

## Department Newsletter

April 4, 2023

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### WELCOME BACK from Spring Break!

*We're excited to share the Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (RSCA) accomplishments of our Radio, Television, Film, and Theatre Arts faculty, staff, and alumni. We had an incredibly active Fall and Winter!*

### Staffing Changes in the Department



Congratulations to **Nikole Abrego** on her new position in the Dean's office. Nikole is now the College Financial Analyst for the College of Humanities and the Arts. We invite you to welcome our new Department Analyst **Cookie Galvin**. Cookie has been employed at SJSU for 25 years and we are happy to have her joining our team. Cookie will be working remotely M-F from 1pm - 5pm. We are thrilled that SJSU Alumna **Erica Smith** has been hired as our Administrative Support Coordinator. Erica's hours in our department will be 8:30 am - 12:30 pm, M-F. Please email the following address to get in touch with them [filmandtheatre@sjsu.edu](mailto:filmandtheatre@sjsu.edu).

## In Memoriam

*Rest in peace, beloved Bev (aka "THE Bev").*



For decades, **Theatre Arts Lecturer Beverly Mathis-Swanson** (1950-2022) taught our students acting, story-telling and oral interpretation. Every semester, she hosted and PERSONALLY FINANCED the Kaucher-Mitchell-Mathis-Swanson events. These competitions rivaled the glamour of any red carpet

celebration. There were semi-finals, finals, and champagne receptions. She gave space and opportunity for students to find their voices. Some of these students never had the opportunity to perform before working with Bev. She made such a difference to countless students, many of whom returned year after year to continue to support generations of KMMS performers. Bev was also a queen of old fashioned values. She rocked Las Vegas like a member of the Rat Pack. She made gentlemen remove their hats in class. She dressed to the nines, always matching her purse with her shoes and she probably never wore white after Labor Day. She was an extreme sports fan, when it came to the SF Giants (season ticket holder) and you always knew when it was a game day by her over-the-top Giants outfits. Beverly was bigger than life in every possible way. She sparkled brighter than all of the bling she wore (and she wore A LOT of bling). Her absence will be felt by so many people in so many ways.  
- by Dr. Kimb Massey.

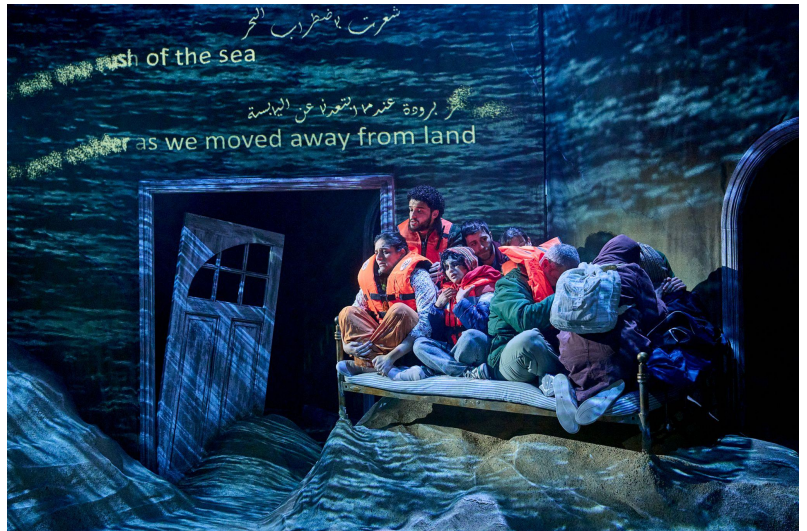




## RSCA NEWS:

### Dr. Matthew Spangler

**Film and Theatre Interim Department Chair Dr. Matthew Spangler's** play based on the novel by Christy Lefter, *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* tells the story of Nuri and his wife Afra, who are forced to escape Syria and embark on a dangerous journey to England as refugees. Winner of the Aspen Words Award, Runner up for the Dayton Literary Peace Prize, and one of "The London Times" top three bestselling books of 2020, Lefter's best-selling novel has been adapted for the stage by Nesrin Alrefaai and Matthew Spangler. The production at [Nottingham Playhouse](#) is directed by Olivier Award winning Miranda Cromwell (*Death of a Salesman* – Young Vic, Piccadilly Theatre and Broadway). It is on tour in the UK and Ireland until July 1. (Photo credit: Manuel Harlan)



