

# Mason Gross SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

SPRING 2011 MAGAZINE



10  
A DECADE OF  
*Rutgers in  
New York*

**RUTGERS**  
Mason Gross School  
of the Arts

#### ALSO INSIDE

- Mason Gross takes the stage in Nashville, New York City and Italy
- International exchanges • Jazz for teens
- *Mason Gross Presents Summer Series*



## Taking center stage

**T**he Mason Gross School continues to evolve, academically and artistically, and our creative spaces are beginning to reflect these shifts: We are set to break ground on a Performing Arts Wing later this year, a space that will fulfill several of the school's most pressing facilities needs. The structure will project from the south side of the Nicholas Music Center and will feature more than 20,000 square feet of performing and practice space.

Meanwhile, our young artists have presented several stunning performances this year, on-campus and off: In October, the orchestra and combined choruses were featured at the university's Our Rutgers, Our Future: A Campaign for Excellence kickoff at Newark's New Jersey Performing Arts Center. Mason Gross School students accompanied Tony-winning alum Roger Bart in selections from Broadway's *The Producers*, and as a special encore they presented a stirring rendition of the alma mater. Later that week, Mr. Bart stopped by to conduct a master class with our Theater students. Enjoy video highlights of the NJPAC performances online at our newly redesigned website, [www.masongross.rutgers.edu](http://www.masongross.rutgers.edu).

In November, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, observed our Theater students during a movement class at the Rutgers Conservatory at Shakespeare's Globe in London. This immersion program allows our actors to work alongside the Globe's master teachers in one of the most important theater venues in the world.

And on **May 2**, the Dance Department will celebrate its 30th anniversary with a student program of original choreography at New York City's premier modern-dance venue, The Joyce. This celebration also marks the 10th anniversary of the *Rutgers in New York* series. Read more about the evolution of *Rutgers in New York* on page 4 of the magazine; even better, join us in Manhattan to toast our dynamic student dancers.

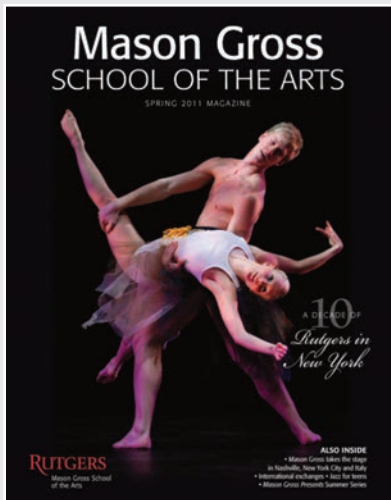
— George B. Stauffer, Dean

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ON THE COVER: Student dancers Scott Schneider and Morgan Preston are set to perform at The Joyce in New York City. PHOTO BY LARRY LEVANTI

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Cara Bufanio

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We've launched a brand-new, easy-to-use website, complete with news, features and the 411 on all things Mason Gross. Visit [masongross.rutgers.edu](http://masongross.rutgers.edu), and let us know what you think.



## GET CONNECTED

We're social—and we're networking. Follow Mason Gross School of the Arts on **Twitter**, **Facebook**, and **YouTube**, and receive daily updates about students, faculty, alumni and events taking place on and off campus. Post your own news, links, photos and video, and find other artists for potential collaborations.



*This magazine is published for alumni, faculty, students, employees, donors, and friends of the Mason Gross School of the Arts. Your letters and comments are welcome. Please write to [alumni@masongross.rutgers.edu](mailto:alumni@masongross.rutgers.edu) or to Mason Gross magazine, Mason Gross School of the Arts, 33 Livingston Ave., New Brunswick, NJ 08901.*

# 10

## We'll take Manhattan A decade of *Rutgers in New York*

Living in the shadow of a giant isn't easy—especially when that giant is New York City.

Plenty of New Jersey residents are ambivalent about the Big Apple, often oscillating between awe and resentment. After all, for 125 long years the Statue of Liberty has turned her back on Jersey City to gaze at the Manhattan skyline.

In 2001, newly installed dean George B. Stauffer established the *Rutgers in New York* performing- and fine-arts series to give Mason Gross students the chance to create, perform, exhibit and network in the heart of one of the world's leading cultural centers.

"It was a calculated strategy because I wanted Mason Gross to embrace rather than feel eclipsed by New York," Stauffer says now. "When we go to New York, it becomes in-



ANDRE COSTANTINI

if we could do it—get a respectable audience. Quite the contrary: It was packed. The performance was tremendous. One had the sense that it was a new day for culture at Rutgers."

Maestro Kynan Johns took the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra to Carnegie Hall in 2005 for a program that featured Modest

**"NO AMOUNT OF PRACTICE  
IN PRIVATE, NO AMOUNT  
OF LESSONS WITH THE BEST  
TEACHERS IN THE WORLD,  
CAN REPLACE  
THIS EXPERIENCE."**

— Min Kwon, Music professor

*Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition.*

Performing at Carnegie Hall "gives you a feeling of the real thing," Johns says. "The stakes are higher. You're out of your comfort zone. It's exciting for students to walk into a hallowed venue and *play* in it."

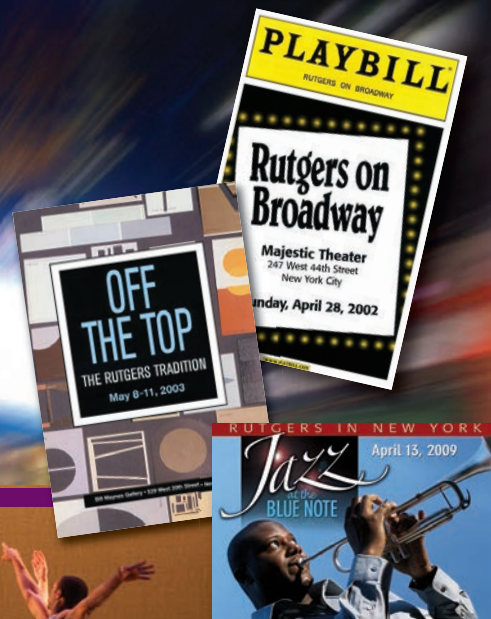
Violist Richard Montag says he relishes memories of that 2005 Carnegie Hall performance.

"I had never had such a wonderful experience in all my life as when I got the chance

to perform at Carnegie Hall," Montag says. "I remember walking on that stage for dress rehearsal that afternoon, and it felt like I was dreaming. I was thinking about all of the famous and amazing musicians that had played on the very stage on which I was standing. It was one of the most thrilling experiences in all my life. I never thought that I would say that I played at Carnegie Hall. Because of the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra, I can say that I did."

In 2002, the program brought Theater students to the Majestic Theater for *Rutgers on Broadway*, an evening hosted by alums Avery Brooks, Kristin Davis, Michael Sorvino and Terrell Tilford, as well as actor Paul Sorvino.

"The students love their school, and to share it and have the spotlight on them meant a lot to everybody," says Bill Esper, former chair of the Theater Department



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stantly clear that we can compete there. We're on the level with the very best."

The inaugural *Rutgers in New York* event took place on April 18, 2001, as the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra and combined choruses performed with pianist Ruth Laredo at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall.

