

Thursday, Aug 31, 2017

SMTD News, September 2017

Chelsea Criger, a theatre design and technology major who will be a senior in the fall, spent two months of the summer as artist in residence at the Fish Factory Art Center in Stöðvarfjörður, Iceland. Criger is a painter and illustrator, but is also experimenting with new media, like lino prints, and while in Iceland she used local materials like wool and rams' horns. This is Criger's third successive summer internship. In summer 2015 she worked at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival as a costume intern, and in summer 2016 she had an embroidery internship at Hawthorne & Heaney in London. Her work can be seen on her Instagram account at [@cncrigerart](#).

The Porthouse Theatre's summer production of *Newsies* got a great review from the *Akron Beacon Journal* with the "16 extremely talented newsies" drawing the most praise from writer **Kerry Clawson**. She said it was "exciting" to see so much "young male, triple-threat talent," and we're happy that two of the threats, musical theatre alum **Joey Fontana** (BFA '17) and senior **Andrew Muylle** were from the OU community.

Junior musical theatre major **William Dunn** appeared in the Barn Theatre's summer production of *A Lion in Winter* as Prince John, the son of Henry II, and was singled out in the Encore website review, written by **David Kiley**. "Dunn hands in some spot-on great moments for the dim-witted Prince."



Chelsea Criger and her art work in Iceland. Photo by Jeremy Barnett.

In July **Paige VanSickle** released her first EP, *Fairytales*, which is available on [iTunes](#). VanSickle recorded the songs in Nashville at **Wayne Moss's** Cinderella Studio with guitarist **Johnny Mac**, piano player **Cody Campbell**, and drummer **Jon Radford**.

During the Oakland Chorale's summer tour of Europe **Timothy Brown** and **Abigail McKay** were interviewed by Slovenia TV. You can the interview on this [YouTube clip](#).

The interviews are in English, and in addition to enjoying a little of the chorale's music, you can see something of the beautiful church St Martin in the ancient town of Bled.

Brooklynn Lambert recently won the Miss Monroe County Scholarship Pageant, which is a qualifying event for the Miss Michigan e next June. Lambert is a junior studying both communications and dance. She performed a jazz dance in the talent competition.

Take Root co-directors and dance professors **Ali Woerner** and **Thayer Jonutz** are enjoying an eventful summer and fall. In mid-Aug they appeared at the Detroit Dance City Festival, the annual three-day community event that celebrates dance in its various forms ar disciplines. They were part of the Choreographer's Showcase and performed on both Friday and Saturday at the Detroit Film Theatre



The cover of Paige VanSickle's EP

On September 26 they will appear as guest artists with Ann Arbor Dance Works, the University of Michigan's Department of Dance professional season. They will perform an excerpt from their 2015 work *Ink*, with music composed and performed by Take Root composer and musical director **Jon Anderson**. The duet is based on the short story "Ink," written by OU English professor **Kathleen Pfeiffer**.

In October they will be back in Ann Arbor to accept the **University of Michigan Emerging Artist Alumni Award**. Both Jonutz and Woerner earned an MFA from Michigan. On Octobe they will teach a masterclass to the U of M dance majors, and that evening they will be presented with their awards.



Lynnae Lehfeldt in Singapore at the VASTA conference

and Laban movement work. She also taught a workshop sharing the "Physical and Vocal Presence" work she developed at Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine. "The VASTA conference is something I look forward to all year," Lehfeldt. "The opportunity to connect with voice faculty from around the world provides a global perspective on the work I do. I am always challenged and reinvigorated by my colleagues' research. And I always appreciate their feedback on my work." Lehfeldt, who has been part of VASTA for 15 years, is already planning for 2018 when the conference will be in Seattle, WA. "I've already approached, **Alta Dantzler**, visiting assistant professor of voice, with the idea of us presenting together. I'd like to explore how stage voice teachers can assist in the singer's studio."

Earlier in the summer Lehfeldt directed *Water Works Shakespeare* in the Park production of the *The Taming of the Shrew*. You can see excerpts of the play in the [YouTube clip](#). Pay special attention to the costumes which were designed by OU costume shop supervisor **Christa Koerner** who is interviewed around 6:35. Reportedly the handmade ivory costumes were so beautiful the cast wanted to take them home!

Theatre professor **Jeremy Barnett** had another production open at Mason Street Warehouse in Saugatuck. Working along with him as associate scenic designer was theatre design and technology alumnus **Jason Maracani** (BFA '15). The show, *It Shoulda Been You*, was reviewed by **Bridgette Redman** for *Encore*, and she singled out their design for their "spotless screamed luxury and made every entrance and exit work."

Mark Stone, associate professor of music, spent time in Johannesburg, South Africa this summer. He took part in Educate Africa's International Marimba and Steelpan Festival, an event he says draws around 2,000 marimba and pan players from over Africa. There is a great introduction to the festival in this YouTube clip from [CNN Inside Africa](#).

Former chair of the music department **David DiChiera**, who recently stepped down as artistic director of Michigan Opera Theatre, has released a new CD, *Letters and Fantasies*, which covers more than 50 years of his compositions, from his graduate school days at UCLA, to excerpts from his latest works such as *Letter to Sarah* and *Letter to Roxane* from the opera *Cyrano*. The CD is available on [iTunes](#).

And finally, as you may have heard, this summer MTD became SMTD, the **School of Music, Theatre and Dance**, housed within the College of Arts and Sciences. Music, Theatre and Dance are now independent departments within the school, each with their own chair. Read more about the details of this change in this [OU News story](#).