

EQUITY NEWS

ACTORS' EQUITY: STANDING UP FOR OUR MEMBERS

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2015 / Volume 100 / Number 8

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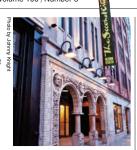
Second City Triumphantly Returns Home

By Sean F. Taylor, Central Regional Director

n September 17, 2015, Second City returned to its Mainstage Theater — three weeks after an extra-alarm fire swept through Piper's Alley, the complex housing the company's offices and theaters. The fire severely damaged the Second City offices and smoke damage required carpet, wiring and lighting to be replaced. While no one from Second City was injured in the blaze, four firefighters suffered injuries as they worked to extinguish it.

With those injured in mind, the first performance back in the mainstage theater was a private performance for Chicago firefighters, and Second City continued to collect donations at each show through the end of September for the Chicago Fire Department's Gold Badge Society, which was founded in 1991 to assist the families of firefighters and paramedics killed in the line of duty.

Andrew Alexander, CEO/Executive Producer of The Second City said in a release before reopening, "We are grateful for everyone's support and assistance — the City of Chicago, the Chicago Fire Department, The Hartford, Piper's Alley, all of the contractors, the Chicago improv and theater community and all of our friends and neighbors that have helped us through this process. In an unfortunate



circumstance, we have been very fortunate."

The most heartwarming part of this terrible situation was how the Chicago community came together to help. Second City staff has been working out of the backroom at Chicago's Corcoran's Bar and Grill, located across the street from the theater. Rehearsals were held off-site at a number of different locations: local theaters, dance studios, museums, universities and churches all played host to the temporarily homeless comedy troupes. Second City's touring company performed at the Steppenwolf Theatre, while the Second City Mainstage revue Panic on Cloud 9 performed at Victory Gardens Theater (both Equity) for one weekend.

Actors' Equity Association was glad to see the mainstage back in action when the company resumed performances — especially of the reopening of the UP Comedy Club on Sept. 22 and the e.t.c. stage on Sept. 24.

Central Regional Director Sean F. Taylor credits Business Representative Cynthia Hanks and Contract Associate Katey Schwartz for helping members and colleagues at Second City during this difficult time.

Taylor said, "Second City is such an integral part of our Equity family and we are glad they are back home."

Equity Reaches Tentative Agreement with Broadway League for New Production Contract

Results of Ratification Vote Expected in October

ctors' Equity
Association and The
Broadway League
reached a tentative agreement
for a new, four-year Production
Contract. The National Council,
which reviewed the terms and
conditions of the new
agreement at a special Council
meeting, voted "yes" to
recommend ratification.

At press time, the ratification ballot had been sent electronically to members in good standing who have worked under the Production Contract at least once between June 30. 2008, and September 27, 2015. The results of the vote are expected in late October and, if ratified, the contract will be retroactive to September 28th of this year. This is the first time that a ratification vote will be conducted exclusively online and will save the union tens of thousands of dollars, which can be used instead for member

This negotiation resulted in another historic move: For the first time, a negotiation with one bargaining partner will benefit the entire membership. For the four (4) years of the new agreement (through September, 2019), the eligibility requirements to qualify for health coverage under the Equity-League Health Fund will be reduced for all members working on an Equity contract not just those working under the Production Contract. If the new agreement is ratified, the eligibility for six (6) months of coverage will be reduced to 11 work weeks (down from 12 weeks) and the eligibility for 12 months of coverage will be reduced to 19 weeks (down from 20 weeks). These changes could make it possible for hundreds of additional Equity members across the country to qualify for health coverage.

The new agreement calls for a 12.57% increase in minimum salaries on Broadway and full production tours, with increases ranging from 6% to 12% on increments. Tiered tours will see increases in salary and increment payments with salary increases of 10.04% over the life of the contract. This

compares to the 6.12% increase over the course of the 2008-2011 agreement, which included a wage freeze in the first year for tiered tours.

Per Diem for full production tours will increase by 6.25% and by 9.7% for tiered tours. For the first time, tiered tour per diems will be equal to full production tours by the end of this agreement.

In another first, the negotiating team achieved payment for all touring stage managers who work load-ins on the day after the day off. Stage managers will receive an additional \$150 — a 400% increase over what is currently paid.

The negotiating team, which had heard from members through surveys, focus groups and meetings, made quality of life issues a high priority. The new agreement requires access to physical therapy beginning on the first day in the theater for shows with extensive choreography or a raked stage. Another new rule states that

(continued on page 2)



union members marched together in New York City. To read the full story, turn to page 6.

#EquityWorks Theater News & Notes

Benicia, CA - Benicia Old Town Theatre Group joins the Equity family operating on the MBAT agreement for its fall production of *Two Trains Running*.

Cincinnati, OH - Ensemble Theater marks 30 years beginning in 2016.

Houston, TX - Stark Naked Theatre has signed on to the transitional use of the SPT Agreement (CAT-1), providing health insurance the first year and utilizing at least five times the minimum required Equity contracts for its transitional phase.

Houston,TX - Theatre Under the Stars' WCLO Tour of *The Little Mermaid* resulted in 19 Equity contracts and 170 work weeks.

Lincolnshire, IL - Marriott
Theatre celebrates its 40th
anniversary in 2015 and adds a
sixth mainstage production,
increasing the total member

workweeks to 65 for the 2016 season.

Long Beach, CA - Musical Theatre West renewed its agreement (LOA to WCLO) with an increase of nine contracts for 2015-16 season.

Los Angeles, CA - Geffen Playhouse marks its 20th anniversary this season.

Los Angeles, CA - Two new (continued on page 3)

Equity's Cabaret Contract Extended

Actors' Equity Association's Council has voted to extend the Cabaret Agreement through October 16, 2016. This one-year extension includes a 3% salary increase to all weekly and per performance rates. There will be an increase from \$148 to \$155 for the lower health rate if the weekly contractual salary is below \$400. The higher health rate of \$180 for salaries above \$400 remains the same. All other terms from the current agreement will remain the same. The rate sheets will be available shortly on our website at actorsequity.org.