"We filled the hall," Stauffer says. "It was a tremendous night for Rutgers. We didn't know



JODY SOMERS



LARRY LEVANTI



STEVE GOODMAN

who coordinated the *Rutgers on Broadway* event. "It was an acknowledgement of how important the school was. It was a big audience, and it was exciting for our students and alums to be on the Broadway stage. It was a big family hug-in."

### Empire state of mind

Other events in the series have included dance at The Alvin Ailey Citigroup Theater, the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra and Rutgers Jazz Ensemble with Paquito D'Rivera at



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Symphony Space, pianists celebrating Schumann and Chopin's 200th birthdays at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall, and several Visual Arts exhibits at downtown galleries. Next up: *Dance at The Joyce*, students performing reconstructed choreography by Merce Cunningham, as well as pieces by Benoit-Swan Pouffer of Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Doug Elkins and others, on May 2.

"The Joyce is the premier modern-dance venue," says Julia Ritter, chair of the Dance Department. "To be performing for New York audiences [stirs up] a different kind of energy."

Mason Gross dancer Myssi Robinson agrees.

"I am expecting to reach a new level of professionalism through this experience," she says. "You don't mess around when you're headed to The Joyce. Just knowing that we are going to be performing there in May has really rejuvenated the energy that I devote to my art form."

Painter Paul DeMuro, a recent MFA graduate in Visual Arts, says exhibiting his work with other Mason Gross students in the spring 2010 *Off the Map* show downtown at White Box opened up other opportunities. He says the experience provided him with higher visibility among former professors, fellow artists, buyers and gallery owners.

"More people get to see your work [in New York City]," DeMuro says. "It's a centralized thing. Other artists started to email me, people who had been introduced to my work at White Box. Networking in New York is through word-of-mouth." The results of crossing the Hudson were tangible: DeMuro says the White Box painting sold, and he began working with a Philadelphia gallery in the wake of the exhibition.

Piano professor Min Kwon studied at two renowned musical institutions: the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and The Juilliard School in New York City. She says bringing students to Weill and Steinway Hall has been critical to their musical development.


"As a young student, I was always searching for meaningful performance opportunities," she says. "Unfortunately, they were rare...As a young person studying to be a performer there is nothing more gratifying and valuable than to actually be able to prepare for a major performance and learning from that process and from the experience of performing on that stage."

Giving Mason Gross artists continued exposure in a cultural mecca has provided

an imprimatur of sorts, reminding our Jersey-based artists that the quality of their work can stand across the river.

"*Rutgers in New York* has been a great boost to the school," Dean Stauffer says. "In 10 years of performances and exhibitions, audiences have gotten over the notion that Mason Gross is provincial in any way." ☺

2011  
*Rutgers in New York*



Dance at The Joyce

7:30 p.m.  
Monday, May 2, 2011

The Joyce Theater

175 Eighth Ave., New York City  
\$25, \$15 for Rutgers alumni,  
employees, students and seniors  
732-932-7511

# Our Rutgers, Our Future: A Campaign for Excellence

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Oct. 13, 2010, marked a historic moment for Rutgers, as it publically launched a \$1 billion capital campaign, Our Rutgers, Our Future: A Campaign for Excellence, at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark.

Rutgers President Richard L. McCormick opened the evening with inspirational remarks, calling on alumni and friends alike to participate in the campaign.

"We hold Rutgers' destiny in our grasp. We can transform an outstanding public research university into a truly exceptional one. But no one will hand it to us . . . We have to earn our greatness—and by your investments in all that we seek to achieve, we will."

The festivities continued with a short performance by the Mason Gross School of the Arts, featuring the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra, the amassed university choirs, choreography by Dance faculty member Sherry Alban and a special guest appearance by Theater alumnus Roger Bart.

The concert concluded with a surprise piece that brought the crowd to its feet: a moving new arrangement of the Rutgers alma mater, *On the Banks of the Old Raritan*, by Mason Gross alumnus and current DMA candidate Michael Lucas Strother.

Following the concert, a number of prominent speakers ranging from New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie to notable Rutgers alumni such as Becky Quick (CNBC's *Squawk Box*) and Gregory Brown (president and CEO of Motorola Solutions) took the stage in support of Rutgers.

At the time of the launch, Rutgers had raised \$478 million towards the \$1 billion goal. The campaign is slated to end on June 30, 2014. 📍



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## Master Class

On Oct. 15, Tony-winning alum **Roger Bart** (*The Producers*, *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, TV's *Desperate Housewives*) stopped by Schare Recital Hall to conduct a musical-theater master class with Mason Gross Theater students. MFA III student Ashley Everage says Bart's perspective was invaluable.

"To have someone come in and say, 'This is what I did with everything I learned, and it can help you to be successful in a way you want to be successful,' is enormously encouraging," she says.



LAUREN GUILLIANO PHOTOGRAPHY

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT: Thomas A. Renyi



Campaign co-chair Thomas A. Renyi and his wife, Beth, made a \$500,000 campaign pledge to the new Performing Arts Wing that will break ground at the Mason Gross Performing Arts Center on Douglass Campus later this year. Renyi, the retired executive chair of The Bank of New York Mellon, is a Rutgers College alumnus, class of 1967, and a graduate of the Rutgers Business School, class of 1968. The Renyis have been generous to various areas within the university over the years. This gift marks their first investment in the Mason Gross School of the Arts.

*Campaign co-chair Thomas A. Renyi, center, and his wife, Beth, at left, mingle with Ralph Izzo, chairman, president and CEO of PSE&G and current chair of the Board of Governors for Rutgers.*

# Faculty and Staff News

■ We are all well aware of our talented staff and their many contributions to the school but are often less aware of those whose talents also spill over into the creative arts. Our recently hired admissions officer, **Mandy Feiler**, is one such employee. With an undergraduate degree in vocal performance from Boston University's College of Fine Arts and a master's in opera performance from the Boston Conservatory, Feiler burns the candle at both ends by regularly performing in local musical theater productions, opera, and children's theater nights and weekends, while in the daytime she busies herself by encouraging the most talented students to attend Mason Gross. Her latest credit is the Cranford Dramatic Club's production of Ken Ludwig's comedy *Moon Over Buffalo*, in which she played Rosalind. The *Westfield Leader* newspaper cited Feiler's performance as "especially terrific."

■ When Sunny gets blue: Pianist and professor **Stanley Cowell** is a jazz talent to be reckoned with, having performed internationally with his own ensembles and other major jazz artists and ensembles. His latest CD features fellow faculty members **Mike Richmond** on bass and **Victor Lewis** on drums. This is a very fine trio as it stands but one made all the more special by the addition of a promising young talent on vocals and viola as Sunny Cowell joins dad Stanley and company on the CD *Prayer for Peace*.

■ *Artistes à Suivre en 2011*: It's not often that a Mason Gross faculty member makes it into French *Vogue*, but gallery curator and professor **LaToya Ruby Frazier** did just that when she was named by French *Vogue* as one of 10 artists to look for in 2011. Frazier also had five of her video works shown recently at the Studio Museum in Harlem.

