



*The National Society of Arts & Letters*

# *President's Newsletter*

## *September 2012*

Dear and Valued NSAL Members,

It's incredible to think that we are entering the 69<sup>th</sup> season of NSAL as a national organization. We all have a lot to be proud of. Thank you everyone for the part you play in fulfilling our mission to help promising young artists as they begin their careers.

### **Printmaking First Place Award Increased!**

The Nicholson/Nielsen Fund Trustees have great news to announce. After careful deliberation, they have decided to increase our National First Place award to \$15,000. This increase will be an enormous help to our printmaking winner since purchasing a press is a significant expense. In addition, I believe strongly that a \$15,000 award will attract top quality contestants and judges as well as more media attention, thus increasing NSAL's credibility and visibility in the art world.

The amounts of the second and third place awards will be determined by the Trustees in late April when they have a clearer idea of the available funds. As always, NSAL members are encouraged to make donations to fund these two additional prizes. Your generosity makes a huge difference in the amount of money we are able to give each year to our winners. Donations will be bundled to create more substantial second and third place prizes, and will be recognized in the Awards Banquet program. Gifts of \$1,000 or more will be acknowledged both in print and when the awards are announced in the following way: "NSAL Second and Third Place Awards are made possible through the generosity of xxxx in honor of xxxx, xxxx in memory of xxxx, and so forth. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me: Catriona, 434 953-6780.

### **Chapter Fundraising**

It has come to my attention that some chapters believe that it would violate their tax-free 501(c)(3) status if they sponsored a fundraiser. That is absolutely not the case. It is well understood by the IRS that fundraisers are a vital source of income for nonprofit organizations, and such activity in no way jeopardizes your standing.

If you are considering putting on a chapter fundraiser (and I hope you are), think about the possibility of doing something that raises money for the chapter as well as directly benefits young artists. For example, you might find a well-known, celebrity pianist to teach a piano master class to 4 or 5 young musicians and charge admission.

## 2013 Conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### Dates:

- Tuesday, 14 – Sunday, 19 May 2013
- First contestant activity: Friday, May 17th
- Monday, May 20: Optional day trip to Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural masterpiece, Fallingwater

### ***Pittsburgh: It's closer than you think!***

For 12 of our chapters it's a day's drive or less to get to Pittsburgh (see chart below). So mark your calendars, get a group of chapter friends together, pile into a car, and enjoy a road trip to the 2013 National Conference.



Pittsburgh  
Wood block print by Jim Rugg  
[www.JimRugg.com](http://www.JimRugg.com)

The Pittsburgh hospitality team (Charles Altman, Norm Brown, and Carole Kamin) are planning fun places to go and lots of unusual things to do. In addition, to better serve the chapters, NSAL National will be offering free courses on foundation grant writing and website management. Bring your chapter members who want to learn those skills, and let's have a great time in Pittsburgh working and playing together and enjoying our wonderful contestants.

### NSAL CHAPTERS A DAY'S DRIVE OR LESS TO PITTSBURGH

To Sheraton Hotel, 300 West Station Square Drive  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Chapter City	Driving Time
Chautauqua, NY	2 hours, 45 minutes
Lexington, KY	6 hours, 45 minutes
Ann Arbor, MI	5 hours
Bloomington, IN	7 hours, 15 minutes
Urbana, IL	8 hours, 15 minutes
Evanston, IL	8 hours, 30 minutes
Morristown, NJ	6 hours, 5 minutes
Marietta, OH	2 hours, 45 minutes
Parkersburg, WV	3 hours
St. Louis, MO	10 hours, 30 minutes
Charlottesville, VA	5 hours, 45 minutes
Washington, DC	4 hours, 45 minutes

## News of our Winners

### Allan Washington (2012 Musical Theater First Place):



Allan K. Washington

**Allan** is a star about keeping in touch with the Charlottesville (Virginia/North Carolina) Chapter. He sent the following email to the Chapter's Immediate Past President, Pat Davis:

**From:** Allan Washington

**Date:** August 24, 2012 10:01:50 AM EDT

**To:** [patdav5@gmail.com](mailto:patdav5@gmail.com), [corkysablin@gmail.com](mailto:corkysablin@gmail.com)

**Subject:** End of Summer Update

Hello Friends in the Arts!

