



The Kennedy Center

OPENING STAGES

**A Quarterly Newsletter for People with Disabilities Pursuing Careers in the
Performing Arts**

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READERS' ALERT

Opening Stages is always interested in hearing from our readers about pertinent programs, resources and events, as well as ideas for articles. We can pay a modest fee for articles we accept. Contact us at access@kennedy-center.org.

FROM THE EDITOR: IMAGINE

This past June I had the privilege of attending the 2004 VSA arts International Festival in Washington D.C. as an official literary artist. I gave a reading of one of my non-fiction works and spent the rest of my all too brief time in the capital taking in Festival events and exhibits, sightseeing and visiting friends and colleagues.

Although I could quibble with some aspects of how the Festival was run, overall I had a great time. Washington is a stimulating place -- the hub of political power, rich in wonderful museums, and full of beautiful and stirring monuments to great men and great ideals. But what made the atmosphere most exciting was being surrounded by nearly a thousand fellow artists with disabilities from every state and all around the world.

Throughout the hotel at which most of us stayed and at every Festival venue I encountered people ambulating in all sorts of ways, accompanied by care attendants and service dogs, and speaking in all sorts of languages, including sign. And we all seemed to feel comfortable with each other and made friends and networked enthusiastically. For once, we were not a marginalized, grudgingly tolerated minority. For once, we had the feeling of owning the town.

And I thought: imagine life being like this all the time! If it were, we could shed our self-consciousness. We could go about our business with no doubt that the world would accommodate us. There would be ramps everywhere for those of us with mobility impairments. There would be interpreters everywhere for those of us who are deaf. There would be audio description everywhere for those of us with vision loss. We would

be valued for the wonderful creativity that we bring to our lives and art, not looked down on for what we lack. We would be proud, free and happy.

The Festival was only four days, but it gave us a stunning glimpse of possibilities. I know that I came back more inspired than ever to pursue my art and more determined than ever to advocate for that kind of world.

Paul Kahn

GUEST FEATURE

SUCCESS IN THE PERFORMING ARTS by Jon-Michael Hernandez and Liz Ortiz-Mackes

Editor's note: This article is adapted from a workshop the authors presented at the 2004 VSA arts International Festival. Jon-Michael Hernandez is an actor, an admissions counselor for the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York and a person with a disability. Liz Ortiz-Mackes is a New York City based independent casting director.

Introduction: Liz Ortiz-Mackes

Part of my job as an independent casting director is to make the unaware (my clients) aware of other choices in casting. This always pushes a button of fear and ignorance, and I gently encourage clients to be open to auditioning actors with disabilities. Why not a person with a disability, if he or she is brilliant and right for the role? This is not charity; it comes down to one word -- TALENT. I am very clear with artists with disabilities when I say, in addition to everything else you have to deal with in this unfair life, your challenge is to be better actors than the non-disabled.

Body and Self-Image: Jon-Michael Hernandez

Body and self-image are an integral part of the artists' life, especially for actors and singers! Just as a piano or violin can convey a musician's artistic intention, so the human body (once trained) can convey a variety of emotional truths. My own personal journey with body and self-image has been a challenge. My biggest obstacle to overcome as an actor had been my disconnection from my body. As a result of my disability, I had become this big "talking head." I thought, if I stayed still long enough, perhaps people wouldn't notice that I was disabled and would take me seriously as an artist. What I didn't realize was that my disconnection from my body actually hindered my work. Through training and personal introspection, I realized that my physicality was one of the most important tools I had as an artist. In a vast sea full of other performers, my body, my instrument, was what truly set me apart. In short, the very thing I thought was a disadvantage as a performer turned out to be one of my greatest assets. When I finally embraced my body, my work as an artist took on a new level of strength, maturity, and honesty. I realized level that I liked who I was, and that person was

shaped, in part, by disability. I needed to take the risk and expose who I truly was. It all comes down to owning yourself, giving yourself permission just to be you.

Creating Your Brand: Liz Ortiz-Mackes

Creating your brand, means putting together marketing tools that showcase the uniqueness of who you are and your talent. A perfect example is one of the most talented and successful persons with a disability that I know, Anita Hollander. For marketing ideas check out her website www.anitahollander.com. (Editor's note: See our interview with Anita on page 7.)