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Area Liaison **Hotline system**

Call 877-AEA-1913

Equity has a national toll-free hotline system for members who live in area liaison and office cities. The number is 877-AEA-1913 (honoring the year of Equity's founding). Each Area Liaison city has its own extension, where members can access news and information in their region.

(1) Dial 877-AEA-1913

(2) Dial your city extension:

- 811 Atlanta
- 812 Austin/San Antonio
- 813 Boston
- 814 Buffalo/Rochester
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(continued from page 1) should a schedule change result in 15 or more consecutive performances, there cannot be a 9-show week either before or after the consecutive performances (even with a day off in between). Because housing on the road is one of the top priorities for Equity members, the union was able to get agreement from The Broadway League that a series of labor/management discussions will be held, and will include general managers, company managers and third party vendors (such as Road Rebel and Road Concierge). Equity was also able to stave off the League's proposal to eliminate the actors' and stage

The Broadway League put forth a strong case that cast changes every six months among the chorus put added stress on the remaining cast members and the production overall. Equity achieved language in response to a new one-year chorus rider that provides opportunities for chorus members to get out of the contract for principal work in specific situations. Equity also negotiated a retention bonus and increment payments so that a member who signs a one-year rider and stays the full year will earn 50% more than a member who signs two six-month riders.

mangers' housing choice.

Other achievements in the new agreement include compensation increases for overtime travel, rehearsal overtime and the six-month use fee for both television and radio and internet commercials. For the second consecutive contract, Equity has made improvements that will make sick leave available to more members.

The negotiating team, under the guidance of co-chairs First Vice President Paige Price and Third Vice President Ira Mont, employed a strategy that was focused and dedicated to achieving a strong contract for the members. Together, they approached the negotiations as problem solvers looking to address the issues that members face every day in their working lives. The negotiating team included members who have worked under the contract and staff who administer the Production Contract. Mary McColl, Executive Director, served as the lead negotiator.

Production Contract | An Equity Tradition Turns 65

or many Equity members who have worked on the Broadway stage, the magical Gypsy Robe ceremony is synonymous with opening night. A theatrical staple, the



The original Gypsy Robe.

Robe and its extraordinary ritual was born on October 12, 1950.

"Actors love traditions and backstage superstitions," said David Westphal, Equity Business Representative and official "Keeper of the Robe." And according to Westphal, the Robe, for many members means "realizing that all of your hard work in rehearsals and previews has finally brought you to this point - and you are now part of Broadway history."

The ritual of the Gypsy Robe takes place every opening night on the stage of every Broadway musical with a chorus. It began in 1950 when Bill Bradley, in the chorus of Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, persuaded Florence Baum, a chorus member, to let him have her dressing gown. Jokingly, Bradley sent the gown to a friend in the chorus of Call Me Madam on opening night with the addition of a pinned cabbage rose; the Robe was

then sent to the chorus of Guys and Dolls on its opening night. Rather quickly, the passing of the gown became custom.

Now, with added show-centric eccentricities, once a chorus member receives the coveted Robe, he or she must run around the ensemble counter-clockwise three times followed by a visit to each dressing room to fully "bless" the show before its momentous curtain.

More than that, however, the Robe symbolizes an historical lesson of showcasing and

on stage," said Betsy Struxness, who garnered the Robe for the first time this year with the opening of Hamilton.

"On one of the most exciting, important nights that happen in theater, everybody stops to recognize a hard working chorus person," said six-time Robe recipient Lisa B. Gaida.

For those who have earned the Robe or witnessed one of the treasured ceremonies, the Gypsy Robe continues to represent 65 years of Broadway, and theater,



recognizing talented chorus performers. Chita Rivera and . Casey Nicholaw, just to name two, have donned the artistic

"I believe it's important for Broadway actors to be made aware of the contribution of ensemble members - as they add a lot of texture, detail and support to the stories being told

Tediously, happily decorated with the shows that have played the Great White Way, each gown tells a story of every Broadway season with memories of the crew and Equity members that played those stages knitted into the fabric.

"To me," said Struxness, "the Gypsy Robe symbolizes hard work, diligence and legacy."

Administrative Fees Raised for First Time in 35 Years

or the first time in more than 35 years, there will be nominal increases to the union's administrative fees. Administrative fees are applied to items like a replacement card or a returned check (a full listing of our administrative fees and the new rates are listed at the end of the article). In reviewing Equity's administrative fees, it was noted that in some cases the fee being charged was actually less than the cost of providing the service. Since

these administrative fees are not applicable to most members, the overwhelming majority of the membership will not be affected by these increases. The increases will go into effect December 1. 2015.

As part of our due diligence, and to keep our fees comparable, we researched administrative fees (such as late payments, reinstatement and others) at our sister entertainment unions and unions in other industries. We also looked at fees that banks charge

for returned checks to ensure that any increase would cover the actual cost to Equity.

The schedule of administrative fees as of December 1, 2015, is as follows:

Late Payment Fee: \$15 in the first month of each 6-month billing period and \$4 each subsequent

> Reinstatement Fee: \$100 Name Change Fee: \$30 Replacement Card Fee: \$5 Returned Check Fee: \$40

Share a special memory you've experienced while performing for children.

JONATHAN BUTLER-DUPLESSIS

"I had just finished the premiere of Mr. Chickee's Funny Money at Chicago Children's Theatre, and I

was picking up my last bit of paperwork. Enclosed were pictures that children who had seen the show had drawn of their favorite scenes. To have tangible proof that our story inspired the imagination of each child and all in different ways — meant the world to me."

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Equity Works

(continued from page 1) productions will operate on the HAT Agreement: Carrie, The Musical and Cash on Delivery.

New York, NY - The Off-Broadway business department added two new companies under NYC-LOA: Ripple Effect Artists and Axis Theatre Company, both with the goal of producing as full Equity companies moving forward.

Philadelphia - Lantern Theatre, which produces a fiveshow season, will be transitioning to an SPT-10, increasing contracts salaries by 50% for the next four years, effective October 6.

Sacramento, CA -Sacramento Theatre Co. renewed its Letter of Agreement for the 2015-16 season with two additional actor contracts and 3% salary increase.

Santa Barbara, CA -**Ensemble Theatre Company** renewed its agreement for the 2015-16 season with one additional ASM contract and 3% salary increase.