■ **Eduardo Chama** received a glowing review from *Opera News* for his performance in *Don Quichotte* at Teatro Massimo in Palermo, Italy. Playing Sancho Panza, Chama was praised for "his touchingly simple admiration for his master that illuminated every bit of pathos that Massenet intended. (Ferruccio) Furlanetto and Chama were a wholly winning, first-rate combination." A recent bequest from Virginia J. Mastrobuono

will serve to launch a new, more ambitious Opera Institute at Mason Gross. Chama's talent and international reputation will be a great lure to students wishing to come to Mason Gross to study with him and his colleagues in the program.

■ Dance faculty member **Jacqueline Reid** was the lighting designer for the winter tour of renowned dance company Flamenco Vivo Carlota Santana. The tour began at Newark's New Jersey Performing Arts Center with a sold-out performance and proceeded throughout the country before returning home for its final performance at the Anna Maria Ciccone Theatre in Paramus.

■ Photographer **Annie Hogan's** work was featured in The National Gallery of Australia, and three of her photographs from the *Silence* series were accepted into the collection. In addition, her work will be included in Anne Marsh's book *Look: Contemporary Australian Photography since 1980*. Hogan is a visiting professor in Visual Arts.

■ **David Gordon** received a Barrymore Award for Outstanding Scenic Design—his third—for *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* at the Arden Theatre in Philadelphia. He also designed the scenery for a production of *Carnival!* at the Goodspeed Opera House in Connecticut and for the world premiere of *Ghost Writer* by Michael Hollinger, also at the Arden Theatre.

■ **Raphael Ortiz** was honored as an outstanding alumnus by Columbia University's Teachers College, his alma mater, from which he received an Ed.D. (he also holds and MFA from the Pratt Institute). The award was highlighted in a Teachers College magazine article called "Musing on the Barrio." Ortiz, a Visual Arts professor and co-founder of El Museo del Barrio in New York City, was honored for his ground-breaking art work and his numerous contributions to the community.

■ *The Star-Ledger* magazine *Inside Jersey* featured Dance professor **Randy James** as one of 10 New Jersey artists making a difference in the arts. The artists were singled out for making New Jersey one of the most culturally rich and diverse states in the nation.

*Continued on next page*



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## Marlene and David Tepper endow school's first faculty chair

Rutgers College alumna Marlene A. Tepper and her husband, David A. Tepper, have pledged \$3.4 million to the Mason Gross School of the Arts. The gift stipulates \$3 million for the first endowed faculty chair at the school, in the Visual Arts Department; the remainder is earmarked for scholarships in the painting program.

"Marlene Tepper has provided the means for taking this already distinguished program to an even higher level," says George B. Stauffer, Dean of the Mason Gross School. He points to the department's long tradition at the heart of the American avant-garde, with professors George Segal, Roy Lichtenstein and Geoffrey Hendricks serving as seminal figures in the Pop Art and Fluxus movements.

Rutgers has attracted numerous top-notch scholars and teachers by establishing faculty chairs. A faculty chair may be extended to outstanding professors, within the university or from the outside, who have demonstrated consistent excellence in teaching, research and public service. The endowment may support salary as well as research projects and travel to conferences.

"The greatest significance of The Marlene and David Tepper Chair in Visual Arts may be found in its inherent good will and optimism," says Mason Gross painting professor Tom Nozkowski. "A real faith in the future of the visual arts can be located here, as well as a deep commitment to the nurturing possibilities of a studio education. Generations of young artists will feel the impact of this endowment.

"Mentoring remains the great paradigm of a studio education," he continues. "The Tepper Chair will allow the Mason Gross School to bring an artist and educator of the highest stature to work on a continuing basis with our students. If art works are gifts to the world—and we believe they are—then this gift, enabling young artists to develop their craft and make wonderful things, is doubly generous."

The Tepper gift is the latest major donation to the Rutgers University Foundation's \$1 billion fundraising campaign. This campaign, Our Rutgers, Our Future, is the most ambitious and comprehensive in the university's history.



■ Dance faculty member **John Evans'** film *50* was selected for screenings at the Rice Film Festival in Texas and the Istanbul Dance on Camera Film Festival. Turning 50, Evans used his recent sabbatical to create a film that employs movement to bring together the significant times and locales of his life from infancy to the present. **Robert "Tigger" Benford** provided the score for the film. Benford also appeared as composer and percussionist with The Washington Ballet in February.

■ Retiring Visual Arts faculty member **Martha Rosler** received a singular honor when the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum honored her with its Lifetime Achievement Award, one of many honors she has received over her career. The museum noted that she "has employed photography, video, performance, and installation, as well as an extensive series of writings to produce a trenchantly political body of work." Rosler's achievements have been noted often in these pages, and we will continue to do so as we follow her career after Mason Gross.

■ Theater faculty member **Marshall Jones** was honored by U.S. Sen. Frank Lautenberg at a special presentation at the opening of the gallery exhibit *Inheritance* at One Gallery in Newark, N.J. The event was part of a special Black History Month celebration, and Jones was honored for his leadership of the Tony Award-winning Crossroads Theatre Company, the only black theater company in New Jersey. Crossroads was co-founded by alums Ricardo Khan and L. Kenneth Richardson in 1978. ☉

## FACULTY PROFILE: Jacqueline Reid

**Jacqueline Reid** isn't keen on catching an audience swooning over her lighting designs.

"I don't want people to look [onstage] and say, 'Amazing lighting design,'" says Reid, the **Dance** Department's new technical director. "Then they miss the dance. You should not be able to pick apart a performance from the lighting."

Reid, 36, danced for more than 12 years as a child and young adult, focusing on ballet. She got her start behind the scenes working high school musical productions.

"I didn't like to sing," says Reid, who grew up primarily in Kentucky and Connecticut. "My high school only did

musicals, and I wanted to find a way to participate. That's how I hung around with theater people. It stuck."

Reid's passion for the stage fed her undergraduate work at Tufts University in Massachusetts, where she earned a bachelor's degree in drama and English. And that passion remained steady throughout her time at Northwestern University in Illinois, where she graduated with a master's of fine arts degree in lighting and scenic design.

Reid has worked extensively in various arenas for more than a decade. She served as resident lighting assistant for the Los Angeles Opera as well as resident lighting designer for The Actors' Gang theater company in Culver City, Calif.

Julia Ritter, chair of the Dance Department, says she and her colleagues were attracted to Reid's experiences in theater and dance.

"She approaches lighting dance from both the dramatic and physical perspective, which is crucial for designing contemporary dance," Ritter says. "Her design work is informed by her own training as a dancer, so she understands kinesthetically the three-dimensionality of the body moving through space and time. I find her work to be sophisticated and smart."

But Reid says she was forced to "fail spectacularly before I figured out dance. I didn't get it necessarily. Theater is more about seeing the face; dance is about the sculptural quality of the body. We're making the music visual," she adds, quoting ballet pioneer George Balanchine: "See the music, hear the dance."

Reid is keyed in to the emotional resonance of light. With slight shifts in lighting, "you can make something look fat or thin,



LARRY LEVANTI

make a person look sweet or evil, make an audience look over there," she says, glancing toward stage left to emphasize her point.