Another great tool is The Non-Traditional Casting Project (NTCP), a not for profit organization, the mission of which is to promote diversity in casting. NTCP is a nationally recognized source for artists of color and artists with disabilities. Its main service is the Artists Files On-Line program, which will post headshots and resumes of actors free of charge. This service is used as part of the casting process for hundreds of projects every year. The NTCP website is www.ntcp.org.

Artist Representation: Liz Ortiz-Mackes

The difference between an agent and manager is 5%. That means the commission by law that agents can receive is 10%, as they are state and union regulated. Managers do not operate under the same regulations and can charge anywhere between 15-25%. Another basic difference between an agent and a manager is attention to career strategy. An agent really operates like an employment agency, referring actors for different jobs without much hand holding. Managers will have fewer clients and will work closely with their clients to develop industry relations and to groom them professionally. But those things are not nearly as important as training and developing your craft as an artist.

Auditions: Liz Ortiz-Mackes

Auditioning for any actor is not the best way to evaluate talent but unfortunately is the only way. Audition skills are like any other, akin to a muscle being exercised. The more you do it the easier and more flexible the process will be. Actors get cast because of the unique persona that they bring to the role they are trying out for. Whether it's Shakespeare or a cheese commercial, your uniqueness, fused with your ability to work the material, is what makes a successful audition. Performers need to embrace who they are and not try to become what they think the casting director is looking for.

Education – Training For The Performing Arts: Jon-Michael Hernandez

An artist's education is perhaps the most important ingredient for a successful career. Not every school, college, university or conservatory is right for every person. It is important to research and visit each educational institution you are interested in. Find out what they teach: What techniques and theories do they use? How they teach: How are students placed in classes? What is the student to teacher ratio? Who are their instructors? Ask for biographies of their current teaching staff. And who are their alumni? A school's alumni are its product, so a real way to measure the success of a school's program is to review the artistic careers of their alumni. Below is a brief

reference list of search engines and websites that can assist you in your search for the educational program that is right for you.

Petersons www.petersons.com (website which lists information and links to major colleges, universities and conservatories by major and location)

Performing & Visual Arts College Fairs www.nacac.com (meetings with admissions counselors of performing and visual arts colleges, universities and conservatories at various locations throughout the United States)

Dramatics Magazine www.etassoc.org/publications/dramatics.asp (magazine and website devoted to the performing arts)

Dance Magazine www.dancemagazine.com (magazine and website devoted to dance)

Dance Spirit Magazine www.dancespirit.com (magazine and website devoted to dance, publishes yearly issue highlighting dance education)

Backstage www.backstage.com (trade newspaper and website devoted to the performing arts)

Creating Your Own Work & Self-Promotion: Jon-Michael Hernandez

Creating your own work, networking with other artists and self-promotion can lead to great personal success in the performing arts. It isn't always enough to just to be talented, trained and represented. An artist must take responsibility and personally invest in his or her own career.

Creating Your Own Work: Are you an actor, dancer, singer or musician? Have you read any good plays lately that you're just dying to do? Have you heard a great piece of music you're hoping to dance to or sing to? Why not assemble a group of fellow artists and technicians and put up a production in a local venue? It's a great way to keep your skills sharp, plus it's a great opportunity to invite industry (casting agents, managers, agents, press) to see and critique your work.

Self-Promotion: Magazines, e-zines, newspapers, television news magazines, and public service announcements are all free ways of promoting and advertising yourself. The first step is to compile a list of local area media sources (name of establishment, address, phone number and contact person). Next you will need to put together a press kit. This kit will consist of a basic information sheet giving the what, when and where of your event/production. This sheet should also contain a name and contact number for a representative within your group, should the media source require more information. You should also include a professional-looking photo, poster or postcard advertising your event. Someone within your group who is good at computer graphics could easily put something together. A fantastic graphic can get you an interview or even a free advertisement. Once you have sent out your press kit, be sure to follow up with a phone

call to confirm that the media have received your information. Below is a brief list of media sources that promote artists with disabilities and/or are disabled friendly.

