
May 21, 2014

Theatre

PREVIEW: Summer 2014 Theatre

By **Victor Wishna** Wed, May 21, 2014



Let's start with those main stages that are going strong with new shows in June and beyond. **The Unicorn Theatre** offers up its last production of the 2013–14 season, ***By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*** (June 4–29), an “irreverent” and “hilarious” look at Hollywood’s racial stereotypes by Pulitzer Prize-winner Lynn Nottage (816-531-PLAY or www.unicorntheatre.org). Meanwhile, **Quality Hill Playhouse** continues through the summer, first with ***Rhapsody in Gershwin*** (June 6–July 6), a musical toast to the dynamic

songwriting brother act, followed by ***Great Duets of Musical Theatre*** (July 18–August 17), a celebration of tunes designed for two, from love songs to lovers’ quarrels (816-421-1700 or www.qualityhillplayhouse.com). The **Metropolitan Ensemble Theatre** offers up its take on a Rodgers and Hammerstein classic, ***The King and I*** (June 5–22, 816-569-3226 or www.metkc.org). And if that sounds good to you, you can check out another summer production of ***The King and I*** (June 13–29), the season finale at **Theatre Lawrence** (785-843-7469 or www.theatrelawrence.com). The **Coterie Theatre** wraps up 2013–14 with ***Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*** (June 17–August 3), “the most phantasmagorical musical in the history of everything” (816-474-6552 or thecoterie.org).

Be on the lookout for more Rodgers and Hammerstein later in the summer as **Musical Theater Heritage** presents its production of ***South Pacific*** (August 7–24), in addition to occasional **Musical Mondays** (June 23 and July 28, 816-545-6000 or www.musicaltheaterheritage.com). The **Jewish Community Center’s White Theatre**, meanwhile, offers a new classic in ***Monty Python’s Spamalot*** (July 12–27, 913-327-8054 or www.jcckc.org/boxoffice). And, for the 64th season in a row, **Starlight Theatre** presents its series of Broadway shows: Andrew Lloyd Webber’s new production of ***The Wizard of Oz*** (June 10-15); the Queen musical ***We Will Rock You*** (June 17–22); the early Lloyd Webber hit ***Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*** (July 8–13); Starlight’s own production of ***The Sound of Music*** (July 25–31); and, finishing with a splash of color, ***Blue***

Man Group (September 9–14, 816-363-7827 or www.kcstarlight.com).

Summer is also the season for world premieres and other theatrical events you can only see in Kansas City. At **The Living Room**, Kyle Hatley directs his own new stage adaptation, **Master of the Universe** (June 10–29), a haunting journey “through the epic, labyrinth of a destructive mind whose only salvation is love or death or both” (816-533-5857 or www.thelivingroomkc.com). **MeltingPot KC** will debut a new play by Kansas City playwright Michelle T. Johnson, **Echoes of Octavia** (August 7–24), the touching and witty tale of a young woman forced to choose between her family and the chance of a lifetime (816-226-8087 or www.kcmeltingpot.com). The **Heart of America Shakespeare Festival** returns to Southmoreland Park with **The Winter's Tale** (June 17–July 6, 816-531-7728 or www.kcshakes.org). And, of course, summer just wouldn't be hot enough without the **Kansas City Fringe Festival**—the schedule has not yet been announced, but be sure to block out July 17–27 for what promises to be 11 days packed with hundreds of diverse and limit-pushing performances (816-533-5890 or www.kcfringe.org).

For complete Theatre listings, [click here to visit the KCM Events calendar](#).

Top Photo: Danielle Wade as Dorothy, Jamie McKnight as Scarecrow, Lee MacDougall as Lion, Mike Jackson as Tin Man. Original Toronto Cast. (Photo by Cylla Von Tiedemann)

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Movers, Shakers, Stalwarts: Charles Bruffy

By **Don Dagenais** Tue, May 13, 2014



Don Dagenais: *Charles, let's start at the beginning. Are you from the Kansas City area? Did you grow up with our arts institutions?*

Charles Bruffy: Not at all. I was born in Racine, Wisconsin, but moved to Missouri at age two. I attended Missouri Western University (then State College) in St. Joseph, and intended to become a veterinarian. My musical involvement was primarily as a pianist, although I did a little singing. Then, in one of those strange

coincidences, I seriously cut my hand with an electric knife. Traumatic as it was at the time, the scar is barely visible and there is no remaining damage. Right about that time I was gone on a six-month 4-H exchange trip and had a chance to reflect on my situation; I decided to give up the piano and study voice. I also decided that I really wasn't cut out to be a veterinarian. A love of animals did not translate into an ability to be an animal doctor. So I entered the UMKC Conservatory of Music to pursue my Master's in Vocal Performance.

DD: *Did you found the Kansas City Chorale?*

CB: No, the Chorale was founded by Jonathan Griffith from the UMKC Conservatory. John Goldsmith was the conductor when I started. He lived in Houston but journeyed to Kansas City for the Chorale performances.

One day I got a call from Barb Samuelson the Executive Director who asked me if I could step in to do the tenor solos for their ailing soloist and then subsequently to help out rehearsing the tenor section. Well, when I got there, the rehearsal room was small and there wasn't a chance to rehearse each section separately, so I just ended up rehearsing the whole group.

DD: *Back in those days the Chorale was not known for singing classical masterpieces like it is today.*

CB: Right. Most of the music was in a popular vein. They called the concerts "Classy Sassy." They would sing classical music for the first half, and then turn to Top 40 hits in the second half. I was soon designated the assistant conductor of the Chorale, which meant that I conducted all of the rehearsals but John Goldsmith would still come up from Houston to conduct the actual performances. Then in 1985 I was promoted to "associate" conductor, meaning that I would continue to conduct the rehearsals but I got to conduct the Chorale in two songs during the performances and any other concerts that were outside our season.

DD: *You must have been putting to good use the classes you took at the UMKC Conservatory.*

CB: Not exactly! Actually, I had never taken a conducting class, but I started to do so, and learned a lot from my teacher, Eph Ely.

DD: *Over time, the Chorale gained quite a reputation in Russian choral literature.*

CB: That was inspired by Olga Ackerly, a Conservatory teacher who is truly an expert of Russian music and its history. She took me to a conference in upstate New York featuring Russian music and I was absolutely taken with the Russian sound. She is responsible for my love for the repertoire and she shared her musical insights with me and coached us in Slavonic diction. Right about this time Goldsmith quit, and I was named the Artistic Director of the Chorale. In my first concert after taking over as the conductor – this was in 1988 – we sang Russian liturgical music.

DD: *The Chorale's audience must have been quite surprised.*

CB: Well, it was standing room only!

DD: *How did the singers take this change?*

CB: I have always been extremely grateful to the Chorale singers that they were willing to do what I asked. They were willing to take this journey with me.

DD: *Tell us how the Chorale got involved in making recordings.*

CB: One day out of the clear blue I got a phone call from Andy Peterson, whom I didn't know. He said that there were very few recordings available of American Christmas music the Chorale should make one. I thought, "Yeah, right," but we had made archival cassette tapes at some Chorale concerts so we sent those off to several recording companies. Much to my surprise, three of the labels wrote back wanting to record the Chorale! We ended up selecting Nimbus, a wonderful British recording firm with a real dedication to quality recording.

Our first recording was done at All Saints Lutheran Church on Minnesota Avenue in Kansas City, Kansas which had marvelous acoustics. Nimbus' recording technique was quite simple: They did it with a single microphone, and they did all of the numbers in a single take. They believed in making the recording as close to a live performance as possible. They did not believe in splicing and dicing takes together; they found a take that they liked, and that was it, beginning to end. We became familiar with the pressure of getting it absolutely perfect, all the way through. It was like recording on a tightrope.

