

Meet the Playwrights

KATRINA BYRD is a graduate of Millsaps College with a BA in History. At age 9 she wrote two pieces which illustrated both her diversity and her vivid imagination. In one piece entitled *I Have A Dream* she dwelled on significant points of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life and then went on to discuss her dreams. Her second piece covered the final defining moments in the life of Terry the Turkey on Thanksgiving Day. In recent years Katrina has written and directed a play entitled *Are You down with OPP (Overwhelming Peer Pressure)*, which was written for her Girls to Ladies Group at Operation Shoestring and addressed teen pregnancy. Katrina was chosen to be a part of the 2006 Hurston/Wright Writers Week based on her submission of a writing sample of her novel entitled *Unwanted Child*, which focuses on the trials, tribulations and successes of a blind girl living in the sixties.

JOHN HOWELL, co-founder of FTW, has spent a great deal of time on stage over the past 20 years, including lead roles in MSU productions of *The Foreigner*, *Look Homeward Angel*, *The Matchmaker*, and *The Crucible*, and playing the role of George in Renais-sance Theatre Workshop's production of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* He also appeared as King Henry in *The Lion in Winter* and as the professor in Ionesco's *The Bald Soprano* for FTW. He also recently appeared in New Stage's production of *Noises Off*. John spent two years as an acting intern and one year as the Education Program director at New Stage, and has served for the last 7 years as the Whole School Arts Integration Program Administrator at Casey Elementary School. John has written two other plays, a musical adaptation of *Through the Looking Glass* (which was FTW's inaugural production), and a short satire, *The Mice*, which was presented at last year's NPP.

BETH KANDER is delighted to be back in Jackson after surviving her first year at the University of Michigan, toiling away at her graduate degree, searching for decent sushi, and scraping snow off her car. Her play *Unshelved* debuts in this year's FTW New Play Project; her plays previously workshopped with FTW include *What You Don't See* and *Terminal*. Beth was an NPP founding coordinator in 2004; she has performed, directed, and had works produced across North America (she made her Canadian debut last August!). Her current day-and-night jobs include full-time graduate student, domestic violence counselor, tutor, peer advisor, grant-writer and freelance writer. She will graduate this coming April, at which time she will have a Master's in Social Work/Non-Profit Management, but probably still no idea what *exactly* she's supposed to do with her professional life. You can find her online at www.bethkander.com.

CHARLES MORGAN AND STEPHEN MORGAN, twin playwrights, revel in the opportunity to present their first co-written play, *Last Rights*. After spending many months underground honing his craft, this play will mark Charles Morgan's first public submission (and production! Two birds with one stone, baby!), and will mark Stephen Morgan's second production, as he is the already acclaimed author of Fondren Theater Workshop's previously produced play, *And Then....* Both brothers share playwriting and screenwriting ambitions, so expect great things from these two brothers on the page, stage, and silver screen!

J C PATTERSON wrote *Voices In The Storm* over a seven-day period while trying to exorcise the Katrina-induced demons from his head. He and his family played host to a New Orleans couple, their 2 beagles, plus a mother-in-law from hell and her cranky Cocker Spaniel for nearly 7 weeks, where they witnessed meltdown, disillusion, and subsequent divorce. JC thanks Diana and Beth for illuminating his work, and thanks the casts of *Last Rights* and *Voices In The Storm* for all their laughter, talent and insight.

SUE STOCK has been writing for years, but *Getting Real* is her first submission to FTW. Her previous works include a full length novel, now in the hands of an agent and a publisher (who knows what next, if anything?), and many unpublished poems and short stories, never submitted anywhere. She hopes to do more plays. Writing and workshopping this one was fun!

JUDY H. TUCKER previously had *The Visit* workshopped and read at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival's Southern Playwrights' Project in 2002. Portions of her play *The Wives* were presented at FTW's 2004 festival; her one act, *The Brooch* was produced at New Stage in 2000. She co-edited and contributed to a short story collection, "From the Sleeping Porch" (Queen's Hill Press) which will debut in the fall of '06. "A Mississippi Childhood," a Judy Tucker-Charline McCord project will be published in '07 by UPM. She is the co-editor and contributor to a series of Christmas anthologies: "Christmas Stories from Mississippi," (UPM), "Christmas Stories from the South," "A Very Southern Christmas," and "Dixie Christmas" (Algonquin). She contributed text to Wyatt Waters' "Painting Home" and "Another Coat of Paint."

