

# ON CUE

We're back, ready to inform and entertain. We are excited about the new DTC season! At the recent Tech Dinner for *Hair*, a group of Guild-supplied hippies was on hand to meet and serve the cast and crew.

(Julie Katinas, Trey Birkhead, Marla Janco)



## New Members!

With great excitement, we welcome 32 new members!

- Jennifer and Peter Altabef
- Jane Arrington
- Nancy and Clint Carlson
- Pamela Cosgrove
- Kathleen Foley
- Mona and Bill Graue
- Stephanie and Robert Haley
- Tracy and Eric Hanson
- Robert Howell
- Julie Katinas
- Barbara Mathes
- Dawn Mickey
- Maryanne and Dan Odom
- Paula and Scott Orr
- Katherine and Bob Penn
- Annette and James Prince
- Alec Schlinkert
- Bob Tonti
- Otto Wagenbach and Patricia Gregory
- Frances and James Waters
- Jasmine Wynton

## Upcoming Events September - December

Now to Oct. 1	<i>Miller, Mississippi</i>
Now to Oct. 22	<i>Hair</i>
Oct. 31, 5:00 – 6:30	Meet & Greet: <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
Nov. 10	Meet & Greet: <i>Fade</i>
Nov. 19	Tech Dinner: <i>A Christmas Carol</i>
Nov. 22 to Dec. 28	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>
Dec. 3	Tech Dinner: <i>Fade</i>

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NOTE: This first issue of the season is longer than most. There is much to cover as we start a new year of adventures. Enjoy!

*On Cue* welcomes Guild Historian **Judy Birchfield** as Photographer! Her well-composed photos are already adding a great deal.

Don Warnecke, Editor and Writer

## President's Message

Hello members of the Guild,

I hope to help make this a terrific season for the Dallas Theater Center Guild! While sitting at the Warnecke home the other night, working on the budget with other members of the leadership group, I was reminded how much we all enjoy theater and more importantly, how much fun we have experiencing it together, through the fellowship which the Guild provides.

Through membership in the Guild, each of us has a role to play in the story of the DTC, however small the contribution may seem. While making connections with one other and working to share with the public our support of the DTC through our individual contributions, we will unavoidably fulfill the mission of the Guild by promoting awareness of the DTC's shows and events and ultimately deepening the DTC's profound impact on our North Texas community, and way beyond, even to our entire nation now, as the 2017 Tony Award would suggest.

We have a great theater to support and many ways to be involved through the Guild. This year could be our best year yet, with our Salon series, Tech Dinners, Meet & Greets, holiday events and more. We are also very excited about Craig and Catharina Haynes' initiative to increase our membership among millennials. More news will be forthcoming, so please plan to attend upcoming events to hear all the ways you have to participate in the efforts of our dynamic, rewarding and entertaining Dallas Theater Center Guild.

Your 2017-18 President,

Lance Hancock

**EDITOR'S NOTE: PRIVACY ALERT IN THIS AGE OF FAKE STUFF AND PHOTO EDITING!!**

**PLEASE DO NOT POST ANY CONTENT IN THIS NEWSLETTER TO ANY SOCIAL MEDIA WITHOUT PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FROM THE EDITOR OR THE PERSON IN A PHOTO.**

## Board Business

Your Guild Board started on the year's business in its September meeting. New members were introduced and several important issues were addressed. To assure that the Board would not be bored, President Lance Hancock caressed the keys and Vice President Kaki Hopkins seemed ready to burst into song.



## In Fond Memory

The Guild lost these dear, long-time members in the last twelve months:

- Beth Averitt \*
- Arlene Dayton
- Dana Juett
- Edith Love (former DTC Managing Director)
- Ann McInnis \*
- Patsy Winslett \*

\* Past Guild president

A fitting way to remember deceased members and to honor living members is to make gifts in their names to the DTC Guild Endowment Fund. Your tax-deductible gift will be communicated to honorees or relatives and announced within the Guild. Your gift also helps assure the future of DTC. On page 57 of your Guild Yearbook (behind the "Tributes" tab), JB Nehlich explains how the Guild Endowment Fund works.

