration of the percussion directly behind the wind section, and thus closer to the brass, making ensemble easier for everyone," says Kynan Johns, director of orchestras and orchestral conducting at Rutgers. "It will also allow easier combined orchestra/choral concerts. It will hopefully be the perfect concert hall stage in terms of dimensions."

Flute student Schuyler Thornton noted that the refurbishments will boost both student performances and the school's focus on developing professional performers.

"Nicholas Music Center now matches the quality of the performances that take place," says Thornton, who is pursuing an orchestral career. "It is absolutely imperative that we have a space that allows us to give the [best] performance possible—this space does that."

But the most impressive element of the renovations, at least to Piotrowski, are the seats.

"The seats are new—what else can I say?" says Piotrowski with a smile. "They are new and they are fantastic. Anyone who sat in our old seats will appreciate just how wonderful these new seats are. And I think the newly created box seats will be the most popular place to sit."

And about the somewhat controversial palette change from Rutgers red to royal blue: perhaps change is good, especially after nearly four decades. The new colors refresh the space, which had become faded and worn. The wave-patterned lobby carpet has been redone in a modern blue-black marbled look.

Stauffer and Kevin Viscariello, director of facilities and scheduling who led the Nicholas project, worked with the architectural and interior design firm Clarke Caton Hintz, based in Trenton, New Jersey, to pick out each element.

Stauffer seems pleased with the results.

"The new hall will be a great resource for present and future generations of Mason Gross students, faculty, and guest artists," he says. "It puts Rutgers at the forefront of the arts, where it belongs."

Renovations at the Nicholas Music Center concert hall were made possible by a \$1 million contribution from the Marjorie Bruce Nicholas Fund and a \$50,000 contribution from the Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation. The Rutgers Class of '57 gave a gift of \$75,000 in April 2017 for the renovation of the center's lobby.

Julia M. Ritter was awarded a book contract from Oxford University Press for her manuscript *Tandem Dances: Choreographing Immersive Performance*.

in the Fall Dance Concert at Culbreth Theatre from November 15 to 17.

Fred Hersch of the Music Department received two Grammy nominations: Best Improvised Jazz Solo for the song “We See” and Best Jazz Album for “Live in Europe.”

Don Holder of the Theater Department designed the lighting for the 30-city first national tour of *Anastasia*, which opened on October 9 in Schenectady, New York. Holder also designed the lighting for a new production of *Porgy and Bess* at the English National Opera, directed by James Robinson. The co-production with The Metropolitan Opera in New York and the Netherlands Opera-Ballet in Amsterdam ran from October 11 to November 17. In addition, Holder designed the lighting for the first national tour of *Fiddler on the Roof*, based on the 2016 production at the Broadway Theatre in New York City and directed by Bartlett Sher. The tour opened on October 17 in Syracuse, New York. Holder designed the lighting for the South Korean premiere of *The Lion King* in Daegu, South Korea, which opened on November 9.

FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

Joseph Tompkins performed with the Cleveland Orchestra in October and November, including at their Fall Gala Concert. Repertoire included Mahler’s Symphony No. 2 and Ravel’s “Rapsodie Espagnol.” In November, Tompkins appeared with the New York Philharmonic at Lincoln Center under Music Director Jaap van Zweden.

Chien-Ying Wang presented (K)Not Tied in the Dance Gallery Festival at the Gelsey Kirkland Arts Center on November 2 and in the Ailey Citigroup Theater on November 4. Wang was commissioned to reconstruct *Benevolence* for the University of Virginia, where it was presented

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR THOMAS LENNON

ACADEMY AWARD-WINNER THOMAS LENNON JOINED THE RUTGERS FILMMAKING CENTER IN FALL 2018, HEADING UP THE DOCUMENTARY FILM LAB. IN DECEMBER, PBS PREMIERED SACRED, A GLOBAL EXPLORATION OF RELIGIOUS FAITH BY 40 INTERNATIONAL FILMMAKERS, WHICH LENNON DIRECTED.

What led you into documentary filmmaking?

I stumbled into it. I came out of college dreamy, ambitious, clueless, without technical skills, and somehow determined to be an experimental filmmaker. I was hanging around places like Anthology Film Archives in New York City. But then there was this awkward problem: I had to earn a living. The few people willing to hire me were in nonfiction. I viewed it as temporary, a way-station. And it was years before I realized that nonfiction was not a diversion but in fact my true interest—and that I might even be good at it.

Your films explore topics ranging from naval aviation to the experiences of a gay man living in China. How do you choose your subjects?

The answer to that has changed over time. When I started out, if you wanted to do good work, you shot on film, and that meant you needed money, quite a bit of it, from the outset. I spent years working for other filmmakers, as a researcher, an associate producer, whatever, learning the craft, apprenticing myself to people I respected. I wasn’t choosing my own stories. Even when I went out on my own, I was working for broadcasters. They wrote the checks and that meant that they had a lot to say about subject matter. That was limiting of course, but there’s also a Zen wisdom at times in going with the flow, taking

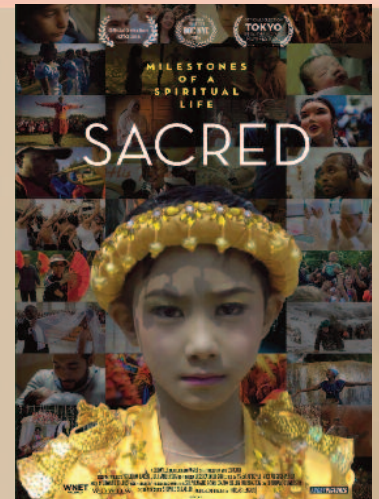
a subject that you might not be drawn to, or might not think of, and plunging in.