GEORGE C. VANCE was a great guy. He used to be funny and charming. He now resides in a lonely cabin in the woods. He has no wife and no children. He had a dog at age twelve, but it was stolen or ran away. He never knew.

fondren theatre workshop



new play project '06

July 13-16, 7:30 p.m., The Rainbow Co-op Plaza
2807 Old Canton Road, Jackson, MS

ROUND ONE - THU & SAT

LAST RIGHTS

by Charles & Stephen Morgan

VOICES IN THE STORM

by J.C. Patterson

UNTIL DEATH DO US PART

by Katrina Byrd

UNSHELVED

by Beth Kander

ROUND TWO - FRI & SUN

THE VISIT

by Judy Tucker

UNBORN GHOSTS

by George Vance

GETTING REAL

by Sue Stock

INTERRUPTED JOURNEY

by John Howell

FTW is pleased to donate a portion of all proceeds of this year's New Play Project to **Operation Shoestring**, a local organization dedicated to improving the lives of youth, and to **The One Campaign**, an international effort to end poverty.

FTW wishes to thank the following for making this year's project possible: Project co-coordinators Beth Kander and Diana Howell; The Clarion Ledger, The Jackson Free Press, Daniel Johnson and The Rainbow Co-op.

Fondren Theatre Workshop is dedicated to building a theatre community, with an emphasis on sharing the creative process as well as the art we create.

ROUND ONE PLAYS

LAST RIGHTS

by Charles Morgan and Stephen Morgan
Directed by J.C. Patterson

Troy James Wood
Red Hannah Bryan
Father Fisher Andrew Davies
Quinn Max Gove

VOICES IN THE STORM

Written and Directed by J.C. Patterson

Newsman J.C. Patterson
Newswoman Skyla Dawn Luckey
Man 1 James Wood
Man 2 Brad Bishop
Woman 1 Tarra Riggs
Woman 2 Jenny Cochran

Intermission - 10 minutes

UNTIL DEATH DO US PART

by Katrina Byrd
Directed by Beth Kander

Angela Neola Young
Gladys Tarra Riggs
Kinesha Katrina Byrd
JoAnne Rebecca Hardin-Thrift
Tyrone John Howell

UNSHELVED

by Beth Kander
Directed by Diana Howell

Rye Sam Sparks
Audrey Patti Meredith
Bill James Anderson

ROUND TWO PLAYS

THE VISIT

by Judy Tucker
Directed by Bettye Edwards

Lillian JoAnne Prichard Morris
Nancy Ginny Webb
Hubert Jeff Murphy
Katherine Jane Sanders

UNBORN GHOSTS

by George Vance
Directed by Sam Sparks

Mary Alyssa Silberman
John James Wood
Mims Max Gove

Intermission - 10 minutes

GETTING REAL

by Sue Stock
Directed by James Anderson

Florence Jane Sanders
Sara Ginny Webb
Agnes Carol Byrnes
Julia Caroline Birchett
Waiter/Stage Director Jeff Murphy

INTERRUPTED JOURNEY

Written and Directed by John Howell

Barney Hill Andrew Davies
Betty Hill Malaika Quarterman
Dr. Simon Jason Moulder

MEET THE ACTORS & DIRECTORS

James Anderson is excited about once again being part of our annual New Playwright series. James directed music and acted in FTW's inaugural offering, John Howell's adaptation of *Through the Looking Glass*. His Chimneyville Readers Theatre, in conjunction with FTW, has presented readings of his adaptations of Truman Capote's *The Thanksgiving Visitor* and *A Christmas Memory* the past two Novembers at Fondren's historic Cedars. An award-winning broadcast producer, James resides in Greater Bolton. He dedicates his work in this series to his Bestest Friend and principal Chimneyville reader, Bettye Edwards, a.k.a. Mrs. God.

Caroline Birchett is delighted to be with FTW again, having last been seen in *Vital Signs*. She started acting at the age of 3 in the Vicksburg Little Theatre and studied acting at All Saints Junior College, University of Southern Mississippi, Pasadena Playhouse, and New York Academy of Theatrical Arts. Having enjoyed many years of acting experience in community theatre, one of her most favorite roles was "Miss Alma" in Tennessee Williams' *Summer and Smoke*.