Sun Valley, ID - Company of Fools has signed on to the transitional use of the SPT Agreement (CAT-5), providing health insurance the first year and tripling the minimum required Equity contracts for its transitional phase.

Waxahachie, TX - American Musical Theatre Company has signed on to the transitional use of the SPT Agreement (CAT-5), providing health insurance the first year and doubling the minimum required Equity contracts for its transitional phase.

New York, NY - The Off-Broadway department has over 80 productions in performance between October 1 and November

Tracking What You're Owed

After a lengthy inquiry with producers. Eastern Region staff collected over \$46k in back salary and pension contributions on behalf of nine members who did not receive new contract employment offers from a 2012 staged reading that resulted in a special touring

An the end of season review of LORT contract records, Equity staff identified underpaid vacation accrual for 15 members in the Eastern Region resulting in over \$2,000 in individual back pay.

After standard review of LORT contracts on behalf of members. Eastern staff recovered \$200 for rehearsal time and \$1,000 in per for

one member.

As a result of deputy reporting, Equity staff recovered an additional \$110.50 in payments to the members working on a COST contract in the Eastern Region due to a longer show running time which impeded on the required 1.5 hours of rest time between matinee and evening performances.

Equity staff recovered over \$550 in missing increment payments and five missing health week payments for three seasonal ANTC companies.

Equity staff discovered an NYC-LOA company never paid a member for additional duties as fight captain and was able to recover over \$300 in back pay for the 11-week contract period.

After a phone call from a concerned stage manager, Equity discovered that a show was rehearsing off-contract. Equity staff was able to place one actor and one stage manager retroactively on contract for rehearsals that had already taken place and secure a full Off-Broadway contract for the show's successive 15-week run.

Upon reviewing weekly reports for a TYA production, Eastern Region staff determined a discrepancy in two actors' salaries and immediately made a claim to resolve the underpayment with the theatre. Equity was able to achieve full payments totaling \$178.08 on behalf of these two members.

After conducting a chorus parts determination of a new musical contract, Central Region staff recovered approximately \$3,000 total in parts and specialty payments for members working on the eight-week run in Chicago.

Western Region Staff collected more than \$7,500 in vacation payouts from Western Region Developing Theaters; almost \$5000 in parts increments and \$250 in vacation payouts from Western Region LORT Theaters; and nearly \$2500 in vacation payouts from Bay Area Theaters.

Grom the-PRESIDENT)

When in doubt, ask The Actors Fund



By Kate Shindle

ver the summer I was interviewed by Carey Purcell for a feature that appeared on Playbill's website. It was a fairly wideranging conversation, and we spent a few minutes talking about the challenges and realities of making a living as an actor - including the fact that, as of July 1, 2015, I was officially without health insurance. My purpose in stating this was simply to emphasize that I'm a working actor, assembling a living like so many of our members.

A couple weeks later, I attended my first meeting since being named to the Board of Trustees at The Actors Fund, which has long been one of my favorite organizations. Basically, if vou work in the entertainment industry and vou need help with something, The Actors Fund should probably be your first stop. Housing seminars. Career counseling. Time management workshops.

Social workers. Financial assistance. You name it. Also, the Fund's staff does a pretty deep dive, in many different ways, into the issue of health care. And apparently, they read Plavbill.

It's possible that Joe Benincasa said hello first (he's a pretty nice guy, for sure), but he quickly went on to tell me that I would be sitting down with one of their health insurance counselors. Busted. And he was right, by the way. In 2015, there really isn't much of an excuse for not being insured. Approximately 16% of our members qualify for Equity League coverage at any given time, and about 11% are using it. But with the recent availability of health exchanges under the Affordable Care Act, we all do have the opportunity and the responsibility - to become more active participants in our own health care. The days of drifting into and out of coverage, rolling the dice and hoping that we don't get a serious illness or injury, seem to be coming to a close.

This is not to say that navigating the health care system is easy; far from it. Over the course of about an hour, The Actors' Fund's Renata Marinaro (Director of Health Services/Eastern Region for The Artists' Health

Insurance Resource Center) thoroughly schooled me in the variety of plans available in New York. Although I have not signed up for one yet the annual open enrollment period doesn't begin until November 1 — I am so grateful to have been walked through the process. And seriously impressed by the level of detail and assistance available not only to me, nor only to Equity actors and stage managers, but quite literally to anyone in the entertainment industry. It's amazing to witness the actual work that gets done with all those dollars we all help raise for The Actors Fund and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS (a major supporter of The Fund). The glamour of a special performance, or the Flea Market or the Fire Island Dance Festival can seem very far away from sitting in an office learning about deductibles. But it is all part of the same picture.

Speaking of health care: If you're in New York or Los Angeles, come on into the office when Physician Volunteers for the Arts (with a grant from BC/EFA) is scheduled to provide free flu shots! We're all very grateful to Dr. Barry Kohn for this annual service and hope that you will take advantage of it.

That's all for now. Happy autumn, and take care of

Equity Mourns Former Councillor

ick Moore, an actor who spent more than half of his life working for Equity - and much longer than that as a member (he joined in 1938) - died on September 7, 2015, days before his 90th birthday.

Moore made his screen debut at the age of eleven months, playing John Barrymore as an infant in the silent film, The Beloved Rogue. He went on to make more than 100 films, including such classics as Oliver Twist. Sergeant York, The Life of Louis Pasteur and Heaven Can Wait. He was probably best known for his appearances in the Our Gana

comedies and as the boyfriend who kissed 14year-old Shirley Temple in Miss Annie Rooney . (1942).

As an adult, Moore relocated to New York and added radio. TV and summer stock to his credits. He also appeared on Broadway in George Bernard Shaw's Saint Joan in 1956.

Elected to a five-year Council term in 1955, Moore reunited with Equity President Ralph Bellamy, with whom he had appeared in the film, Disorderly Conduct in 1932. He served on the Stock and OffBroadway, Alien, Agency and Industrial Shows committees. Moore resigned from Council in 1957 to become editor of Equity Magazine



Share a special memory you've experienced while performing for children.