Ability Magazine www.abilitymagazine.com

Deaf Nation Newspaper www.deafnation.com

Dialogue Magazine www.blindskills.com (magazine written specifically for persons who are blind or are experiencing sight loss)

Mainstream Magazine www.mainstream-mag.com

New Mobility Magazine www.newmobility.com

Paralinks Magazine www.paralinks.net

PN/Paraplegia News Magazine www.pvomagazine.com

Ragged Edge Magazine www.ragged-edge-mag.com

Time Out Magazine www.timeout.com

PEOPLE

**ANITA HOLLANDER
NEW YORK BASED ACTRESS**

"People don't believe an actress could have one leg, that a person who can sing really well and act really well -- someone who is great onstage -- could have one leg."

How did you get interested in a career in theater?

I've always wanted to be in theater as far back as I can remember. When I was four I got up on a stage for a magic show. They asked for kids to sing and I got up and sang "I'll Know When My Love Comes Along" from *Guys and Dolls*. They were expecting "Mary Had a Little Lamb." Nobody knew quite what I was singing, because the show had just come out. My mom knew that I wanted to do this, so she started taking me to auditions. I got my first professional job when I was eight doing Gretel in *The Sound of Music*. This summer is my fortieth anniversary of doing theater -- both professionally and non-professionally. I've worked all the way through that time.

What have been some of your favorite roles?

Oh, gosh! Well, I have to say this summer something really surprised me and became one of my top ten. I did Grisabella in *Cats* this summer as a three-legged cat. I danced on one leg, and I sang part of "Memories" standing on one leg. It brought a meaning to the song that no one had ever really thought of. It was a great experience for me, because I got to climb all over the set, up and down ladders, slide across the floor, and crawl and do things I have never done before in any other show I've ever been in. For me this was a most liberating experience, because my artificial leg had no place in that show. And the director agreed, and the producer agreed. We all agreed: why would we want to impose an artificial leg in a situation like that, where it was such a perfect opportunity to be just the way I am?

So that role has jetted to the top of my list. But I also premiered a few shows. One was at the Kennedy Center when I did the title role of *Gretty Good Times*, John Belluso's play. That won the Playwright's Discovery award. This play was just phenomenal. The role was phenomenal, and I loved playing it. Gretty was a woman in 1955, just as Salk was creating the polio vaccine. But it was too late for her. She got polio in Germany and came over here with her family. They knew less and less what to do with her. She got shunted around to old age homes, because there were no facilities for people with polio. This fabulous character just proved to everybody that it didn't matter that she couldn't ambulate herself. I had a blast.

At the Olney Theater in Maryland I did another world premiere called *The Fifth Season*, and I got a Helen Hayes nomination for it. It was a musical where my character got shot in the leg and had to have her leg amputated in the second act. In the first act, I danced on both legs and was all over the stage, because I was a dance hall girl. I played the whole second act without my leg. And the audience didn't really think I was one-legged, because I had a skirt and they thought I was making it up. People don't believe an actress could have one leg, that a person who can sing really well and act really well -- someone who is great onstage -- could have one leg. Their minds won't go there. So when they're told that I actually have one leg, they're blown away.

Another favorite role was Fraulein Schneider in *Cabaret*.

I play a lot of everyday people like Meg in *Damn Yankees*. And when I wear my leg and do those roles nobody even has a clue, because I walk really well on the artificial leg. I really want to wipe away the stigma that it's not possible for a person with a disability to have talent. That's why I leave the leg in the dressing room and go off on one leg, because for me it's important for people to know that they have just watched somebody with a disability doing a fantastic job on stage.

"My husband says I'm one of the sights of the city: there are tall buildings, there's the Statue of Liberty, and there's the one-legged girl in Times Square."

So you really want to create an illusion. But afterwards you want people to realize that you do have one leg, so they get that awareness.