I was recently reminded in a huge way of NSAL yesterday because we had a wonderful visitor come to the Opera. **Jessye Norman** came to see our production of *Lost in the*

*Stars* and came backstage after the performance to wish us congratulations and allow us a chance to talk to her. Before she arrived, I was looking her up on the internet and I saw that **she won the NSAL Competition at the exact same time in her career that I did** - her junior year of undergrad! I took that as a sign to write to you with great gratitude for everything you have done for me this far and express to you how much I can't wait to be reunited at some point whether artistically or otherwise!



Jessye Norman,  
soprano, 1966 NSAL  
Washington, DC  
Chapter winner

I also wanted to just give you a little update about the things that have been going on here at Glimmerglass. The festival is really winding down because we are finished here this Saturday. So many things have happened for me here, but I won't bore you with all of the frivolous details; I'll just give you the highlight reel :)

This summer has really been something special because it is my second season here at Glimmerglass, so the staff and creative team know me and my work pretty well, so I was able to be showcased incredibly well. *The Music Man* was a true gem in my career thus far. I had the chance to work with an incredible Broadway director/choreographer Marcia Milgrom Dodge and be exposed to an aspect of work that I may be interested in pursuing in the future. The caliber of talent that the festival brought in to play some supporting roles in that production was really awe-inspiring and I was able to be mentored by some Broadway and fierce regional theatre actors! Every performance felt fresh and alive; it was such a blessing to be a part of it all.

*Aida* was wonderful as well. Any chance to sing in a grand opera, I will take in a heart beat because of this experience. I also got to dance in a style that I feel so comfortable in, which is always a treat!

*Lost in the Stars* was filled with new experiences for me across the board. First of all, the piece in general is unlike anything I've ever done before because it really toes the line between being a musical and an opera. That was very cool to explore in such a classical setting with such classically trained singers. I was also covering/understudying THREE big roles in the production, which I have never done. I actually had to do a 'cover run' a couple of weeks ago in which I was talking to myself for most of the show because I was covering characters who are in scenes together. I wish you could have seen it! I also have had to go on for one of the characters because a cast member was sent back to South Africa for reasons still unknown. That was the first time I have ever had to go on as an understudy. My first performance in the role was a couple of weeks ago, and yesterday's performance was the first time I felt really comfortable in the role. That was really a good experience for me as I assume I may be understudying quite a bit in the early stages of my career.

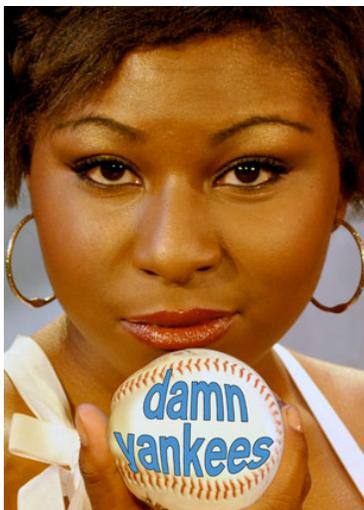
A really cool aspect about the festival here is the opportunity to audition for some managers and other opera companies around the company. For the musical theatre people, though, it really doesn't come to much of an end because opera managers and companies usually aren't interested in hiring us. This year, though, I was approached by a manager who is interested in possibly developing a relationship with me! I have a meeting with him on Monday. I will definitely keep you updated about that.

I'd love to hear about all that's going on with the Society and any updates about this year's competition. I will stay in touch with you about shows I am doing at school. I think you will be pleasantly surprised to hear of the season and the roles I have upcoming this year, but I will save those for a later date :)

I really do hope all is well, and I hope to hear from you all so very soon.

