



# Performing Arts News

Volume X, Issue 2

Riverland Performing Arts - fostering artistry, creativity, and intellect

Spring 2010

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## Be an Angel

**YOU** can make a difference in the lives of Riverland students by making a contribution to theatre and music scholarships. Donations are made to the Riverland Foundation and may be tax-deductible. Please specify "music scholarships" or "Theatre Angels." Contact the Foundation Office or the Music or Theatre Departments for more information.

## 30-Second Note

Theatre Instructor and Technical Director, **Brad Weber**, recently completed an online Bachelor of Science degree in Business with a Management and Leadership focus from Capella University, Minneapolis. Brad is also a radiology technician and PACS Administrator at the Austin Medical Center.

## Profile of an RCC Music Student

When Miguel Chacon entered high school in Medford, he had no idea how a simple misunderstanding would shape his life.



Miguel Chacon, '10

Miguel's family had just moved from Faribault and as he began his 9th grade year in a new school, he selected classes to take. He was under the impression that he had to choose between band or choir for 4th period, with no other options available. This led him to enroll in band.

"Before I entered 9th grade, I really didn't have any background in music," Miguel said. "I was thinking maybe I would be a pilot or maybe go into accounting."

As he learned to play the baritone horn, a newfound love for music began to grow and soon he was enrolled in choir, appearing in musical theater productions, participating in solo/small ensemble contests, learning to play keyboard, and playing and singing in his church's worship group.

As he began to look at colleges, he knew that he wanted to save money by attending a two-year college and then transfer to a four-year college. Miguel said he considered other colleges,

but decided on Riverland because of the variety of performance experiences and ensembles offered and because of the wide range of classes offered.

Miguel has taken advantage of these opportunities, singing in the College Choir and Vocal Ensemble; studying voice, piano, and guitar; and is in the cast for the upcoming production of *Oklahoma!*

This fall he plans to continue his education at the internationally recognized McNally-Smith College of Music in St. Paul to pursue a degree in audio production with a minor in performance, and hopes to someday work in the field of audio production.

Another interesting aspect of Miguel's story is that he will be the first person in his family to earn a college degree. Both of his parents are first-generation immigrants from El Salvador and Guatemala. However, his mother is currently a student in Riverland's Human Services program.

Asked about his Riverland experience, Miguel said "I'm glad I chose Riverland. It was the right size for me. It was nice to really get to know my instructors." As for advice to others, he says "Don't be afraid to try new things. You can do anything you want."

Miguel will graduate in May with an AFA in Music (General/Music Ed) track.

## May Concert Has World Focus

The Riverland College Band, Vocal Ensemble, and College Choir will be joining forces to present a concert on Friday evening, May 7 at 7:30pm in the FWB Theatre.

David Hovland, director of the Instrumental Ensemble stated "This past December our performing groups focused on music that was essentially American. For this semester's concert, we will be presenting music with more of a global theme."

Additionally, the Vocal Ensemble "Frequency"

and the Instrumental Ensemble will be collaborating on some songs including "The Girl from Ipanema" and Cole Porter's 1953 hit "I Love Paris."

Both the College Choir and the Vocal Ensemble are directed this year by Ms. Anne Walker. Vocal Ensemble members are selected by audition. The College Choir and Instrumental Ensemble do not require formal auditions and are open to any Riverland student.

## Instructor Reflects on Teaching Hybrid Class

My experience teaching our Survey of Music as a hybrid-online class has been a qualified success. The music we study in a survey class is approachable yet complex, and in a classroom setting, the instructor has the advantage of “narrating” pieces of music – giving a play-by-play of important melodies, rhythms, and structural events as they go by. For my online students, I had to ensure that this “guided tour” experience would still be there, so I took the additional step of building my online lectures as podcasts with multiple layered audio tracks. Once I learned how to do this, I found that I could give even better play-by-plays of the music, working out in advance what I would say, timing it precisely and

*continued on p. 3*

## Courses in the Spotlight

### THTR 1130 Stagecraft & Technology

One of the required courses for students pursuing the Associate of Fine Arts degree in Theatre is Stagecraft & Technology. In this class students learn:

- basics of theatrical design concepts including design and drawing blue-prints
- basics of safe and effective scenic construction using a myriad of materials and tools
- basics of theatrical painting and various texturing techniques
- basics of theatrical lighting design, including rigging, patching, programming, and running

**Think College. Think Riverland.**

- basics of theatrical sound: microphones, mixing, sound effects, equipment, etc.

Students learn in a blended classroom/scene shop environment to reinforce lecture topics with actual hands-on time. They are also required to collaboratively analyze, design, build, light, and sound a full production during their semester. Additionally, they are given the opportunity to work on productions outside of RCC at Austin High School, the Paramount, and other local venues.

