Emi Phillips - President

Hello lovely players (cold readings and well versed).

This year has been exciting and busy to say the least. We started off the season by working with Alpha Phi Omega who had an amazing production of Don’t Fear the Reaper. After that, we started off with our first showcase, Suicide, Incorporated, then moved on to our Fall Family Weekend show, A Gray Matter (written by Yolanda Casitore, Class of 2019) and ended our Fall semester with our main stage performance of The Love of Three Oranges. I’ll let the individual producers tell you more about each show.

Next, the Players are getting ready to present Evening of Performance 2018, which will include Jimmy the Antichrist, Waiting for Twust Stiffly, Plots, and acts by Comma and Sheer Idocy. After that please be sure to join us for a Spring Slideshow (1st) and our spring musical, The Mystery of Edwin Drood. The RPI Executive Committee is excited to bring back a season with six shows, as we get ready to have our 38th show fall on the musical next year.

The RPI Players is always looking to improve and grow. Just as I hope that the this year’s Executive Committee is better than last year (I hope that we can keep on making Players better every year. If you have any suggestions or would simply like to talk about Players (tell me cool, historical facts) then please email me at players-pres@union.rpi.edu. I really hope to hear from you either via email, but hopefully in person when I get to see you at one of our shows!

Hannah De los Santos - Business Manager

Hello, Old Timers! It’s Hannah, your favorite (old) Business Manager. It’s that time of year again — budgeting season! We’ve economized spending as well as made plans for the upcoming year. In other business news, we’ve been having great shows all semester, which, of course, means more money. Not only did we make extra money from our student-written showcase and hilarious mainstage show, but we were able to donate over $300 for suicide prevention as a result of our additional showcase, Suicide, Incorporated. Hope to see you all at our fantastic shows next semester.

Ben Wright - Technical Director

In the proud tradition of my forebears, I’ve spent the last semester squandering the budget, defying the rest of the Executive Committee, and generally raising merry hell around the Playhouse. We tackled some incredible technical challenges (notably constructing the largest book on campus outside the architecture library) and I’m looking forward to overcomplicating IOP and the musical! To an equal degree, I’ve worked closely with our magnificent Technical Committee and lovely Business Manager to ensure that next year’s budget is duly misspent. New tools for the set shop, major upgrades to the sound system, and a repurposing of the stage all made it into next year’s budget, and I couldn’t be happier. During the coming semester, I plan to bring the Playhouse as close to combustion as possible while purchasing new lighting equipment, organizing the set shop, and corrupting the next generation of technical ne’er-do-wells. Service the membership, annoy the other officers, and argue with alumni about microphones has been an honor and a joy, and I can’t wait for the next semester!
Micaila Dean - Membership Chair

What a wonderful semester! We brought in a lot of new freshman and even new upperclassmen to add to our ever-growing ranks. Plus, we had some really great events that we were able to put on, like our first-ever Loch-In. We are continuing to pull in new people and have great participation with our upcoming Fall show. You should definitely come see it, as well as all of our wonderful shows this semester. And don’t worry, Thacher Park is all ready and reserved for anyone who’d like to join us after the musical this spring.

Mason Cooper - Secretary-Historian

Hello Old Timers, my old friends... I’ve come to talk with you again! I was hoping this would be the issue that starts with your stories, but alas, that will start this summer. That said, if you have any updates on how you’re doing or news to respond to, let me know! I’ll start compiling stories now, and send out a more official call lickety at the end of this season. I’m thankful to everyone who sent things in this semester, and would like to give a special shout-out to Mr. Keilman ’54 for sending in some awesome early 50s playlists. (Look forward to the goodies I’ve sent back!) The newly formed Historical Committee will be collecting artifacts like these for both digitization and display as we approach our 300th show!