Nowadays, you can buy a pretty decent camera for a thousand dollars and a fabulous one for five thousand. You can edit on your kitchen table. So now you can dive into a subject when you get wind of it and worry about the money later. The process is more organic, more immediate, more observational: the film evolves as the story unfolds. But chance still plays an important role.

For example, I went to dinner at the house of my friend, who’s a chef. Across from me was another guest, a very strange guy who was mumbling something about starting his own restaurant, which was going to be staffed entirely by men and women just out of prison. I hadn’t even finished my appetizer and I already knew that that might be a good film. I went out to Cleveland to film the restaurant launch, and years later, I came out with *Knife Skills*. And that weird guy—who became a friend—and I went to the Oscars in 2018. Random. Opportunistic. Zen. All those words apply.

What advice do you have for young filmmakers about making work and getting it seen?

Say yes more than no. Take the opportunities that come your way, even if they appear limited, because you can often be surprised about where they lead you. Marketing a film is an area where students don’t need to learn from me. They’ve come of age in a digital world. They understand, much more intuitively than many people my age, that



In January, **Pam Tanowitz** of the Dance Department was selected as Bard Fisher Center's first choreographer in residence. Bard Fisher Center will commission three new Tanowitz dances, beginning with a new work created in collaboration with New York City Ballet principal dancer Sara Mearns. A major component of the residency will be the development of a digital archive of Tanowitz's oeuvre, including the remounting and documentation of several of her performances. Tanowitz is creating pieces for the Martha Graham Dance Company and the Paul Taylor Dance Company, and will create works for the New York City Ballet's 2019 spring and fall galas.

Congrats to Music Department faculty **Rebecca Cypess** and **Nancy Rao**: Cypess won the Noah Greenberg Award for outstanding contributions to historical performance at the American Musicological Society's annual conference; Rao won the Music in American Culture Award for outstanding scholarship in music of the United States. In addition, Rao's book *Chinatown Opera Theater in North America* has won the 2019 Association for Asian American Studies Award for Outstanding Achievement in Humanities and Cultural Studies: Media, Visual, and Performance Studies.



Dean of Students Mandy Feiler, center, starred as Donna in the musical *Mamma Mia!* at Cranford Dramatic Club. The show ran February 15 through March 2. Brava!

each artist, each filmmaker, is in some sense a brand, and that a brand needs careful tending. It took me a long time to learn what 20-somethings already know: that your work is far from over when the film is done.

What's the last piece of art that's really stuck with you?

An exhibit of late Rothko paintings in New York City last year. Two great works of nonfiction by the Israeli writer Yuval Noah Harari, *Sapiens* and *Homo Deus*. The fiction film *The Rider* [a drama, based on a true story, about a rising rodeo star who suffers a tragic riding accident].

What would you say to encourage someone to sit down and watch a documentary? And what are a few documentaries you'd recommend?

Documentarians are finishing their work at such a high level of polish that I encourage people to get out of their homes and see this work in a theater. Don't watch Netflix with one hand on the remote. Commit. See *RBG* to be inspired. See *Commun-ion*; *Hale County This Morning, This Evening*; *Free Solo*. Or get onto HBO and watch *King in the Wilderness*, about the last two years of the life of Martin Luther King, to be reminded of how brutally difficult, and thrillingly noble, a public life can be.

Lennon (kneeling) filming *Knife Skills* at a prison in Cleveland, Ohio. The 2018 film received an Academy Award nomination for Best Documentary Short Subject.



Alum Leah Guadagnoli's *Break Heed*, from left, *Riddled With Care*, and *Delicate Fury*, on view in New York City earlier this year.

COURTESY OF ASYA GEISBERG GALLERY

STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

The *New York Times* says art & design MFA alumna **Leah Guadagnoli's** works "challenge viewers to figure out what they are, or what they could be." Guadagnoli's solo show, *Soft Violence*, ran at Asya Geisberg Gallery from January 10 through February 16. The *Times* featured the show in their round-up, "What to See in New York Art Galleries This Week."

On January 27, MM opera student **Andrew Moore** received an award at the 61st annual New England Regional Finals of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions at the New England Conservatory.

Theater alumnus **James Pearse Connelly** is the production designer on the NBC craft competition show *Making It*, hosted by Amy Poehler and Nick Offerman.

Many congrats to former jazz student **Terence Blanchard**, who won a Grammy for Best Instrumental Composition for "Blut Und Boden (Blood And Soil)" from Spike Lee's latest film, *BlackkKlansman* and was nominated for an Oscar for Best Score.

Kudos to 2018 theater alumna **Camila Canó-Flavia**, who made her Broadway debut in December in *Network*, alongside Bryan Cranston.

Dance alum **Shakira Barrera**, who has a part on Netflix's *Glow*, was nominated with her cast at the Screen Actors Guild Awards for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series.

Art & design MFA alumna and part-time lecturer in painting **Jamie Gray Williams** was selected as a critic's pick in *ArtForum* last December for her solo show, which ran November 7 through January 5 at Selena's Mountain in New York City.

In December, dance alum **Javier Padilla** was one of just six choreographers selected for the Newsteps Series showcasing young choreographers at New York City's Chen Dance Center. In February,

the group Padilla founded, The Movement Playground, presented at Seattle's CHOP SHOP Contemporary Dance Festival.