We learned that it takes three days to make a recording...you can't go for too long on any one day, because of vocal and physical exhaustion. Our first recording, of American Christmas songs, was called *Nativitas* and it came out in 1994 and won Best Seasonal Recording-Runner Up from the National Association of Independent Record Distributors. In 1995 we recorded *Fern Hill*, a disc of American choral music, and *Songs Ring Out to the Heavens*, with the choral works of Johannes Brahms. In 1996 we released *Alleluia*, a collection of American sacred songs, and then a two CD set of Rachmaninoff, *Liturgy of St. John Chrisostom*.

DD: *You are also the artistic director of the Phoenix Chorale. How did that come about?*

CB: In 1998 I got a call from the Phoenix Chorale. It was a small professional choir much like the Kansas City Chorale. Their director had just left, and they wondered if I could go down and do a concert with them. We spent several weeks in rehearsal and then did a concert. I was too naïve to realize that this was really a job interview, and to my surprise, they offered me the job of artistic director. I didn't take it at first, thinking I couldn't tear my spirit in half, so they asked me to guest conduct the entire next season while they reorganized to start their search again and here I am, still doing it fifteen years later.

DD: *Do the two choral groups perform much of the same repertory?*

CB: Partly yes and partly no. Some of the concerts we essentially do in two places...for example, the recent concert of Irish music was performed by both chorales in their own cities. But they do lots of separate repertory, too. Eventually we had the idea of bringing them together for joint concerts and recordings, and of course in that case I rehearse the two choruses on the same music separately, then they visit each other's cities and we put it all together.

DD: *How have the singers responded to this?*

CB: When we visit each other, we stay in each other's homes, and over time many of the singers have

developed close friendships with their compatriots from the other city. Now it is like a big reunion when we get together. When we record, we must depend on an immediate blend and the sonority emulsifies into one that sounds as though we had always been rehearsing together. We simply don't have time to start from scratch when we join forces. The recording of Gretchaninov liturgical music was a joint project of both choruses, along with the recording of Rheinberger choral works, the *Eternal Rest* recording and the upcoming Rachmaninoff recording [of *Vespers*].

DD: *When you do a recording, is it usually your idea of something you want to record, or does the record company identify some literature that it needs to have in the catalogue, and ask you to do it?*

CB: A little bit of both. With the Gretchaninov recording, I just loved this music and wanted us to record it. By that time Nimbus had unfortunately gone out of business, so we were recording for Chandos. They already had a recording of the Gretchaninov in their catalogue, by a fine Russian choir, so they turned down the proposal. But I said, "Well, we're going to do it anyway and we'll let you have a chance at it." So we recorded the piece and sent them a master. They took it!

DD: *Sometimes you do recordings with the Phoenix Chorale also.*

CB: Yes, and I find it interesting that actually the Phoenix Chorale won a Grammy award before the Kansas City Chorale did...with its recording of *Spotless Rose: Hymns to the Virgin Mary*. That was before the Gretchaninov.

DD: *We shouldn't forget to mention the Chorale's other recordings, the Rheinberger Sacred Works with the Phoenix Chorale, Eternal Rest with the music of Mäntyjärvi, Ticheli, Martin, and Clausen, and then Life and Breath, the works of René Clausen. I believe it was the Clausen recording for which the Chorale won the 2013 Grammy award for Best Choral Performance.*

CB: That's right. It also won Grammy awards for engineering and for the producer of the year. In 2007 our recording of the Gretchaninov *Passion Week* was nominated for four Grammy awards, and won for Best Engineered Classical Album. In 2008, the Rheinberger album was nominated for Best Choral Performance and Best Surround Sound Album, and won a Grammy for engineering. In May we are recording the Rachmaninoff *Vespers*, which I'm very excited about.

DD: *We also shouldn't forget your conducting of the Kansas City Symphony Chorus. What is it like conducting a bigger choir; do you use the same techniques as with a smaller group like your chorales?*

CB: I try to follow the same technique. I've taken the same tools and vocabulary that are mine, but applied them on a larger scale. With the Symphony Chorus, the big difference is the addition of the orchestra; it's vocal music, but with cymbals! That was a real eye-opener for me. Now I can investigate all sorts of great musical material that has never been available before. I love the Symphony Chorus.

DD: *What else should we know about you?*

CB: I have Arabian and Saddlebred horses and keep them both here and in Arizona. This is a childhood love of mine which I have pursued; I have two show horses, seven broodmares, one yearling, and three new babies and I spend as much time with them as I can.

DD: Any parting words?

CB: I probably haven't conveyed how grateful I am for the support that so many people have shared with me, from the wonderful singers to audience members to board members to contributors. The Kansas City Chorale is where it is because of the continuous support of this city and the wonderful people in it. We are very proud that our name contains the words "Kansas City," especially when we give out-of-town concerts. We want people to know we are from Kansas City. We are proud of this town.

For more information about Charles Bruffy and the Kansas City Chorale, visit <http://www.kcchorale.org>. The Kansas City Chorale is joined by the Phoenix Chorale on Friday, May 23 for the season finale. Tickets are available at <http://www.kcchorale.org>.

Top Photo: Charles Bruffy

Classical, Dance

PREVIEW: Summer 2014 Music and Dance

By **Don Dagenais** Wed, May 21, 2014



Before we get into the summer months, let's not forget that the **Kansas City Symphony** season is not quite over. This coming Sunday the whole community can enjoy the free annual patriotic-themed Symphony concert which has become known as **Celebration at the Station**. So head for Liberty Memorial on Sunday, May 25, to enjoy the concert that starts at 8:00 p.m. You can lounge on the north grounds of Liberty Memorial while the

Symphony performs from a stage in front of Union Station. Then, on May 30–June 1, the Symphony performs one of the great classics of the vocal and orchestral repertoire, the *Messa de Requiem* by **Giuseppe Verdi**. Its power and drama will carry you away to another world. The Symphony wraps up its classical season a week later, on June 6–8, when the brilliant young pianist **Yuja Wang** returns to Kansas City to perform the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* by **Sergei Rachmaninoff**. The orchestra will also perform a world premiere by **Chris Rogerson** and **Dmitri Shostakovich's** dramatic Symphony No. 5. One final post-season Symphony concert will be on Thursday, June 19 when the orchestra will preview the new recording that it will be shortly be making, featuring the music of **Adam Schoenberg**.

On the vocal scene, the **Kansas City Chorale** joins with its sister organization, the **Phoenix Chorale**, for

another **Rachmaninoff** work, the *All-Night Vigil*, in a single performance on Sunday, May 23. The fine local group **Kantorei** performs "Testaments," including music taken from texts from the Old and New Testaments, on May 31. The weekend of June 13–15, the **Heartland Men's Chorus** brings a decidedly less serious program to the stage, as the members perform "Vegas, Baby," featuring music of Las Vegas over the years; the group promises to bring "glitter, sequins and feathers for our most audacious concert ever." On August 17, **William Baker** leads the 125-voice **Summer Singers of Kansas City** and members of the Kansas City Symphony in an all-**Handel** program including two *Coronation Anthems* and the *Dettingen Te Deum*.

Among the finest classical music performances available during the summer are those at the **Sunflower Music Festival** held each June in Topeka. The Festival, founded in 1987 by the late Russell Patterson of Lyric Opera fame and now directed by **Charles Stegeman**, features a variety of orchestra and chamber music concerts. Chamber orchestra concerts are held on June 6, 11 and 15, with chamber ensembles performing on June 7, 10, and 13. The Festival includes a concert by the **Atrium Quartet** on June 8 and a jazz concert on June 9. Look for music by such favorites as Franz Joseph Haydn, Franz Schubert, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Johann Sebastian Bach, but also surprises by Franz Danzi, Franz Lachner, and Henri Vieuxtemps, among others. All performances are at White Concert Hall on the Washburn University campus.

