

From Executive Director Terence McFarland

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She's getting a little work done

AS SEPTEMBER APPROACHES I can't help but think of going back to school.

As the son of a career Navy man, each time we moved I had the opportunity to cast myself in a new role. The gymnast, the soccer player, the guy into puppets, the student council vice president, the musical theatre camp kid, the future fashionista, the world traveler just back from visiting my parents in Italy, the guy who went back to school at 30, that dude who wore the crazy mirror covered jacket. A new role for each successive season. No wonder I fell back into theatre and the performing arts.

I chose to think of each new home as a place to redefine myself. Or at least how others might see me when the curtain went up on that "opening night" or trip down the center aisle of a new bus in a new town. As we get older that opportunity doesn't present itself as frequently.

I've found we're often cast against what we might consider our type. I certainly find myself creating back stories for the cast of characters I run into on both sides of the curtain:

I subscribe.
I sit on the aisle.
I sing along, quietly, under my breath.
I can't wait to give a standing ovation.
I'm a triple threat.
I can't wait to get to my car before anyone else.
I'm staying put, it's stacked parking.
I might not get recognized as the great choreographer
I am on the hit reality show if I keep my hood up.
I've never seen this show before.
I'm a romantic lead.
I only go to opening nights.
I'm a singer who moves well.
I wait until I've read the review.
I have an authentic Southern accent.
I only go to Sunday matinees.
I prefer previews.
I may be in a supporting role with these arms,
not for long.
I'll only go to shows where I get comped.
I'll only see the shows my friends are in.
My name might not be the first listed but I'm the star.

Recognize yourself?

I love how Christine Lahti mentions in our cover story that she would love to perform a nude scene now but wouldn't have considered it earlier in her career. What an empowering moment to have come to that realization. To bare one's flesh is quite a different act than baring one's soul

onstage each and every night. I think our best performers prove the former is the more challenging...at any age. Nudity at some point becomes easy, stripped bare never does.

Tonight my time in the theatre was spent meeting our first batch of the 2007-2008 Ovation voters during a training session. I'm struck by the commitment of our voters and by those who take obvious pride in defining themselves as such. Looking across the faces, I cast the leading man, supporting multiple character actor, the brilliant designer, the organized assistant stage manager taking notes and the soon to be grand diva when they very well could be the managing director, artistic associate, marketing coordinator, box office manager and board member. Each is responsible in determining the Ovation Award recipients in 29 competitive categories each year. Our new season begins Sept. 1. I wish them well in their new roles.

On that topic, please join us at Pasadena Playhouse for the 2007 Ovation Award nominee announcement on Sept. 24 at 10 am. Reserve a seat with Darren Schroader, our Member Services Coordinator. And mark your calendar for this year's Ovation Awards ceremony on Nov. 12 at 7:30 pm at the Orpheum Theatre in downtown Los Angeles with our returning host Neil Patrick Harris.

The Ovation Awards may have been miscast.

Last year, Neil made a few jokes about how long she is. As a young ingénue in her 18th year she's entering adulthood at a time when there are very few role models. Ladies her age are doing unspeakable things in public or online for the world to see.

That said, she's getting a little work done.

Nip here, tuck there.

A little richer, more robust in some areas, a little leaner in others. She does not want to be perceived as "long."

We're promising a ceremony that comes in under two hours. What are you going to do with all that extra time you might ask? It's up to you but we have a killer after-party planned if you want to leave it up to us.

She is 18, don'tcha know!

And be sure to check out YouTube to see what else she's been up to!

It's always a night of surprises.

This year?

Even more so.

See you there, play someone new.

I know I will be. ■