Art & design student **Young Sun Han's** 2017 MFA First-Year Exhibition project was curated in a solo artist booth at The Anti Art Fair by The Elijah Wheat Showroom in Peckham, London, from October 4 to 7.

On October 29, three-time Tony nominee and theater alumnus **Kevin Chamberlin** served as the announcer on NBC's broadcast of *A Very Wicked Halloween: Celebrating 15 Years on Broadway*. Idina Menzel and Kristin Chenoweth performed on the show with Ariana Grande. Chamberlin plays the Wizard in *Wicked* on Broadway.

Filmmaking students **Kirsten Pasewaldt** and **Finley King** interned on the production of faculty member Danielle Lessovitz's first feature film, *Port Authority*.

Theater alumna **Midori Francis** starred in *Usual Girls* at the Roundabout Underground in New York City from November 5 through December 9. *The New York Times* called Francis "bold, moving and full-on funny" as the lead in the off-Broadway play and named the show a NYT Critic's Pick. **Melanie Aponte** served as assistant stage manager on *Usual Girls*.

Theater alum **Maddie Orton** served as director of NJTV's *I Can't... I Have Rehearsal*, which won a 2018 Mid-Atlantic Emmy Award in the Arts Program/Special category. The special is a look at six very different high schools as they compete for The Rising Star Awards. Other Rutgers alumni on the project include executive producer **Philip Alongi** of the Music Department and art director **Vinny Caravano** of the Department of Art & Design.

PhD musicology student **Jasmine Henry's** paper, "#GrammysNotSoWhite: Critical Race Theory and the Grammys' Race Problem," has been accepted for publication in "Africology: Journal of Pan African Studies."

Dance Revolution

TEACHER AND ALUM AARON RAMOS TACKLES SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH DANCE

BY RISA BARISCH

As a dance teacher, Aaron Ramos doesn't allow himself to get too comfortable.

Five years ago, Ramos had gotten to a point where he could teach "in his sleep," he says, so he began challenging himself—one major goal each year at Franklin Middle School in Somerset, New Jersey, where he has taught for over a decade.

This year, Ramos says, his aim has been to teach his students "how to be human beings, how to love, how to respect each other and each other's struggles and stories. I'm getting the kids to think about subjects and topics that they may not be well aware of, or they may not be too comfortable with. To me, dance should be pushing envelopes, getting people to talk and converse."

they're old enough and smart enough to know what to do," Ramos says. "You just have to give them that chance and the opportunity, because they are capable."

Franklin Township Public Schools is one of just a handful of districts nationwide that teaches dance from elementary school all the way to high school, which caught the attention of producers at NJTV's *State of the Arts*. Ramos and his all-boys 8th-grade advanced dance class were featured on the program last year.

Before filming began, Ramos decided that he and the boys needed to do "something special," he says, and so together, they created a dance centered around social justice.

"With what's going on in our nation with Black Lives Matter, I thought, let's see if we can

“
DANCE SHOULD
BE PUSHING
ENVELOPES,
GETTING PEOPLE
TO TALK.”

”

choreograph a dance to accompany the words.

"Some kids were crying," says Ramos. "Some kids were quiet for a while—and that never happened before. These boys have so much energy."

Ramos freely expresses his emotions with students, and encourages them to do the same through dance. This is especially valuable, he says, when creating choreography.

"I want the students to feel it, because they're the ones dancing it," says Ramos. "You can't fake movement."

The dance, *Black Boys in America: Kings*, premiered at the districtwide curriculum showcase last January, and brought the packed auditorium to tears, says Ramos, who at first worried that the performance may be too controversial.

"At the end, though, African-American fathers came up to me and thanked me for it," says Ramos. "Just to have their voice be put out there, that meant a lot to them. I've never seen so many fathers cry. That's what dance is about. It's supposed to change lives."

Ramos says he draws from his own experience as a young immigrant to the United States from the Philippines who found it challenging to prepare for a college education.

"I'm the first generation to go to college, so I did not know anything about it—I didn't know the process, I didn't know how financial aid worked," Ramos says. "I had to figure it all out for myself."

He credits the Educational Opportunity Fund, which provides financial assistance and support services to New Jersey students from educationally and economically disadvantaged backgrounds to attend college in the state, as well as supportive Mason Gross dance faculty and classmates, for helping him complete his BFA degree.

"I know the importance of having that person who can guide you in the right direction," says Ramos.



COURTESY OF AARON RAMOS

Dance alumnus Aaron Ramos, center, with some of his young students. Ramos says he believes part of his job is to help his students to "respect each other and each other's struggles and stories."

In the several classes he teaches at Franklin—one with all girls, one with all boys, and one mixed—Ramos is working on dances that he says "people need to see and hear," with subjects including immigration and the #MeToo movement.

Tackling these topics through dance may sound a bit advanced for 7th and 8th graders, but Ramos says his students can handle it.

"These kids may be in middle school, but

deal with a topic that's big," says Ramos. "Our demographic is mostly African American and Hispanic, and I thought, these boys need it. They're the ones who are going to be either changing what's happening or letting it continue to happen."

To create a framework for the piece, Ramos found a spoken-word poem, "Black Boys Die Easy," by Akeem Olaj, and asked the boys how they felt about it and if they thought they could



IN MEMORIAM: William Esper, founder of MFA and BFA Acting programs

JULES HELM

William Esper, founder of the MFA and BFA Acting programs here at Mason Gross and former chair of the school's Theater Department, died on January 26, 2019, in New York City, of complications from Lewy body dementia. He was 86. In addition to his wife, Suzanne, Esper is survived by his son, Michael, daughter, Shannon, and her husband, Jake, and a grandson, Otis.