"During a post-show Q&A for The Velveteen Rabbit, which I stage managed at KANDRA PAYNE Seattle Children's Theatre, a small child raised her hand and, filled with awe, asked, "How did you make the fairy fly?" Now this was a fairly low-tech production, beautifully designed and orchestrated, but with no rigging — or, no "flying." The actress portraying the fairy took a small pause before answering, "My dear: That is what we call 'theater magic."

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Audience Participation Welcomed

By Daniel C. Brewer, Equity Stage Manager

round 9:30 a.m. the buses begin rolling up to the lobby doors. Out spring scores of excited young children on a field trip heading into our 500-plus seat theater. Audiences of Jr. High or High School students saunter in with a "too cool for this" 'tude. A challenge we eagerly accept in theater



for young audiences - TYA - because we are confident we can capture their attention and their imaginations. As the house lights go down, the rush of energy from the audience swells back to the stage charging the company.

It has been an honor and pleasure to serve as Nashville Children's Theatre's company stage manager since 1985 NCT was founded in 1931 and became an Actors' Equity TYA company in 1998. We serve audiences of all ages. (Yes, a mother once set her baby on a side stage and proceeded to change a diaper during a show.) One wonderful and unique aspect of our theater is that the incredible pool of talent from which we cast includes professionals who have fond memories of attending shows at NCT as students.

Working in TYA is not for the faint of heart. You must warm up your voices and bodies so you can be at your best for a 10 a.m. curtain. Easier said than done. You must have the concentration of a stand-up comedian to

react, or not react, to very direct audience responses. If an actor asks aloud, "Should I share this ice cream cone?" they had best be prepared for a huge "Nooooo!" or "Yeeeesss!" If the stage and set allow, then it's en garde, as audience members might just crawl or run on stage and join the show. The most jaded teen will gasp or scream in spite of himself when Frankenstein's creature suddenly appears from the shadows behind Elizabeth. We'll hear a satisfying "He's behind you!"

A TYA actor has the opportunity to create fantastical characters (not always human) in fantastical worlds, from A Wrinkle in Time to James and the Giant Peach. Costuming for TYA is an artistic challenge. Just how many different kinds of animal tails and ears can one make? TYA also provides opportunities to draw realistic, memorable characters from history — some with a capital "H" and some not. We create deep and compelling characters from evocative plays like Selkie: Bud, Not Buddy and And Then They Came for Me.

Many times adult actors are challenged to create younger-aged characters by tapping into their imaginations - to be believable and find the essence of a young character without talking down to audiences. Working in TYA provides tremendous responsibility and tremendous opportunity because in every audience there will be at least one child who will need this shared communal experience to see what it's like to walk in someone else's shoes. To laugh, feel and cry, to empathize together. To know she is not alone, and that despite our many differences, we are one in humanity.

As each performance comes to a close, there is that magical moment when the audience erupts with an enthusiastic roar of approval that comes from a genuine and visceral place. When the audience connects with the acting ensemble, it is an absolutely exhilarating ride like no other on earth. As the last line in Dr. Seuss's The Cat in the Hat lands "And what would you do if your Mother asked you?" we hear from the audience, "Blame the fish!"

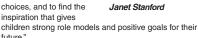
Inspiring and Teaching the Next Generation

"Those children who are inspired to study theater after seeing it gain skills in creativity and self-expression that will support them in any life endeavor."

anet Stanford, Artistic Director of Imagination Stage in Maryland, believes that now more than ever theater for young

audiences is crucial. "Our children are growing up in a complex said. "The theater is one of the few remaining places for reflection. The theater is a place to examine values,

society full of stresses," she to learn how to make moral choices, and to find the inspiration that gives



Taking on characters and working on shows that tend to teach tolerance, acceptance, perseverance and often a comically different way of viewing the world, Equity performers and stage managers have become a staple in the TYA [theater for young audiences] community.

For stage manager Julie Haber and actor Chauncy - in addition to the palpable excited buzz before curtain and hearing the usual unfiltered reactions throughout a show - working in children's theater allows them the opportunity to provide an incredibly meaningful experience to young audiences.

"I have the privilege of being in a position in which I often get to be a part of a person's first live theater experience," said Thomas, And when it comes to performing and connecting with the children, Thomas said "kids and teenagers generally have built fewer walls [than adults], and I hope theater can reach them before some of those walls are built and I hope it validates their humanity."

"A good children's play makes me believe that we can really teach important and complex lessons to even very young children," said Haber. The sincerity of union members is why Stanford believes it is important to hire and continue to work with Equity members.

"If we want children to love theater," she said, "we must show them quality work. Equity actors and stage managers are committed to their craft. They keep themselves fit, work to refine their skills and add talents to their résumés. There is no substitute in my experience for the single-minded, long-term and comprehensive focus that Equity members give to their careers."

Equity, which started its TYA contract in 1969. has seen the other side of the bargaining table grow from 5 to 17 participating theaters on the Producers' League of Theatre for Young Audiences, or

"When I ran for Council in 1964. I was determined to



Chauncy Thomas

contract that would establish Equity's rightful national jurisdiction," said Barbara Colton, the TYA committee chair and chief negotiator from 1967 until 1988. "However by 1967, with the considerable support of Equity giants Theo Bikel, Bill Ross, Jeanna Belkin, Edith Meiser, and Nancy R. Pollock, Council was finally convinced and appointed me to chair a reactivated, long-dormant Children's Theatre Committee. We were instructed to prepare

negotiation demands for the approval of Council before approaching management to begin negotiations. Stanford noted that when she got into the TYA

field in the '80s, the writing and production values of TYA tended to be rather simplistic, where actors

(often dressed to the nines in silly costumes) were encouraged to play down to the audience. She said, thanks to efforts around the country (including TYA-centric writing competitions, visionary leadership and, of course.Equity artists), theater for young audiences "continues to grow in sophistication and



importance as part of the overall theater scene." Luckily, it's not just the young viewers who glean a

(continued on page 5)



"On each TYA contract, I keep a list of 'kid quotes' — shout outs from ETHAN ANGELICA excitable audience members. One of my favorites is from Theatreworks USA's Max and Ruby, where a goofy-looking 'blue tarantula' (me) climbed over Max's bedroom wall as one of his scary storybooks came to life. Upon my entrance during one performance, a small girl leapt to her feet and screamed, "Save yourselves!" I wish adult audiences were so invested."