Brad Bishop is making his first FTW appearance. He was previously seen as Colonel Mustard in the Centerplayers production of *Clue: The Musical*. He is also a founding member of the Off-Kilter Improv group that performs all around Jackson. When not making audiences laugh hysterically, he's busy telling people that he and his friends make audiences laugh hysterically. Seriously, he won't shut up about it. What a jerk.

Hannah Bryan is very excited to be returning to FTW after previous performances in *Vital Signs* and the 2005 New Play Project. Hannah has also been seen performing at Black Rose Theatre and Pike County Little Theatre, and is a founding member of Off-Kilter Comedy & Improv Troupe. She plans to attend the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London this upcoming August to continue her development in contemporary dramatic studies.

Carol Byrnes is making her debut performance with FTW, but she has appeared locally in several community theatre productions, her favorite being Miss Preen in *The Man Who Came To Dinner* with Black Rose Theatre Company. She has directed for Black Rose, and directed *Mame* at St. Joseph Catholic School, where she serves as theatre teacher and thespian sponsor. She is married to Jeff Murphy and has two daughters, Caty and Christina. She says "Break a Leg" to all her fellow actors.

Jenny Cochran joins FTW for the first time this year and she's very excited to be a part of it! Theatre has truly been a love for her and a wonderful outlet since she's a stay-at-home mother of two. She's been performing since high school and college, and recently appeared in *M*A*S*H* with Madison The Center Players, where she is currently serving as Vice-President on its board.

Andrew Davies is making a second go at dramatic theatre, having made his acting debut last February in the Madison Center Players production of Aaron Sorkin's *A Few Good Men* as Lance Corporal Dawson. Born and raised in the Caribbean, Andrew currently works at MadGENIUS Inc. as their Art Director, lives in Jackson, and plays with the Off-Kilter comedy troupe... when they let him.

Bettye Edwards is pleased to be working with FTW again, having previously directed "Clear Glass Marbles" in *Talking With* and appeared in *Vital Signs*. She has done several commercials and films, and she also performs with Chimneyville Readers Theatre, where she portrays Sook Faulk in Truman Capote's *A Christmas Memory* and *The Thanksgiving Visitor*. She has also appeared in two FishTale Group productions. Bettye recently appeared in *The Skin of Our Teeth* at New Stage Theatre.

Max Gove is a 15-year-old who recently completed 10th grade at Madison Central. He is the son of Patti and Gary Gove. Max has been involved in many school and community theater productions. Some of his favorite roles are MacDuff, Nathan Detroit, and Mayor Shinn. Max was a member of the MCHS Jazz Band as well as the First Symphonic Band. Some of his hobbies include playing Ultima, walking around Madison with his friends, and fighting the Scurvy Turtle for his treasure.

Rebecca Hardin-Thrift
Rebecca Hardin-Thrift is originally from Belmont, NC. She is currently an Assistant Professor of English and Drama at Tougaloo College, where she teaches creative writing, composition, drama and directs a student play each semester. In 2002 she wrote and performed her one woman show, *The Becky Show*, at New York's International Fringe Festival. Her short stories have appeared in Washington Square, The Bellevue Literary Review, Karamu, and in the online journal Crate. She is also co-editor of an online journal, 27 rue de fleurs.

Diana Howell, a founding member of FTW, has served in some capacity for every one of its productions to date, including directing, producing, publicity, hospitality, lighting and sound, box office, and pretty much any thing that needs doing. She and her husband John have lived in Fondren for 10 years, and are both amazed and gratified by the number of people from all over the n metro area who continue to join FTW to work, play, and enjoy the fruits of our collective labor, as well as the outstanding support they have received from the Fondren Renaissance Foundation.

Skyla Dawn Luckey has appeared numerous times in FTW projects, including roles in the first New Play Project and in *Vital Signs*. Skyla also has several local and regional commercial credits, and has performed with the Madison Center Players, and currently works as the traffic reporter for Clear Channel Radio.