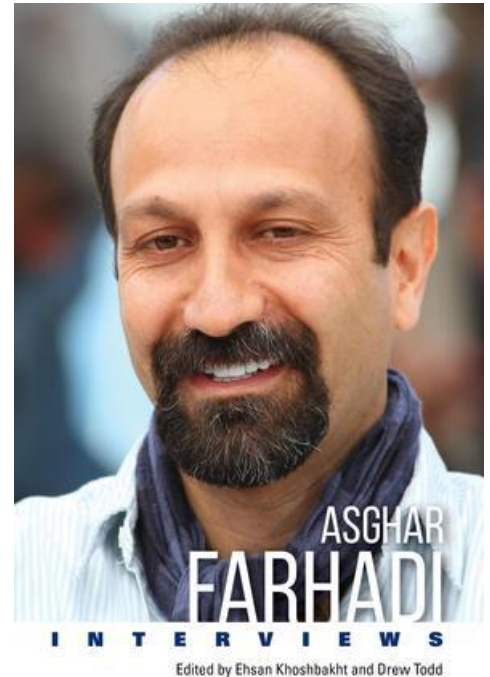
**Dr. Spangler**, SJSU, and the University of Nevada Las Vegas will be hosting the [American Conference for Irish Studies](#), the main international academic body of scholars working in fields related to the study of Ireland, at San Jose State University from June 7-10. Keynote speakers include: the Artistic Director of Dublin's [Abbey Theatre](#) Caitriona McLaughlin, and historian and RTE broadcaster [Myles Dungan](#). See the conference home [page](#) for a program and related events

(The Abbey Theatre production of Bisi Adigun and Roddy Doyle's "The Playboy of the Western World: A New Version." Photo credit: Ros Kavanagh)

## Drew Todd

**Radio-Television-Film Lecturer Drew Todd's book** *Asghar Farhadi: Interviews* was published in January by University Press of Mississippi. This is a collection of interviews given by Farhadi, all of them translated from Persian into English. The winner of two Academy Awards for Best Foreign Film in only five years, Asghar Farhadi (b. 1972) has become Iran's most prominent director since the late Abbas Kiarostami. Around the world, especially in the international festival circuit, Farhadi is considered one of the great dramatist filmmakers of his generation. His reputation and influence in his home country is even greater, though also prone to misunderstandings, controversies, and divided critical reception.

[This volume](#) offers a unique perspective into Farhadi's career in several key respects. Beginning with his work in television, the interviews collected here chart his rise from theater student to Iranian dramatist to celebrated international filmmaker.



**Drew Todd** was honored by Indiana University Cinema on 25th anniversary of *City Lights*, a student-run film series he founded on the campus of IU in 1998.

You can read the interview with Indiana University [here](#).



# Sukanya Chakrabarti

**Theatre Arts Associate Professor Sukanya Chakrabarti** served as the Cultural Dramaturg for an Off-Broadway production, *Public Obscenities*, produced as a collaboration between [Soho Rep](#) and [NAATCO](#). *Public Obscenities* is the first bilingual play in Bangla and English to be produced on an Off-Broadway stage, and is produced by Soho Repertory Theatre in partnership with the National Asian American Theater Company (NAATCO). Sukanya is serving as their Cultural Dramaturg, in continuation of her collaboration with Writer/Director, Shayok Misha Chowdhury, which had begun during the developmental stages of the play in 2021. (Photo Credit: Julieta Cervantes @j\_cervantes)



# Sarah Kate Anderson



## **Theatre Arts Lecturer Sarah Kate Anderson(S'Kate)**

served as the Associate Workshop Coordinator and member of the text faculty for Shakespeare & Company's Month-Long Shakespeare Training Intensive for professional actors.