But Reid recognizes the fundamental distinction between her work and that of, say, a graphic designer or a painter: guaranteed transience.

"I love that [the work] disappears," she says. "There's something beautiful, ephemeral about [lighting design] that you create something you can't put your hands on. Because [lighting] isn't solid and still in front of you, people don't realize how powerful it can be." ☉

# Naming Opportunities

Be a part of the show: Funding artists, performances, or art exhibits at the Mason Gross School of the Arts offers creative ways to help advance the school while being philanthropic. Consider lending your name to one of our cultural events featuring up-and-coming young artists as well as established names in the fields of music, dance, visual arts and theater. Or better yet, consider giving to a scholarship and help support one of our students directly.

Many investment opportunities are available at the Mason Gross School of the Arts. Examples include:



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## STUDENT AID AND PROGRAM SUPPORT

### Scholarship Fund: Gifts of any size

- Scholarship support for gifted and deserving students is among the school's most critical needs. Competition among top conservatories for the most talented students is especially keen, and Mason Gross, in addition to presenting program excellence, must be able to offer student financial support that is on par with or competitive with peer institutions.
- Naming opportunities begin at \$5,000 for annual scholarships.
- Endowments begin at \$50,000 (\$10,000 a year for five years).

### Academic Excellence: Gifts of any size

- When opportunities arise, gifts to Academic Excellence provide the school with the ability to enhance academic programs, present special concerts and productions, and mount special exhibitions.
- Assists the school in offering community programs and maintaining facilities.
- Advances the school by covering expenses that are not supported by general state funds.

## PERFORMANCE AND EXHIBITION SUPPORT

### Platinum Circle: \$100,000

- Rutgers Theater Company Season – seven main-stage theater productions, approximately 50 individual performances.
- Rutgers Conservatory at Shakespeare's Globe – a prestigious one-year training experience for our students with performances in London and the United States.
- *Mason Gross Presents* series combines the educational and community-outreach missions of Mason Gross through special performances featuring prominent guest artists.
- *Rutgers in New York* series – four to five performances and exhibitions per year in renowned New York City arts venues.



COURTESY RUTGERS CONSERVATORY AT SHAKESPEARE'S GLOBE

### Gold Circle: \$50,000

- Opera Institute at Rutgers – four performances of a main-stage opera production, highly popular with a broad audience.
- Rutgers Symphony Orchestra Series – approximately six concerts per year, including a holiday pops performance.
- Rutgers Jazz Ensemble Series – four jazz concerts featuring prominent faculty as well as guest artists such as Paquito D'Rivera and Frank Sinatra Jr.



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### Silver Circle: \$25,000

- Emerging Artist Production – a world-premiere play by one of our MFA playwrights, under the guidance of Lee Blessing, Head of Playwriting Program at Mason Gross.
- Brodsky Center for Innovative Editions Annual Exhibition – ranked among the top six print centers in the country.
- Extension Division Summer Camps – servicing 200 middle and high school students, their parents, and extended family.

### Dean's Circle: \$10,000

- Single production with multiple performances such as *DancePlus* concert or a theater production.
- Visual Arts Project Room Exhibition featuring a prominent outside artist including Pepón Osorio.
- Extension Division Recital Weekend – children enrolled in the Mason Gross Preparatory School perform for Extension Division families and local community.

### Producer's Circle: \$5,000

- A single performance or exhibition during the regular presenting season.

### Artist's Circle: \$2,500

- Co-sponsorship of single performance or exhibition during the regular presenting season.

For facility namings, estate gifts, or to discuss any of the above opportunities, please call the Mason Gross School of the Arts Development Office at 732-932-9360, ext. 514.

# Alumni and Student News

■ Rutgers is celebrating and formally honoring the art and achievements of Mason Gross alumna **Joan Snyder** by inducting her into the Hall of Distinguished Alumni, the highest award the university bestows. Once inducted, Snyder will join fellow Mason Gross alums **Avery Brooks, Calista Flockhart, Kristin Davis, George Segal** and **William Mastrosimone**. Coinciding with this honor, the university's Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum has mounted a major retrospective of Snyder's print work, on view through May 29, 2011. Curated by Marilyn Symmes, *Dancing with the Dark: Joan Snyder Prints 1963-2010* demonstrates the extraordinary range and power of her work. At the same time, the Mary H. Dana Women Artists series, the highly influential program founded by Snyder in 1971, is presenting *Joan Snyder/Intimate Works 1965-2010* at the Mabel Smith Douglass Library Galleries through June 5, 2011. Interestingly, at the time of the Women Artists Series founding, Associate Dean **Dennis Benson** worked at the university libraries and was responsible for the pickup and delivery of the work of the participating artists in the early years of the program.

■ **Department of Dance students** presented a performance of Taipei National Uni-

versity of the Arts Professor Xiao-xiong Zhang's choreography *Butterfly Dreams* at Studio 110, Nicholas Music Center, on Feb. 14, 2011.

■ **University DanceWorks** is the student touring company of the Dance Department. We recently reported on the university-wide award, the Ernest E. McMahon Award Public Service, that University DanceWorks received. We are happy to say they continue their good work, having recently performed for the students at Piscataway Regional Day School. The school is the regional center for educating special-needs students in Middlesex County. Principal Toba Knobel gave the performance a rave review, noting: "It was great to observe our students' smiling faces and their enthusiastic audience participation." DanceWorks students capped off the performance by engaging the students in participatory dance movements.

■ Theater alumna **Tara Platt** has co-written a book with her husband, actor Yuri Lowenthal, titled *Voice-Over Voice: What It's Like Behind the Mic*. A winner of the National Indie Excellence Award and a Pinnacle Book Award, *Voice-Over Voice* is a guide to professional voice-over techniques and tips on how to break into the industry based on Platt and Lowenthal's 12-plus years in the business working for clients such as Disney,



WAYNE CRANS

## Keeping score

Michael Lucas Strother, a Mason Gross grad and a DMA candidate, is known among the faculty as "the John Williams of Mason Gross." The affectionate nickname is a nod to Strother's gift for crafting lush, cinematic pieces in the vein of the composer of scores for *Jaws*, the *Star Wars* saga and the Indiana Jones films, among others.

In October, Strother applied his magic to a performance by the Rutgers Symphony Orchestra, Rutgers University Glee Club, and the Voorhees, Kirkpatrick and Rutgers University choirs at Newark's New Jersey Performing Arts Center. Strother provided an epic arrangement of the Rutgers alma mater, aka *On the Banks of the Old Raritan*, for the launch of the university's \$1 billion capital campaign, Our Rutgers, Our Future: A Campaign for Excellence. Strother reportedly hoped to craft a bold score that would marshal a full orchestra and chorus—more than 250 voices in total—to complement the performance of Carl Orff's grand *Carmina Burana*, which concluded the concert.

Judging from the audience's sustained ovation, Strother succeeded.

Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, Coca-Cola, and McDonald's.

■ **Robert Ridgell**, second-year DMA student and organist and director of music education at Trinity Wall Street church, was recently featured on ABC television when the station broadcast *Lessons and Carols*, the Christmas concert from Trinity Church. Ridgell will be leaving his post at Trinity in July to take over as director of music at the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Saint Paul, Minn. With a seating capacity of more than 3,000, Saint Paul's is one of the largest Roman Catholic churches in the world.