Yes, that's enlightenment. They can't look at a person with a disability ever again and think "Oh, that poor person. What kind of life can she have?" There's too much of that. I live in New York, and I walk down the street. I don't wear my leg unless I'm going to an audition or a rehearsal. So, I get all kinds of reactions. My daughter and I have what we call "the look list." My husband says I'm one of the sights of the city: there are tall buildings, there's the Statue of Liberty, and there's the one-legged girl in Times Square. I had an agent who hated that. She hated the fact that I did not wear my leg every day and disguise myself as an able-bodied person all the time. I'm basically more comfortable without the artificial leg. I don't see the need for it, except to make other people more comfortable. Once they talk to me on the street, they're already changing their minds. They go, "Oh. She seems pretty normal. OK, I can accept that." All these things have come about over many years of living and 20 years of living in New York. This agent -- we had a parting of ways because she felt I was sabotaging my career by letting people see me on one leg. She thought that, if I wound up auditioning for that person, all they could think was, "Oh. She has one leg." But I've gotten work all the time I've had one leg.

It certainly seems as if you're a busy person.

I get myself out there. If a manager or agent can't get me the audition, I find a way to get it myself. I don't sit around and wait for the phone to ring. I go out and work very hard to get the work. One thing I always impress upon colleagues who have disabilities is that they're not going to get work unless they get out there and make themselves known by submitting pictures and resumes and pick up a copy of the Ross Reports. They should look for casting directors and get people to know they're there. They should get registered with the Non-Traditional Casting Project and the PWD files at SAG.

"In this business, I feel that the more you can do the better."

You sing, write, compose music, direct and teach. Has having multiple abilities been a conscious strategy for success?

That was necessity. To continue to work I tapped into any kind of talents that I have. Sometimes it happened by accident. Teaching came about by accident. When I got cancer at Carnegie Mellon I was in my junior year, and I missed a lot of school, because my diagnosis and treatment happened in February and March. But I went back to school in April to finish off the term, and I did not want to have to go another year. I stayed the summer and assisted the voice teachers, because I had had such a shock that my voice disappeared. I needed to work to get my voice back. They suggested I serve as an assistant to the voice teachers, based on my experience of having to build my voice back up. They said the high school students would find it incredibly valuable to see someone like me who was using my whole body to get my voice back. Because of that, through the years, I started to get work as a vocal coach and teacher. The teaching has helped me to get work where I might not have gotten the work. I became invaluable, and they said, "You can act in the company."

My musical skills came about when I was really young. My sisters and I all sang together, and I was good at arranging harmonies. I was good at accompanying myself on piano. Sometime around my first operation I started writing songs. If I was up against another actor for a role and the role happened to include singing, I could get the role over the other actor.

In this business, I feel that the more you can do the better. Now I find myself being a musical director at a synagogue in New York as a sideline job. In the winter, I play for services, I sing and I conduct the children's choir. I love children, and I love working with them. That happened because I had a daughter who was a great singer, and I put her in the children's choir. The choir director had to move, and I slipped into the choir director position.

I also teach music at a preschool. I love the fact that I'm working with people of all different ages.

After your surgeries it must have been very difficult to resume what you were doing. Were there particular people who helped you?

When I came back, I had enormous fear, because I had lost my hair and was wearing a wig. And I had lost a lot of weight and looked like a 12-year-old. I didn't have any eyebrows or eyelashes. Many of the students were scared to death of me, because everything was about how they looked. Only maybe two out of the whole class came up and hugged me and acted like everything was fine. They were there for me. The rest were afraid to talk to me, afraid to look at me. They didn't know how to deal with me. They warmed up after a while, but they were very scared.

My teachers were phenomenal. They were only interested in how they could help. And this is at Carnegie Mellon, where the teachers are hard on everybody and people get kicked out, if they're not working hard enough. I was in a big rush to get back. I said to my mom, "I can drive, I can go back to school." The teachers saw this determination -- I was not going to give up. They rose to the occasion. They worked with me privately after classes, and they were the ones who suggested I stay for the summer. They included me in teacher conferences, and they just wanted to build my confidence back up. I got enormous support from the school's financial department. I was able to graduate with my class as scheduled, even though I had a hard time, because I was going through chemo and radiation while I was doing my senior year. And I shed a lot of tears and felt a lot of frustration, but my teachers really believed in me. I got an award in my senior year. I was so surprised, but they looked at me and said, "How could you think it would go to anybody else?"