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Bringing Stories to Life at Seattle Children's Theatre

We asked the staff at the Seattle Children's Theatre to tell us about the company; this is what they had to say:

ack in 1987, Seattle Children's Theatre took its first steps to become an Equity house, because, as Artistic Director Linda Hartzell said, "It became very clear to me that if we were to be taken seriously as a significant, viable theater in Seattle we had to become an Equity theater. It was then, as it is now, the sign of a professional theater doing important professional work."

According to union member Linda-Jo Greenberg, who was SCT's production stage manager for 27 years, the process was quite a challenge, one that worked out thanks to the partnership of former Equity Business Representative Joe Garber. "When we began the transition, Equity only had rules on the books for children's touring companies," Greenberg said. "SCT was the first resident children's theater with a relationship to Equity, and we had quite a number of weird situations to figure out — how to deal with the actors participating in the post-show discussions with the children, for one. Now, thanks to SCT's

Chris Bennio

including directors and designers — is that we offer them actors who have the expertise to realize their visions.

Professional actors bring life and power to the stories that SCT tells and make all the difference to the success of the theater. In return, they are part of a unique experience. Julie D. Briskman is an Equity actor, a Lunt-Fontanne Fellow and the Founder/Artistic Producer of The Seagull Project. She played Aunt Sponge in SCT's recent production of James and the Giant Peach. Briskman observed, "There's nothing like performing for an audience of hundreds of kids. They are loud, they are honest, they love you when you're good, they scream at you when you're nasty. They tell you where the secret stone is hidden and laugh when you are frightened by a spider. They are balls of truth.

and the integrity required to give them the performance they deserve is epic. We actors are lucky to be a moment in the beginning of their artistic

SCT is committed to providing this rich experience of live theater to all children. The School Children Access Program serves approximately 55,000 children and

teachers each year with highlysubsidized tickets and free tickets for classrooms of low-income

students. SCT strives to provide access for children in other ways, too. Last year, SCT launched the first relaxed performance to serve children and families affected by sensory disabilities, such as those on the autism-spectrum.

SCT's pilot sensory-friendly performance was during the run of *Goodnight Moon*, and for Equity actor Matt Wolfe, it provided a special opportunity: Wolfe was instrumental in facilitating the event because, besides performing in the production,



The cast of Seattle Children's Theatre's James and the Giant Peach, with words and music by Justin Paul and Benj Pasek and the book by Timothy Allen McDonald, based on the classic book by Roald Dahl.

he was doing a theater leadership internship with Hartzell.

"She simply believed in my potential as a future leader in the industry and in the arts, so she created a pathway for me to learn where there was none," Wolfe said. "There was no specific internship available at SCT, but she created a way that I could train and learn in a safe environment. I find that remarkable."

In continued partnership with Equity, SCT carries the tradition of professional theater for families in the Puget Sound area forward into its 41st season this fall.



The cast of the company's A Single Shard, adapted by Robert Schenkkan.

leadership, the Equity TYA rule book has two sections, one for touring companies and one for resident theaters like us."

SCT is now a major presence at Seattle Center, home of the Space Needle, with two theaters — the 482-seat Charlotte Martin Theatre and the 275-seat Eve Alvord Theatre — in a beautiful building that includes full scenic, costume and prop shops, classrooms and rehearsal spaces with stunning views.

Since 1975, SCT has produced more than 236 plays including 110 world premiere productions. Among the outstanding playwrights and composers whose work SCT has premiered are Robert Schenkkan, Y York, Steven Dietz, Justin Paul and Benj Pasek, Tim McDonald and Cheryl West. A large part of the reason SCT can attract all the talented, creative artists who make the plays —

Performing a Young Audiences During the 2014-15 season, Equity members brought storytelling to life on stage for kids across the nation. Whether in theaters or in schools, children have met some interesting and zany characters with important life-lessons to impart. Here are the

top five most-performed TYA productions staged last season:

Charlotte's Web Cinderella A Christmas Carol Pinocchio

Photo courtesy of Imagination Stage. This photo depicts the company's 2013 production of James and the Giant Peach. Photo by Margot Schulman.

The Little Mermaid

Inspiring (continued from page 4)

valuable lesson from each production, but the professionals do, too. Equity members participate in productions that often stir something within them.

For Haber, one "magical" show in particular, *Honus* and *Me*, about a 10-year-old boy who discovers a mystical baseball card time machine, always brought her to tears.

Thomas, who portrayed Tom Robinson in *To Kill a Mockingbird* in November 2014 at Bay Street Theatre in

New York, said that working on this TYA show was the "easiest and most difficult acting" he'd ever done. Having lived in St. Louis for 10 years before moving to NYC and aware of the events in Ferguson, Missouri, he was emotionally invested and affected by the happenings in his former home. "Playing an emotionally vulnerable character dealing with other people's prejudices as the result of the uncertainty of a racially charged event, while my former home was suffering because of people's prejudices as the result of the uncertainty of a racially charged event, caused me to

experience an emotional intensity I'd never previously harnessed on stage," he said.

As for anyone who might be making his or her debut on or directly off a children's stage, Haber said, "Be as professional as you ever are — strive for the highest quality of every aspect of the project. Just because the audience is young doesn't mean it doesn't deserve the best you have to offer."

"Everyone should work in children's theater sometime in their career; it's so fulfilling," she added. "I never thought I would love it so much."

Share a special memory you've experienced while performing for children.

DANIELLE DEADWYLER Charlotte'

"Let me tell you about the wonder of youth audiences. As Charlotte in Charlotte's Web, I sustained an injury the evening before opening night

(performing aerials on silks). I feared the daring wonder of the show would be lost; but lo and behold, the youth audiences adored the adjustments — solidifying to me that theater doesn't have to razzle dazzle, but to just be embraced with a wondrous eye."