Speaking of which, we held show selections! For our fall straight play we will be putting on The Mousetrap by Agatha Christie and for our spring musical (and lickety 300th show!) we will be putting on Avenue B by Jeff Whitty with lyrics and book by Jeff Marx and Robert Lopez. It’s sure to be a fun ride! I’ve passed the midway point in my term, but still have a lot of things left to accomplish. Please be sure to contact me by replying to this email. If you have any questions, concerns, or anything else you’d like to share about yourself!

Heili Springsteen - Publicity Director

Hello from the Season Publicity Director! Three of our shows have passed, and with that we’ve gained some valuable insight into how we can make the P-COMM better. (That’s right, the P-COMM has returned! Sort of.) We’ve done some shifting of duties due to concerns about interest in the position, but we’re still working as hard as ever to promote Players events. Up next is our evening of Performance, for which we’ll be working with Comma, a creative writing club, and Sheer Idiosy to get the news out about the production. We’re also working with the Performing Arts Committee to maintain awareness and interest in our events. It’s been a great fall season, and I’m looking forward to an even more creative spring semester when it comes to publicity events!

Bryce Miller - Season Artist

Welcome to the 88th season, brought to you by the number 88 and the shape ‘hexagon’. If you’re a regular reader of the OTR, then this will be the fourth time you’ve heard or seen from me, so I won’t hold you up. Making this season’s art scheme has been an extremely enjoyable endeavor, and the marquee / t-shirts turned out fantastic. If I have my way, you’ll be seeing plenty more art (and hexagons) coming your way.

PS: Emil thinks she can throw shade at me and my G-Comm, but as Season Artist and creator of this newsletter, I get the last laugh! Haha!
Mason Cooper - Webmaster

Howdy, folks! I introduced myself again above, but here I am again... hopefully you're not so old as to have forgotten just yet (if you are, you should reach out to me as Sec-Hist, I'd be really interested in hearing about the Playhouse back then). Lots of features are making their way into the website! In addition to being able to directly link to cast pages, a new reservation system, and other such fun, we're also introducing accounts! Once I'm sure everything is nice and secure, you all will be able to visit your pages in the profiles section of the site. From there, you'll see a little button. With this button you'll be able to register that page as yours (and we'll ask you to send in some proof). Once I approve, you can submit a headshot (all images will have to be approved by me), so while I might appreciate the nudes, only I will see them) and request for information to be updated. More will be done with these accounts in the future, once they are fully rolled out. (Thin games, fun, etc.) Oh, ah, and a new mobile theme is on the way. Have a nice trap!

Deborah Winograd - Producer (NRB)

Greetings old-timers! While I am soon to join this illustrious group of former Players, I had the great privilege of welcoming future members into our ranks. As the NRB 2016 Producer, I oversaw the micro-productions of The 9 Worst Breakups of All Time, 18 Ways to Survive the Zombie Apocalypse, Man Woman Flower, and a cappella performances. Hearts were broken, zombies were stayed, and blank frames ogled at. The show was a success and most importantly, incredible amounts of freshmen have come back to be part of larger productions.

Jeremy and Katie - Producers (Suicide Inc.)

At the beginning of the semester, we had the distinct pleasure of putting together Suicide, Incorporated, a black box show produced in partnership with Tray High Out, the Tray Arts Center and the Chapel, and Cultural Center as well as the PAF Counseling Center and Active Minds to spread awareness about suicide and suicide prevention as part of National Suicide Prevention month. This show was different from what we've done in the past and brought a more serious tone to kick off our season.

The show opened in the Tray Arts Center to a nearly full house of students and community members alike. The actors were able to take pride in having to right to be heard over the snifflers and tears from the audience. The show was a labor of love by all of its cast and crew and we cannot thank their dedication and hard work enough to make such a powerful and moving show possible.

All said and done, we were able to raise more than $400 for a local suicide and depression counseling center and spread an invaluable message about the struggles that are so hidden in our world. We hope that black box theater catches on in the Players so that we can continue to partner with wonderful organizations and serve not only to entertain but to inform and inspire.

