

**ASTR**  
*American Society for Theatre Research*

**Minutes of the Fall 2010 ASTR Annual Business Meeting  
Renaissance Seattle Hotel, Seattle WA  
20 November 2010**

The President called the meeting to order at 1:52 pm.

**1) Approval of the Minutes of Fall 2009 meeting--Blair**

**MOTION:** to approve the minutes of the Fall 2009 Annual Business Meeting. Moved by Sell, seconded by Chansky. **The motion carried by acclamation.**

**2) In memoriam: Vera Mowry Roberts, George Woodyard, Helen Krich Chinoy, and Oscar Brockett**

David Savran offered words of remembrance for Vera Mowry Roberts, who was a pioneer of theatre studies and a master teacher who worked to legitimate theater as an object of study. She was co-founder of Washington's Arena Stage, and taught for fifty years at CUNY, helping to establish its PhD program in Theater in 1968. She was in many ways a founder of our discipline, having promoted both the study of women in theater and the study of American theater in general.

Patricia Ybarra spoke in remembrance of George Woodyard, who taught in the University of Kansas Spanish Department for forty years. A scholar of Latin American theatre, Woodyard was best known for founding and editing the *Latin American Theater Review*, as well as editing many anthologies on Latin American theatre.

Rhonda Blair memorialized Helen Krich Chinoy, who was a leading theater historian of American theater and a pathbreaker for women in American theater. Chinoy co-edited two fundamental resources for theater research, *Actors on Acting* and *Directors on Directing*, and also authored the monograph *Reunion* about the Group Theater, with whom she worked. She was a significant contributor to research on women in theater.

Charlotte Canning offered words in memory of Oscar Brockett, whose contribution to theater history is well known to members of ASTR. We mourn him because he was a warm, humorous, and thoughtful person. A generous mentor, Brockett reached out to students and always made them feel like they had something to offer. He continually embraced new ideas, and was willing to be challenged and disrupted. We have all lost someone who gave us more than we could ever return.

**3) Announcements--Blair**

--Thank you to outgoing EC members Daphne Lei, Ramon Rivera-Servera, Rebecca Schneider, Brandi Catanese, and GSC Representative Charlotte McIvor for their service to ASTR.

--Congratulations and welcome to new EC members: Gay Gibson Cima, Elinor Fuchs, Heather Nathans, Brian Herrera, and to incoming GSC Representative Kimi Johnson.

--Thanks and congratulations to conference chairs Anthea Kraut and Nadine George-Graves for their superb work in putting this great event together, and thank you to CORD for joining us.

--Thanks to the donors who sponsored our receptions, including Cambridge University Press, Choreographic Practices (Journal of University of Northampton), University of Iowa Press, and the University of Washington School of Drama and Center for Performance Studies.

--Thanks to silent auction organizers and facilitators Jenna Kubly, Deleah Silva, Michelle Granshaw, Kellyn Johnson, and Nancy Erickson, and thanks to all who donated items.

--Thanks to all of our exhibitors, we had 12 this year, an increase from previous years.

#### **4) Secretary's Report—Arons**

##### **a) Membership and Conference Registration**

Conference registrations this year numbered 630, our largest attendance ever. The current membership total stands at 559, which includes 323 Regular members, 204 Students, 27 Retired, and 5 Honorary Members.

##### **b) 2010 Election**

Thanks to Sean Sewell & Nancy Erickson for once again creating an electronic ballot. In addition to the EC members already introduced by the President, Mechele Leon was elected as the new at-large member of the Committee on Conferences, and Laura Edmondson as the new EC member on the Committee on Conferences. There were no changes to the bylaws.

##### **c) Website**

A reminder that minutes from EC meetings and from the general meeting can be found on the website, along with the handbook detailing ASTR policies and procedures and describing the work of all of the committees. The results of the membership survey will be posted to the website after it has been redacted to protect respondents' anonymity.

#### **5) Vice President's Report--Wolf**

--Thanks to Nancy Erickson for conference organizing, and to Nadine George-Graves & Anthea Kraut for their excellent hard work as program chairs. Thanks to all for attending, and to all on the Committee on Conferences for their continued work on the conference.

--2011 Conference: The CFP for our 2011 Conference in Montreal is in the registration packet, the theme will be "Economies of Theatre." Thanks in advance to Nic Ridout for his work as Program Chair.

--2012 Conference: Our conference in 2012 will be held in Nashville, the Program Chairs will be Patricia Ybarra and Patrick Anderson.

--Any thoughts and feedback on the current conference would be welcome to the Vice President, in particular she would appreciate feedback on the joint conference and on your reception of the Concurrent Paper Panels.

**6) Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Archive Preservation/ American Theatre Archive Project—Ken Cerniglia & Susan Brady**

Last year an ad hoc committee was struck to start up an exciting and ambitious project to get theatres to commit to archival plans. The committee drafted a development plan that was approved by the EC over the summer, and made progress toward its goals.

The overall goals of the project are: to preserve records of current theatrical activity for future generations; to promote a better understanding and appreciation of theatre and its preservation; to encourage scholarly research in contemporary American theatre; to support active collaborations among theatre archivists, dramaturgs, and scholars; and to increase funding for establishing and maintaining theatre archival repositories.