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Notice to Performers Hired to Work Under Collective Bargaining Agreements

1. In most states, unions are permitted to enter into collective bargaining agreements with employers that require employees, as a condition of employment, either to join the union (and thereby enjoy the full rights and benefits of membership) or to pay fees to the union (and thereby satisfy a financial obligation to the union without enjoying the full rights and benefits of membership). This requirement, set forth in a union security clause, serves the legitimate purpose of ensuring that such employees who benefit from union representation pay a fair share of the cost of that representation. The goal of a union security provision is to eliminate "free riders" who benefit from the Equity contract without contributing to Equity's costs of negotiating, administering and enforcing the contract. If you are working under an Equity contract that contains a union security clause, you have the right to join and support Actors' Equity Association. You also have the right to choose not to become a member of the union.

2. Actors' Equity Association, in its role as a collective bargaining agent, has negotiated many hundreds of agreements since 1913 with theatrical employers on behalf of professional performers and stage managers. Equity has worked hard and successfully to negotiate improved minimum salaries and progressively more favorable wages and other terms and conditions of employment such as health insurance, pension benefits, overtime pay, vacation time and programs to insure a safe workplace. These contractual benefits are enjoyed by all performers covered by an Equity contract. Your membership strengthens Equity and helps the union achieve better results in its negotiations with theatrical employers.

3. Members of Actors' Equity enjoy valuable rights and benefits flowing from membership (as distinguished from the employment rights under collective bargaining agreements). Among the many rights only available to members are the right to attend and to speak freely and openly at Equity membership meetings and to debate issues affecting all members at union meetings; to participate in formulating Equity policies; to influence the nature of Equity's activities and the direction of its future; to nominate and vote for candidates for office in Equity; to run for office; to fully participate in development of contract negotiating proposals; to vote to accept or reject proposed contracts—thereby ensuring your active participation on issues central to your life as a working member of the theatrical profession. In addition, members have enhanced rights to audition at Equity Auditions.

4. Under the law, you also have the right to choose not to be a member of Actors' Equity. In that circumstance, you will not enjoy the rights and benefits of membership described in the previous paragraph. In addition, while you will be fairly represented with respect to your employment rights under an Equity contract, you may not participate in or enjoy the benefits of certain social programs and organizations around the country that are supported by Equity for the benefit of its members and others in the theatrical profession. These include the Actors Federal Credit Union, the Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts, the Actors Work Program, Career Transition For Dancers, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), and Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS — all organizations that Equity has been pleased to support for many years. You also will have no right to attend membership meetings, to audition as an Equity member at Equity auditions, to run for union office, to vote in union elections, to participate in the formulation of bargaining proposals or to ratify

5. In 1988, the Supreme Court held that a non-member has the right to object to paying any portion of union dues or fees that will be expended on activities unrelated to collective bargaining, contract administration or grievance adjustment. Consistent with our firm belief that membership in Equity is, in fact, a privilege — not lightly granted — our current policy is not to accept any dues or fees from those who choose to be objecting "financial core" non-members.

6. Equity will freat a request for "financial core" status as a request to resign from, or remain a non-member of, Actors' Equity Association. Upon such a request, you will have no membership rights in Actors' Equity. If you elect to be a non-member, and subsequently decide that you wish to join (or re-join) Actors' Equity, Association, you will be required to apply for membership. Actors' Equity, however, retains the sole discretion to determine whether or not you will be admitted into its membership. Should such a membership application be approved, you will be required to pay an initiation fee at the then current rate and union dues uniformly imposed on all members. (In so-called 'right-towork states," employers and unions may not enter into contracts containing union security clauses. As such, this notice is not applicable to performers who are not required to pay union fees under a collective bargaining agreement.)

7. Equity reserves the right, upon appropriate notice, to change the policy set forth above.



Across the Country Marching with Pride

Equity members across the nation marched to show that "Equity works!"

cross the country this past September, members proudly marched side by side with their union brothers and sisters showing their Equity pride.

In cities like Buffalo, Detroit, Dallas, Milwaukee and New York City, members took part in their



Dallas/Ft. Worth



Buffalo/Rocheste

local Labor Day parades, proudly wearing Equity blue.

Corey Joseph Masklee, who just received his card on August 3, 2015, was marching for the first time in New York City.

"I'm marching today because I'm proud to be here," he said. "I'm proud to be a member."

Walking with over 100 members, Masklee joined President Kate Shindle and Executive Director Mary McColl as they marched up NYC's 5th Avenue singing renditions of "Give My Regards to Broadway," "There's No Business Like Show Business," "Another Op'nin', Another Show" and "Lullaby of Broadway."

"The diversity at the parade was thrilling," said Eastern Regional Vice President Melissa Robinette. "Everyone's energy and hope was flying high!"

In the Buffalo area, liaison chair Don Gervasi marched with a dozen Equity members to show that professional actors and stage managers are in the

"We are proud to march every year alongside our other brothers and sisters, from electricians to state employees," Gervasi said. "Unions matter and we welcome any opportunity we can get to show the public professionals do live and work in their communities."

In Milwaukee, members marched with musician and stage hand brothers and sisters.

"I was proud to march in a state where, and at a time when, many people need to be reminded that unions work for the betterment of all working conditions," said member Kathi Karol Koenig.

A reminder that Actors' Equity stands up for it members, those walking in the parades proudly shouted "Equity works!"

"It's incredibly important for our members, who know they've joined a union but don't always feel connected to the broader labor movement, to be able to witness the solidarity and community firsthand," said President Kate Shindle. "Plus, it's fun. We've been trving some new outreach strategies in the past few months, which resulted in a record turnout and a terrific social media presence our new Councillor Tonya Pinkins was Periscoping like crazy. I plan to need twice as many tshirts next year!"

For more photos from Equity members who marched around the country, visit Equity's Flickr page.

Dayton, Ohio

Last month The Human Race
Theatre Company in Dayton, Ohio,
raised an astounding \$7,280 over
22 performances of *The Full Monty*for BC/EFA. Led by Equity member
Richard E. Waits in the role of
"Noah 'Horse' Simmons," company
members came together to hold the
famous red buckets.

"Before I arrived, I asked Artistic Director Kevin Moore if I could organize something to raise funds for BC/EFA and he said 'yes,' said Waits. "Then he generously offered to put his appeal into his nightly curtain speech."

Following every performance cast members would rotate spots at the door to the theater offering

signed posters and BC/EFA shopping bags as incentive to donate. "My job," said Waits, "was



to guide, inform and get everyone on the same page — then get out of the way to 'let it go!'"