Best,  
Allan K. Washington

**Charnette Batey (2012 Musical Theater second):**



This summer **Charnette Batey** starred as Lola in the Indiana Festival Theatre production of *Damn Yankees* directed by NSAL member **George Pinney**.

Charnette Batey looking beautiful and alluring in the publicity poster for the Indiana Festival Theatre production of *Damn Yankees*

**Chloe Jenna Dolandis, (2012 Musical Theater sixth place)** also is keeping in touch. She writes:

Greetings from North Carolina!

I wanted to take the time to update you on my recent artistic activities and achievements -- what a whirlwind spring and summer this year!

In April, my band and I were finalists in the Florida Grammy Showcase in Orlando and performed to a wonderful crowd of Recording Academy members and music enthusiasts. Then, in May, I was honored to take home one of the career awards at the national NSAL Musical Theatre competition. (Thank you for the opportunity to travel to El Paso with our distinguished and absolutely lovely Boca Raton/East Florida chapter members.) ***With the help of the funds I received from the national prize, I went to Los Angeles for a month and a half to explore career opportunities.*** [editor's italics] During my time there, I got to sing at a jazz club with famed actor Jeff Goldblum (of *Jurassic Park* and *The Fly*), played at The House of Blues -- among several other venues, and co-wrote songs with several new friends, including Duane Neilsson (he wrote the music for the TV show *Everybody Hates Chris*, *Dr. Phil*, and more) and Dane Diamond Errisson (Neil Diamond's godson -- THANK YOU, **Dorinda Spahr** [NSAL Boca member] for introducing us!)

Trustworthy music professionals I met in L.A. recommended that I attend the Durango Songwriter's Expo. from Oct. 4-7 in Boulder, CO. I would like to formally request the amount of \$299 from NSAL to cover the cost of my attendance. At Durango, I'll meet with music supervisors, producers, and other musicians. This expo is a great opportunity to expose my songs to some top tier industry professionals.

For more info. check out: <http://www.durango-songwriters-expo.com/support-files/DurangoEXPOco12.pdf>

If you haven't had a chance to listen to my original music, you can hear it on [www.ChloeDolandis.com](http://www.ChloeDolandis.com) (the album went to #19 on the itunes jazz album downloads last year!) I'll be performing with The Jazz Ratz at FAU on Sept. 30 at 3PM, at the University Theatre as well as Oct. 28 at 3PM. It would be wonderful to see you there.

Now, I'm en route to Nashville where I'll be performing, auditioning, writing more music, and having meetings with some really talented folks.

Hope to see y'all again, soon!

With gratitude,

Chloe

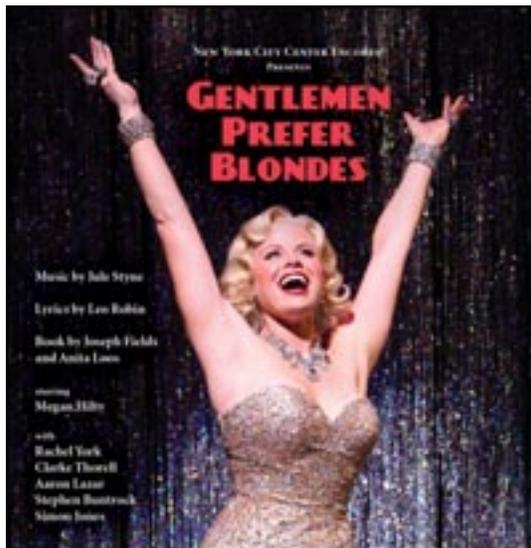
**Megan Hilty (2004 Musical Theater First Place):**

As long as she has an active career, there will be a lot to report on **Megan Hilty**. Here are some highlights:

**Jeanne Tasse** shared the following blurb about **Megan** that she found in the August issue of OPERA NEWS: "But the big draw of this production [*Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*] was Megan Hilty, who has earned an army of fans for her role on TV's *Smash*. As the unapologetically gold-digging Lorelei Lee, she made a wonderful, self-mocking anthem out of 'Little Girl from Little Rock.' Hilty maintained an easy light touch throughout the evening, until she got to the show's most famous number, 'Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend,' which she delivered with a kind of brassy anger that seemed out of synch with the rest of her characterization." [Note: Ben Brantley, theater critic for the *New York Times*, loved Megan's rendition of "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend." cte]

For all of us who missed seeing **Megan** live in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, we can enjoy the cast recording. It is available on Amazon at [http://www.amazon.com/Gentlemen-Prefer-Blondes-Encores-Recording/dp/B008BCHADE/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=music&ie=UTF8&qid=1346498585&sr=1-1&keywords=gentlemen+prefer+blondes](http://www.amazon.com/Gentlemen-Prefer-Blondes-Encores-Recording/dp/B008BCHADE/ref=sr_1_1?s=music&ie=UTF8&qid=1346498585&sr=1-1&keywords=gentlemen+prefer+blondes)

Cover of the Encore cast recording of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* featuring Megan.



On November 10th, 2012, **Megan** will be the special guest at the *PANDORA Unforgettable Holiday Moments on Ice* at the Grand Canyon University Arena in Phoenix, Arizona. The entire show, featuring Olympic champion Brian Boitano, U.S. Champion skater Ashley Wagner and 2011 US champion Alissa Czisny as well as Manheim Steamroller will be broadcast on NBC during the Thanksgiving weekend on November 25th from 4 - 6 p.m. eastern standard time. Make a note on your calendar to watch that.

In addition, **Megan** has signed a recording deal with Sony Masterworks and is working on her first solo album. She also is playing the role of China Princess in the animated feature *Dorothy of Oz* which is scheduled for release in 2013. Here's a link to a video of her talking about the role: <http://broadwayworld.com/video/play.php?colid=209034> (be patient through the brief ads up front before the video of Megan begins).

Season 2 of NBC television's hit show *Smash* starring **Megan**, Debra Messing, Angelica

Huston, Katharine McPhee, and Christian Borle is currently being filmed and will begin broadcasting in mid-season. Watch your television listings. If you haven't seen Season 1, catch up now on Netflix: [http://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/Smash/70196148?strkid=234902703\\_1\\_0&strackid=59ee557db0a314ec\\_1\\_srl&trkid=222336](http://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/Smash/70196148?strkid=234902703_1_0&strackid=59ee557db0a314ec_1_srl&trkid=222336). It's a very entertaining show, and the plot builds on itself, so you want to start at the beginning.

One sign that you've "arrived" in the world of celebrity is to be featured in a candid photograph in *US Magazine*. **Megan** has arrived. She was pictured in a July issue of the magazine:

**US Magazine featured photograph with caption:**



**Ice Cream Break:** SMASH Star Megan Hilty cools off from the heat wave with some Starbucks Java Chip Frappuccino ice cream in New York City. July 10, 2012

Birmingham Chapter President **Mildred Allen Taub** reports that this summer she had the pleasure of seeing **Kyra Wharton**, Birmingham Chapter's Musical Theater Competition winner, in the role of Pilar in the Red Mountain Theatre's outstanding production of *Legally Blonde, The Musical* starring Bailey Hanks. "Kyra was excellent," wrote Mildred.

**Frank Wright**, Washington DC Chapter scholarship winner in art in 1950 with renewals in 1952 and 1953 writes the following about **Richard K. Miller**, the Washington DC Chapter scholarship winner in art in 1948:

"I have some sad news about my good friend Dick Miller. He died in New York last week. He was 82 years old. He had been painting steadily and well, but while he was in the hospital for an unknown malady, he contracted pneumonia.