In 1977, Esper, a director, actor, and stage manager in summer stock, regional theater, and off-Broadway who went on to work closely with the legendary Sanford Meisner as a teacher and director, established the MFA and BFA Professional Actor Training Programs at the school and led the programs until retiring from Rutgers in 2004.

For much of his tenure at Mason Gross, Esper also served as department chair. Under his leadership, the department reached the top ranks of acting programs in the nation. Over the years, the Mason Gross Theater Department produced a steady stream of artists who became working professionals—including actors Calista Flockhart and Kristin Davis, as well as directors, playwrights, lighting, costume, and set designers.

"Bill Esper was one the most gifted human beings I have ever encountered," Flockhart says in a written statement. "I was in awe of his talent and incredible instincts; his endless wisdom. But what I will always cherish and remember most about Bill was his gentle, easy, and compassionate smile. He cared deeply for his students. Any actor who has had the good fortune of studying under the tutelage of Bill Esper understands a common language. The many 'Esperisms' that he passed on to his students have stayed with me all of these years. I loved Bill very much and I am deeply grateful for having the honor of knowing and learning from him."

Esper's career spanned more than six decades, as a theater artist and a teacher. He served as a leading authority on the work of Meisner and was founder of the William Esper Studio in New York City, where he trained, among others: Amy Schumer, Sam Rockwell, Jennifer Beals, Peter Gallagher, Jeff Goldblum, Patricia Heaton, Christine Lahti, Gretchen Mol, Tracee Ellis Ross, David Morse, Kathy Bates, Michele Shay, Paul Sorvino, Harold Perrineau, Patricia Wettig, Richard Schiff, Timothy Olyphant, Tonya Pinkins, and Aaron Eckhart.

"Bill was so incredibly supportive after I graduated from MGSA," Rutgers theater alum and three-time Tony nominee Kevin Chamberlin says in an email. Chamberlin is currently on Broadway as the Wizard in *Wicked*. "He would show up at my dressing-room door after a show, and that feeling of terror and need for validation would flood over me, but that quickly melted away. He was like a father figure to his old students, always full of praise and pride. He could be intimidating and child-like, his wit was hysterically dry, but if you were unprepared, or worse,

inauthentic in class scenes, he could reduce you to rubble. He had high expectations of his students, and after performing a scene in class, if you heard him say 'Good. That was good,' you were on cloud nine for the rest of the day."

In addition, Esper co-authored, with former student Damon DiMarco, *The Actor's Art and Craft* and *The Actor's Guide to Creating a Character: William Esper Teaches the Meisner Technique*, published by Anchor/Random House in 2008 and 2014 respectively.

Barbara Marchant, interim chair of the Theater Department and head of acting at

Mason Gross, worked alongside Esper both at Rutgers and at the William Esper Studio.

"I vividly remember a time when Bill and I were talking about the experience of working on a Shakespearean play, and he said, 'Delving into Shakespeare is like falling into a sponge: One keeps going deeper and deeper, and the depth and breadth of the writing, the complexities of the human condition, keep unfolding,'" Marchant says. Esper instituted a semester of study in London for Rutgers theater students, which laid the groundwork for the Rutgers Conservatory at Shakespeare's Globe program.

"His brilliance never faded, even to his last days," Marchant says. "Time spent with Bill made me a witness to a continuous unfolding of knowledge from a person of profound depth. He understood that unlike any other artistic profession, acting required its practitioners to use themselves in their entirety, to withhold nothing, because acting was the most human of the arts.

"Bill was a gift given to many," she added. "I count myself one of the lucky ones having known him for 42 years."

**ANY ACTOR WHO HAS
HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE
OF STUDYING UNDER
THE TUTELAGE OF BILL ESPER
UNDERSTANDS A
COMMON LANGUAGE.**

—Calista Flockhart

ROBESON AT RUTGERS

ZIMMERLI ART MUSEUM COMMEMORATES CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF PAUL ROBESON'S RUTGERS COLLEGE GRADUATION

EXCERPTED WITH PERMISSION FROM AN ARTICLE BY CYNTHIA MEDINA THAT APPEARED ON THE RUTGERS TODAY NEWS SITE

Scholar, athlete, actor, singer, and global activist. These are the faces of Paul Robeson, whose graduation from Rutgers College in 1919 is the subject of a yearlong centennial celebration by Rutgers University–New Brunswick.

From February 9 through April 14, the university's Zimmerli Art Museum featured six portraits of Robeson highlighting the different facets of his identity. The exhibit was commissioned as part of a joint project between the university's Robeson Centennial Celebration Committee, Rutgers–New Brunswick, and the museum. Two Mason Gross alumni and a current grad student created portraits for the show: Alums Nell Irvin Painter and Layqa Nuna Yawar, and MFA student Valerie Suter.

ROBESON AS SINGER, BY LAYQA NUNA YAWAR

Layqa Nuna Yawar is a migrant artist, muralist, and educator born in Ecuador. His large-scale murals, paintings, and projects question injustice, racism, and xenophobia, while celebrating cross-cultural identity and migration to amplify the silenced narratives of people of color around the world.