Patti Meredith is thrilled to be included in the FTW readings, especially portraying Audrey. Patti met the FTW crew at the Beckett celebration and loved the experience & people. Patti performed at Center Players in *Rehearsal for Murder* & has done commercials, TV, & mystery theatre in the Tampa Bay area. Patti will be seen in an upcoming DVD film called *Ex-mas Eve*.

Jason W. Moulder is a freelance designer and illustrator who has been involved in community theatre for several years. Past credits include *Arcadia* and *The Bald Soprano* with FTW and *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* with Clinton's Brick Street Players. Jason will be concluding his acting career with this performance. (*Producer's note: not if we have anything to say about it!*)

Jeffery Murphy is making his first appearance with FTW. He previously has appeared in *Naz* at Black Rose Theatre in Brandon and in *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* with the Terry Station Players. Jeffery is an ordained minister with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and is a chaplain at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. He is married to Carol Byrnes and is step-father to Caty Bird of Hattiesburg and Christina Cavanaugh of Chicago.

JoAnne Prichard Morris is making her second appearance with the Fondren Theatre Workshop, having appeared in the "Lamps" monologue in 2004's *Talking With...* Like the woman she portrayed in "Lamps," her character in this one, Aunt Lilian, is a batty old bag. ("Am I being type cast?" she wonders. Not to worry, however, JoAnne much prefers batty to boring!) She appreciates the contribution FTW makes to our community and is proud to be a part of Judy Tucker's splendid new play, *The Visit*.

Malaika Quarterman is making her second harrowing appearance with FTW, having suffered being murdered by her now-current director John Howell in January's production of *The Lesson*. Malaika is a graduate of Belhaven College, and is director and founder of the Mississippi Theatre Academy. Prior favorite productions in which she's appeared include *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Braids*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, and *Love's Labors Lost*.

Tarra Riggs is excited to be a part of FTW for the first time. Tarra has recently completed filming and is extremely thrilled about the release of the independent film Ballast due to be released in the fall of 2006, in which she stars as Marlee Sykes. She most recently appeared as Wanda in *Crowns* at New Stage, *Rehearsal for Murder* (Madison Center Players) and *You Can't Take it With You* (The Brick Street Players of Clinton). Originally from Illinois, Tarra resides in Jackson with her husband and two children.

Jane Sanders is making her third appearance with FTW, having appeared in two sketches in 2005's production of *Vital Signs*, and playing Mrs. Martin in this past January's production of Ionesco's *The Bald Soprano*. She was very active in theatre in college, and played the lead role of Lizzie in *The Rainmaker* for Jackson Little Theatre. Jane is an attorney and founder of Legal Resources, a legal staffing company.

Alyssa Silberman, a Jackson attorney, can now call herself an FTW veteran, having appeared in *Talking With*, *Vital Signs*, the world premiere of John Webb's *The Sound of Steel* (which was first introduced at the 2004 New Play Project), and *The Bald Soprano*. She has also appeared in *Dracula* with Clinton Brick Street Players, *Beau Geste* with Black Rose Theatre, and *M*A*S*H* with the Madison Center Players.

Sam Sparks is the production manager and resident set designer for New Stage Theatre. He directed FTW's production of *The Lion in Winter*, and at New Stage has directed *Santaland Diaries*; *A Christmas Carol*; *Moby Dick*; *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*; and *The Magician's Nephew*.

Ginny Webb made her acting debut at last year's New Play Project in Beth Kander's *What You Don't See*. She came to Jackson as a teenager by way of Cincinnati, OH and Alexandria, VA. She is a Family Nurse Practitioner in the Division of Geriatrics at UMC.

James Wood has been involved in theater since high school, and was most recently seen in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* at Actor's Playhouse in Pearl. He has also appeared in *Cheaper by the Dozen* and *1940's Radio Hour* for Madison's Center Players, and served as assistant director for their production of *A Few Good Men*. James is a Fondren resident, and in real life sells radio advertising.

Neola Young has been a long-suffering theatre widow of Fondren housemates Beth Kander and Sam Sparks for a few years, but is finally making her FTW debut. A Jackson native, she graduated from Millsaps with a degree in history, and now works at the Institute for Southern Jewish Life. Her first theatrical role was that of a statue in a play about a talking cat, but she now appears weekly at karaoke as Tina Turner, and is always seeking other fellow "instigators."