"**Dorothy Stabell** [founder of the Washington, DC Chapter and daughter of NSAL founder Mollie Davis Nicholson] will remember Dick well. Dick was not only a wonderful painter but also an actor with a fine singing voice. He lived in New York as I am sure your records show. He understudied for Fagan in *Oliver*. His wife, Terry, sang in the chorus of the Metropolitan Opera for several decades. Since the early 1950's, we stayed in touch and we would have dinner together, along with Dominic Spadaro - the NSAL winner in 1949 - whenever Dick and Terry would come to town. All three of us kept abreast of each other's careers and cheered each other on for six decades. I am sure that you have a complete record on Dick but I would like to inform the members

and add this to your file. His wife Terry would love to hear from NSAL. Terry's address is: Apartment 8-C 222 West 83rd Street. New York, NY 10024 for those of you who would like to send your condolences."

Online obituary: MILLER--Richard K., (Dick), 82, Artist, passed away August 29th. Survived by his wife, Terry Miller. Visitation Wednesday, September 5th from 2-4 and 7-9pm at Riverside Memorial Chapel, 180 West 76th Street.

Richard K. Miller was born in Fairmont, WV in 1930. A painter, he studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and earned his degree from American University. His abstractions are rich in color and texture and have a strong structural component to them, often basing his compositions on still life works. He lived and worked in New York City.

On a happier note:

**Dennis Organ** and **Ruth Albright** made pig noses to wear to a musical version of *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* which starred all four of the NSAL Bloomington Chapter award winners. Directed by NSAL member **Chad Rabinovitz** of the Bloomington Playwrights Project, the production starred NSAL Bloomington Chapter winners **Chloe Williamson**, **Charnette Batey** (2012 National Second Place winner), **Taylor Crousore**, **Hana Slevin**, and **Matt Birdsong**.



Charnette Batey in the Bloomington Playwrights' production of *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs*

**Lauren Strother**, the Little Rock Chapter's finalist for the 2011 Dance:



Lauren Strother, Executive Director at Ballet Arkansas and NSAL Dance: Choreography

Choreography competition, is the new executive director of Ballet Arkansas. In a feature article about her in *Inviting Arkansas* magazine, Lauren said, "It is my hope that we will start to build an audience of both traditional and non-traditional dance enthusiasts. Our professional dancers are as much athletes as they are artists, and I know that most people in Arkansas relate to athletes and athletics." Lauren plans to improve the organization's artistic quality and to develop new partnerships with other arts, community and educational organizations.

**Membership Chair for the Little Rock Chapter, take note. She sounds like an excellent candidate for NSAL membership.**

## Members' News

**George Pinney** and his colleague Terry LaBolt spent time this summer in Akron, Ohio working on a new musical that will be in development for the next 14 months. *Tuning In*, about the Golden Age of radio, will make its debut in September 2013 at the University of Akron. George is director and choreographer, and Terry is musical director. This summer George also directed and choreographed the Indiana Festival Theatre production of *Damn Yankees*, starring this year's 2nd place musical theater winner **Charnette Batey**.

**Ray Fellman** was music director for *String*, a new musical about a workaholic Greek god. The production was developed this summer at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Music Theater Conference in Waterford, Connecticut.

**Jonathan Michaelsen** directed the Indiana Festival Theatre's summer production of *Taming of the Shrew*.

**Adam Noble** played the lead role of Petruchio in Michaelsen's "Shrew" production at Indiana Festival Theatre, and took the part of Boris in the same theater's production of *You Can't Take it With You*.

**Jean-Louis Haguenaer** spent time in France to record the complete works for voice and piano by French composer Claude Debussy. He used Debussy's own piano for the recordings. This 4-disc collection will be the first of its kind, and will be accompanied by a book. The project was made possible by an Indiana University New Frontiers grant.

That's all for now. Check out my blog at <http://joyofgardens.com/>. I welcome conversations regarding my postings. Just click on the pale gray voice bubble at the top right of each post. NSAL business has distracted me from posting recently, but please keep checking.

Catriona



NSAL National President

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