At the end of my senior year I got Laura in *The Glass Menagerie* as my first professional job in summer stock. It couldn't have been a more perfect role for me, having just gotten a brace on my leg and dealing with cancer. This theater company didn't know me, and they thought I was faking the limp. They hired me right away.

"It's not that I'm out to shock people; it's that I really believe that I have something to give people."

Your autobiographical show *Still Standing* is different, because it's not about illusion; it's about your own experiences. What is it like for you to purposefully discard any attempt at illusion? What is it like for the audience? In part of the show you take off your artificial leg and put it around your shoulder. That seems very immediate and very raw.

It starts right at the beginning of the show. It's not that I'm out to shock people; it's that I really believe that I have something to give people. I walk on stage on two legs, and I start to sing a little bit about my experience. I look at the audience, and I take off my leg, and I sing a very funny song about the benefits of having one leg. So within 60 seconds, the audience has gone from OK this is an actress who has a great voice; now we find out she's not exactly what we thought. She has one leg, and now we find out she's funny. The point is to get the audience to laugh as soon as possible. I learned that from eight years of working in a comedy club, opening for Robin Williams, Rodney Dangerfield, Steven Wright and all those folks.

So, what do you say are the benefits of having one leg?

It starts with, "I live in New York City and get mugged on two legs but don't get mugged on one./The guys who mugged me see me on one leg and say, 'God bless you, hon.'" I only have to shave one leg. And I only have to find one sock. I get a seat on the bus. And "airplane seats are getting very small,/but with one leg it's no problem at all." And there's a section about sex where "sex is spontaneous, and getting there is an art./But when you have to remove your limb the mood sometimes falls apart." At first people are like, "Am I allowed to laugh?" As soon as they laugh, the whole audience relaxes. By the end of the opening number of the show, we're ready to get going. We're ready to deal with whatever the show brings, because we've been through the worst, and now it won't be any harder than that. Then I get into the serious stuff. That stuff can be a little mind blowing for people, like a song about phantom pain. And a song about what it's like at three in the morning when you wonder why you should go on. There are things about love and not being afraid that you'll die, because everybody dies. And a very funny, tender song for my daughter, which is called "Mommy is a mermaid." I wrote it for her before she was born, so she'd have a song for when she wonders why people stare at her mom. A little boy in our building saw me on one leg and asked about me. And his mom said, "Well, you know, she swims at the swimming pool." And he said, "How does she swim with one leg?" And she said, "Beautifully. And she sings, too!" And he said, "Well she must be a mermaid." My daughter has sung this song at the White House and at the Kennedy Center and at Disney World.

Is there anything you haven't done professionally that you'd like to do?

Yes, I want to do a Broadway show really badly. I don't care if it's a musical or not. I would be just as happy to do a dramatic role, or a comedy, or anything. I leave myself open to all possibilities. I've been up for *Ragtime* and *Les Mis*. I got far along in the process in both cases. I live two blocks from the Broadway theaters. I should be able to work there!



Tell me about what you do for other performers with disabilities.

I'm the East Coast national chair of the AFTRA Committee for Performers with Disabilities. Robert David Hall is chair of the West Coast. I think he's also the chair for SAG. But I work with all three unions, including Equity. Robert David Hall and I have worked a lot on getting people to get out there. The industry should be aware that we exist. David has particular projects in mind that he's been working on. He wants to get it in the contracts that we shouldn't be discriminated against. We both find the job a bit daunting. It's not an easy thing, because we're a group that doesn't show up on the diversity reports. We're not on anybody's radar screen.

We don't show up on television enough, and we don't show up on film. The only way we show up is if an able-bodied actor plays us and gets an Oscar. If we're not good enough, don't cast us. But if we are, we should be there. People just assume we don't have any talent. There are so few of us making it out there in the profession. In my case, people don't even know I exist most of the time. But we know that Itzhak Perlman exists, and Marlee Matlin exists, and Robert David Hall exists on *CSI* every week.

"I feel success is when you are making a living at the thing you do best."