On June 8, the **Bach Aria Soloists** perform a concert of French music entitled "Les Divi de l'Empire" at a private home as part of its Hauskonzert series. With music by Satie, Duparc, Fauré and Debussy, this should be one of the musical highlights of the summer. The **Kansas City Chamber Orchestra** ends its 2013–14 season with the great wind serenades of Dvořák and Mozart on June 13 at Unity Temple.

In Kansas City, the greatest instrumental delights of the season are to be found with **Summerfest**, the venerable summertime classical music oasis which is performing on four consecutive weekends, featuring concerts with the overall title of "To everything there is a season." First up, on the weekend of July 12–13, is a concert featuring the music of Antonio Vivaldi, Paul Hindemith, and rarely performed composers Paul Reade and Gernot Wolfgang, entitled "A Time to Remember." On July 19–20 it is "A Time to Love," as the group brings us the music of Johannes Brahms, Francis Poulenc, and Dominick Argento. The compositions all feature the delights of summertime romance. For its third weekend July 26–27, Summerfest performs a wide range of numbers by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the tango composer Astor Piazzolla, Samuel Barber, Robert Paterson, and Timothy Janza. The theme is "A Time to Dance." The group wraps up its season August 2–3 with "A Time to Plant," with music by Robert Schumann, contemporary composer Jennifer Higdon, and Ping Jin, featuring themes of nature.

Classical dance performances are a little hard to come by in the summer, but at least you can get the season off to a good start with the **Wylliams/Henry Contemporary Dance Company** on May 30–31 at White Recital Hall on the UMKC campus. Company founder and director **Mary Pat Henry** is celebrating some of the finest performances the company has produced during its first 20 years. **Owen/Cox Dance Group** performs *Memory Dances* with cellist **Helen Gillet** on June 28. You can see some other dance performances by local troupes such as **Quixotic**, **City in Motion** and **Seamless Dance Theatre** at the **Kansas City Fringe Festival** which runs for eleven days beginning July 17.

For complete music and dance listings, visit the [KCM Events calendar](#).

Classical

Debut recital, septet of premieres

By [Kristin Shafel Omiccioli](#) Thu, May 22, 2014



An intimate crowd of around 30 people gathered at La Esquina Tuesday night for the debut recital of the Maroon Trio, which performed seven new works written for the group thanks to a composition competition initiated by Black House Collective artistic director Hunter Long. Three talented students from the University of Kansas with a passion for new music comprise the Maroon Trio: marimbist Mai Tadokoro, bassoonist Jessica Findley, and hornist Eric Hessel.

Long introduced the group and also provided the first piece on the program, explaining that Tadokoro approached him for a new work for the trio and he agreed, offering to host the competition so they may have enough music for a full-length recital. Long's piece, *The World Needs Bad Men*, was a fine, memorable opener, landing in a comfortable groove after a solo marimba introduction. The brief tonal work featured playful layering, with a natural arc and balance among the instruments.

Argentinian composer Gisela Paterno's *Three in Disguise*, Op. 27, followed, and was decidedly darker and more dissonant than Long's work, yet pleasantly complementary. Paterno used each instrument's warm timbre and dynamic range for a stereophonic effect, especially during the atmospheric opening. She included mouthpiece slaps for the horn, they were timidly performed and inessential to the work.

The Night Raven by Iranian composer Karen Keyhani is based on a Persian poem and plays up the tonal colors of this instrumental combination. This modal piece contrasted well with the previous two works, however it found itself meandering toward the end. Its mournful, delicate quality allowed each instrument to shine a singular, distinct character. Tadokoro deftly handled the marimba's complicated licks with a concentrated, articulate interpretation.

Marking the halfway point of the evening was *DNR* by Gregg Wramage, who was in attendance and introduced his piece as a tribute to his late mother. While the title did not quite reflect what we heard, the work's lovely musicality was accentuated by the excellent bassoon writing, which Findley performed with great expression and

finesse.

The structured improvisation *Seeds and Fields ABXYZ* by Nick Zielinski. The high-energy, intervallic opening theme was attention catching and led to interesting sustained harmonies in the winds and effective forward momentum propelled by the marimba. Unfortunately, though, after its promising opening the piece lost direction and steam during the improvised sections. It was overall on the too-long side and the improvisatory element was conservative. It needed to be pushed further to a wilder, more uninhibited level.

The trio's hornist Eric Hessel composed the recital's penultimate work, *Portrait in Maroon*. It was dramatic and colorful, with rich harmonies, an active marimba pattern as its foundation, and a well-paced climactic build-up. Naturally, Hessel gave himself a bright, tuneful feature on horn.

Concluding the premieres was Matthew McConnell's Trio for Bassoon, Horn, and Marimba, written for his young daughter, with a sprinkling of her favorite tunes throughout ("Ach, du lieber Augustin" was most prominent). The work looked like it was fun to play—with a catchy tension-building main theme (although it may have repeated a few too many times) and its overall dark, twisty "music box" waltz vibe.

I was happily surprised and impressed by the variety and range of the winning compositions for this unusual instrumentation, and Tadokoro, Findley, and Hessel on their expert interpretations of these challenging new works. A niche has been found, and I applaud the Maroon Trio and Black House Collective on a successful and intriguing presentation.

REVIEW:

Black House Collective and Charlotte Street Foundation

The Maroon Trio: Seven World Premieres

Tuesday, May 20, 2014

La Esquina

1000 W. 25th St., Kansas City, MO

For more information, visit <http://blackhouse.typepad.com> or www.charlottestreet.org

Top Photo: Maroon Trio in performance

Film

"God's Pocket" is far from divine

By **Michael D. Smith** Wed, May 21, 2014

Philip Seymour Hoffman was one of the greatest actors of his generation, which made his premature death



earlier this year all the more saddening. Thankfully, more films in which he starred have yet to be released (*A Most Wanted Man*, *The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Parts 1 and 2*) because the bleak drama *God's Pocket* is one of the worst films on his otherwise impressive cinematic résumé.

The story is set in 1978 in a gritty, dilapidated Philadelphia neighborhood known as God's Pocket (the film was actually shot in Yonkers, New York), a place so grimy that you want to go home and scrub yourself clean after watching it for 88 minutes. In this

place Mickey Scarpato (Hoffman) is an alcoholic, low-level criminal with just enough ties to organized crime to make him semi-respected among the locals even if he is an outsider.

He either refuses to face it or is naïve, but Mickey's beautiful wife, Jeanie (Christina Hendricks, *Mad Men*) feels nothing towards her husband now and seems to be hoping for someone to take her out of God's Pocket.

It is the "accidental" death of his racist, pill-popping, loser step-son that sets the wheels in motion for some life-altering decisions for Mickey who suddenly finds himself boxed in by debt, a frozen corpse, and rumors in his neighborhood about his wife cheating on him with an alcoholic newspaper columnist (Richard Jenkins). His only friend in God's Pocket, Arthur "Bird" Capezio (John Turturro), is in deeper with organized crime and soon not even he can help Mickey.

Based upon the 1983 novel by former *Daily News* columnist Pete Dexter, *God's Pocket* is just like the unlikable people in the neighborhood it depicts – neither goes anywhere. Moments that should be funny fall flat. Moments that should be filled with emotional gravitas are shallow. Many of the characters are flimsy stereotypes--especially the story's bar flies--and there is a general lack of character development. Pacing is stuck in low gear throughout.

On more than one occasion it is mentioned that Mickey is not a native of God's Pocket. It's something its residents remind him and while Hoffman is superb as always by fleshing out how equally trapped Mickey feels, there isn't any exposition on his background, therefore leaving his motivations in the dark. Why Jeanie constantly drones on about how sweet of a boy her son was when in reality he is a piece of garbage is a mystery. In that sense she's like Mickey – either she doesn't want to face facts or she is naïve. Or perhaps her soul is as dead as her son.