## September General Meeting

This first General Meeting of the Guild year was BIG! A BIG count – 94 members and guests were registered; that’s the largest attendance in several years. DTC Board Chair and very gracious host **Julie Hersh** brought the Guild to her BIG home, filled with art. DTC Board and Guild Board member **Craig Haynes** organized the meeting and provided a wonderful array of beverages and food, including 200 spouse-baked cookies. That’s BIG.



Lance Hancock Julie Hersh

Liz Mikel



Vice-President **Kaki Hopkins**, who is responsible for all of the year’s member benefit events, summarized the exciting activities ahead. It will be a BIG year. Check your new Guild Yearbook for details. **John Howell** and **Sarah Warnecke** prepared the Yearbook and distributed it to all members in attendance. It will be mailed to other members in September.

Guild President **Lance Hancock** served masterfully as master of ceremonies. He reminded the members about Meet-and-Greet and Tech Dinner events ahead (see “Upcoming Events” on the cover page). These events are excellent opportunities to chat with the playwright and director, the actors, the designers and DTC staff. It is always amazing to hear about what it takes to bring a play to a DTC stage and to have it run flawlessly. That’s a BIG job!

The evening’s program featured Brierley Resident Acting Company member **Liz Mikel**. Liz has played a wide variety of roles in her 27 year connection to DTC. With her characteristic enthusiasm, intensity and grace, Liz talked about *Miller, Mississippi* (playing at DTC through October 1) and her role in it. This powerful, intriguing play covers about three decades in the life of a Southern family torn between inexorable external pressures to change and the always strong grip of history and traditional ethos.

## September General Meeting

Liz plays the role of Doris, the Miller family housekeeper. Doris tries to keep the family functional while dealing with her place in the family and with external forces in her own life. The clash of the Civil Rights movement and Miller family traditions does spiral down. Liz gave personal context. Her grandmother was a proud domestic worker; her mother earned a PhD in radiation biology.

Lance recognized the 33 Guild officers and leaders present. It is a new crew, with many talents and heavy experience with arts organizations. Lance also introduced new members **Jane Arrington, Stephanie and Robert Haley, Julie Katinas, James Prince, Alex Schlinkert and Diana Winkelmann**. James is the Artistic Director of The CORE Theatre in Richardson. SMU law student Alex joined the Guild in the new "\$35 for Under 35" program, instituted by Craig Haynes. Guests **Kathleen Foley and Barbara Mathes** joined on the next day!

DTC Director of Development Rhealyn Carter joined us to represent DTC. She brought the actual 2017 Regional Theatre Tony Award, which DTC won for its continuing high level of artistic achievement. Even though the Tony itself is only about nine inches tall, it has BIG significance for DTC and the City of Dallas. Thanks to Rhealyn for keeping us artistically connected to this major artistic honor and for all of her work in keeping us financially connected to DTC.

Guild members value social relationships, some dating back before the Guild began, and others formed at this General Meeting. There was continual conversation and many introductions. Add it all up and you have a wonderful kick-off to this new Guild year!

The photos were taken by Guild Historian **Judy Birchfield**. There are more photos on the Guild website.