■ This is Captain America calling: Theater alum **Sebastian Stan** will take on the role of Captain America's sidekick, Bucky Barnes, in the soon-to-be-released *Captain America: The First Avenger*. The role follows closely upon Stan's performance in the Oscar-nominated movie *Black Swan*, in which he played the role of Andrew.

*Continued on next page*

## ALUMNI HOLIDAY RECEPTION 2010



LARRY LEVANTI

(Above left) From left, John Keller, Anjanette Hall and Katie Renn. (Above right) From left, Julia Ritter, Tony Bordonaro, Pamela Sommer, Avianna Perez and Shannon MacDowell.

Alums, faculty, staff and friends of Mason Gross noshed on guacamole, tossed back pumpkin-soup shooters, surveyed the twinkling lights of Midtown Manhattan and made merry at the Alumni Holiday Reception, which took place on Monday, Dec. 13, 2010, at The Joan Weill Center for Dance, part of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Join us for the 2011 bash in New York City. Look for updates at [masongross.rutgers.edu](http://masongross.rutgers.edu).

## Alumni and Student News

Continued from page 11

■ Alum **Meagan Woods** and her dance company performed *Dance Within the Art* at the university's Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum in New Brunswick on March 2, 2011.

■ Visual Arts alumna **Ellen Lesperance** received the 2010 Betty Bowen Award from the Seattle Art Museum, which carries with it an unrestricted cash prize of \$15,000. In addition, Lesperance received the MacDowell Colony Artist-in-Residence Award and a faculty development grant from Pacific Northwest College of Art. Lesperance's recent work pays homage to women in direct action human-rights campaigns by using gouache and graphite to create patterns that reflect the ideologies of different movements. 🌀



MEG FRANTZ



### DEAN'S CHOICE

Photographer Corrine Cuozzo and painter Diana Whitener, BFA Visual Arts students, are recipients of the annual Dean's Choice honor; their work will be displayed in the Dean's office until the fall semester. Cuozzo is seen at left with Dean George B. Stauffer, while Whitener is shown above with her father, Scott Whitener, vice-chair of the Music Department, and the dean.

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: Francesca Fiore

You heard it here first: **Francesca Fiore** will never be a starving artist.

Fiore, a double major in **Visual Arts** and English, is hungry to travel, create and communicate, via her installations, playwriting and poetry, and in occasional performances with the Livingston Theatre Company. Last semester, Fiore starred as Queenie the 1920s show girl in LTC's production of Andrew Lipka's bawdy musical *The Wild Party*.

"Everything that's creative is something I want to do," says Fiore, 20, a junior who is spending the spring semester in Rome. "... I'm so restless. I want to be in galleries now. I'm trying to calm myself and not rush too much ... but I really want to pursue it fully."

The daughter of a graphic designer and an Italian professor says she began painting at age 12—she and her parents fibbed about her age to gain admittance to an art class—and proceeded to "make horrible paintings for many years."

And Rutgers? Rutgers was not on Fiore's agenda. Her maternal grandfather, Joseph Laggini,

was a Rutgers Italian professor as well as an associate dean in the School of Arts and Sciences. Her mother, father and several other relatives are Rutgers grads.

"I looked at Rutgers grudgingly," Fiore says. "I took a tour because my mom's a professor and makes me do these things."

"I loved it," she says. "I loved the feeling I got when I came here... I felt at home with the idea of my grandfather [having been] here."

Since Fiore's arrival at Rutgers, she has been painting on storm doors, mirrors and shower doors, installing life-sized painted figures in contextual spaces, on beds and in rooms she assembles like stage sets.

"These are my characters," says Fiore, who has been writing plays.

Richard Baker, Fiore's painting professor sophomore year, describes her as "remarkably driven. She was something of an octopus, not just taking on one challenge... She brought in everything and the kitchen sink. She challenged the idea of what a painting could be, and I think that challenged other [students] about the limits of painting."

Singing and acting onstage have become passions too.

"I decided I had to do theater once a year because it makes me happy," says Fiore, a former member of the University Choir who also had a role in last year's LTC production of *Sweeney Todd*. "... It's so exciting to be someone else for a while."

When asked about her artistic influences, Fiore readily points to conceptual artist Jenny Holzer's provocative mix of text and imagery and Louise Bourgeois' voyeuristic, large-scale installations. But Fiore's maternal grandmother, suffering from late-stage Alzheimer's, clearly informs much of her work.

Fiore points to a series of drawings of her grandmother mounted on Plexiglas.

"Glass is a tangible presence, but because it's transparent, at the same time it represents an absence," she explains. As for her grandmother: "She is a person who is present, in that she exists, but also absent because she has no memory or personality."

Fiore says she takes notes when she visits her grandmother in a nearby assisted-living facility; sometimes she records video of her grandmother for art projects. She writes plays about her grandmother and has created installations featuring her grandmother's image.

"If you don't make art about it, you're going to cry about it," Fiore reasons. "Instead of thinking of her as your grandmother, you think of her as a potential piece of art... Because she has such a debilitating disease, it's so hard to watch it happen."

But Fiore's grief has only fueled her devotion to making a creative life for herself. She says all this cross-pollination feels right.

"As an artist you have to be able to stretch yourself out over different forms," Fiore insists. "Art can exist in a cemetery. Plays can exist in a gallery."

"There's no limit to what is possible," she continues. "... I'm trying to keep the doors open now while I'm allowed to." 🌀



ROB KOWALSKI

Fiore as Queenie in Livingston Theatre Company's 2010 production of *The Wild Party*.



Untitled, 2010, oil on Plexiglas and bed, by Francesca Fiore.

COURTESY FRANCESCA FIORE

# Theater students earn their wings

A dozen BFA IV Theater students brought some holiday cheer to the Parker at Stonegate Assisted Living Residence in Highland Park, N.J., on Saturday, Dec. 18, 2010, as they performed the radio play *It's a Wonderful Life*.

The actors, students in Susan Schuld's Advanced Voice and Speech class, stationed themselves at microphones to recreate Christmas Eve in Bedford Falls. They assumed multiple roles in the drama,

**A VOLUNTEER PERFORMANCE  
"IS A WAY TO CONTINUE TO  
CONNECT TO THE MEANINGFUL-  
NESS [OF THEIR ART] AND  
NOT JUST THE BUSINESS."**

— Professor Susan Schuld

based on the 1946 Frank Capra film about a beleaguered George Bailey who plans to commit suicide, and Clarence, the angel who earns his wings by showing Bailey all the good he has done.

Jasmine Carmichael played Josephine, the superintendent of the angels, and Zuzu, Bailey's daughter. She says the response to *It's a Wonderful Life* was gratifying—so gratifying, in fact, that she says the performance seemed to nullify the age gap between the young performers and the residents.

"We really connected with the audience," Carmichael says. "The residents were so appreciative and loving and enjoyed it so much . . . There was a sense of

love and happiness and that we were giving a gift that was appreciated."