Turturro has the most colorful character in the story, but his time on-screen feels more like a cameo than a truly supporting role.

No offense to first-time feature film director John Slattery, but perhaps he should stick with directing and acting in episodes of *Mad Men*, which is probably how he got his costar Hendricks to sign on to such a forgettable film.

On a letter grade scale from “A” being excellent to “F” for failing, *God's Pocket* receives a **D**.

God's Pocket is rated R and has a running time of 88 minutes.

Now showing through May 22 @

Tivoli Cinemas

Westport Manor Square

4050 Pennsylvania Ave., Kansas City, MO

Visit www.tivolikc.com, or call 913-383-7756 for more information.

Leawood Fine Arts

3707 W 95th St., Leawood, KS

Visit www.fineartsgroup.com, or call 913-642-1133 for more information.

Theatre

Dancing to “A Little Night Music”

By **Anthony Rodgers** Wed, May 14, 2014



It is said that the summer night smiles on the young, the fools, and the old, but I'm convinced a fourth smile is reserved for Spinning Tree Theatre's production of *A Little Night Music*. This elegant musical by Stephen Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler received a intimate treatment this weekend at Off Center Theatre, following the romantic entanglements of families and lovers alike with superior musicality, humor, and a delicate lilt.

Charles Fugate (Fredrik Egerman) and Melinda MacDonald (Desirée Armfeldt) had a seasoned chemistry that was simply untouchable when they shared the stage. Their timing of charismatic quips and exchanged glances were on point during “You Must Meet My Wife.” MacDonald's beautiful performance of the iconic “Send in the Clowns” as a reaction to rejection pulled on my heartstrings. Molly Denninghoff (Anna Egerman) and Daniel

Beeman (Henrik Egerman) displayed overwhelming energy in their acting, but it often did not feel out of place in regard to their characters. Denninghoff's effervescence was contagious. Beeman's frustration was palpable, and his singing voice was rich and fluid; the challenging shifts of register in “Later” were executed effortlessly.

Allison Banks was charming as the “broad-minded” Fredrika Armfeldt and allowed her character to teeter on the verge of growing up too quickly due to an atypical upbringing. Her grandmother, Madame Armfeldt, was full of

remarks and advice worthy of being placed on motivational posters, and Cathy Wood's delivery was pompous and precise, capturing the concealed love the elder Armfeldt holds for those she counts dear. Together, they juxtaposed a bright-eyed optimism with jaded maturity, leaving the audience to create a balance within themselves.

Flirtatious and mildly crass, Liz Golson stormed the stage as Petra, always hinting that there is more to this character than one expects. Her rendition of "The Miller's Son" delved into the mind of a dreaming realist and was playful yet forlorn; her voice, rich and exquisite. As the Countess Malcolm, Lauren Braton gave excellent face, conveying her callused obedience to her husband and brokenness with stark contrast. Vigthor Zophoniasson was rigid and all business, which was perfect for a portrayal of Carl-Magnus. While not often breaking from militaristic sternness or raging jealousy, Zophoniasson transitioned well to the more private displays of vulnerability, particularly in "In Praise of Women," a number that resembles another dreamy, female-idealizing song from a later Sondheim work, *Sweeney Todd*.

Under the direction of Angie Benson, the orchestral chamber ensemble blended well, and their sound filled the theater without becoming overpowering, often giving the effect that a full pit orchestra was indeed present. The static elements of the stage were simple yet poised in a way that added a lavishness to each scene created. And for a show that is heavily laden with waltzes—both musical and physical—the dancing was dignified and graceful.

REVIEW:

Spinning Tree Theatre

A Little Night Music

May 8–24 (Reviewed Saturday, May 10, 2014)

Off Center Theatre, Crown Center

2450 Grand Blvd., Kansas City, MO

For tickets call 816-274-8444 or online <http://spinningtreetheatre.com/>

Top Photo: Melinda MacDonald as Desirée Armfeldt and Allison Banks as Fredrika Armfeldt in Spinning Tree Theatre's *A Little Night Music* (Photo by Manon Halliburton/Spinning Tree Theatre)

THIS IS A TEST

[Classical](#), [Dance](#), [City Classics](#)

Music and Dance through May

Wed, May 21, 2014

Harriman-Jewell Series

The Trey McIntyre Project

Thursday, May 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Muriel Kauffman Theatre, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

1601 Broadway Blvd., Kansas City, MO

For tickets call (816) 415-5025, or online at www.hjseries.org.

The Trey McIntyre Project, one of today's most innovative dance companies, first performed in 2005 and made its Harriman-Jewell Series debut in 2010. This January, however, Mr. McIntyre announced that the company would undergo a transition from a full-time dance company to focus on other enterprises, including film and photography. Therefore, this performance marks the last time the company will appear on the Harriman-Jewell program. The group gives its final performance ever in June.

For this final program, the company will focus on two new works by McIntyre— *Mercury Half-Life* (2013) with music by Queen, and *Vinegar Works: Four Dances of Moral Instruction* (2014) with music by Dmitri Shostakovich and puppetry by Dan Luce and Michael Curry.

Kansas City Chorale***Concert for Double Chorus***

Friday, May 23 at 7:30 p.m.

Redemptorist Church

3333 Broadway Blvd., Kansas City, MO

For tickets call (816) 235-6222, or online at www.kcchorale.org.

Conductor Charles Bruffy brings the Phoenix Chorale to Kansas City to join with the Kansas City Chorale in one of the occasional double chorale concerts that the two groups perform. Both have won Grammy Awards under Bruffy's direction. For this concert, the two chorales will combine to perform the pinnacle of Russian sacred music, Sergei Rachmaninoff's *All-Night Vigil*.

Kansas City Symphony***Celebration at the Station***

Sunday, May 25 at 8:00 p.m.

In front of Union Station

30 W. Pershing Rd., Kansas City, MO

Free admission. For more information, visit www.CelebrationAtTheStation.com

One of the mainstays of Kansas City's Memorial Day celebrations is the annual Kansas City Symphony Celebration at the Station concert in front of Union Station, where the audience sits in the street and on the lawn

of Liberty Memorial south of Pershing Road. As many as 30,000 may attend, so be sure to arrive several hours early with a blanket or lawn chairs for sitting, and perhaps some binoculars if you are far away. The event is more of an early summer fair than a classical music concert, and will feature patriotic numbers and special appearances by guest artists of a popular vein. But the Symphony usually plays a truly stirring performance, and it has become an important Kansas City tradition.

Wylliams/Henry Contemporary Dance Company

Spring Revivals Concert

Friday, May 30 at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 31 at 8:00 p.m.

White Recital Hall, James C. Olson Performing Arts Center, UMKC Campus
4949 Cherry St., Kansas City, MO

For tickets call (816) 235-6222, or online at www.wylliams-henry.org

Director Mary Pat Henry brings the Wylliams/Henry Contemporary Dance Company to the White Recital Hall stage for its spring concert, which features excerpts from some of the best known works of the company's formative works. The concert will showcase revivals of works by renown choreographers including Leni Wylliams, DeeAnna Hiatt, and Winifred Harris, interposed with new works by Autumn Eckman, Ming Xia, and Mary Pat Henry.

Kansas City Symphony

Stern Conducts the Verdi Requiem

Friday, May 30 at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 31 at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 1 at 2:00 p.m.

Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts
1601 Broadway Blvd., Kansas City, MO

For tickets call (816) 471-0400 or available online at www.kcsymphony.org

For the second-to-last Symphony classical series of the year, Michael Stern has chosen one of the monumental works of the symphonic repertoire, the powerful *Messa da Requiem* (Requiem Mass) of Giuseppe Verdi. This is virtually the only non-operatic composition by the Italian master to remain popular, and was inspired by (and was written in honor of) the great Italian poet and patriot Alessandro Manzoni, who was one of the inspirations behind the mid-century Italian revolution with which Verdi himself was also closely identified.

Unlike many requiems which feature soft and ethereal music, Verdi's is a chest-thumping, dramatic, powerful, and almost overwhelming emotional experience, not unlike many of his dramas for the stage. In fact, many

religious leaders of the day complained that it was all too secular. The fine German conductor Hans von Bulow famously called it “Verdi’s greatest opera.”

Verdi expert Charles Osborne wrote that “Verdi’s Requiem is a Mass not for the dead but for the living. The intensity and compassion of his tragic view of the human condition are Shakespearean in stature; the prodigality of his technique deserves to be called Mozartian.”

For his soloists, Stern has chosen soprano Amber Wagner, mezzo-soprano Tamara Mumford, tenor Dimitri Pittas and bass Jordan Bisch. The work is performed without intermission.

Kansas City Women’s Chorus

Excelsior: Ever Upwards

Saturday, May 31 at 8:00 p.m.

Folly Theater

300 W. 12th St., Kansas City, MO

For tickets call (816) 474-4444, or online at www.follytheater.org.

The subtitle of this concert is “Taking Charge, Making Change, Spreading Hope, Peace and Love,” and according to the promotional material, the concert “celebrates the strength and bravery of women in a musical program you will find both inspiring and beautiful.”

Michael Robert Patch is the artistic director of the Chorus, with Andrea Dalton as the assistant director and Robert Lamar Sims as the principal accompanist.

[Theatre](#) , [City Stage](#)

Theatre through mid-June

Wed, May 14, 2014

For complete Theatre listings, [click here to visit the KCM Events calendar](#)

Martin City Melodrama & Vaudeville Company

***Aesop’s Amazing Fables* (A Martin City, Jr. production)**

Runs February 27 through May 17

For tickets call 913-642-7576 or online at martincitymelodrama.org

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

Written and directed by Jeanne Beechwood, with original songs by Jon Copeland, and performed by talented professional actors: Jeanne Beechwood and Rob Pagenkopf, and music played by Diane Brown. *AESOP'S AMAZING FABLES* is a NEW musical for children that pays tribute to the timeless tales from legendary and beloved storyteller Aesop. Relive some of his most cherished fables such as The Lion and the Mouse, The Tortoise and the Hare, and The Goose that Laid the Golden Eggs. Performed with storytelling, folk songs and Martin City Jr.'s signature "edutainment", this celebration of lifelong learning through theatre continues when the audience is given the opportunity to write their own fable, using the popular choose your own adventure format.

The Coterie Theatre

Schoolhouse Rock Live

Runs April 8 through May 18

For tickets call 816-474-6552 or online at thecoterie.org

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

This award-winning musical teaches history, grammar, math, science, and government through clever, tuneful songs, instructing a whole new generation to "Unpack Your Adjectives" and meet up at "Conjunction Junction" to add some "Interjections!"

The Mystery Train

Funeral for Brother John

Runs April 18 through June 7

For tickets call 816-813-9654 or online at www.kcmysterytrain.com

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

Things are bound to change in the wake of John Lazia's funeral. Politicians rub elbows with gangsters on the lam and the crowd provides cover for another murder!

Theatre for Young America

No Dogs Allowed!

Runs April 22 through May 17

For tickets call 816-460-2083 or online at www.tya.org

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

Theatre for Young America is presenting *No Dogs Allowed!* at the H & R Block City Stage in Union Station, April

22 through May 17, 2014. This will be the Kansas City premiere of this new musical based on the award-winning book by Sonia Manzano who plays Maria on Sesame Street.

Unicorn Theatre

For tickets call 816-531-PLAY or online at www.unicorntheatre.org

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

Water By The Spoonful

Runs April 23 through May 18

A young Iraqi war veteran comes home to reconnect with his family and finds his mother running a chat room for recovering addicts. The boundaries of family and community are stretched from Philadelphia to Puerto Rico as birth families splinter and online families collide. One thing they all have in common- they're all searching for a safe haven in a messed-up world. Winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. This playwright also wrote the 2008 Tony Award-winning book for the musical *In the Heights*.

[Read the KCM review here.](#)

By the Way, Meet Vera Stark

Runs June 4 through 29

An irreverent look at Hollywood's racial stereotypes as an African-American maid auditions for the same 1930's movie as her employer, a white starlet. This hilarious comedy is a change from the serious themes in previous Lynn Nottage works like *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize Winner) seen here in 2011... and it's winning rave reviews.

Quality Hill Playhouse

For tickets call 816-421-1700 or online at www.qualityhillplayhouse.com

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

The Musical of Musicals!

Runs April 25 through May 25

Why see just one Broadway musical when you can see them all? This hilarious musical is a comic tour de force that spoofs Broadway's best musical theatre songwriters.

[Read the KCM review here.](#)

Rhapsody in Gershwin

Runs June 6 through July 6

A musical toast to the brothers who brought us such memorable songs as "Embraceable You," "Someone to Watch Over Me," "The Man I Love" and "S Wonderful." Plus thrill to a dazzling piano performance of George

Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

MeltingPot KC

White Sangria

Runs May 1 through 18, at Just Off Broadway Theatre

For tickets call 816-226-8087 or online at www.kcmeltingpot.com

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

By Arika Larson. When Ben and Marla, a young, hip, newly relocated and newly married couple decide to host a leisurely dinner party to get to know their new neighbors, an evening unfolds that neither of them could ever have predicted. A play about gender, power, love, beauty and what brings us together or tears us apart.

Spinning Tree Theatre

A Little Night Music

Runs May 8 through 24, at Off Center Theatre

For tickets call 816-545-6000 or online at www.spinningtreetheatre.com

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

Stephen Sondheim's "Send in the Clowns" musical waltzes into Kansas City in an all-new, intimate production! Fully staged and choreographed and featuring an all-local, all-professional cast. Starring Melinda MacDonald, Charles Fugate, Lauren Braton, Vigthor Zophoniasson, Molly Denninghoff, Liz Clark Golson, Daniel Beeman, Cathy Wood, Allison Banks, with Devon Barnes, Sarah Morrissey, Zachary Parker, Bob Wearing.

[Read the KCM review here.](#)

Whim Productions

Flowers in the Wardrobe

Runs May 10 through 31, at Arts Asylum

For tickets visit flowersinthewardrobe.brownpapertickets.com

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

Flowers in the Attic collides with *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*. *Flowers in the Wardrobe* tells the comically twisted story of four children forced to live in an attic by their selfish mother. Left to their own devices, they seek comfort in cookie binges, dirty dancing, and loving each other in all the wrong ways. Everything changes when a magical wardrobe offers the children a chance for adventure and escape, thrusting them into a land of talking beavers, a seemingly trustworthy faun, and a witch bearing Turkish Delights. Directed by Steven

Eubank. Written by Kevin King.

Theatre Lawrence

The King and I

Runs June 13 through 29

For tickets call 785-843-7469 or online at www.theatrelawrence.com

Call or visit the website for performance days and times

It is 1862 in Siam when an English widow, Anna Leonowens, and her young son arrive at the Royal Palace in Bangkok, having been summoned by the King to serve as tutor to his many children and wives. The King is largely considered to be a barbarian by those in the West, and he seeks Anna's assistance in changing his image, if not his ways. With both keeping a firm grip on their respective traditions and values, Anna and the King grow to understand and, eventually, respect one another, in a truly unique love story. The dazzling score includes "Whistle a Happy Tune," "Getting to Know You," "Hello Young Lovers," and "Shall We Dance."

