Voice of a new generation

In the space of six years, AARON PHILLIPS ’05 has gone from performing in Taylor Theater to singing in the Kennedy Center.

Aaron, who played the title role in “Bat Boy: The Musical” when he was a senior at UNCG, is now singing familiar tunes with “Disney in Concert.” He performs with three other singers, backed by a symphony.

It was only supposed to be a one-time gig. At the time, Aaron was living in LA and taking jobs wherever he could. Then they added 30 tour dates. And then several more. The singers have been touring for close to a year now. Last December found him in Melbourne, Australia.

It’s a good job for someone who has always been involved in musical theater. He credits Community Theatre of Greensboro with shaping him as an actor. He credits the School of Music, Theatre and Dance, where he majored in voice, with giving him solid fundamentals with classically-based training.

Those skills have stood him well during his post-graduation days in regional theater productions; LA performances in “Les Miserables” and “Jekyll and Hyde,” which earned him an Ovation Award nomination; and the off-Broadway rock opera “The New Hopeville Comics” written by Nate Weida ’02.

These days, in addition to touring with “Disney in Concert,” Aaron has been doing staged readings, auditioning for musicals and doing voice-overs for commercials and video games. You can hear Aaron voicing “a bunch of bad guys” in Sony’s new video game “Medieval Moves: Deadmund’s Quest.”

Voice-overs are fun for a variety of reasons. First, the convenience factor. “I have a home studio. I never have to change out of my bathrobe,” he says.

Second, the challenge. “With the stage and screen, you have more faculties at your disposal. You can use your face and body to convey emotions. In voice-over, you don’t get any of that.”

While he’s passionate about theater and ultimately wants to perform on Broadway, his favorite type of work is a combination of everything he’s currently doing.

“What’s funny about actors and performers is that they have to do a variety of jobs to survive and, in the end, that never changes,” he says. “Diversification becomes what you love. I really have grown to love it.”

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Ready for her close-up

Still of Lois Frazier from the documentary “Pioneers in Skirts,” courtesy of Ashley Maria.

LOIS FRAZIER ’42, ’48 MS is featured in a new documentary about the Business and Professional Women’s clubs. Frazier, a vital member of the organization, oversaw the Business and Economics Department and directed the MBA program at Meredith College from 1954 until her retirement in 1991.

The National Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs, the North Carolina Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs, and the Raleigh Business and Professional Women’s Club were organized in 1919—before women won the right to vote. The organizations’ mission was to “provide professional and personal growth opportunities and to promote equity for women in the workplace.”

Lois, who now lives in Raleigh, joined the Brevard Business and Professional Women’s Club in 1945 and later became a member of Raleigh and Greensboro clubs. Her service included a two-year term as president of the North Carolina Business and Professional Women’s Federation. She also served as treasurer of the National Federation for two years and sat on several committees.

The documentary, “Pioneers in Skirts,” focuses on the impact of the Business and Professional Women’s clubs at local, state and national levels while concentrating on the Raleigh club. The filmmaker, Ashley Maria, a film student at the University of Southern California, is the daughter of past Raleigh Business and Professional Women’s Club President Lea-Ann Berst.

The niece of former N.C. Governor Luther H. Hodges, Lois earned an EdID in Business Education from the University of Indiana at Bloomington in 1961. She describes her professors at Woman’s College, UNCG’s earlier incarnation, as “outstanding; they were demanding; but they were genuinely concerned about our total education for careers and life.”

Lois has maintained a close relationship with UNCG over the years. She served on the Alumni Advisory Board for the Bryan School of Business and Economics, and accepted a distinguished service award from the university in 1996.

But most gratifying to Lois is the lasting impact her former students have made. “Seeing students grow personally and academically from early enrollment at Meredith until graduation was a joy,” she says. “One of my proudest accomplishments is learning that graduates of our programs are successful in their professions and provide outstanding leadership in their communities.”
1970s

LAVONNE WAUGH JAMES ’75 retired from Rockingham Community College as a counselor. She lives in Reidsville.

KAREN JEAN WELLER ’75 served as principal designer and director of the team that developed wardrobe designs for the Universal Studios Singapore theme park. Part of the ResortWorld resort on Sentosa Island, the park consists of seven themed “lands” requiring themed wardrobes for all of its food and merchandise locations as well as more than a dozen major attractions based on Universal and DreamWorks films. Karen lives in Orange, Calif.

SYLVIA JOHNSON BJORKMAN ’76 was awarded the NC School Psychology Association’s 2010 Innovative Practice Award. She is employed as a school psychologist with Pitt County Schools. Sylvia lives in Greenville.

DENISE CATES BELL ’77, ’82 MBA was voted CFO of the Year by Triad Business Journal. Denise was involved in several high-profile deals that served residents of the Triad including the reclamation of incentives when Dell closed its plant in Forsyth County. Denise also helped secure financing for a new baseball park. Denise is CFO for the City of Winston-Salem and lives there with her husband Don and their two children, Alex and Caroline.