<https://www.shakespeare.org/actor-training>

# Johnny Moreno

**Theatre Arts Lecturer Johnny Moreno** will perform in the Regional premier of Bess Wohl's play *Grand Horizons* at [The Stage](#). *About the play:* Fifty years into their marriage, Bill and Nancy want a divorce. While they seem unfazed by the decision, their two adult sons are shaken to the core, forced to reexamine everything they thought they knew about their parents' outwardly happy lives. As the family grapples with their new reality, each must reckon with their own imperfect past and how their collective love for each other might express itself in new and unlikely forms. **Now Playing thru April 30th.**



# Nancy Carlin

**Theatre Arts Lecturer Nancy Carlin** performed/read A.R.Gurney's *Love Letters* at [The Lark Theater](#) in Larkspur with her husband Howard Swain in February.

(Photo credit:Tanya Marie)



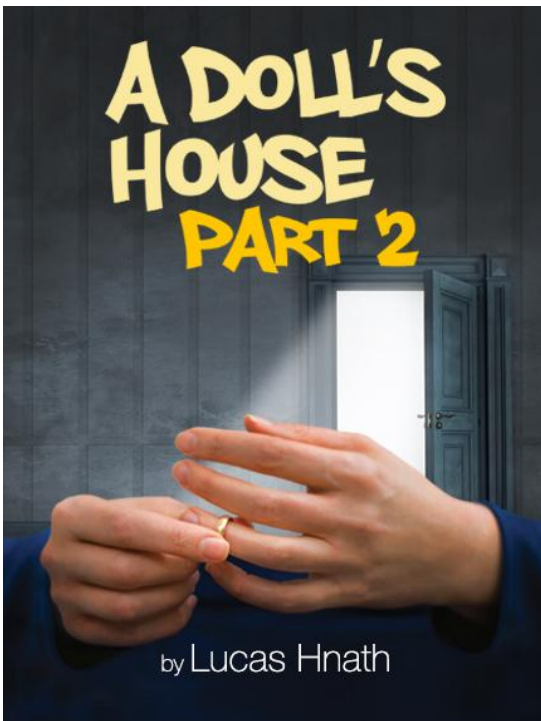
Photo: Leonardo Correa

Carlin is Continuing to direct actor/teaching artists in the performance part of [The Mitvah Project](#), a 75-minute, three-part, Holocaust/social justice-themed, theatrical, education program. It is currently being presented at high schools, colleges and community organizations across America. (Photo credit: Leonardo Correa)



## Andrea Bechert

**Theatre Arts Associate Professor Andrea Bechert** designed the scenery for [FANNIE](#): *The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*, by Cheryl L. Wes, . directed by Artistic Director Tim Bond, and featuring Greta Oglesby. Presented by TheatreWorks, Silicon Valley. The production played March 8-April 2, 2023 at the Lucie Stern Theatre in Palo Alto.



**Associate Professor Bechert** also designed the scenery and media for *A DOLL'S HOUSE, PART 2*, by Lucas Hnath, directed by Bill Peters. The production runs MARCH 29 – APRIL 23, 2023 at The [Jewel Theatre Company](#) in Santa Cruz. **Theatre Arts Lecturer Nancy Carlin** plays "Anne-Marie" in the production. The show is stage managed by **Theatre Arts Alum Abby Halper**.

# Students in the Field

## RTVF and TA alumni are working all over the world!

**Spencer Lepore, RTVF major, '23**, has been accepted, with scholarship, to USC's Cinema & Media Studies MA program.

**Current TA Major, Georgia Ball**, is performing in Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* at [City Lights Theatre](#) in San Jose. . Georgia plays Elvira (a ghost). Sound Designer George Psarras (*Marisol, The Grouch*) plays Charles. (Photo by Christian Pizzirani)



**Jaedan Sanchez**, who played "E" in Dreamer Project. is going to NYU Tisch School of the Arts, and wrote to this to Theatre Arts Lecturer Kathleen Normington::