Stephanie & Robert Haley  
Chairs of 2018 Salon Series



Craig Haynes Judy Birchfield

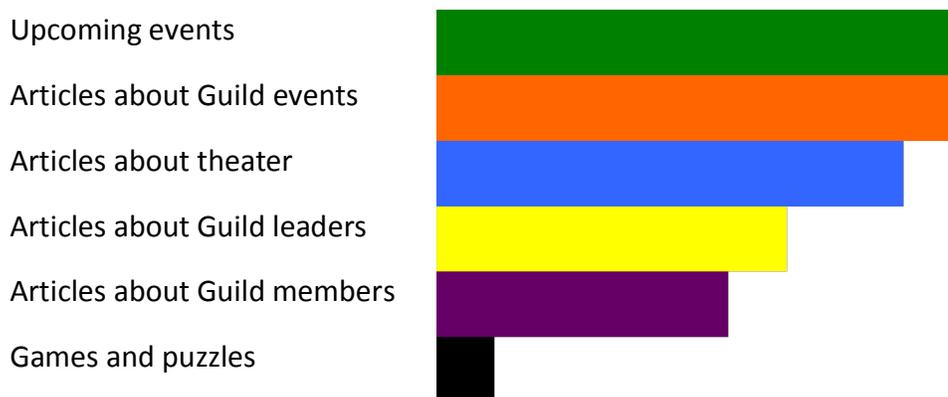


Margaret LaRocca Eleanor Casey  
Diana Winkelmann

## On Cue Reader Survey

*On Cue* strives to inform and entertain its readers and to connect them with each other. In order to meet those objectives, the publication continues to evolve in content and format. *On Cue* recently conducted an online survey to examine reader usage and preferences. So far, 46 readers have responded. Here are key findings:

- Practically all readers receive *On Cue* by email. There was no interest in receiving it by social media.
- *On Cue* is currently published four times each year. 82% of readers are pleased with that frequency. 16% asked for more issues.
- Readers said that their preferences for types of articles are as follows:



- Responders' comments were very positive. Some asked for more photos. There is a technical limit to the size of an email message (25 MB). Each photo is digitally large, so they quickly push against that technical limit. We include as many photos as will fit.

Good news! *On Cue* is introducing a new series that serves readers' high interest in articles about theater. Please see the article below about "Theater Backstage".

The survey also asked about *Theater Insights*, published right after each Guild-sponsored Meet & Greet. A Meet & Greet is a great way to get the director's perspective on the play, and provides an understanding of a play's context, background, artistic significance, and unique aspects. Guild members bring lunch-time finger foods to the Wyly or Kalita. The director, playwright, entire cast and crew, and many of the other DTC staff attend. Often there are drawings or models of the play's set and costumes.

Each *Theater Insights* summarizes the directors' comments, supplemented by research on the play and its context, and on the playwright and director. Readership is high, but not as high as *On Cue*. Perhaps recipients don't recognize it in their email inboxes. *Theater Insights* issues are distributed to all members; the message comes from "Dallas Theater Center Guild" with a subject line of "DTC Guild – Theater Insights".

## Meet Our Leaders – Kaki Hopkins

Kaki Hopkins is well-known – no, change that, is famous – in Dallas’ thriving non-profit world. The DTC Guild is very fortunate to have her as this year’s Vice President – Meetings and Events! Nearly 80 Guild members and guests were excited about her first meeting of this season (see article above on the September General Meeting).

Kaki is a deep well of artistic talent and a white-hot fireball of leadership and fundraising! First, let’s step back into her theatrical career. Kaki’s early connection to DTC was as an actress in the Paul Baker and Mary Sue Jones eras. Among her credits were: *Anna Christie*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Blithe Spirit*, and *Little Murders*.

She also directed DTC productions of: *She Stoops to Conquer*, *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*; and DTC San Antonio Tour productions of *Comedy of Errors*; *The World of Carl Sandburg*; *The Amorous Flea*. And there is more! She instructed and directed in theater programs at Trinity University and the University of New Mexico. While husband Dr. Shelton Hopkins was stationed at an Army base in Germany, Kaki served as the director of music and theater, providing entertainment for USO concerts and programs for the local population. Way beyond “um pah pah”, I’m sure.

Now about that white-hot fireball. Kaki has been a DTC Board of Trustees member, where she focused on developing trustees and on initiating the Deloitte & Touche InPerspective Series. We might consider that a precursor to the current Come Early, Stay Late series.