PANSY RUMLEY ’79 MED retired from Wrightsville Beach School after serving as principal for 12 years. Pansy taught for many years before moving into school administration as assistant principal at M.C.S. Noble Middle School. After 10 years, Pansy said she “came to the best job in the world,” when she became principal of Wrightsville Beach School. Pansy ends her career on a high note with the initiation and development of Wrightsville Beach School’s one-of-a-kind marine science program.

Alumni deaths

CHARLOTTE WESTER CATE ’60 MED ANNETTE “NIKI” HEISERMAN DAVIS ’60 CAMELLIA OLESEN GUNN ’60C MAY BONEY KINLAW ’63 KAREN BOSTIAN MCFADYEN ’66, ’75 MED VIRGINIA NEELY DOZIER ’68X MARY REBECCA MURRAY THOMPSON ’68

Sympathy is extended to

BETTY BAKER REITER ’64 in the death of her mother, EDNA CARPENTER BAKER ’37.

1960s

JANE ELLEN HORNOR ’66, ’68 MFA had a solo exhibition of her work, “Columns: Installation, Abstract Paintings and Assemblage,” at the Beaufort Art Center in Beaufort. Jane is a well-known artist who works in a number of media including sculpture, installation, watercolors and acrylics. After living in New England for 40 years, Jane now lives in New Bern.

DR. PAULA MYRICK SHORT ’67, vice chancellor for academic affairs at the Tennessee Board of Regents, has received funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Lumina Foundation to support college completion initiatives in higher education. Paula co-authored an article in the winter 2010 issue of Enrollment Management Journal titled “Leading Developmental Education Redesign to Increase Student Success and Reduce Costs.” She has also served on a national panel, “Getting Past CoE: Using Policy to Improve Developmental Education and Increase College Success,” at the annual meeting of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities in Dallas. Paula lives in Nashville.

Alumni deaths

CHARLOTTE WESTER CATE ’60 MED ANNETTE “NIKI” HEISERMAN DAVIS ’60 CAMELLIA OLESEN GUNN ’60C MAY BONEY KINLAW ’63 KAREN BOSTIAN MCFADYEN ’66, ’75 MED VIRGINIA NEELY DOZIER ’68X MARY REBECCA MURRAY THOMPSON ’68

Sympathy is extended to

BETTY BAKER REITER ’64 in the death of her mother, EDNA CARPENTER BAKER ’37.
L.A. stories and scripts

When you’re sitting in “The Room,” brainstorming for the next big Showtime series, “Nurse Jackie” starring Edie Falco, you call on everything you’ve got. Googling funny incidents from hospitals. Pitching and shooting around jokes, scenarios and random ideas. Like the other 10 writers in that room, you draw on your entire past as well.

JOHN HILARY SHEPHERD ’88 came of age as a big movie nut. He loved the 1970’s big-budget disaster films like “The Poseidon Adventure” and George Lucas’ “Star Wars.” All the Spielberg movies fueled his obsession through his teenage years in Greensboro.

Only a few universities nationally offered a film production MFA. That’s what he wanted. He knew that meant the program would certainly have the equipment and professors and classes he wanted. UCLA, NYU, Columbia did. So did UNCG. “I thought it was really cool one of those few MFA programs was in my hometown.”

He didn’t want theory; he wanted film production training and know-how.

He took both lower level and upper level classes as an undergraduate. “I loved it.” He graduated in 3 ½ years in 1988 with a Broadcasting and Cinema major (now Media Studies).

His two screenwriting courses under Tony Fragola were pivotal. “I still remember and use some of what I learned in his classes.” And two classes under Fred Chappell, “Film as Literature” and a short story writing class, helped him focus on his writing as well.

After attending the graduate level American Film Institute program in screenwriting, his first job in Los Angeles was developing scripts at Aaron Spelling’s company, which produced movies like “The Usual Suspects.” Then, he worked in the story department of the William Morris Agency. That led to being a staff writer for the initial season of “Nurse Jackie.”

In the first month, all the writers went back and forth from their offices to “The Room,” where they’d pitch to each other and trade ideas. The central character, Jackie, was to be a flawed, obsessive-compulsive prescription-drug-addicted emergency room nurse that would appeal to Showtime viewers. The writers found that quite a tightrope to walk. And how to flesh out all the other characters and plot lines?

After a month, each writer was assigned an episode to write. The initial scripts were then critiqued as each writer pitched theirs. “I loved the communal experience,” John says.

After a round of downsizing at the end of the year, he was no longer with the show. But with that first season – which was nominated for the Writers Guild Award for Best New Series – he had his first production credit.