For complete Theatre listings, [click here to visit the KCM Events calendar](#).

KCMetropolis only previews and reviews events that are posted on the KCM Events Calendar. If you would like to list your event on the KCM Events Calendar to be considered for coverage, [click here for instructions](#).

Film, City Cinema

May Art-House Films

Wed, Apr 30, 2014

May 2

Le Week-End

In director Roger Michell's (*Notting Hill*) newest comedy/drama, Jim Broadbent and Lindsay Duncan (*Alice in Wonderland*) play a long-married academic couple who pay a weekend visit to Paris for the first time since their honeymoon 30 years earlier. It's all in the hopes of rekindling their relationship. They careen from harmony to disharmony to resignation and back again as they take stock and grapple with love, loss, regret and,

disappointment, in their own very English way. Eventually, the two bump into Morgan (Jeff Goldblum), with whom Nick went to university and who is now a successful writer, and attend a dinner party of his that ultimately opens up a new view of life and love for the ageing couple.

Rated R, 93 minutes

Visit www.tivolikc.com or call 913-383-7756 for more information. Visit fineartsgroup.com for more information.

Finding Vivian Maier

A documentary on the late Vivian Maier (1926–2009), a nanny in Chicago whose previously unknown cache of 100,000 photographs earned her a posthumous reputation as one the most accomplished street photographers.

Unrated, 83 minutes

Visit www.tivolikc.com or call 913-383-7756 for more information.

May 9

Only Lovers Left Alive

A depressed musician (Tom Hiddleston, *Thor*) reunites with his lover (Tilda Swinton), though their romance - which has already endured several centuries - is disrupted by the arrival of uncontrollable younger sister (Mia Wasikowska, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Stoker*).

Rated R, 123 minutes

Visit fineartsgroup.com for more information.

May 16

Belle

This historical drama is inspired by the true story of Dido Elizabeth Belle (Gugu Mbatha-Raw), the illegitimate mixed race daughter of Admiral Sir John Lindsay (Matthew Goode, *Watchmen*, *Stoker*). Raised by her aristocratic great-uncle Lord Mansfield (Tom Wilkinson) and his wife (Emily Watson), Belle's lineage affords her certain privileges, yet her status prevents her from the traditions of noble social standing. While her cousin Elizabeth (Sarah Gadon, *A Dangerous Method*) chases suitors for marriage, Belle is left on the sidelines

wondering if she will ever find love. After meeting an idealistic young vicar's son bent on changing society, he and Belle help shape Lord Mansfield's role as Lord Chief Justice to end slavery in England.

Rated PG, 104 minutes

Visit www.tivolikc.com or call 913-383-7756 for more information. Visit fineartsgroup.com for more information.

Opening dates of films listed are subject to change. All descriptions and other pertinent information originated from official film Web sites, IMDB.com, Wikipedia.org, tivolikc.com, and fineartsgroup.com.

City Spaces, Visual Arts

Visual Arts in May

Wed, Apr 30, 2014

Mid-America Arts Alliance

Spirited: Prohibition in America

Group Show

On view May 2–May 23

For information call 816-421-1388 or online <http://www.maaa.org/firstfridays>

Spirited: Prohibition in America explores the history of Prohibition, from the dawn of the temperance movement to the unprecedented repeal of a constitutional amendment in 1933.

What made the country go “dry” and how did America change during this period in history? Visitors to *Spirited* will learn about the amendment process, the role of liquor in American culture, the cultural revolution of the roaring '20s, and how current liquor laws vary from state to state today. Relive the world of flappers and suffragists, bootleggers and temperance lobbyists, and real-life legends, such as Al Capone and Carry Nation.

In a tumultuous era spanning 13 years (1920–1933), Americans could no longer manufacture, sell, or transport intoxicating beverages. The morality and illegalization of liquor split American opinion and created a subculture of rampant criminality. *Spirited* draws on histories told from both sides of the law. Through strong visual and interactive elements, the exhibition demonstrates how America went from a nation drowning in liquor in the 1800s, to campaigns of temperance, and the upswing and downfall of outlawing prohibition.

Spirited is adapted from an exhibition originally staged by [National Constitution Center](#) in Philadelphia. It is presented by [NEH on the Road](#), an M-AAA initiative with the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art***Benton in Black and White***

Lithographs by Thomas Hart Benton

On view May 21–February 15, 2015

For information call 816-751-1278 or online www.nelson-atkins.org

The year 2014 marks the 125th anniversary of the birth of Missouri native and Kansas City resident Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975). Part of a city-wide celebration, this installation presents four decades of Benton's lithographs and highlights his dedication to telling the many stories that shape our national narrative.

Prints held a particular attraction for Benton. The relative affordability of the medium matched his aim to make art available to as many viewers as possible. The majority of his nearly 100 lithographs were printed in editions of 250 by master lithographer George C. Miller and distributed by the Associated American Artists (AAA). The AAA sold these prints by mail and in department stores, changing the perception that art was a luxury only the wealthy could enjoy. Americans across the nation acquired Benton lithographs for a price that seems unbelievable today. For most of the 1930s through the mid-1970s, a signed Benton lithograph could be yours for only five dollars.

Roads of Arabia***Exhibition***

On view April 25–July 6

This landmark exhibition presents more than 7,000 years of largely unknown cultural history of the Arabian Peninsula. *Roads of Arabia* examines the impact of ancient trade routes that traversed the peninsula, carrying precious frankincense and myrrh to the Mesopotamian and Greco-Roman world and allowing for a vibrant exchange of both objects and ideas. With the later rise of Islam, pilgrimage roads converged on Mecca (Makkah) and gradually replaced the well-traveled incense roads.

Roads of Arabia is an unprecedented assembly of more than 200 recently excavated objects, none of which had been seen outside of Saudi Arabia until 2010.

Park University's Campanella Gallery***Senior Photography Exhibit***

Group Show

On view April 27–May 18

For information call (816) 584-6457 or online www.park.edu

The artwork of three Park University seniors will be on display at the Campanella Gallery on the University's

Parkville Campus from Sunday, April 27, to Sunday, May 18. A reception will be held on Wednesday, April 30, from 4:30 to 6 p.m., in the Gallery.

ArtsKC - Regional Arts Council

A Toast to the Classic – Cocktail Party

Exhibiting works from Ricardo Nunez

Saturday, May 3, 5:30 p.m.

For more information call 816-221-1777 or online <https://artskc.org/artskcaperitif/>

Delight your senses with live duo-piano performances, luscious cocktails, and an exclusive art exhibition. A "Toast to the Classic" hosted by Benny and Edith Lee in their Ward Parkway home, with co-hosts Don and Patricia Dagenais. Enjoy timeless elegance, view the host's private collection and take in a private exhibition by local painter Ricardo Nunez.

Toast to all things art while enjoying live piano performances by UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance students while toasting.

Pour It On & On

Exhibiting work from Whitney Kerr

Saturday, May 17 5:00 p.m.

Let the libations flow with hosts Dale and Vickie Trott as they transform their suburban villa into a jazz-infused performance space with co-host Siobhan McLaughlin Lesley.

Guests will enjoy live performances by jazz pianist Eddie Moore and live graffiti artwork by Whitney Kerr.

Tickets are tax-deductible. All proceeds directly benefit ArtsKC - Regional Arts Council's work to advance and support the arts for the benefit of the Kansas City region.