Brad Weber is the instructor for this course. His credentials include 15 years experience with lighting/sound, involvement in over 125 full-scale productions in Austin, and is house technical director for RCC.

## Everything's “Up to Date” at Riverland Theatre

Rodgers and Hammerstein melodies are floating through the Frank W. Bridges Theatre as rehearsals are under way for the American classic...*OKLAHOMA!* Rodgers and Hammerstein's first collaboration remains, in many ways, their most innovative and set the standard for all American musicals to follow. Set in a Western Indian Territory just after the turn of the previous century, the high-spirited rivalry between the local farmers and cowboys provides the colorful background against which Curly, a handsome cowboy, and Laurey, a winsome farm girl, play out their love story. That they will succeed in making a new life together we have no doubt, and that this new life will begin in a brand-new state provides the ultimate climax to the triumphant *OKLAHOMA!* Winner of a special Pulitzer Prize for drama, *OKLAHOMA!* was named Best Musical of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century by the New York Drama League.

Tickets are available at campus bookstores, the theatre box office and Coffee House on Main in downtown Austin.

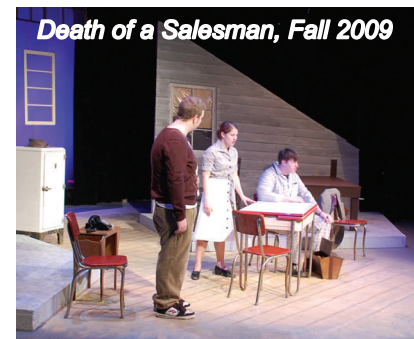
**Repertory:** a type of theatrical presentation in which a company presents two works in alternate sequence in one season

This spring Riverland Theatre is presenting two plays in repertory. This is an exciting adventure for the student actors as well as the audience. To add to the unique performance situation, the cast of one play is all men and the cast of the second is all women. Opening on Wednesday, April 21, is the drama *Take Me Out*.

The New York Times calls *Take Me Out* “an unconditional, all-American epiphany...to cherish. It's a sensibility that is so smart, raw and sincere all at once that you may find tears in your eyes.” Darren Lemming, the star center fielder of the World Champion New York Empire, is a young, rich, famous, talented, handsome and so convinced of his popularity that when he casually announces he is gay, he assumes the news will be readily accepted by everyone. It is not. The ambivalence turns to anger and violence when the Empire call up young phenom Shane Mungitt.

Please be aware that *Take Me Out* contains adult language and graphic situations.

The next night Thursday, April 22, Riverland Theatre opens the award-winning Jane Martin play, *Talking With*. Eleven extraordinary monologues from eleven extraordinary women received a standing ovation at Louisville's Actors Theatre. Idiosyncratic characters amuse, move and frighten, always speaking from the depths of their souls. The characters include a baton twirler, a fundamentalist snake handler, an ex rodeo rider and an actress willing to go to any lengths to get a job and covers the length and breadth of the American dream.



## “A Shining Star...Katie Nelson Remembered” Event Planned



On February 26 at 7:30 pm friends and family of Katie Nelson will gather in the Frank W. Bridges Theatre to celebrate her life. The evening will consist of songs, dances and scenes that Katie loved. All proceeds of the evening will go to establish an endowed scholarship in her name, “The Katie Nelson Music Theatre Scholarship.” Tickets are available on all campuses and through the Riverland box office.

In addition to performances from *Honk!*, *My Fair Lady*, *Guys and Dolls* and many other shows, there will be

an auction, food and other entertainment. The goal is to raise \$10,000, the amount needed to guarantee her scholarship will be given out on an annual basis for ever.

So far Piggy Blues, Belles and Beaus, Minnesota State University-Mankato Department of Theatre and Dance and The Coffee House on Main are joining Riverland Music, Theatre and Massage Therapy to make this event worthy of “A Shining Star.” If you would like to donate an item for the auction or become involved in the event, call Jerry Girton at 434-7390. We invite you to join Katie’s friends and family on this special evening.

## Focus on Alumni



*In Memoriam*  
**Katie Nelson**

Katie Ann Nelson, 29, passed away at St. Mary’s Hospital in Rochester on March 20, 2009 from a newly diagnosed brain tumor. A funeral service was held March 28 at the St. Columbanus Catholic Church in Blooming Prairie, MN.

As a student at Riverland, Katie was very involved in the Music and Theatre Departments. She was a member of the College Choir, Vocal Ensemble, appeared in a number of theatrical productions, and completed a number of courses in Theatre and Music.

After graduating from Riverland, Katie transferred to Minnesota State University-Mankato and completed a bachelor’s degree in theatre and dance. She had returned to Riverland in 2008 and was in the process of completing a degree in Massage Therapy at the time of her death.

Katie had a particular passion for musical theatre and some of her most memorable roles were Adelaide in *Guys and Dolls*, Mrs. Higgins in *My Fair Lady*, Lulu in *Footloose*, and Lowbutt in *Honk!*.