*"I've met some amazingly unique people, and living in the city has given me a great perspective on the impactful effects of arts and culture through the diverse community of artists here. All throughout my artistic journey, I have sought to find stories that I've felt had something unique to tell about the human soul. It really wasn't until the Dreamer Project that I had that realization that I wanted to tell stories that brought together a community, the same way I found that through being part of the play. To this day, I'm so very much proud and thankful to be part of a project that led me to have ambition and passion for making art that speaks not only to me personally but to inspire individuals to make real change after leaving the theatre. I remember you once telling us that we weren't just actors but actor-advocates. That has stuck with me ever since, leading me to advocate roles that are part of socially progressive stories."*

Current **TA Major, Skylar Riordan** play "Gabe" in *Next to Normal*, presented by Sunnyvale Community Players at the Sunnyvale Theatre, opens April 22 and runs to May 14. Fri-Sun with one Thursday. There are two casts (for covid reasons), Mountains and Light cast, Skylar is in the "Mountain" cast. **Theatre Arts lecturer Vinh Nguyen directs.**



## Students in the Field continued

**Theatre Arts Alum, Josh Marx** was just recently hired at PlayStation as head of leadership development, helping executives build impactful communication skills. In addition, he just finished directing a production of *Assassins* at Hillbarn Theatre in Foster City, and recently had his third child with fellow alumni **Lizzie O'Hara**.



**Theatre Arts Alumni Cherise Mantia** writes



*"I have been an adjunct theatre arts instructor at [Gavilan College](#) in Gilroy, CA for over eight years. Teaching acting, oral interpretation, theatre history, and theatre appreciation; in addition, directing Folktales and Fables from Around the World for Gavilan College's long-running Children's Theatre Program. While at Gavilan I have taken on many additional roles from lead negotiator for our faculty union to heading into my second term as the Academic Senate President (the only adjunct in the state). I am continuing my lifelong learning by engaging in additional training for distance education, equity, and culturally responsive teaching practices. I was recently nominated by my colleagues for Part-time Faculty of the Year for my work in Shared Governance and advocacy for part-time instructors. I have also kept my toe in the acting world by performing in small productions and this semester I will share the role of Miss Lynch in Grease at Gavilan."*



## KSJS 60th Anniversary Celebration

KSJS turned 60 this year and we are so proud of the KSJS station and all of its history and impact on the community that we want to celebrate!

Since February 11, 1963, KSJS has been the radio voice for California's first public university, San Jose State University, and its surrounding community. KSJS is a non-commercial radio station—completely run by students—broadcasting 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on 90.5 FM and the Internet. The station will be celebrating later in the semester on April 22nd on its 60 years of community building, accomplishments and underground college radio standings.

**You are invited to the KSJS 60th Anniversary Celebration**

**PLEASE RSVP USING THIS LINK TO A RESPONSE FORM** By filling out this google form, you are RSVPing for our 60th anniversary celebration. Invitations are welcomed to all KSJS Alum, as well as, our current KSJS students. **Location:** Hal Todd Theatre in Hugh Gillis Hall (HGH) RM #103: 220 E San Fernando St, San Jose, CA 95112 **When:** Saturday, April 22, 2023 **Time:** 6PM - 9PM **Price:** \$25 dollar donation per person. (*This will be used to cover the cost of food and non-alcoholic beverages.*)

*Hope to see you there! ~ Kimb Massey*



# UPCOMING SHOWS

Coming up next:

## The Hunchback of Seville

Playwright by Charise Castro Smith

Directed by Kinan Valdez

At the Hammer Theatre

For tickets: [Hammertheatre.com](http://Hammertheatre.com)

April 28-29 and May 3-6

**THE STORY:** At the turn of the 16th century, Christopher Columbus has just returned from the New World with gold in his pockets and blood on his hands. Maxima Terriblé Segunda, the brilliant adopted sister of dying Her Royal Highness Queen Isabella, is living out her life locked away in a tower...until it is decided that the future of the country is in her nerdy, reclusive hands. In a bitingly funny and madcap take on Spanish history and colonialism, Maxima weaves her way through mountains of prejudice, politics, religion, and the horrors of history. From the author of Disney's *Encanto*.

*“a bawdy funfest...a fun, frothy romp that doesn't take itself too seriously, and isn't afraid of blue language and skewering history with some modern twists.” —BroadwayWorld.com.*

