

N E W S R E L E A S E

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The Theatre School Welcomes Damon Kiely, Catherine Weidner and More
Attracting World Class Talent and Diversity for Over 80 Years

The Theatre School at DePaul University is pleased to announce the appointment of four new full-time faculty members: **Damon Kiely**, former artistic director of American Theater Company in Chicago, **Catherine Weidner**, formerly of The Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C., **Shane Kelly**, formerly of the University of Northern Colorado, and **Carlos Murillo**, award-winning playwright and director.

Continuing its tradition of creating a top-notch conservatory environment, the school moves into its 2007-2008 year with one of the most diverse incoming student bodies in its history. This is in part due to the commitment to bring in the highest caliber of faculty and staff from a wide variety of professional, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. With this multiplicity comes an expansive amount of knowledge to nurture well rounded artists and individuals.

Weidner was attracted to The Theatre School because of this cohesiveness and dedication. She comes from a wonderfully multi-cultural background herself and feels that this has allowed her to respond rather than react both in life and in acting. "I've learned to do less talking and more doing -- that comes directly from my experiences in not speaking the same language as everyone else, but still finding ways to express myself," Weidner reflects. "Our physical language is like an alphabet that all creatures can understand. I encourage students to show me what a choice would look like rather than explain it to me."

Students choose The Theatre School because they know they will receive quality training from experienced faculty who genuinely care about them and their craft. For Kelly, this was an important factor in his decision to come. "I was attracted by the reputation of The Theatre School as a place that is committed to training their students in a professional manner to empower their graduates to be successful theatre professionals" he said. Kelly's extensive experience in his field of theatre technology includes professional work at American Repertory Theatre, Guthrie Theatre and in the educational setting at University of Northern Colorado. Weidner also brings notable experience having worked with La Jolla Playhouse, Theatre de la Jeune Lune and the Guthrie, to name a few. Cultivating a faculty with credentials in the field engages and fosters creativity not only for students but for the school as a whole.

For Kiely, his appointment is even more meaningful as he follows in his father's footsteps. "I love teaching. My father is a 35-year veteran professor at DePaul in the Law School, so I think it must be in my blood." Having worked with Andrei Serban, Anne Bogart and Richard Foreman while pursuing his M.F.A. at Columbia University and receiving the TCG Directing

fellowship are just two of the credentials this successful artistic director will bring to the school. Kiely is looking forward to getting started saying "I find interaction with students reinvigorates my own art and I'm excited about learning from my colleagues."

Kiely will certainly be in good company to do so. Joining The Theatre School in the new capacity of a full time Assistant Professor in the Theatre Studies Department is two-time winner of the National Latino Playwriting Award, Carlos Murillo, whose *dark play, or stories for boys* premiered at the Humana Festival this past spring. Murillo, who served as a full time visiting faculty member in previous years, begins this new chapter not only teaching, but directing the production of *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings*, an adaptation of Columbian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez's famous short story.

The Theatre School also welcomes **Reginald Lawrence**, Executive Director of MPAACT, returning in the visiting multicultural faculty position; **Jennifer Shook**, who, with nearly ten years of production dramaturgy experience, joins the school this year as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Dramaturgy and Criticism; and **Ray Nardelli**, who has worked with such companies as Lookingglass and the Goodman and will be the Visiting Assistant Professor of Sound Design in the Design/Tech Department in 07-08.

Faculty Biographies:

SHANE KELLY

Shane Kelly served as the University of Northern Colorado's School of Theatre Arts and Dance Opera Technical Director and sound design instructor. Shane also worked as the Assistant Technical Director at American Repertory Theatre, the regional theatre in residence at Harvard University. Productions at A.R.T. include: *Birthday Party*, *The Miser*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Snow in June*, *Amerika (or The Disappearance)*, as well as assisting in the outfitting of the new Zero Arrow Theatre at A.R.T. Shane has also worked as the Master Carpenter at Colorado Shakespeare Festival, the Scenic and Lighting Designer for student theatre at Harvard University, as Carpenter and Rigger at the Guthrie Theatre, as Master Electrician at Surflight Theatre in New Jersey, and as Installation Assistant and Craftsperson for Vee Corporation and the NBA All-Star Jam Session. His most memorable sound design is working with Adrian Hall on *All The King's Men*. Shane has an M.F.A. in Theatre Technical Production from the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Delaware and a B.A. in Theatre from the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University in Minnesota, and is a member of U.S.I.T.T.