Katie Saporito and Jeremy Feldman

Talina Bastille - Playwright (A Gray Matter)

Hi, my name is Talina Bastille. I wrote and directed ‘A Gray Matter’, which was put on as the fall side show for 2015. Working on this show was a dream come true for me. We had a large cast and production team that allowed us to bring in a lot of freshmen who were new to Players. I spent the last two and a half years writing this show and refining it, and to see it become a reality was incredibly surreal and wonderful. Everyone involved did a fantastic job. Despite the lack of name recognition, we still brought in a sizable audience both show nights, and they seemed to really enjoy the production. I’m grateful to the Comm and Players in general for giving me this amazing opportunity, and to everyone who was involved for bringing this show to life in ways I’d never dreamed of.
Nicholas Menezes - Producer (Oranges)

Hello Old Timers! My name is Nicholas Menezes, the producer of The Love of Three Oranges by Herraldo Ferrari. This was a very interesting show compared to the past three fall main stage shows. From the face of The Importance of Being Earnest and the horror of Dracula to the Commedia dell’arte that is The Love of Three Oranges, this hilarious postmodern retelling of Sergei Pravdeev’s opera, many bizarre events take place that both the actors and the audience on rollercoaster of a story. Together, one of our talented freshmen, a community member, an API Player’s senior, and a API Players Runmi took the stage by storm! Out of all the past shows I would say that this show stood out not only for its interesting plot and ideology, but for being a medium in which many of its members of the API Players could learn a different form of dramatical performance. I had the pleasure of working with Eric Shoveh, who in my opinion was the perfect director for this show as he went off of his way to teach actors physically in acting and a variety of circus tricks including but not limited to juggling, balancing large objects, and fencing. The Tech departments were faced with many challenges that were tackled head on. Having to build a giant functional boat that the narrator could turn the pages as he proceeded to engage the audience and proceed with the story as well as having to properly light it up, being faced with the daunting task of creating various unique wooden weapons and costumes for the giant cast including three gorgeous dresses for the Oranges. A lot of research was done on the hair styles and costumes that were reminiscent to those of the Commedia dell’Arte stock characters. One of the things that really puts this show out there is that it is a fall show to have live music performed each night by the Musician. The production ended with praise by the adjudicator as well as 2 awards. This show was an amazing experience for everyone who was apart of it, having taken away a large deal of new knowledge that will hopefully guide the API Players to being an overall amazing theatre.

Katie Saporita - Producer (EoP 2016)

HEY EVERYBODY!

Are you interested in disgruntled sci-fi actors, the occult, or silly plays exploring life and death? How about stamy poetry and improv? Live musical performances? Well, then we have the show for you! I am excited to announce that 2016’s Evening of Performances is well underway, and will be coming to your friendly API Playhouse on the last two weekends of February. Dust off the snow, and shake those winter blues with a night you don’t want to miss! The cast and crew is full of fresh eyes and fresh talent, making this show sure to impress and thrill you. Remember: enthusiasm is encouraged!

Alex Karcher - Producer (Edwin Drood)

This Spring we present Rupert Holmes’s musical adaptation of Dickens’s unfinished novel, The Mystery of Edwin Drood. This warm-hearted show is the first Broadway musical to have multiple endings, as voted by the live audience! We have a worlds class directorial team with Director and old time Player Zoe Phillips (his 45th time around as our director — including our original Drood 25 years ago... and most recently The Velveteen Rabbit), Choreographer Zachary Pearson (Scoundrels, Bursys, Chaperone, Assassins), and returning Muscial Director Frank Leavitt (Scoundrels, Bursys, Chaperone, Assassins), Come out and see The Mystery of Edwin Drood on April 21th and 22th and 23th and May 1st, 5th, 6th, and 7th. Come every night and vote for a unique live theatrical experience that’s different every night!

All photos courtesy of Demetrios Green