"Paul Robeson's legacy is alive in the USA inside of every person of color who attends school and aims to exceed any limitations placed upon them. It is the same iron will which pushed Robeson to pursue sports, acting, and the arts that I see in the eyes of today's students across Rutgers campuses, the same students who celebrate their otherness and create radical art, poetry, and music to represent themselves with pride and love," Yawar says.



ROBESON AS GLOBAL ACTIVIST, BY NELL IRVIN PAINTER

Nell Irvin Painter is an artist, an emeritus professor of American history at Princeton University, and the author of several books, including *The History of White People*, *Sojourner Truth: A Life, A Symbol*, and *Creating Black Americans*.

She said her depiction of Robeson as a global activist mirrors aspects of her own life.

"I've admired Robeson's dedication to black and working people around the world. The project let me visualize Robeson as an activist, the dimension of him I treasured the most, though my own way of working manually and digitally, with drawing and text. I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of making the work and combining the strength of Robeson's image with the passion of his words," says Painter.



ROBESON AS SCHOLAR, BY VALERIE SUTER

Valerie Suter is an MFA student and part-time lecturer at the Mason Gross School, and the second Mason Gross student to be awarded an Eagleton Graduate Fellowship to study politics and government at the university's Eagleton Institute of Politics. Her work crosses the intersection of visual art and other forms of expression with socio-political history, government, and law.

"I am fascinated by Robeson's ability to be professional in so many different capacities. So few people have that ability," says Suter, who mentions that her painting helped visualize Robeson's deep connection to Rutgers.



YOUR BRAIN ON MUSIC

Opera star Renée Fleming comes to campus to discuss her Sound Health initiative

BY RHONETTE SMITH

During a panel discussion at Nicholas Music Center on February 26, celebrated opera singer Renée Fleming spoke about the power of music as it relates to health and the brain. Fleming's presentation, *Music and the Mind*, is inspired by her Sound Health initiative, which encourages research into the links between music and wellness. She and scientific researchers discussed how our brains process music, and how listening, performing, or creating music can contribute to better health.

Featured panelists included Daniel Schneider, director of the Rutgers Dementia Clinic and medical director of the Robert Wood Johnson Deep Brain Stimulation Clinic; Wendy Su, lead medical director of neuroscience at Novartis; and Sunil Iyengar, director of the Office of Research & Analysis at the National Endowment for the Arts.

Fleming discussed the roots of her interest in the relationship between physical health and music.

"I developed—not only performance anxiety—but somatic pain," Fleming said. "My thinking was, 'If I suffer, I'll allow myself to do well on stage.' This, in turn, got me very interested in the mind-body connection, which wasn't very much acknowledged by medicine in the early part of my career. And it got me noticing that scientists were studying music. And I thought, 'Gosh, why are they studying music? I mean, I know what I think about it.' "



COURTESY OF RENÉE FLEMING

From left, Eduardo Herrera of the Music Department, who moderated the talk; opera star Renée Fleming, Sunil Iyengar of the National Endowment for the Arts, Daniel Schneider, medical director of the Robert Wood Johnson Deep Brain Stimulation Clinic, and Wendy Su of Novartis.

When Fleming met Francis Collins, director of the National Institutes of Health, at a dinner party attended by U.S. Supreme Court Justices Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Anthony Kennedy, and Antonin Scalia, as she tells it, she said, "You know, I'm interested in all this press about neuroscience. What would you think about collaborating with the Kennedy Center?" He was enthusiastic! ...And so Sound Health, *Music and the Mind*, was born."

Many people who are part of the health research community, like Collins, are exploring the possibilities of non-pharmaceutical methods of treatment for issues like multiple sclerosis,

Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's thanks to the efforts of Fleming's initiative. Since 2017, Fleming has presented in over a dozen cities around the country in an effort to bring awareness to the discoveries being made linking music, health, and neuroscience.

"From offering relief to people suffering from dementia and strokes to Parkinson's disease and even in lowering the rising suicide rate in adolescents, music is proving to provide mental relief that has always been known in our hearts, but now science is backing it up," Fleming has said.

Designers need a combination of empathy and imagination. They need to be able to imagine others' contexts and care for others' perspectives.

—Jaqueline Thaw, director of the newly launched MFA in Design. The program welcomes its first cohort in the fall. Applications for students who wish to begin in the fall semester will be accepted through June 15, 2019.



MATT RAINEY

Taking the Leap

ART & DESIGN STUDENT AARON LEWIS HAD ZERO DANCE TRAINING— BUT HE CHOSE TO TRANSFER TO THE DANCE PROGRAM ANYWAY. ON LEWIS'S SECOND TRY, HE MADE IT

Why did you start out in visual arts?

I remember falling in love with being in the darkroom and developing 35-mm film rolls; the process always felt intimate to me.

I only stayed in the program for my first year before dropping all of my visual art courses for dance classes. I spent the following year in the School of Arts and Sciences as a BA dance major while taking photography, dance, and liberal arts classes.

Why did you make the switch?

Dancing was a way for me to connect to myself, something I felt I always understood. In the moments it would find me, I always felt liberated. Grappling with my sexuality in high school and playing sports didn't make it easy to even entertain the thought of dancing. My queerness isolated me, which led to a need to repress my individuality, ultimately halting my pursuit of dance while in high school. After my first year at Mason Gross, I remember spending my summer evenings in the studios of Nicholas Music Center. I had no clue what I was doing, and I aimlessly improvised for hours trying to make sense of my infatuation for improvisation. Spending all that time in the studios reassured me that leaving the Art & Design program was what I wanted to do. I had never taken any classes in dance prior to making my decision, but I knew dancing would allow me to be the full person I wanted to be.