Schuld, voice and speech instructor for the Mason Gross School's BFA Theater program, says she plans to make an annual ritual out of performing at the nursing, assisted living and adult daycare facility. Schuld says she has long hoped to nudge students to employ their skills for social action.

"The real, true way to get gratification is by offering services through civic engagement," she says. "That's where a true sense of gratification and fulfillment comes from. I want them to know they can go and offer a show any time. [Volunteering] gets them off of being self-centered and gets their awareness of how else they can be serving."

Schuld says the audience responded generously: As she tells it, one woman grabbed student Breanna Foister's (Mary Bailey) hand and said, "I love you!"; another asked Foster and her co-star, Tim Giles (George Bailey), how much practice went into their kiss.

But Schuld says she believes the



SUSAN SCHULD

BFA IV student Justin Kruger with an assisted-living resident after a performance of *It's a Wonderful Life*.

performance benefited the students every bit as much as it did the Parker Memorial Home residents.

"It's really important to find out how to fill back up [as an actor] while they're being rejected left and right. Then they don't give up," Schuld says. A volunteer performance "is a way to continue to connect to the meaningfulness [of their art] and not just the business." ©



LARRY LEVANTI

Kudos to the **Scarlet Knights Jazz Trombones**, winners of the prestigious International Trombone Association 2011 Kai Winding Jazz Trombone Ensemble Competition. The group will travel to Nashville, Tenn., June 22-25 to accept the award. They will also perform at the International Trombone Workshop.

## Stay In Touch!

**New job? New home?**

If you have changed your address, phone number, email address, business information or name, we want to know.

Please contact us at:

[alumni@masongross.rutgers.edu](mailto:alumni@masongross.rutgers.edu)

Send new contact information along with your full name (include your surname from your student days), major and class year.

# Prince for a day: Prince Philip visits Mason Gross Theater students

Mason Gross Theater students at Rutgers Conservatory at Shakespeare's Globe in London met Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, on Nov. 10, 2010.

Prince Philip is a patron of the Shakespeare Globe Trust, an educational charity associated with the theater. Prince Philip was present to officially open the Globe's Sackler Studios, a converted warehouse featuring studios, offices and spaces for students and actors in Southeast London.

Prince Philip also observed a movement class and spoke with the 13 BFA III acting students from Rutgers. They are spending a year in an immersion program treading the boards alongside master theater artists in a venue committed to William Shakespeare's work and the legendary 16th-century playhouse for which he wrote.

Company manager and Mason Gross alum Jennifer Monaco, who was present at the event, praises the prince's affability.

"He walks in the room, and he is just another human being," Monaco says.

Prince Philip may have come off like an Everyman, but his arrival did not go unnoticed



AMY MURRELL

Prince Philip visits Rutgers BFA III students at the Globe Theater's new Sackler Studios in London.

among the Mason Gross School actors.

Prince Philip's presence "created a buzz that made us as a class want to step up," student Sam Roberts says.

"The students wanted to do a good job," Monaco adds. "They knew they'd been asked

to participate in a very special day. They are part of the Globe Education department and wanted to do them proud."

Besides, Monaco says, "How often does an American university student get to hang out with royalty?"

## Kirkpatrick Chapel

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LARRY LEVANTI

In mid-February, Dance students engaged in a weeklong exchange with Chi-Fang Chao, a professor of dance at the Taipei National University of the Arts in Taiwan and an expert in indigenous dance forms of Taiwan. Professor Chao, along with two of her students, conducted intensive workshops, sharing indigenous movement and song with our young artists. This visit represented the first portion of an artistic exchange that Mason Gross dean George B. Stauffer recently established with the Taipei National University of the Arts.

## Mason Gross establishes Opera Institute at Rutgers

The Mason Gross School of the Arts is expanding its present opera program, hiring additional faculty and broadening its performance slate to establish the new Opera Institute at Rutgers. The first class of Opera Institute students is expected to enter in fall 2011.

The school is establishing the institute as a result of a multi-million-dollar bequest to Mason Gross from the estate of 1977 University College alumna Victoria J. Mastrobuono. Mastrobuono, a longtime opera buff and a patron of the Mason Gross School's performances and exhibits, specifically earmarked \$1.7 million for opera scholarships and the opera program in general. Her gift is the largest ever given to the Mason Gross School of the Arts. Mastrobuono died in 2009.

The school also has been the recipient of the David M. Reeves and John V. Moore Jr. Fund for Opera at Rutgers and other gifts earmarked specifically for opera production, programs and scholarships.

Mastrobuono's gift to Rutgers "will serve as an opportunity to... build a nationally competitive Opera Institute," says Pamela Gilmore, director and producer of the opera program. Gilmore says the scholarship allotment allows the program to "attract a higher level of talent to Rutgers." The other monies will finance the hiring of additional faculty in



LARRY LEVANTI

voice and acting, as well as the production of two main-stage operas per year.

Music Department chair Antonius Bittmann says the Mastrobuono bequest allows for a "much fuller and more specific tailoring of the program. There's a more specific focus on opera and skills [associated with the art]: acting, movement, language studies for singers."

George B. Stauffer, Dean of the Mason Gross School, says the Opera Institute will move the school forward in a number of crucial ways.

"We have wanted to build an opera program for many years," he says. "There's tremendous interest and enthusiasm for opera at Rutgers and in American culture, and we've had requests from many students for a program that focuses fully on opera training. The Mastrobuono gift is serving as a springboard to launch the institute, which will bring together existing



FRANK PAUL

## Regina Heldrich

Douglass College alumna Regina Heldrich grew up in New York City surrounded by the arts, playing piano and making frequent trips to the Museum of Modern Art. As a young girl, she attended a downtown performance of Giuseppe Verdi's opera *La Traviata*, and she was hooked.

Heldrich went on to work as a chemist for the pharmaceutical and healthcare giant Johnson & Johnson.

But Heldrich continued to treasure the arts, especially opera and theater. She says attending a 2010 performance of U.S. composer Carlisle Floyd's opera *Susannah* along with a pre-show dinner here at Mason Gross was inspiring. Heldrich says she also appreciates not having to travel to New York City to experience opera.

To that end, Heldrich recently established the Regina B. Heldrich Endowed Scholarship to support scholarships for undergraduate and graduate Music majors studying voice or classical instrumental performance.

Heldrich, also an avid gardener, says she will finance a courtyard outside the school's planned Performing Arts Wing on the Douglass Campus. She has donated \$500,000 to develop and maintain the Regina B. Heldrich Courtyard. The intimate outdoor space will allow faculty, staff, students, performers and patrons to relax and interact, fostering a sense of community and creative collaboration.

resources for opera and allow us to create new courses and hire appropriate faculty to teach them. We anticipate bringing distinguished opera artists to Rutgers to work with our students."

Stauffer confirms that the school is in negotiations with Nancy Gustafson, renowned soprano and general manager for the annual Castleton Festival in Virginia, to forge an alliance with the festival. Such an alliance would allow Mason Gross opera students to sing in the festival's productions. Conductor Lorin Maazel is the festival's co-founder and artistic director. ●

# Lollar named director of Brodsky Center

Thomas W. Lollar, a scholar of fine art prints, arts administrator and internationally recognized ceramist, was named director of the Brodsky Center for Innovative Editions in December. He has assumed the reins of Rutgers' noted print center from its namesake and founding director, Judith K. Brodsky, who is retiring.