The committee has successfully submitted an application to the NEA for \$100,000; if this grant is awarded, then the project can proceed with its outreach to theatres, beginning with the launch of a website. To date, the project has recruited seventy volunteers in local teams to begin local surveys of local theaters. There is still room for more to get involved. If a member is interested in getting in on the ground level, email [archivetheater@gmail.com](mailto:archivetheater@gmail.com). Thanks to all who are already on board.

**7) Treasurer's Report--Nellhaus**

Our investments currently stand at \$537,000; our portfolio is recovering well from the economic crash. At 630 attendees, our conference attendance is about 35% more than we forecast, which equals revenue that goes to the benefit of the organization. Many thanks to Nancy Erickson for the assistance she provides in financial matters on a regular basis.

**8) GSC Report—Charlotte McIvor & Kimi Johnson**

--McIvor expressed thanks to President Rhonda Blair, members of the EC, and to Nancy Erickson. Congratulations and thanks to incoming GSC President Kimi Johnson and to outgoing VP James Lang and Secretary Jenna Kubly. Many thanks also to all who helped organize this year's silent auction.

--This past year the GSC has continued to expand resources to grads, it has maintained a quarterly newsletter, and has increased its facebook presence. Graduate students have been pivotal to the development of *ASTROOnline*. It is a difficult time in the field, and the GSC is trying to be positive and create resources. McIvor extended an invitation to all graduate students to attend the GSC meeting at the conference. Thanks to the EC for its support and advocacy for graduate students.

--Incoming GSC Representative Johnson expressed thanks to McIvor for her tireless work over the past year; she has set the bar high. Johnson announced her plans to build on the foundations laid by the previous three GSC presidents, and wants to launch new initiatives to support

graduate scholarship, teaching, and career development. She encouraged graduate students to join the GSC, give ideas, and volunteer leadership. Thanks to the ASTR population in general and President Blair in particular for advocacy for graduate students.

### **9) TLA Report--Schlesinger**

--Schlesinger noted that TLA is proud of its long association with ASTR, and that the relationship between the two organizations has never been stronger. TLA is an association of librarians, archivists, curators, and scholars, and at \$30/year for membership, it's a bargain. He encouraged GSC members to join in particular. TLA's current and future events include the recent publication of *Performing Arts Resources 27*, documenting costume design; and the upcoming symposium "Holding up the Mirror" on April 22 2011 at the Lincoln Center. ASTR members can attend at a discount.

### **10) President's Report--Blair**

a) Website: the new website is a significant improvement over the prior site in its range of materials and service to the membership. Thanks to website editor Matt Omasta, his associate editors, and to Webmaster Jim Groom, who are continuing to work on improving how it looks. Thanks to the ad hoc website committee chair Brandi Catanese and committee members Bruce McConachie, Charlotte McIvor, and Jim Peck for making this project a success. This committee has been disbanded, and a new committee has been struck, chaired by Publications Chair Susan Bennett, to focus on defining the responsibilities of website editor and webmaster, and the relationship between ASTR's website services and those offered under the new contract with Cambridge UP for *Theatre Survey*.

b) *Theatre Survey*: Susan Bennett has done a stunning job of negotiating a new contract with CUP, which not only includes better financial terms for ASTR but also lays the groundwork for moving from a two issue to three issue schedule. The new contract also opens opportunities for website coordination, and it includes the digital archive of back issues to Vol. 1.1, which will be available online next year. Thanks to Susan for her monumental amount of work on this negotiation.

c) Nominating committee: Thanks to NC Chair John Lutterbie and committee members Amy Cook, Henry Bial, Karen Shimakawa, Natalya Baldyga, and Koritha Mitchell for their work in bringing a wonderful slate of candidates to the EC for approval. It is complete but for one candidate, and has been approved. The full slate will be announced in Spring.

d) Ad Hoc Committee on Membership Assessment: Thanks to Scott Magelssen and his committee, Chase Bringardner and Charlotte McIvor for doing this important survey work. The report shows ASTR to be a complex and vital organization; it lays out in concrete terms some of the commonalities, differences, hopes, frustrations, and challenges we face. The President called on Magelssen to present his report.

Magelssen expressed thanks to the committee members, President Blair and the other officers, and to all who took time to fill out survey to provide information. Thanks as well to Nancy Erickson and Shaun Sewell for setting up the survey on line. Some of the results were expected, some were surprising and contradictory. The result is a 65 page report which will be made

available online after some redacting—members will certainly find it fascinating. The EC is going to continue to work with this material as we think about the future direction of the organization.

e) Ad Hoc Committee on New Paradigms in Graduate Education: Chair Heather Nathans and her committee—J. Ellen Gainor, Odai Johnson, Esther Kim Lee, and Charlotte McIvor are exploring ways that ASTR might address changing paradigms in the profession to support our members personally and programmatically. The President called on Nathans to present her report.

Nathans thanked the members of her committee and explained that it has taken on the task of working in conjunction with the PhD Consortium formed by Esther Kim Lee to investigate how to proactively support graduate programs and institutions that are facing challenges and may need to be able to respond to challenges in quick agile creative ways.

f) Fundraising: It takes resources to support what we do; all are invited to be part of lifting up our projects—please make gifts large or small. Any amount will be welcome. Please think about what you get from the society and if you are able to contribute. We are hoping that when the economy recovers we will be able to restore monetary amounts to awards that have been defunded.

## **11. Adjournment**

MOTION: to adjourn. Moved by Sell, seconded by Dolan. Motion passed by acclamation.