When I first auditioned for the dance program, I didn't get accepted. I trained for another year, taking as many classes as I could over the summer and during the semester to be more prepared for what would be my last shot to get into the program... After my second audition, I was accepted into the dance program.

Personally, I see my switch from visual art to dance in a larger context than a change in mediums. Dancing was a part of me that I never allowed to exist. Switching mediums was a way for me to be honest with myself, and to no longer let opinions and judgment dictate the way I lived my life.

How does your background in visual arts inform your work in dance?

When creating a dance, I always think about spatial structures before developing movement. How does the physical space inform choices that are made? What needs to happen in one quarter to relate or contrast to what's interacting in another? I see creating a dance as no different than setting your focus on a camera, or laying down grids for a design. Every choice has an intention that informs the next.

DANCING WAS A PART OF ME THAT I NEVER ALLOWED TO EXIST. SWITCHING TO DANCE FROM VISUAL ART WAS A WAY FOR ME TO BE HONEST WITH MYSELF, AND TO NO LONGER LET OPINIONS AND JUDGMENT DICTATE THE WAY I LIVED MY LIFE.



Lewis's photograph from his 2015 documentary series on Onyx, a hair design studio in New Brunswick.

What was it like to enter the dance program later?

I always felt behind the eight ball, like I was playing catch up. Here I was, as a 20-year-old who just started dancing, trying to keep up with people who have been dancing since they were young. I always felt challenged, and at times intimidated. It raised the [feeling] of inadequacy, and no matter how much time and effort I put in, I felt I would never amount to anything as a dancer—no matter how much I loved it. The conflict between a love for dance and a search for liberation persists as I approach my third year dancing. It's a pendulum that pertains to life just as much as it does to the studio. While I still encounter struggles in dance, I wouldn't know how to navigate life without it.



DEAN GEORGE B. STAUFFER STEPS DOWN AFTER NEARLY TWO DECADES AT THE HELM

NEW LEA



KYO MORISHIMA

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N JUNE 30, DEAN GEORGE B. STAUFFER WILL STEP DOWN AS DEAN OF THE SCHOOL, A POSITION HE'S HELD LONGER THAN ANY OF HIS PREDECESSORS.

HERE, HE REFLECTS ON HIS TIME AT MASON GROSS—THE TRIALS, THE CHALLENGES, AND THE VICTORIES—AND EXPRESSES OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE.

What do you consider your steepest challenge over your nearly two decades as dean?

There were several, for the steepest challenge shifted over time.

The initial challenge was to change the culture of the school—from faculty-centric to student-centric, from local outlook to national and international outlook, from “can’t do” to “can do.” The faculty and staff jumped on board with these critical shifts, and changes had a tremendous positive impact on morale and the quality of the instruction.

The second challenge was to unite the school. When I arrived, there was very little interaction among the departments. There was no school-wide Executive Committee, the departments were siloed to the extent that faculty did not know one another, and there was no unifying vision for the school’s programs. Despite the fact that Mason Gross occupies 24 buildings on four campuses, we’ve been able to bring the faculty, staff, and students together through collaborative activities and projects. This is symbolized nationally by our branding efforts, which tout Mason Gross as a conservatory embracing multiple arts, and locally by our events monitors, located at key gathering spots throughout the school. The monitors present all the activities that are taking place in the departments and divisions on a daily basis. They help to create a sense of the whole.

LEADERSHIP

The third challenge—and the challenge that I will share with my successor—is gaining sufficient resources. The school's programs are humming, our faculty members are remarkably distinguished, and our students are the most select at Rutgers–New Brunswick. All the pieces are in place. But we need additional resources to remain competitive with the top-tier arts schools against which we now compete. We require additional funds for deferred maintenance, for faculty support, for program enrichment, and most of all, for student scholarships. I've been able to raise \$25 million in permanent endowment. But the school needs, and deserves, much, much more.

What was your initial impression of the school, and how has that changed? In other words, what surprised you about Mason Gross?

My initial impression of the school, when I arrived in 2000, was that it was a sleeping giant, that it had extraordinary potential waiting to be realized. That impression proved true, and we've been able to capitalize on many of the school's previously untapped assets: its wonderful location between New York City and Philadelphia, its deeply committed and passionate faculty and staff, its industrious and eager students.

What surprised me most, perhaps, was the resourcefulness of the faculty and staff. There have been many bumps along the road, especially in terms of fluctuating budgets. The faculty and staff have weathered these storms and emerged stronger with each passing challenge.

What do you feel will be our artists' biggest challenges coming out of school?

Our graduating artists are walking into a rapidly changing landscape. As is true of other fields, the arts are being transformed by technology. In earlier times, one created a career by playing recitals or presenting one-person exhibitions. Now one creates a career through social media and entrepreneurial undertakings. Our goal at Mason Gross is to create a "nimble artist," a person who is solidly trained in the traditional arts but also prepared to embrace technology and deal with a rapidly shifting environment.

We now ask all our students to take a required business course, "Pain in the Assets?: Finance and Entrepreneurship for the Arts." We also present "Social Media for the Arts." Both are available online, for ready accessibility. These courses, plus face-to-face networking classes within the programs, are important steps toward preparing our students for what's to come, be it a career in the arts or a career in a related profession. Our students do well in the real world after graduation. They adjust, and they thrive. I'm optimistic about their future.

What do you love about this place? What is especially dear to you?