There are just a few people who have broken into that level of recognition.

It hasn't been my goal in life to be famous. This is a bone of contention for me when I work with young people. They're very impressed with people who are famous, and they feel that means they're successful. I feel success is when you are making a living at the thing you do best.

Ninety percent of actors are unemployed. So, people raise their eyebrows when they see me. They say, "You always seem to be working." I don't care where it is; I just want to work. Yeah. It's great to get an episode on *Oz* or *The Sopranos*. That's a great thing to add to your resume to give you credibility. It's a business where credibility is important. It's a tough profession for everybody. So, it's that's much tougher for people with disabilities. We have to expect it to be tough and not expect that we're going to convince writers to write roles for us. The truth is you have to get out there and audition like everybody else. We have to nudge at agents and casting directors. That's what every actor has to do.

Can you talk about the importance of professional training?

Training is very important. Go out and get training, so you have the tools for your trade. The point is to get the training and pursue your craft by getting out there and auditioning and promoting yourself and being able to deliver the goods with the training that you have. It's important to have talent to begin with. But once it is recognized, you have to hone it down. I certainly didn't start out with everything I needed. I had to train, and I had to work on my voice. Even when it's in top form, I'm always working on developing it more, because in the last few years I've used three different accents and three different vocal ranges. Training is going to help you last longer and be more eligible for

more types of roles. You have to use all the skills you have to get where you want to go and be prepared to shift gears at a moment's notice.

RESOURCES

THE ACTOR'S CHECKLIST

The Actor's Checklist (<http://www.actorschecklist.com>) is a web site that offers valuable career advancement advice to the professional actor. Topics covered include:

- know your type
- training you will need
- the headshot
- the resume, cover letter and other mass correspondence
- finding an agent
- looking for work
- preparing for an audition
- joining a union
- understanding the role of the casting director
- raise your profile and marketability through the media
- business, tax and legal considerations
- launching your own independent productions

You can also check for news and events affecting your career and post your photo for others to find and view.

NEWS AND NOTES

DEAF MUSIC FESTIVAL AND SYMPOSIUM ISSUES CALL FOR ENTRIES

A Call for Entries has been issued by the 2005 Hawaii Deaf World Music and Sign Language Festival and Professional Symposium. The Festival and Symposium will take place on June 11-12, 2005 at the Hawaii Artsplace Statewide Center for Creative Industries, Pearl City Cultural Center, 2201 Waimano Home Road, Pearl City, Hawaii. Both events are sponsored by VSA arts Hawaii-Pacific, University of Hawaii Center on Disability Studies, Hawaii Services on Deafness, Aloha Association for the Deaf and the Department of Health Developmental Disabilities Division.

Call for Entries to the Music Festival

Musicians and other creative performers, who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or blind, are invited to participate in this two-day international music festival on the island

of Oahu. A Deaf World Cultural Access event, the Festival will feature Beethoven's Nightmare, America's only professional all-deaf band. (Learn more about this group in the next issue of Opening Stages.)

Performers interested in participating in the Festival should send the following items, together in one envelope with a cover letter to:

Dr. Arthur Harvey, Coordinator of Music Education
University of Hawaii at Manoa
2411 Dole St.
Honolulu, HI 96822

- Name of Ensemble/Soloist/Act
- Number of musicians and names
- Contact Person and Contact Information
- Name, address, email, telephone, website
- A recording of the performing ensemble or soloist on either VHS or DVD (Length: Minimum 4 minutes - Maximum 20 minutes) Home recordings or professional releases are suitable. The performers will be chosen based on their performances, not on the recording quality.)
- A photo and bio of the performer(s) (Photos and recordings will not be returned.)
- A short description of your act (2-4 sentences on your sound, style, instrumentation, line, special features, tech requirements)
- A brief statement of why you feel your act should be included in the festival and how it meets the requirements

Notification of Acceptance will be sent by February 28, 2005. Contact Information:

Dr. Arthur Harvey
Tel: (808) 352-6088
E-mail: aharvey@hawaii.edu

Call For Entries to the Symposium

Proposals should address the topic of the "Creative Will: The Implications of Music as a Vehicle for Creative Self-Determination for People Who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Deaf-Blind or Blind." Suitable topics include evidence-based research, best practices, innovations in live performance, assistive and communication software and technology, teaching and communication styles, and evidence of excellence and successes in the advancement and promotion of professional careers in the performing arts by people who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or blind. Exemplary demonstrations of cultural access to fine arts and creative industries are also sought. The symposium will include but not be limited to: music as a tool for teaching sign language; career exploration and professional development strategies for emerging deaf and deaf-blind singers and musicians; successful female artists who are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or blind; and advances in international sign language as a tool for global communication and unity.