DAMON KIELY

Damon Kiely served as the Artistic Director of the American Theater Company from 2002 to 2007. He has directed for the Ontological Theater, Adobe Theater Company, PS122, Ensemble Studio Theater, and New Dramatists. Directing credits at American Theater Company include *Oklahoma!*, *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, *Orpheus Descending*, *Kid-Simple*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Strictly Dishonorable* and *The Hairy Ape*. Damon also served as the Artistic Director for Real Time Theater, and was a Producing Director at Ontological-Hysteric Theater, as well as the Associate Artistic Director for the Children's Theater of Maine. He is a winner of the 2000-02 NEA/TCG Career Directing Program, the 2000 Drama League Fall Directing Program, and the 1997 Princess Grace Award. He received his MFA from Columbia University and his B.A. from the University of Chicago.

CARLOS MURILLO

Carlos Murillo's plays have been produced in New York (New York City Summer Play Festival, En Garde Arts, Soho Repertory Theatre, Hangar Theatre), Los Angeles (The Theatre @ Boston Court, Circle X Theatre Co., Son of Semele Ensemble), Chicago (Walkabout Theater Company, DePaul University), Seattle (The Group Theatre), Minneapolis (The Red Eye Theater) and Austin (the dirigo group), and developed at The Public Theater, New York Theatre Workshop, The Goodman Theatre, Sundance Theatre, The Playwrights' Center, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, South Coast Repertory, A.S.K. Theatre Projects and others. He was a Jerome Fellow at the Playwrights' Center (95-96), a recipient of grants from Rockefeller Foundation and Minnesota State Arts Board, and a two-time winner of the National Latino Playwriting Award (1996 & 2006). Mr. Murillo is an Assistant Professor at The Theatre School at DePaul University in Chicago and a member of New Dramatists in NYC.

CATHERINE WEIDNER

Catherine Weidner was the Program Director of The Shakespeare Theatre Company Academy for Classical Acting at George Washington University. Prior to that, she was head of the theatre program for five years at Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont. She recently appeared in *A Streetcar Named Desire* with Patricia Clarkson at The Kennedy Center, appeared as Susan Johnston in *The Heidi Chronicles* at Arena Stage, appeared in *Mary Stuart* and *Blithe Spirit* at CenterStage in Baltimore, and has worked at The Guthrie Theater, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, the La Jolla Playhouse, and with Bread & Puppet. In New York, she has directed and performed at Soho Rep and New Dramatists. Her directing experience includes: *Richard III*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Measure for Measure*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Caligula*, *Otherwise Engaged*, *Animal Farm*, *Reckless*, *Cloud 9*, *The Visit* and *Ubu*. She also teaches public speaking for the Smithsonian Associates program. She holds a BFA in Acting from Ithaca College and an MFA in Directing from the University of Minnesota, and has trained at The Second City in Chicago and The Neighborhood Playhouse in New York.

Interviews are available upon request. Please contact Maliwan Diemer for details.

The Theatre School at DePaul University, founded as the Goodman School of Drama in 1925, educates, trains and inspires students of theatre in a conservatory setting that is rigorous, disciplined, culturally diverse and that strives for the highest level of professional skill and artistry. A commitment to diversity and equality in education is central to our mission. As an integral part of the training, The Theatre School produces public programs and performances from a wide repertoire of classic, contemporary and original plays that challenge, entertain and stimulate the imagination. We seek to enhance the intellectual and cultural life of our university community, our city and the profession.