This one is easy: the unbridled passion of the faculty, staff, and students for what they do. The arts are not about making money; they are not about the practical. Rather, the arts are about exploring what it means to be human, what it means to be mortal, what it means to both celebrate and lament.

When Bach published his music, he commonly stated that it was "for the enrichment of the spirit." The Mason Gross School presents more than 550 events each year—concerts, lectures, productions, exhibitions, screenings. I find that these events lift one up, and truly enrich the spirit. In our present tumultuous times, we need to be reminded that humankind is capable of brilliant things. We must remember the transcendent nature of creativity. One gets that every day, walking the halls of Mason Gross.

STAUFFER AT MASON GROSS

- 2000** Arrival, August 1, as third dean of the Mason Gross School of the Arts
- 2001** Launch of Rutgers in New York series, with a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony at Avery Fisher Hall
- 2002** Construction of Bettenbender Plaza
Launch of Mason Gross Presents initiative, with American Ballet Theater Music Director Andrea Quinn as first guest artist
First Rutgers in New York theater performance, at Broadway's Majestic Theatre, with alumna and *Sex and the City* star Kristin Davis as host
- 2003** First Rutgers in New York dance performance, at The Joyce Theater
Establishment of Rutgers Conservatory at Shakespeare's Globe Program in London
- 2004** First visual arts Rutgers in New York event, at Bill Maynes Gallery, with works by Mason Gross students and alumnus George Segal and former faculty Roy Lichtenstein
- 2005** Mason Gross ranked 19th-most-selective school in the nation, by Kaplan/Newsweek
- 2008** Establishment of the Extension Division, offering arts education to Central New Jersey children, now with more than 2,300 enrollees
- 2009** Announcement of \$7.2 million bequest from the estate of Victoria J. Mastrobuono, the largest gift in the history of the school
- 2010** Establishment of Rutgers Arts Online, offering online courses in the arts to the Rutgers and national communities, now with more than 8,000 enrollees
Rutgers Capital Campaign Kickoff performance by Rutgers Symphony Orchestra, Rutgers Kirkpatrick Choir, Rutgers University Glee Club, and Rutgers University Choir at NJPAC
- 2011** Establishment of the Tepper Family Chair in Visual Arts, the first endowed chair at Mason Gross, occupied initially by distinguished artist Catherine Murphy
Establishment of Rutgers Center for Digital Filmmaking, now the Rutgers Filmmaking Program
- 2012** Initiation of student recruitment trips to Asia, eventually covering China, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore
- 2013** Dedication of Mortensen Hall, with Shindell Choral Hall, the Kevin Goetz Studio for Theater and Dance, Café '52, and Heldrich Courtyard, through gifts from 12 major donors
- 2016** Establishment of Leora M. Sies Theater Fund, through a gift of \$4 million from Roger Sies and Andrea Wargo
Appointment of Kara Walker as second holder of Tepper Family Chair
Refurbishment of Levin Theater
- 2017** Initiation of the annual meeting of arts administrators in Big Ten Academic Alliance
Entry of Mason Gross into consortium forming the New Brunswick Performing Arts Center in downtown New Brunswick
Purchase of 1840 Thomas Appleton Pipe Organ
- 2018** Rededication of refurbished Nicholas Music Center, with gifts from the Nicholas Family, Laurie Foundation, and Rutgers College Class of '57
Establishment of Rutgers Printmaking Studio, with distinguished master printer Randy Hemminghaus as head print-maker
Establishment of Documentary Film Lab, with Academy Award-winning filmmaker Thomas Lennon as founding director
- 2019** Steps down, June 30

Simple Science

Theater faculty member teaches scientists how to improve communication through improv

BY RISA BARISCH

Andrew Abdou was in the middle of giving a presentation at the annual conference of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine in September when he noticed audience members growing restless and bored, and some even leaving.

Abdou was speaking about vision assessment after acquired brain injury, which he admits is a “very dry neuroanatomy topic,” but it’s one he’s passionate about as a rehabilitation physician and post-doctoral researcher in stroke rehabilitation.

He realized in that moment that he needed to learn ways to better tell his story.

“Improv to Improve,” a four-day workshop offered through Rutgers’ New Jersey Medical School (NJMS), and sponsored by the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, was created for scientists and researchers like Abdou who have valuable information to share, but may need a boost in their communication skills.

**“IF YOU CAN TALK ABOUT YOUR SCIENCE
IN SUCH A WAY THAT MORE PEOPLE
CAN UNDERSTAND IT...
IT WILL MEAN SOMETHING TO THEM,
AND THEY’LL WANT TO GET BEHIND IT.”**

— David Dannenfels, theater faculty member
and co-director of “Improv to Improve”

The workshop is directed by Nicholas Ponzio, a cancer immunologist and professor of pathology, immunology, and laboratory medicine at NJMS, and David Dannenfels, a director, playwright, and member of the theater faculty at Mason Gross School of the Arts.

Using storytelling and theater techniques, participants develop presentation skills to engage audiences, no matter how complicated the information. Among those who signed up this fall were an engineer, a surgeon, a biologist, and an immunologist—smart people, Dannenfels says, who don’t necessarily know how to speak publicly about what they study.

“Communication is an important part of researchers’ jobs, but most don’t train for it at all,” says Dannenfels. “The focus is more on their research—mostly they like to work with their science, and the fact that they then have to share it with somebody else can be pretty anxiety producing for a lot of them.”