Grand Arts

Don't Go Back to Sleep

Feature-length Video by Stanya Kahn

On view May 9–July 3

For information call 816-421-6887 or online <http://www.grandarts.com/>

Grand Arts is pleased to present Stanya Kahn's latest work: a feature-length video titled "Don't Go Back to Sleep." Kahn created, directed, shot, and edited the 75-minute piece. Anchoring the film's structure is Kahn's sound design, which includes original compositions by the artist along with musician Keith Wood (of Hush Arbors and Thurston Moore's band Chelsea Light Moving). Extending a video practice that allows fluid boundaries

between the real and the fictive, between narrative and abstraction, Kahn directs an ensemble cast of mostly non-actors to perform in scripted and improvised scenarios in which their subjectivity and agency become central to the film's construction. Darkly comedic and uncanny scenes revolve around groups of medical professionals stationed in newly built, vacant homes as they prepare for impending emergencies. Time alternately slows and speeds as the characters are suspended in the in-between of waiting, their affective potential activated by constant uncertainty and disasters already underway.

"Don't Go Back to Sleep" was made with support from the Guggenheim Foundation and Grand Arts. It premiered at Susanne Vielmetter Los Angeles Projects on April 19, 2014 and continues on view there, along with recent drawings by Kahn, until May 24, 2014.

Kemper Museum

Conversations – Marking 20 Years

Group Show

On view May 16–September 21

For information call 816-753-5784 or online www.kemperart.org

Conversations—Marking 20 Years brings together premiere works of art from the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art on the occasion of the Museum's 20th anniversary. Pairings and clusters will spark dialogue between the visitor and the works of art, questions amongst friends who visit the exhibition, and conversations about the relationships between artists and the art that is a testament to their time. *Marking 20 Years* indeed marks a signature moment in the history of the Kemper Museum. It offers visitors an opportunity to reflect upon the creation of the Kemper Museum's Permanent Collection, to be delighted by a favorite, or to be challenged by works new to the Collection.

Leedy-Voukos

Dominator

Skyler Bieberly

On view May 2–June 28

For information call 816-474-1919 or online www.leedy-voukos.com

In the artist's words:

"My work is a direct product of my surroundings, the emotional, psychological, and physical world in which all life inhabits. Intuitive and in the moment I translate emotion and experience through the act of creating. My work teeters between the gestural and the technical. Much like life, the reality of the universe I create is multi-dimensional, a bridging of motifs both light and dark.

There exists a nasty tendency in the human condition, an aggressive and instinctual selfishness, our Id, the

Dominator. The desire to seek immediate satisfaction has become rampant. Why do we alienate ourselves from each other and our environment, our Earth-Mother and deny the interconnectedness of all life? Was there a time in human evolution in which the ability to dominate, kill, rape, and pillage was not only advantageous but necessary? Was there an age of back-stabbing, face eating boogymen that eventually decimated their own species into dilution, ultimately evolving into what became a human being? Whatever the case, the Dominator gene has survived and flourished in our psyche, having been passed down through the millennia. You can see it in our collective attitudes, governments, entertainment, in endless war, and amongst other hominids. This affliction is simply that, a disease of the mind, body, and soul. To identify the Dominator in yourself is to abolish its power. Now is the time for mankind to transcend the chains of this evolutionary psychosis. My role as an artist is to investigate consciousness and the human condition. Playing the part of shaman and social commenter I regard my creations as reliquaries of spirit, emotion and consciousness, informed by experience. My work is a cathartic ritual that I must engage in.”

Tè ak San

Krystal Jolicoeur

On view May 2–31

Tè ak San, or Soil and Blood, introduces Kansas City to the work of mixed-media artist, Krystal Jolicoeur. While living in a remote Australian aboriginal desert community, she observed the collective treatment of death by the residents. Individuals did not simply pass, they experienced a transformative process. Those left behind were reminded of the true value of their life through the act of mourning, which left them rejuvenated. Observing others' external style of mourning made it easier for Jolicoeur to address the losses she had previously handled internally. The patterns left in the red soil from the “sorry” ceremonies, had a lasting impact upon the artist, attracting her to the irrefutable connection to the human condition embedded in soil. Soil gives life, nurtures, and erases existence. The land supplements human needs and determines their lifestyle, all people are bound by blood to its constraints and freedoms. In Jolicoeur's solo exhibition at the Leedy-Voulkos Underground Gallery, she presents a series of earthen sculptures and installations that correlate with the inevitable nature of death.

Red Star Studios at Belger Crane Yard

By and Large

John Balistreri

On view May 2–August 16

For information call 816-474-7316 or online www.redstarstudios.org

By and Large includes John Balistreri's newest large-scale ceramic sculptures that were created over a 2.5 year period at the Jun Kaneko studio in Omaha, NE. Totemic, monumental, fluid in form and color, his new body of work is an amalgamation of what he considers the most visually interesting characteristics of his previous work.

Today the phrase "by and large" means "generally speaking," or "on the whole." The origin of the phrase, however, is nautical and was communicated as an order to the man at the helm of a ship to sail the ship slightly off the wind. A similar command was "full and by" which meant to "sail as close to the wind as it can go." The risk of sailing too close to the wind was the danger of being "taken aback" (when the sails press against the mast and progress halts). To Balistreri, these phrases reflect his approach to life and his new work—sailing slightly off the wind in search of unexpected opportunity, while trying not to be "taken aback" too often. He creates work that challenges his understanding of the material as well as his own capabilities as a maker.

By and Large also includes works on paper and canvas. These paintings and drawings represent a wide aesthetic range and phases of the process Balistreri used to create the ceramic sculptures in the exhibition. He describes some of the drawings as the alter ego to his large clay work—expressive, energetic, and spontaneous in ways the large methodical and time-consuming clay work, is not.

Blue Gallery

Drawings

Ruth Shively

On view May 2–TBD

For information call 816-527-0823 or online www.bluegalleryonline.com

"As a painter, I am exploring vulnerability and the idea that we are all universally connected through vulnerability. In my artistic exploration, I've learned I can express myself through my paintings, to confront my fears and take risks that I normally wouldn't explore."- Shively

Ruth Shively grew up in Nebraska, receiving her BFA in 1988 from University of Nebraska Lincoln, NE. With a curiosity to see beyond the plains of the Midwest, Shively ventured to Europe where she lived and worked in Paris for a year. She moved back to the states where she settled in New York City. While in New York, she apprenticed for illustrator Steven Guarnaccia, and worked in the illustration industry. Over the years, painting became more appealing in her life. Strongly attracted to the human form and facial features, she has concentrated on portraits. In recent years, she's loosened her style with practice and inspiration from such artists as Egon Schiele, Lucien Freud and Neil Welliver.

Auditions

Upcoming Auditions and Opportunities

Tue, May 20, 2014

The William Baker Choral Foundation announces the creation of the Summer Singers of Lee's Summit. Registration is now open for the ensemble that will rehearse each Thursday evening in June and July. Membership is open to all adult and mature youth singers without audition. The Summer Singers of Lee's Summit follows the tradition of the very successful Summer Singers of Kansas City that has given annual performances of masterworks to capacity audiences each year since 1999.

The Summer Singers of Lee's Summit will be co-directed by Lynn Swanson and Dr. William Baker of the Choral Foundation staff. Dr. Steven McDonald, of the faculty of Ottawa University, will be rehearsal accompanist. The chorus will perform Mozart's *MISSA BREVIS IN D*, K. 194, classical works by Brahms, Bach, and Haydn, and American folk songs and spirituals. The chorus will be joined in performance by professional soloists and members of the Kansas City Symphony.

Rehearsals will be Thursday evenings, 7:00-9:30, beginning June 5, 2014, at the St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 416 SE Grand in historic Lee's Summit, MO.

For information and registration materials, please call [913-403-9223](tel:913-403-9223), email Mail@FestivalSingers.org, or register online at www.FestivalSingers.org.