She is remembered by those that knew her as being a vivacious, funny, somewhat bemused, open, compassionate, giving person.

Katie is survived by her parents, brothers, family and friends.

### Hybrid (continued from p. 2)

trying again if I made mistakes. This was labor-intensive, but satisfying.

The other aspects of D2L that I’m using – online quizzes every week, and an online listening-journal – didn’t need to be any different from their in-person versions. Keeping these evaluative exercises online has been a great boon to the class: by doing all testing and writing assignments online, not only do the students get fast, personalized feedback, they also reap the benefit of greater classroom time for lecture and discussion with-

out the necessity of passing papers back and forth and taking quizzes. And the added flexibility of watching the online lecture-podcasts at any time has allowed at least two students to take my class who would otherwise not have been able to do so.

All in all, I’ve been pleased with the hybrid-online format for MUSC-1111, Survey of Music. I would not plan on implementing a fully online version yet, but I myself have become committed to integrating online educational tools into music history classes. **-Griffin Woodworth**

## Riverland Theatre & Music Faculty Assignments

### THEATRE

**Jerry Girton**—Director of Theatre; Advanced Acting; Intro to Theatre & Film; Speech for Performance; Directing

**Susan Hansen**—Beginning Acting, Stage Make-up

**Brad Weber**—Technical Director

**Leslie Weber**—Movement for the Stage

### MUSIC

**Scott Blankenbaker**—on leave

**Cheryl Collins**—Percussion

**Mark Conway**—Guitar

**Holly Dalager**—Woodwinds

**Tim Davis**—Brass

**Angela Donlon**—Voice (OWT)

**David Hovland**—Piano; Music Theory courses; Instrumental Ensemble; Piano Classes; AFA Portfolio

**Lynnee Larson**—Piano

**Susan Radloff**—Strings

**Jesse Smith**—Guitar

**Scott Stroud**--Saxophone

**Anne Walker**—College Choir, Vocal Ensemble (Frequency), Voice, musical theatre direction

**Griffin Woodworth**--Popular Music in America; Survey of Music

**PERFORMING ARTS NEWS**

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**SPRING 2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

<p><b>RCC Theatre Box Office (507)433.0595</b> <b>RCC Music Info (507)433.0600</b></p>	<p><b>STUDENT RECITAL</b> Miguel Chacon &amp; Calder Pfeifer, voice Wednesday, April 7 @ 7:00pm Christ Episcopal Church 301 3rd Ave NW - Austin</p>	<p><b>TALKING WITH</b> Theatre Department April 22, 24, 28, 30 @ 7:30pm FWB Theatre - Riverland \$12/Free for RCC students</p>
<p><b>OKLAHOMA!</b> Theatre &amp; Music Departments Feb. 12, 13, 17-20 @ 7:30pm Feb. 14 @ 2:00pm FWB Theatre - Riverland \$14/Free for RCC students</p>	<p><b>STUDENT RECITAL</b> Ryan Heydon, tenor sax &amp; Trevor Bordelon, guitar Friday, April 16 @ 7:30pm Austin East E102 - Riverland, Austin</p>	<p><b>ACTING OUT!</b> Theatre Department Advanced Acting Students Monday, May 3 @ 7:30pm FWB Theatre - Riverland</p>
<p><b>KATIE NELSON REMEMBERED</b> scholarship fundraiser Theatre, Music, &amp; Massage Therapy Friday, Feb. 26 @ 7:30pm FWB Theatre - Riverland \$20; tickets available on all campuses; or at Theatre box office</p>	<p><b>FACULTY RECITAL</b> vocal, percussion, instrumental faculty Music Department's Casual Classics Series Wednesday, April 21 @ 12:10pm Austin East E102 - Riverland, Austin</p>	<p><b>FINE ARTS SHOWCASE</b> Art, Theatre, &amp; Music Departments Wednesday, May 5 7:00pm student art exhibit 7:30pm music &amp; theatre performances FWB Theatre - Riverland</p>
<p><b>11th ANNUAL VARIETY SHOW</b> Music Department Sunday, March 28 @ 2:00pm FWB Theatre - Riverland \$10 adult/\$5 student proceeds used to support scholarships and music activities tickets available at door</p>	<p><b>TAKE ME OUT</b> Theatre Department April 21, 23, 29, May 1 @ 7:30pm FWB Theatre - Riverland \$12/Free for RCC students</p> <p><i>Events listed are free unless otherwise noted. Find events online at <a href="http://www.riverland.edu">www.riverland.edu</a>.</i></p>	<p><b>SPRING CONCERT</b> Music Department Choirs &amp; Instrumental Ensemble Friday, May 7 @ 7:30pm FWB Theatre - Riverland \$5/\$3/Free for RCC students</p>