And he still sees some fruits of his labor. One supporting role, the young nurse Zoe, was one he was drawn to early on. “She was the newbie. I felt like a rookie myself.”

He’d just seen Merritt Wever in “Michael Clayton,” and called the “Nurse Jackie” producers to recommend they consider her for Zoe. “They loved her. I was a little responsible for finding that actor.” Over three seasons, she has become an essential character.

A contact in the industry had started Cross Creek Pictures and hired him as director of development. John is the gatekeeper – the writers and the agents pitch to him. And he reads scripts in addition to going out and looking for stories.

The company’s first film, “Black Swan,” was wrapped up before he joined. “The Ides of March” starring George Clooney among others, premiered last month. He had little involvement, though when executive producer Leonardo DiCaprio chose not to play the lead role, John helped develop the list of potential lead actors. The role went to Ryan Gosling.

Their “The Woman in Black,” a creepy ghost story starring Daniel Radcliffe, comes out early next year. Many other projects are in the pipeline, such as one Ron Howard is directing about Formula One racing in the 1970s.

All the while, he is adapting a Cherie Priest novel into a script for the company: “Boneshaker.” It’s set in Seattle after the 18th century Gold Rush. “‘Boneshaker’ is going to make for a super cool, period, steampunk zombie movie,” he says. “I’m having a blast writing it.”

profile

1980s


GEORGE “AL” WRIGHT ’80 retired from Guilford County Emergency Medical Services as a paramedic after 32 years of service. Al lives in Oak Ridge.

DANIESE HEDRICK SMITH ’82 was named the N.C. Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher of the Year for 2011 at the June Guilford County Board of Education meeting. The award is sponsored by the N.C. Farm Bureau. Daniese teaches at Alamance Community College.

Michael Taylor ’85 EDD retired in August after serving as president of Stanly Community College in Albemarle for 15 years. Michael worked for North Carolina Community Colleges for 32 years. He lives in Emerald Isle with his wife.

GINGER WAYNICK ’81, ’97 MPA retired in June as a public information officer serving the Rockingham County Manager’s Office.
WILLIE R. STAFFORD III ’88 was confirmed by the U.S. Senate and sworn in as the United States Marshall for the Middle District of North Carolina in August 2010. Bill retired as Greensboro’s assistant chief of police. Before his new position, he worked as an independent contractor/consultant for companies providing pre-employment screening and promotional testing for law enforcement agencies. Bill lives in Greensboro with his wife, Jan.

DARI ROWEN ’89 earned a doctorate in ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago in May. Dari pastors a congregation in Bryan, Ark.

Sympathy is extended to RICHARD MCFADYEN ’82 MBA in the death of his wife, KAREN BOSTIAN MCFADYEN ’66, ’75 MED.

JULIE MCGEHEE-OLDANI ’94
KELLY JEAN COX ’97, ’02
JEFFREY AARON PRITCHETT ’97

1990s

LAURA LORENZ ’90, ’97 MPA is the Downtown Greenway assistant with Action Greensboro. The Downtown Greenway is a planned four mile walking and biking trail that will loop around downtown Greensboro.

CHRISTIE CORNWELL ’91 MED was one of six umpires to earn a spot on the Women’s College World Series tournament held in Oklahoma City in June. Christie is certified by the International Softball Federation and was selected to umpire the games at the 19-and-under Junior World Championships in Cape Town, South Africa, last December. Christie is a licensed counselor and owns the Cornwall Center for Behavioral Health. She lives in Greensboro.

JONATHAN D. GREEN ’92 PHD was appointed provost and dean of the faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, Ill., on Aug. 1. Prior to his appointment at Illinois Wesleyan, Jonathan had a 15 year career at Sweet Briar College where he served as dean of the college and vice president for academic affairs. Jonathan will join the faculty at Illinois Wesleyan as a professor of music.

Congratulations to INDIA OCHS ’95, ’99 MPA on the birth of her son, Jack Camden, April 28, 2010. India lives in Annapolis, Md.

PAULA NELSON PATCH ’97 is the coordinator of College Writing at Elon University where she has served as a lecturer in English for five years.

Evangelin Chapman-Wall ’97 was awarded a PhD in comparative literature from the University of South Carolina in August.


Pauline Desjarlaits ’99 MSN is a nurse planner and chair of the Continuing Education Provider Unit Committee for the Association of Rehabilitation Nurses. Pauline is a consultant for the Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation in Buffalo, N.Y. She is the proud grandmother of six grandchildren and lives in West End.

Alumni deaths

MICHAEL HALL ’00 premiered “Canopy” by composer Mara Gibson for viola and fixed media at the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Mo., on April 29. Michael was also the featured soloist at the 2011 Thailand International Composition Festival in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Michael performs regularly with the Chicago Philharmonic Orchestra and is on the faculties at the Chicago Academy for the Arts, VanderCook College of Music and Illinois Wesleyan University.