Across Flora Street (and in Fair Park before that), Kaki has served on the boards of The Dallas Opera, The Dallas Opera Guild, and The Women’s Board of The Dallas Opera. The opera soared to several crescendos on the results of her many gala events and fundraising drives. One Kaki innovation was The Junior Opera Guild. Picture hundreds of students from 19 Dallas area high schools organizing a giant



party with six bands at the Convention Center that raised \$30,000 for the opera – all with minimal adult guidance!

Kaki has been a board member and a leading fundraiser for Friends of WRR, Vickery Meadow Learning Center, Les Femmes Du Monde, the Dallas County Medical Society Alliance, and the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden (DABS), among others. In the last several years, DABS has been the beneficiary of Kaki’s creativity, energy, disciplined approach and intellect as she led major events, including the Chihuly Gala and Artscape.

### Theater Backstage!

This issue of *On Cue* introduces a new series of articles – “Theater Backstage”. The objective is to give visibility to the myriad of magical actions – and hard work – that take place on and behind the stage to enable a performance and to maximize its impact and value. Topics are likely to include:

- Planning a season
- Directing and casting
- Sets and props
- Lighting and sound
- Costumes, wigs and make-up
- Production and stage operations

The first article in the series, covering Directing and Casting, is included in this issue. The series, including the sequence of the topics, will evolve along the way, and may extend into next season. Enjoy!

## Theater Backstage!: Directing

When you sit down with Associate Artistic Director Joel Ferrell, you realize that directing at a major theater has so many dimensions: intellectual, emotional, creative, professional, perceptual. And it requires expert leadership. Joel's deep expertise in acting, choreography and directing drove our conversation on the process of directing a play. It was a fascinating conversation!

Joel contrasted American and European processes for putting a play on stage. In many state-funded European theaters, the director assembles a cast and works through the play to shape the roles, flow and dialog. Then the director brings in designers to develop choreography, staging, lighting and sound, props, costumes, and other elements. Given the economics of American theater, the overall process is reversed. The director works with designers for an extended period to develop all of the physical elements and then brings in the actors for a rehearsal period limited by a budget.

He also contrasted doing established plays vs. new works. A challenge with established work can be to coax the audience into putting their expectations aside and embracing a new view (think about Liz Mikel replacing Spencer Tracy in a setting devoid of church fans). New works might feature social/political themes or focus on human nature and psychology. Directed by Joel, *The Necessities*, which had its world premiere at Second Thought Theater, is a psychological study of loneliness and risk-taking, leaving the audience with many questions. Not many actors have experience with new work, and most are in New York. However, *The Necessities* was done with local actors.

Several interesting points:

- DTC uses 80 – 90 actors in a season. In another era, Richard Hamburger used about 40.
- *Inherit the Wind* had 24 actors but very minimal staging and technical elements. It was an experiment in focusing the audience on the plot and the personalities.
- In *Colossal*, lighting was critical, since the set was large, flat and static.

### Here is the five-step process for developing a production:

#### Reading and Research

- Read the play from several perspectives.
- Research the context, the playwright, production history, etc.
- Discuss ideas with colleagues.
- Give voice to the play for a DTC audience: getting them invested in the characters; keep them guessing; leave them laughing, singing or disturbed.
- Consider Wily or Kalita capabilities.

## Designing the Production

- Hire designers: sets and props; lighting and sound; costumes; choreography. A key selection criterion: ability to communicate. Joel's ideal mix is half long-time associates and half people with new perspectives.
- Resolve themes, imagery, flow and movement, balancing impacts on audience, actors, and economics.
- Finalize the designs so that procurement and construction can start.
- Build the sets. Build or purchase props.

## Casting

- Send specifications to casting agents, both local and in major markets. Casting agents propose a good match.
- For Joel, an ideal cast mix has half from the Brierley Resident Acting Company other local sources.
- Provide actors with a safe atmosphere (particularly if doing something risky, like a nude scene), interesting and productive in terms of career development.
- Cast members meet for the first time at a Meet & Greet (the first day of rehearsals).
- Actors are flexible and have been trained to adapt and get excited. They seldom complain about design decisions made without them.