"I am a born and bred Chicagoan, and years later I still remember the chills I

In 2015, BC/EFA has awarded more than \$85,000 in grants to AIDS and family

service
organizations
in Ohio,
including
Dayton's
AIDS
Resource
Center,
Caracole in
Cincinnati,
LifeCare
Alliance and
the AIDS
Resource
Center in

Columbus, as well as organizations in Akron and Toledo.

Share a special memory you've experienced while performing for children.

SANDRA DELGADO

got onstage at our first performance of the adaptation of the iconic, Chicagoset House on Mango Street at Steppenwolf Theatre. It felt special, indeed revolutionary and evolutionary to bring the story of a young, strong and smart Latina to the Latino/a youth of Chicago. Seeing positive images of ourselves onstage is essential as our youngest cull their hopes and dreams."

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2015



(L to R) Central Regional Director Sean F. Taylor, award co-hosts Donald V. Calamia and Jaime Moyer, director Beth Torrey

(winning award for Leaving lowa, at podium) and Equity CRB non-Councillor member Peggy Thorp.

Michigan

Wilde Awards honor Equity talent

The 2015 Wilde Awards, presented by EncoreMichigan to honor the best in theater throughout the state of Michigan, were presented on August 31, 2015, at the Berman Center for the Performing Arts in the Detroit

Founded in 2002 and named in honor of 19th century playwright Oscar Wilde, these awards - now in their 14th year - honor the best productions, performances and technical work produced or presented by theaters across the state.

Bestowing awards to Equity actors, EMCs and non-union performers, categories recognized best drama, best

musical, best comedy, best opera, best of the Bard, best theater for young audiences and several others.

"Although I say something similar pretty much every year, this past season was certainly a memorable one - both onstage and behind the scenes," said Donald V. Calamia, co-founder and editor-at-large of EncoreMichigan.com.

Central Regional Director Sean F. Taylor and CRB non-Councillor member Peggy Thorp presented the award for best comedy, which went to Tipping Point Theatre's Leaving Iowa, an Equity production, directed by Beth Torrey.



(From L to R): Tom Carpenter (Equity's Eastern Regional Director) and Paige Price (Equity's 1st Vice President) with honorees Dana Ivey (50 years), Maureen Anderman (35 years) and Steve Vinovich (35 years).

New York City Saluting Equity Members

On September 29, 2015, 107 Equity members, including actors, stage managers and Councillors, were honored for their dedication to the theater industry. The seventh annual

Broadway Salutes, which was hosted by union member Bebe Neuwirth, honored those professionals in the field who have devoted 25, 35 or 50 plus years to the business.

Nashville, Tennessee

On Sept. 19, 2015, Equity members along with the Nashville Area Liaison Committee gathered for an end of summer ice cream social. Welcoming new members, the group met at Nashville Children's Theatre. According to member Elizabeth Davidson, with new members coming into the region, the committee felt that a gathering to get to know one another was in order. Pictured from left to right: Nikkita Staggs, Rona A. Carter, Shawn Knight, Mikey Rosenbaum and Eric D. Pasto-Crosby.





Equity President Kate Shindle with members Lea Salonga and Alex Brightman at Equity's "toast" to the upcoming Broadway season.

New York City Equity Toasts the New Broadway

Season

Actors' Equity Association celebrated the Broadway theater community with a fitting "break a leg."

On September 20, 2015, Equity President Kate Shindle and Executive Director Mary McColl welcomed theater industry colleagues, Equity members and Eastern Region Councillors for a special toast

Presented by The Broadway League and Coalition of Broadway Unions and Guilds, the public celebration at Anita's Way (next to the Stephen Sondheim Theatre) honored actors, stage managers, stage hands, producers, managers, theater owners, press agents, ushers, agents, make-up artists, dressers, designers, directors, choreographers, musicians, casting agents and more who have made a life-long career in

Office

Closing

All Equity offices will be

closed on Wednesday,

November 11, 2015, in

observance of Veterans

Day. Additionally, all offices

will be closed on Thursday.

November 26 and Friday,

Thanksgiving. Offices will

Wednesday, November 25

for the holiday. Check with

your local office for the

exact time of closing.

November 27, 2015, for

also close early on

"Broadway Salutes remains my favorite 'inside Broadway' event, as it honors people in every corner of our business from ushers to doormen to our hard working ensembles and everyone else who makes Broadway the number one attraction in New York," said the 1st Vice President of Equity, Paige Price, who has also been a member of the committee since its inception.'

to the upcoming season.

Guests joining the president and executive director on the Haven Rooftop at the Sanctuary Hotel in New York City included Alex Brightman, Andréa Burns, Erin Mackey, Lea Salonga and Josh Young, along with Actors Fund Executive Director Joseph Benincasa, Charlotte St. Martin, President of The Broadway League and producers Bonnie Comley, Stewart F. Lane, David Elliott, Sue Frost and Martin Platt.

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Share a special memory you've experienced while performing for children.

"During a preview of Oz 2.5 at South Coast Repertory, something technically related went wrong in the OE FRIA first scene. Having to stop the show, bring up the house lights and begin again, I was worried that we would lose the attention of the kids. Again, I went out for my first line. Instead of the expected confused silence or even worse, judgmental laughter — they broke into a spontaneous round of applause. I was completely blown away at their ability to step out of the fact that they were in a theater to watch a play and step into a role of supporting an artist who they didn't know. It just showed me once again how sophisticated young audiences can be."



(From L to R) Central Regional Director Sean F. Taylor along with Central Regional Vice President Dev Kennedy and Executive Director Mary McColl.

Chicago

Jeff Awards Honor Equity Members & Chicago Theater Couple

both Jeff nominations and

illustrious careers: Scrofano

with two principal actress wins and an astounding 18

nominations and Reeger

with a principal actor award

for his play, The Christmas

Schooner.

has appeared.

as well as many nominations

Together, the couple has

appeared in 48 productions

together, which is nearly a

third of the more than 150

shows in which each of them

"We became part of a

living community of actors

that supported each other."

said Reeger in a prepared

health insurance and raise

our best work, earn our

statement "We wanted to do

awards throughout their

No strangers to the Chicago theater scene or the Jeff Awards, real life married couple Paula Scrofano and John Reeger were honored with the Jeff Award's 2015 Special Equity Award for Career Achievement on October 5, 2015, at Drury Lane in recognition of their contributions and talents lent to Chicago's stages.