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PERRY JAMES STUDEVANT JR. ’00 received a master’s of science in technology systems from East Carolina University in May.

LIBBA BOYD ’01 was honored with The University of West Alabama’s Julia S. Tutwiler Educator of the Year Award in Counseling. The award, named for the institution’s first president, honors excellence in education by identifying outstanding educators in the areas of Early Childhood/Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Counseling and Instructional Leadership. Libba lives in Roxboro.

TERRILL LOPEZ DRAKE ’01 was promoted to executive director of the Office of Smith Programs and Events at the University of Maryland Robert H. Smith School of Business. Terrill oversees more than 250 annual events and programs hosted by the Smith School. Terrill is pursuing an executive master’s of business administration at the Robert H. Smith School of Business.

Congratulations to ERIC JACKSON ’01 on the birth of his daughter Ansley Cora Jackson, July 7.

AMANDA OSBORNE ’01 is the campaign director for Big Brothers Big Sisters in the Greater Kansas City area. She is a partner for Harsook Companies, based in Greensboro.

JONATHAN MATTIOLI ’01 was appointed as executive director of the State Justice Institute after serving as deputy director for the agency. Congratulations to Jonathan on the birth of his son, Benjamin Dominick Mattioli, Jan. 2, 2010, who joins his sister, Caroline Paige. Jonathan and his family reside in Fairfax, Va.

CATHERINE ALTICE ’02 received a master’s of fine arts in Studio Art from Johnson State College / Vermont Studio Center, graduating with honors. Catherine is a mixed media artist who owns the Tin Roof Gallery and Studio in West Jefferson.

PAULA HEFFERIN-BARGER ’02 is the volunteer manager for the Shepherd’s Center of Greensboro.

BEVERLEY SMITH ’02 is a student at NC Central Law School.

BRIAN COCKMAN ’03 established Rooster Communications in August 2010. Brian’s company serves clients ranging from North Carolina nonprofits to international manufacturing corporations. Brian lives in Greensboro.

KIMBERLY COFIELD DOZIER ’03 was named the 2011 Distinguished Social Worker of the Year at the Edgecomb County Department of Social Services. Kimberly is a level II child care social worker and lives in Tarboro with her husband Anson.

JONATHAN LUCAS ’03 is the senior consultant and national coordinator for RefugeeWorks, located in Baltimore.


ASHLEY HOWZE ’04 was appointed director of development for the Winslow Cancer Institute at Emory University in Atlanta.

Congratulations to KEVIN BOTTOMLEY ’06 and his wife Rachel on the birth of their third son, Nash Kruz, July 22, 2010. He joins his brothers, Nate and Nicholas.

ANDREA SMITH MILLER ’06 is the public relations director for Caldwell Academy in Greensboro.

KYLE WOLF ’07 is a budget and management analyst for Forsyth County. Kyle previously worked for the City of Greensboro.

Congratulations to STACY HARTMAN GIDCUMB ’08 on the birth of her son, Caleb Talon, Oct. 16, 2010.

SCOTT TESH ’08 is budget analyst for the City of Winston-Salem. Scott was previously the finance director in the Town of Gibsonville.

PAUL ZANOWSKI ’09 is the head of the Upper School at The Ranney School in Tinton Falls, N. J.

Congratulations to CHRISTIE ANN MURPHY ’10 on the birth of her son. Christie teaches in the Guilford County School System.

ASHLEY NICOLE BOWMAN ’10 joined Guilford College Residence Life in July 2010 as hall director and student success mentor. Ashley helps to improve retention efforts through an individualized mentoring program.

AUBREAH COLLINS ’10 is the program coordinator for the Diversity IT Institute at UNC Charlotte.

SHANA DICAMILLO ’10 accepted a position with the State University of New York Research Foundation in the Geology Department at the University of Buffalo.

CLIFTON RAY JOHNSON ’10 is serving on a research team for the Association of College Unions International (ACUI) conducting research on advisors’ roles in student organizations. Clifton presented at the regional ACUI conference on the topic “Centralized Scheduling for a Decentralized Campus.” He lives in Washington.

CARRIE MARIA MILLER ’10 is the director of marketing for the Eastern Music Festival in Greensboro.

KATHLEEN PATTERSON ’10 is the operations manager for the N.C. Center for Global Logistics. She lives in Greensboro.

AMANDA LEIGHANN GOODMAN ’11 is a user experience librarian at the Darien Public Library in Connecticut. Amanda lives in Norwalk.

UNCG MAGAZINE

FALL 2011 • VOLUME 14, NO. 1
ISSN 1525 9838

UNCG Magazine is published by University Relations
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
PO Box 26170
Greensboro, NC 27402-6170
336-334-5571

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1993 Forest Stewardship Council

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