All proposals must be submitted in English and must contain the following information in the heading:

- Title
- Topic
- Format preference
- List of presenters/performers (and their affiliations), beginning with the lead presenter, including addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail

Submissions may be sent via e-mail, by fax or by regular mail. They must be composed in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect or ASCII format. Mailed proposals must be on a 3.5 disk. E-mailed proposals should be sent as an attachment or as part of the body of the e-mail. The deadline for submission is January 30, 2005. Abstracts should be mailed to:

Susan Miller
VSA arts of Hawaii-Pacific
University of Hawaii
Center on Disability Studies
Hawaii Deaf World Music Festival and Symposium Program Committee
1776 University Ave., UA 4-6
Honolulu, HI 96822
Tel: (808) 455-6002 or (808) 946-7300/VOICE & TTY
E-mail: millers@hawaii.edu

All communication with the symposium committee will be through Ms. Miller. Submissions should not exceed 150 typed words, and each proposal should be submitted separately. The deadline for submissions is January 30, 2005, and notification of acceptance will be issued by February 28, 2005.

INTERNATIONAL PIANO PARALYMPICS TO BE HELD IN JAPAN

The Institute for Piano Teachers and Disabled in Japan is organizing its first-ever International Piano Paralympics, January 9-10, 2005. Pianists from all over the world with all kinds of disabilities are invited to perform at the Yokohama Mirai Hall in Japan.

According to its prospectus, Piano Paralympics is an intentional music festival for pianists "who have overcome great challenges." It points out that several great musicians had disabilities, among them Ludwig von Beethoven who became deaf, pianist Paul Wittgenstein who lost his right hand in World War I, and the famous Japanese Koto player Michio Miyagi who had a visual impairment.

The real purpose of the festival, the prospectus says, "is not to compete for superiority but to encourage, appreciate and praise special skills through music and to bring awareness of such achievements."

To learn more about the International Piano Paralympics contact

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JACOB K. JAVITS FELLOWSHIPS FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN THE ARTS

The purpose of the Jacob K. Javits (JKJ) Fellowship Program is to award fellowships to eligible students of superior ability, selected on the basis of demonstrated achievement, financial need, and exceptional promise. The fellowships are for graduate study leading to a doctoral degree or a master's degree in selected fields in the arts, humanities, and social sciences from accredited institutions of higher education.

The selected fields in the arts are: creative writing, music performance, music theory, music composition, music literature, studio arts, television, film, cinematography, theater arts, playwriting, screenwriting, acting, and dance.

Applications are currently available, and the deadline for Transmittal of Applications is October 8. To be eligible an applicant must be a citizen or national of the United States, a permanent resident, intending to become a permanent resident, or a citizen of any one of the Freely Associated States.

The estimated average size of awards is \$41,511, and approximately 71 awards will be made. Applicable regulations, priorities, and other information are available in the Federal Register notice of June 29, 2004. Additional information is available online at www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/announcements/2004-2/062904b.html

PROGRAM OFFERS EXPOSURE FOR CHOREOGRAPHERS

DanceBreak, a signature program of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation, is designed to advance the careers of gifted choreographers by giving them unprecedented exposure among industry leaders who hire for major theatrical venues in New York City. Every choreographer who has participated in the program has received a job offer, an interview or agent affiliation as a result of DanceBreak exposure. September 20 is the application deadline, and applications can be downloaded from www.sdcfoundation.org or requested by calling Carrie Siegel, the Foundation's Program Associate at 212-302-5359, ext.243.

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