For 22 years, Lollar was director of visual arts and the List Print Program at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts in New York City. He is also an instructor in the Arts and Humanities Department at Teachers College of Columbia University, and has taught at the Parsons School of Design.

As an artist, Lollar is a renowned ceramist whose unique, hand-built clay murals are represented around the world in public, corporate and private collections.

He is a graduate of Western Michigan University with a bachelor of fine arts degree in sculpture and ceramics and a master's in ceramics and art history. Lollar has been a visiting artist and scholar at the

LOLLAR IS A RENOWNED CERAMIST WHOSE UNIQUE, HAND-BUILT CLAY MURALS ARE REPRESENTED IN COLLECTIONS AROUND THE WORLD

American Academy in Rome, a Fellow at the Salzburg Seminar and is the recipient of several artistic awards.

In the print world, Lollar has extended his reputation as a valued resource to artists



LARRY LEVANTI

and nonprofit organizations through the Benefit Print Project, which he co-founded last year with Paul Limperopulos, his former assistant and curator at the List Print Program at Lincoln Center. The project coordinates the creation of limited-edition prints to raise money for nonprofit arts organizations. ☉



## CHARITABLE IRA ROLLOVER

The transfer must come directly from a taxpayer's plan administrator to the charity and may count toward the taxpayer's required minimum distribution. Please consult with your financial or legal advisor to determine how this legislation impacts your own personal situation.

### THE CHARITABLE IRA ROLLOVER IS BACK

and has been extended through December 31, 2011. Taxpayers 70 1/2 and older may transfer up to \$100,000 directly from their IRA to a charity, free of federal tax. (Some states may tax transfers. Please check with your advisor).

For more information on supporting your desired focus at Rutgers with an IRA gift, please call 888-782-3666 or visit [support.rutgers.edu/IRA](http://support.rutgers.edu/IRA).

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Rutgers University Foundation is the fundraising arm of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.



# Rutgers Summer Jazz Institute aims to create ‘improvisers for life’

Mason Gross faculty member Conrad Herwig says he believes the school “has a responsibility to serve the New Jersey community and give opportunities to our young people.”

As a result, Herwig has served as director of the Mason Gross Extension Division’s Rutgers Summer Jazz Institute since 2009. Institute participants study with the esteemed Mason Gross jazz faculty, experience campus life and immerse themselves in the world of jazz.

The week opens with a field trip to the Jazz Standard in New York City for barbecued food and a performance by the Grammy-winning Mingus Big Band.

“The student musicians are exposed to the electric atmosphere of the New York jazz scene,” Herwig says. “They see how cutting-edge jazz improvisers handle themselves on the bandstand.”

Herwig, a trombone player and a charter member of the Mingus legacy groups, says that “the Mingus Big Band musicians are energized and uplifted, as well. They have conveyed to me how gratifying it is to see young musicians so hungry to learn about jazz, soaking up the performance and information like sponges. The institute participants are able to ask questions and in-

teract in a way that would not be possible in the traditional classroom.”

The young musicians spend an intense four days training with faculty before heading to yet another club, this time for a gig of their own, at Cecil’s Jazz Club in West Orange.

And on the institute’s final night, participants take the stage at Nicholas Music Center on the Douglass Campus for a collaboration with big bands and chamber ensembles.

“What is really amazing is to hear student musicians who had never improvised confidently take solos under the pressure of the concert spotlight,” Herwig says of the final night’s concert. “...It’s incredible how much musical growth and maturity develops in one short week.”

But for Herwig, the institute is ultimately about the quest to create what he calls “improvisers for life.” Herwig says he “hopes to instill and reinforce the creative spirit in all that they pursue. Jazz combines creativity, spontaneity, individual performance, teamwork, and nonlinear thinking; these components lead to success and innovation in life. And for those students who do go on to musical careers, we are offering a solid foundation and framework for them to build their artistic personalities and skills.”



LARRY LEVANTI

Registration runs through **June 1** for all Mason Gross Extension Division summer camps.

732-932-8618  
[masongross.rutgers.edu/extension](http://masongross.rutgers.edu/extension)

*Thanks to the generous support of the **Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation**, this summer’s institute is accessible to talented young musicians who would otherwise not have the resources to participate.*

**Scholarship application deadline is May 15, 2011.**

# Robert E. Mortensen pledges \$10k matching donation to support Glee Club’s travels

Mason Gross Advancement Council Chair and former Rutgers University Glee Club member Robert E. Mortensen has pledged a \$10,000 matching donation to support the Glee Club’s May 2011 travels to Italy. In addition to Mortensen’s annual pledge, he will match, dollar-for-dollar, gifts designated to the Glee Club. The Glee Club is slated to sing the Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica in Vatican City and to perform in Florence, Salerno, and Venice, among other Italian cities.

To ensure that all students participate, regardless of financial concerns, the Glee Club subsidizes the cost of international tours, paying approximately half the cost of the tour for each vocalist.

Without the support of loyal alumni, donors, and friends, this kind of international tour would be impossible. Consider supporting the young artists of the Rutgers University Glee Club by making a tax-deductible gift to the international tour. With Mortensen’s help, your gift will mean twice as much.

To make a gift, please contact the Office of Development at 732-932-9360, ext. 514, or mail your donation to the Office of Development, Mason Gross School of the Arts, 33 Livingston Ave., New Brunswick, NJ 08901. Please make checks payable to the *Rutgers University Foundation*.



COURTESY RUTGERS UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION



CARA BUFANIO

# Q & A with Cara McPartland Bufanio, Visual Arts alum and Advancement Council member

*Cara Bufanio is a creative director at Med-Force, a pharmaceutical/medical education company, and has run her own graphic-design business for more than 10 years. She joined the Mason Gross Advancement Council in September 2010 and has been an active member of the Rutgers Alumni Association for more than two decades.*

## **Q: How did Mason Gross change you as an artist and as a person?**

**A:** Mason Gross made me an artist first and gave me the tools and encouragement to become a great graphic designer. Observation, self-expression, creativity, inspiration, composition—these are the cornerstones, whether you're a fine artist or a "commercial" artist. Mason Gross taught me to value all types of art, for what art says, does, makes me feel, or teaches me. I love the creative process. Having worked and studied so closely with artists in other disciplines, I also developed a greater appreciation and a lifelong love of dance, theater and music.

## **Q: What do you hope to accomplish on the Mason Gross Advancement Council?**

**A:** I hope to encourage others to support our students and contribute to our scholarship funds. I'd also like to organize programs or events to bring arts alumni back to campus, and I'm looking forward to building a stronger relationship between Mason Gross and the alumni band. Being a visual artist, however, I'd personally like to see more art on campus and would like to explore ways to make that happen. For instance, the Visitors Center on Busch Campus is a beautiful building, but to me it's "unfinished" without an art installation or sculpture on the lawn in front of it.