## Rehearsals (about 3 weeks)

- Start with a full day of table work, reading through the script, understanding the characters in context, asking questions. Designers bring out the themes.
- Initiate rehearsal of segments of the play, working with actors assigned in each segment. Other actors may be working with a dialect or a fight coach, working with public relations people on marketing materials, or studying the script. The director must schedule the people so they all feel productive.
- Bring it all back together for run-throughs for colleagues and designers, resulting in tuning.
- In the last few days, up to a week, conduct technical rehearsals, where the cast works in the production environment with all technical elements (lights, sound, props, etc.). It can be a laborious, slow process. Lighting, sound and sets can make a huge difference in how the play comes across to the audience – and how the actors interact with each other.

## Previews and Opening Night! (2 – 4 days)

- During previews, run the play with a live audience, and do final tuning. Some directors make incremental changes and others may make large changes. The show is then locked down (union rules preclude changes after opening night, although the director may provide notes of observations and suggestions).
- **Then it's showtime – opening night!** The audience provides thunderous applause! It's a gigantic hit! The playwright and director may leave after press interviews; essentially, they have nothing more to do.
- The stage manager, musical director and dance captain keep it going.

## Joel's Favorites and Wants

- His favorite play to direct was *Cabaret* (your editor's all-time favorite as well). It was co-produced with The Holocaust Museum, which added much to the play's success. Many months were spent on design and on evolving the flow and staging to the final version. Wade McCollum transformed the role of the MC to one of evil, sensual power, much more captivating than the original Joel Grey character.
- Other favorites are *Dividing the Estate* and Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals.
- Joel would like to direct *Uncle Vanya*, *A Doll's House*, *As You Like It*, and new works by Rajiv Joseph and Kim Rosenstock.

## GREAT, LATE-BREAKING NEWS

TACA has selected DTC Board Chair and Guild member **Julie Hersh**, along with arts and civic leader Don Stone, to receive the 2018 TACA Silver Cup Award! Julie is an AT&T Performing Arts Center trustee, a sponsor of the DMA Arts and Letters Live series, and a supporter of Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Cara Mia Theatre, Dallas Children's Theater and other theaters. She is also a board member for UT Southwestern Medical Foundation and a strong advocate for mental health and the impact of arts on mental health. Julie is an author, a runner, hiker and a mother to two.

## Tech Dinners

The wild and woolly production of *Hair* first “happened” on the Wyly stage on September 23. And to get everyone ready, the Guild put on a Tech Dinner, complete with Guild-supplied hippies to welcome and serve the cast and crew. Fortunately, everyone chose to eat and talk rather than to get naked and dance. Everyone involved in the production is delighted to have a break during a 12 hour day of technical rehearsal.

During the several days of technical rehearsals, the cast works on stage with the sets, props, lighting and sound, costumes, and all else that the audience will see and hear. Up to that point they have been rehearsing lines, movements, and other actions without all of these technical elements.

If you have not attended a Tech Dinner, you have missed an excellent opportunity to talk one-on-one with the director, the actors, the technical crew and other DTC personnel over a plate filled from a major buffet supplied by Guild members. It is an opportunity to learn about theater and to have a rollicking good time that is available only to Guild members. Intense work-outs are recommended to counteract the gravitational effects of this massive caloric offering (but lite and vegetarian fare is always available).

**Marla and Howard Janco** are leading the year’s series of Tech Dinners, and are doing a fantastic job of providing thematic decorations, bounteous arrays of foods, leadership and good cheer!



Keith Redmon Gary Goodwin



BRAC member Tiana Kaye Johnson and other actors



Craig Haynes and BRAC member Ace Anderson



Marla Janco Don Warnecke



Howard Janco



Lance Hancock Andrea Redmon



Artistic Director  
Kevin Moriarty!



Kathy Messina Judy Mathis



Pat Hastings  
Larry Lee Johnson