Visual Arts, Local Arts News

Spencer receives donation of significant James Turrell piece

By *Wed, May 21, 2014*

As the Spencer Museum of Art's celebrated exhibition "James Turrell: Gard Blue" draws to a close, the art museum has announced that collectors Mark and Lauren Booth have donated a significant work of art by Turrell, an internationally renowned light artist.

Mark Booth, a University of Kansas alumnus, and Lauren Booth, an artist, loaned "Gard Blue" as the centerpiece for the Spencer's nine-month exhibition and announced their intent to donate the work for the art museum's permanent collection.

"The Spencer is the right home for 'Gard Blue.' We are thrilled for it to be at the university," Mark Booth said.

Museum Director Saralyn Reece Hardy, who led the initiative to show “Gard Blue,” said the gift reveals the Booths’ commitment to public education and the important role that art plays in the education of the whole person.

“This gift from Mark and Lauren Booth demonstrates their vision as collectors and their astounding generosity,” Hardy said. “Adding a Turrell of this significance and power, from his early period of discovery, to our collection is transformative.”

“Gard Blue,” a cross-projection created by Turrell in 1968, marks the crucial juncture when he shifted the viewer’s attention to perception and the phenomenon of pure light, which is his medium. Appearing in a large, box-like room constructed specifically for its display, “Gard Blue” is a projection of blue light in an enclosed space. The clarity of “Gard Blue’s” seemingly material shape is held by a single, arresting color emanation. The work encourages sustained attention and demands sensory revelation.

“My work has no object, no image and no focus,” Turrell has said. “With no object, no image and no focus, what are you looking at? You are looking at you looking. What is important to me is to create an experience of worldless thought.”

For the past half-century, Turrell, the pre-eminent light artist of our time, has worked directly with light and space to create artworks that engage viewers with the limits and wonder of human perception. Informed by his training in perceptual psychology and a childhood fascination with light, Turrell began experimenting with light as a medium in Southern California in the mid-1960s and emerged as a leader of the West Coast’s avant-garde Light and Space Movement. Today, Turrell remains on the cutting edge.

Hardy believes that, decades into his extraordinary art career, Turrell is light years ahead of his time.

“His astonishing perceptive power and imagination have created an art of the future,” she said, “one that changes how we see, think and live.”

The Spencer’s exhibition, which opened in September 2013, built on the momentum of three simultaneous Turrell retrospectives at major U.S. museums — the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston — and provided local and regional art audiences with the rare opportunity to experience Turrell’s art close to home.

The Spencer Museum of Art houses an internationally known collection that is deep and diverse, including artworks and artifacts in all media. The collection spans the history of European and American art from ancient to contemporary, and includes broad and significant holdings of East Asian art. Areas of special strength include medieval panel painting and religious sculpture; the Kress Study Collection of early modern Italian painting; 19th-

century American art and material culture; old master prints; photography; European, East Asian, and Indian textiles; American Indian pottery, beadwork, and jewelry; African sculpture; Japanese Edo-period prints; and 20th-century Chinese painting.

For more information, visit <http://www.news.ku.edu>

Classical, Local Arts News

KC Boys and KC Girls Choirs named as finalists

By *Wed, May 21, 2014*

The Kansas City Boys and Kansas City Girls Choirs have been selected as one of 50 finalists for the 2014 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award.

This is the second consecutive year the Kansas City Boy and Girls Choirs have been designated as one of the nation's top arts and humanities organizations for youth by award organizers. The choirs were finalists for the 2013 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award.

"Being named a finalist for the National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award is a great honor," Choir Executive Director Ah'Lee Robinson said. "The finalists represent many of the top youth programs across the nation.

"Our selection as award finalist reflects the commitment and hard work of our choristers, staff and volunteers," Robinson said.

The Kansas City Boys and Girls Choirs perform public and private concerts throughout the year. In addition to rehearsals and performances, choir members must complete 60 hours of community service annually and maintain a 2.5 grade point average.

The Kansas City Boys and Girls Choirs were selected from 360 nominations from 47 states and the District of Columbia.

The National Arts and Humanities Program award recognizes excellence in after-school and out-of-school arts programming for youth, particularly in underserved areas. A national jury will award the top 12 organizations a one-time \$10,000 grant and an invitation to a White House awards ceremony hosted by First Lady Michelle Obama. The panel will select award winners in June.

The National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award is sponsored by the President's Committee on

the Arts and the Humanities and its partners the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Boys Choir was founded in 1995, and the Girls Choir was founded in 2006. Choir members are boys and girls ages 8-19 and are selected by audition. The choirs strive to bridge cultural gaps and foster talent through music education, community service and scholarship.

For more information, visit <http://www.kcboychoir.org/> and <http://www.kcgirlschoir.org/>

Local Arts News

2014 Rocket Grants Awards announced

By Tue, May 20, 2014

Rocket Grants, funded by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, announces its 2014 Grant Awards: eight full Project Awards and two Research & Development Awards. Full Project Awards provide \$5,400 grants for each selected project. R&D Awards provide \$2,000 up front and a further \$3,400 contingent upon a return proposal for implementation. The winners were selected by a panel of visiting artists: Juan William Chávez, artist, curator and cultural activist, St. Louis; Kemi Ilesanmi, Executive Director, The Laundromat Project, New York; Dave Loewenstein, muralist, printer, activist, Lawrence; Mark Southerland, musician, performance artist, horn sculptor, Kansas City.

An Awards Ceremony will be held at the Kansas City Museum on Thursday, June 5, including a reception in Corinthian Hall from 5 to 6 PM, and pecha kucha presentations of awarded projects from 6 to 7 PM in the Carriage House. RSVP to julia@charlottestreet.org.

Grantees are as follows:

Full Project Awards

Joseph Keehn:: A Mystic Bond of Brotherhood Makes All Men One

Recordings of text and music relating to Gay culture and exploring the notion of a third space, with interactive public commentary, presented in libraries in Topeka and Kansas City.

Lyn E Cook, King Kihei, The Recipe KC (Theodore 'Priest' Hughes & Desmond 3-3-7 Jones):: Parent/Teacher Conference

Music video/spoken word performance and public forums to highlight issues surrounding the lack of accreditation in Kansas City public schools.

Cambria Potter:: 50/50

A space for exhibition, dialogue, and curated programming in two shipping containers in the West Bottoms, Kansas City, with associated billboard and digital archives.

Damia Smith:: The Weight of an Object

Multimedia, interactive performances involving an outdoor, sculptural display unit, consumer commodities, and documentation of their histories, in downtown Lawrence.

Nick Ward Bopp, Sam Green:: Maker Village Kansas City (MVKC) Builder Series

Affordable public programming for a brand new Maker Space at 31st and Cherry in Kansas City, teaching local residents to work with tools and materials and build useful structures.

Lyn Elliot, Misti Boland, Caitlin Horsmon, Meg Jamieson, Mary C. Taylor:: Lessons from Exes

A 10-minute film project featuring five regional women filmmakers responding to recorded interviews about exes. Public showings to include restrooms and outdoor venues in both Lawrence and KC.

Charlie Mylie, Lindsey Griffith, Colin Bright Eagle O'Keefe:: GuestWriter's Revenge

Custom computer program generates humorous scripts on the fly from popular TV shows and films, for use in public-engaged performances with costumes, sets, and puppets.

David Cedillo, Angie Wolford, Matt Hawkins:: Beep Goes the Weasel

Audience-engaged music-making at a drive-in theater, including on-screen projection of people playing assorted unconventional electronic instruments, including circuit-bent fruits and vegetables.

R&D Project Awards

Joseph Kamm:: Func-artCommons

Setting up a system to share functional art and design objects made by local craftspeople, via community-driven artCommons collections.

Erin Zona:: The Zz School of Print Media

An alternative school focusing on college-level printmaking and art history for a one-year pilot program.

For more information, visit <http://www.charlottestreet.org/>

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