To work through some of that anxiety, Dannenfels introduces role-playing and playwriting methods to organize talking points, keeping in mind that most participants have no theatrical experience.

Interactive games serve as the ice breaker, including pretending to be a time traveler who has to explain a cell phone to someone living in the 1800s, an exercise that imparted a valuable lesson to Abdou.

“The activity demanded that we explain the technology with the language and references used in that time period,” says Abdou. “It was challenging, but forced us to describe a complicated thing in simple terms. It made me realize how powerful simple explanations can be.”

Speaking simply and completely about their research isn’t just about a scientist keeping an audience’s attention—it can also be a necessity as they compete for funding, says Dannenfels.

“If you can talk about your science in such a way that more people can understand it, more people are willing to fund it,” Dannenfels says. “It will mean something to them, and they’ll want to get behind it.”



Dannenfels, left, enjoying a lighter moment in class with researchers Charlene Wetterstrand and Andrew Abdou.

The workshop, a streamlined version of a semester-long course in science communication that Ponzio and Dannenfels have twice taught at Rutgers, focuses on four goals: identifying and distilling the message, knowing your audience, minimizing scientific jargon and building a narrative, and personalizing the message.

Ponzio and Dannenfels’ efforts are an expansion of a program they attended at the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science at Stony Brook University. Alda, perhaps best known for his role in the TV series *M*A*S*H*, became interested in bettering scientists’ communication skills as a host of the PBS series *Scientific American Frontiers*.

“He discovered that a lot of the scientists on the show had a difficult time talking about their work in a way that was accessible” to general audiences, says Dannenfels, who attended a boot camp at the center. “That spurred him on to start using theater techniques, mostly improvisation, to get them to loosen up a little bit and help them in communicating.”

The workshop caught the attention of Charlene Wetterstrand, a biomedical science graduate student who is working on a thesis as the first person at Rutgers to use 3D imaging equipment so new that it does not yet exist in many other locations. She signed up for the workshop in anticipation of being asked to present her research.

“I do not have many opportunities to speak, and I wanted constructive feedback on my skills,” says Wetterstrand, who hopes to work as a medical communicator after she graduates. “The class was fun and not threatening at all, and the games helped us to relax and become comfortable with speaking in front of everyone.”

Anxiety about public speaking is a challenge that Dannenfels and Ponzio keep top of mind when teaching the workshop, and something they work to alleviate throughout each session by emphasizing practice and preparation, and offering common-sense tips like getting enough sleep and avoiding too much caffeine.

“I make the analogy of an athlete or a performer—you can practice all you want in a room by yourself, but until you get on stage, until you get up to give a lecture in front of people, it’s not the same,” says Ponzio, who spent six months at the Alda Center as a visiting professor. “It’s all about confidence. You’re the only expert in the room that knows what you’re talking about to the degree that you do, because this is what you do for a living.”

Dannenfels and Ponzio are very clear with participants that the goal of the workshop is not to “dumb down their science, but explain it in terms that a college-educated but not scientific audience can understand,” says Ponzio.

“Most scientists are just in that science-speak mode, using abbreviations and jargon,” Ponzio says. “There’s a language barrier, and if you lose an audience from the beginning, it’s hard to recapture them.”

The most compelling lesson of the workshop, according to Ponzio, is making the message personal.

“Why do you go to work every day and spend countless hours over test tubes or Petri plates?” says Ponzio. “You can’t get up there and show a table after a graph without explaining why people in the audience should care. If people can understand why it’s important to you, maybe it will point out why it should be important to them.”

In Memoriam

The Mason Gross School of the Arts community reports with great sadness the loss of alumni and friends of the school. We extend our condolences to each of their families and classmates.

All death notifications included in this issue of our magazine were submitted to the university after our last issue in the fall of 2018 and before going to press on this issue. We apologize for any omissions and ask that loved ones of deceased alumni, friends, donors to the school, faculty, and staff notify us by emailing records@ruf.rutgers.edu. Please be sure to include the full name of the deceased (and name as a student), death date, class year, and major. Thank you.

Carol Asman, BA Douglass College 1985, October 18, 2018

Barbara M. Bauer, Douglass College 1946, November 24, 2018

Charles Bihler, BA Rutgers College 1959 and EDM Graduate School of Education 1969, December 5, 2018

William Esper, Retired Faculty (Theater), January 26, 2019

Al Fielder, Friend and Donor to Mason Gross, January 31, 2019

Daniel S. Green Jr., MA 1978 (Theater Arts), June 28, 2018

Rolv Yttrehus, Retired Faculty (Music), February 4, 2018



The Last Word

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knew I was in the right place when I started traveling as the head seamstress and head dresser with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.

Not only do I love being backstage and working with the costumers, performers, and animals, but also traveling. In the future I hope to design and travel all over the world doing what I love.

”

— Student Kim Griffin,
MFA costume designer

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
33 Livingston Avenue
New Brunswick, NJ 08901



The Last Look

Enrique Figueredo's *Viajes de La Gran Flota Blanca (Voyages of the Great White Fleet)*, 1899–2019. Aluminum, wood, woodcut, and screen print on paper, paint, casters. 14 feet, 3/4 inches-by-14 feet, 3/4 inches-by-6 feet, 5 1/2 inches. Figueredo's work, along with these paintings by Jeanette Mundt and work by five other MFA artists, was on view earlier this semester at the Mason Gross Galleries. Catch them again at the Rutgers in New York MFA Exhibition April 27 through May 18 at Rong Hua Gardens.