In a press release, the Jeffs committee stated: "Paula and John are consummate professionals who have enriched the Chicago community with signature techniques that have brought laughter, tears. chills and thrills to audiences over the years."

The couple has garnered

our children as we had been raised. We somehow got our kids through college, own our home, are still happily married and are debt free it's a tribute to the Chicago theater scene of the past forty years as much as it is to us.

Additionally, Central Regional Board member Ronald Keaton was awarded the Best Solo Performance award for his portrayal of Winston Churchill in Churchill (which he adapted and performed at Greenhouse Theater Center in Chicago and then brought to New York City's New World Stages.)

Central Region Vice President Dev Kennedy along with Executive Director Mary McColl and Central Regional Director Sean F. Taylor presented Best Ensemble award to The Hypocrites' company for its production of All Our Tragic.

The Jeff Awards have been honoring outstanding theater artists annually since they were established in 1968. The Jeff Awards foster the artistic growth of area theatres and theatre artists and promote educational opportunities, audience appreciation, and civic pride in the achievements of the theater community.

Equity Mourns

(continued from page 3)

and director of public relations for the

He also served as legislative liaison, working closely with the Equity's legislative representative in Washington and testifying on numerous occasions before Congressional committees on issues of importance to the arts and Equity members. He served as a delegate to the New York State AFL-CIO Convention in 1959, 1960 and 1963; was a member of the National Council on the Arts and Government; the State Department's Theatre Panel on Cultural Exchange: and the State Attorney General's Theatre Advisory Committee. During the '50s, he also

produced and directed USO-sponsored overseas tours, was a member of the acting faculty of the America Academy of Dramatic Arts, wrote a television play produced on NBC and lectured extensively on theater.

Moore left Equity in 1964 to become creative director for films, meetings and shows for a leading advertising agency. He formed his own public relations firm, Dick Moore and Associates, in 1966. representing performing arts and labor organizations, including AFTRA and the AFL-CIO Department for Professional Employees. He came full circle in 1975, returning to represent Equity as editor of Equity News until 2014.

Moore was married to Equity member Jane Powell.



Actors Fund Hosts Special Performance

The cast of The King and I on Broadway gave a wonderful special performance on September 20, 2015, to benefit the programs and services of The Actors Fund. Tony-winner and Equity member Kelli O'Hara delivered a post-show curtain speech thanking the audience. All of the funds raised from these extra performances, featuring the donated time and talent of Equity members, go to help those in need within our performing arts community.

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Mistaken Identity

Because of David Thorn and the Membership Department, I was able to have my theater credits removed from Wikipedia and other sites where they were mistakenly credited to a woman with the same name. Even odder: She had died in 1982, yet continued to receive credit for the work I had done years after.

Not knowing what to do, I reached out to Equity and they immediately went to work checking records. They gave me an official "to whom it may

Letters received from paid-up members on subjects of concern to Equity members will be considered for publication in Equity News, provided that they are no greater than 175 words in length. Letters selected for publication may be edited for space requirements. Actors' Equity Association reserves the

Letters to The Editor

right to decline to publish letters at its sole discretion. When multiple letters on the same topic are submitted, the Editor may decide to select a smaller number of representative letters for publication Letters must be signed and must provide preferred contact information for verification purposes, but Details and the second of the

concern" letter stating that the theater credits were, indeed. mine, having been a member of Equity since 1960, and the deceased had never been a member.

I sent their letter with copies of all of my contracts listed on her page — and within a short period of time, Ron Jones of Wikipedia's information team, to whom I shall be forever grateful. removed my credits. But to my frustration, no one thought of transferring those credits to their true owner: me, Barbara Lang,

and very much alive. Still in a quandary!

— Barbara Lang

Calling All Stage Managers

The stage management program at the University of Iowa is conducting its biennial survey of stage managers. This national survey tracks training and employment trends along with practices within rehearsing and calling shows. In the 2013 survev. we received responses from 878 stage managers, including 478 members of Equity.

Anvone who has stage managed theatrical productions in the United States (or a tour that originated in the U.S.) is encouraged to participate. There will be separate lines of questions for veteran stage managers and people who are just starting their careers.

This online survey should take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The survey runs November 1 - 29. The survey results will be published in January. To participate, visit http://smsurvey.info.

David J. McGraw

In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that I read of the passing of Matt Landers. Matt and I went to Boston Conservatory together and I think I can speak for my colleagues when I say that we knew from the start he was very talented and a hard worker. On and off stage he was funny, sexy and creative. He was adept at improv and, once on the spot he made up a song (with piano accompaniment) that told the whole plot of A Flea in Her Ear. He left the Conservatory when he auditioned and was hired for a Boston tour of Godspell - and got his Equity card. Later, he was the first replacement on Broadway for Sonny in Grease and was nominated for a Drama Desk Award for Working He went on to work in TV and film. I've never met his two beautiful daughters, but I'm sure they are proud of their actor/father who passed away too soon. It was a privilege to share the stage with vou, dear Matt.

Catherine Cappiello

NOVEMBER 20 through NOVEMBER 29, 2015

The 28th Annual BROADWAY CARES/EQUITY FIGHTS AIDS WEEK

Your fundraising efforts mean more than ever before. By joining us in this year's appeals you make possible:

- · Renewed support for the HIV/AIDS Initiative of The Actors Fund
- Increased support for the Phyllis Newman Women's Health Initiative, the Al Hirschfeld Free Health Clinic, Artists Health Insurance Resource Center (AHIRC), The Dancers' Resource and a host of invaluable social services and emergency assistance. For information, visit actorsfund.org
- Continued support for AIDS and family service organizations nationwide

In 2015, BC/EFA provided \$5.2 million in support to The Actors Fund and another \$6.2 million to 450 AIDS and family service organizations in all 50 states, Washington DC and Puerto Rico.

Your generous efforts make this safety net of social services possible.



instagram.com/BCEFA