## **Q: What's your favorite grease truck sandwich?**

**A:** Believe it or not, I've never actually eaten a "fat" sandwich. I've been to the grease trucks countless times, but I usually just get cheese fries. I'm really a "boli" fan at heart. I have Stuff Yer Face on speed dial, and most times when I'm on campus for meetings I'll get an order of bolis to go to bring home to the family.



*When the Rutgers block "R" New Jersey license became available, Bufanio was the first to purchase a plate and display her Rutgers pride.*

NICK ROMANENKO

## **Q: Which instrument did you play in the band?**

**A:** I was in the color guard in the marching band—a flag twirler. Truth be told, I originally joined the marching band because it was the easiest way to get to all the home football games and to take some road trips. Unlike cheerleaders or band instrumentalists, color guard members are actually able to watch the whole game. My motive may have originally been football, but I truly loved being in the band. So many good times and good people! That's why I continued to be active with the Alumni Band after graduation.

## **Q: Every year there is a football game between the Rutgers University Glee Club and the Rutgers University Marching Scarlet Knights. Any bets on who will win this year's game?**

**A:** The marching band has to make a comeback this year! They've lost the "Soup Bowl" the past three years in a row. My goal is to have a bigger alumni band presence to cheer the team on this year.

## **Q: You were a Visual Arts student. Did you ever consider majoring in Music?**

**A:** Here's the ugly truth: I can't read a single note of music or play an instrument. I once pretended to play the tuba. The Rutgers tuba line was participating in "Tuba Christmas" in Rockefeller Center, but they didn't have enough tuba players to spell out "Rutgers" on the bells, so I offered to help out. I love music though, and I made sure that both of my children learned to play. Learning to play piano is on my "bucket list." Deep down there's a jazz pianist inside me, I just know it.

## **Q: What advice would you give an incoming/current student?**

**A:** Make art. Always ask for and accept criticism of your work. Make art. Challenge yourself to do something every semester that's out of your comfort zone. Don't limit yourself with perceived limitations of your own abilities. Make art. Pay attention in art history. Make art. Take a business or marketing class (or better yet, take both). Most important... make art! 🎨

## STUDENT VOICES: Robert Burke

Mason Gross BFA **Dance** student **Robert Burke** was among the dancers who collaborated with visiting artists Banu Ogan of the famed Merce Cunningham Dance Company and Benoit-Swan Pouffer, artistic director of Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet; the subsequent performances were part of the 2010 DancePlus Fall program. Both pieces will be presented at the Dance Department's Rutgers in New York performance on May 2, 2011, at The Joyce. Here, Burke, a sophomore, shares his thoughts about the Mason Gross collaboration with two illustrious artists:

I had the honor of experiencing both the game of chance that exemplifies Merce Cunningham's work and the contemporary edginess of Benoit-Swan Pouffer's style.

I have become a stronger, clearer, more intelligent dancer by working with Banu Ogan on the Cunningham *MiniEvent*, a piece created with excerpts from Cunningham's repertoire. With the death of Cunningham in 2009, it was a chance to learn the Cunningham technique from someone who had worked with him directly before the company is disbanded. Ogan challenged the cast to break old habits and to work through the distinctive aesthetic approach and technique that Cunningham developed.

While working on a new piece called *for all of us* with Pouffer, I found myself adher-

ing much more closely to my own natural inclinations as a dancer. The work was still a challenge; I found myself working intensely and rigorously as Pouffer pushed us to dig deeper into the movement by reminding us that we will never know the piece perfectly. Pouffer's rehearsal process led me to understand that it is an amazing gift to realize that each performance is a chance to learn from the imperfections that we find along the way, and to constantly improve.

My experience with these two iconic works has helped me to grow into not only a virtuosic dancer but also a more sensitive artist. Both Ogan and Pouffer are remarkable leaders who have imparted knowledge about the professional field of dance that will stay with us for the rest of our artistic lives.



Robert Burke performing at DancePlus Fall.

LARRY LEVANTI



BRIAN SCOTT CAMPBELL

### Visual Arts scholarships

Lilly A. Novak admired the arts, and in her youth she enjoyed painting. Novak's interests informed her choice to support the work of fledgling artists by instituting a bequest at Mason Gross School of the Arts. That bequest finances the Frank P. and Lilly A. Novak Endowed Scholarship. Full-time graduate/undergraduate students in Visual Arts will receive scholarships based on artistic and academic merit, as well as financial need. Recipients will be known as Frank P. and Lilly A. Novak Scholars.

Novak also designated a portion of her estate to establish and maintain the Frank P. and Lilly A. Novak Sculpture Garden. The garden will be constructed in front of the Livingston Art Building on Livingston Campus.

If you would like to establish a bequest, please contact the Office of Development at 732-932-9360, ext. 514.

### 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.

Carl L. Andreasen, Dramatic Art/Theater Art, 1962, EdM, 9/4/10

Rosalind Bigelow Burkett, Art, 1937, BA, 4/14/10

Patrick A. Conlon, Art Education, 1975, BA, 8/24/10

Jennie Kozinsky Dean, Music, 1947, BA, 4/13/10

Ronald J. Gall, Music Education, 1966, BA, 1/16/11

M. Elizabeth Stackhouse Graham, Music, 1938, BA, 11/24/10

Susan Kleckner, Art, 1997, MFA, 7/7/10

Betty B. McLure, Music, 1940, BA, 11/24/10

Arlene Roza Pachter, Art, 1998, MFA, 12/06/10

Isabella W. Pfeil, Music, 1931, BA, 10/24/10

Sylvia Lazan Ponemon, Music, 1940, BA, 11/23/10

Anthony D. Reedus, Music, 2005, BA, 11/16/08

Alice M. Saltman, Art, 1929, BA, 9/02/10

Lorna Christ Smith, Music, 1936, BA, 9/4/10

Lila S. Waddington, Music, 1951, BA, 8/2/10

All death notifications included in this issue of our magazine were submitted to the university after our last issue in fall 2010 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 us at [records@winants.rutgers.edu](mailto:records@winants.rutgers.edu). Please be sure to include the full name of the deceased (and name as a student, if it was different), death date, class year, and major. Thank you.

## Mason Gross Presents: Summer Series 2011

### SUMMER SERIES

### *2011 Schedule of Events*

**Wednesday, July 6 8 p.m.**

**THEATER:** Bill Bowers:  
*Moving Pictures* one-man show  
– Nicholas Music Center

**Wednesday, July 13 8 p.m.**

**MUSIC:** The Diaz/Nelson Project  
– Nicholas Music Center

**Wednesday, July 20 8 p.m.**

**DANCE:** Jennifer Muller/*The Works*  
– Victoria J. Mastrobuono Theater

**Wednesday, July 27 8 p.m.**

**MUSIC:** Rutgers Jazz Faculty  
– Nicholas Music Center



CAROL ROSEGG

Nicholas Music Center  
and Victoria J. Mastrobuono Theater  
are part of the Mason Gross  
Performing Arts Center at  
85 George St., New Brunswick  
Admission is **FREE**; tickets may be  
assigned at time of entry

More information is available by calling 732-932-7511  
or by visiting [masongross.rutgers.edu](http://masongross.rutgers.edu)

*Mason Gross Presents* is sponsored by the Office of the Executive Vice President  
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