

Volume I: Issue 2
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www.MontanaPlaywrights.org

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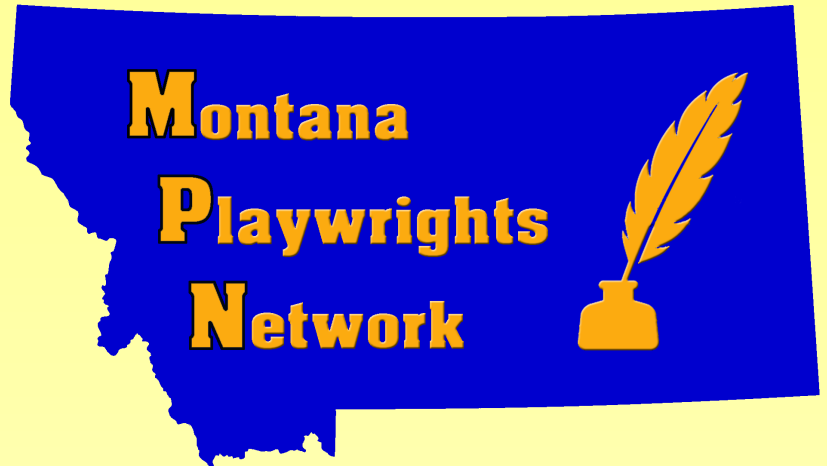
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MPN News

The official newsletter of the Montana Playwrights Network

Inside this Issue:

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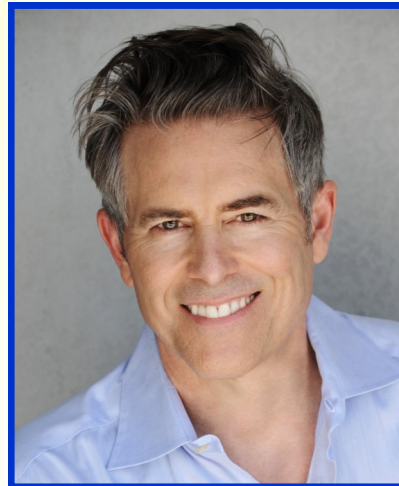
And more...

Share your Story!

The **Montana Playwrights Network (MPN)** is looking for original material to include in our first ever performance of staged readings at the **Montana Playwrights Conference**. Send us your **poetry, stage monologues, short essays, short plays, stories and memoirs** for consideration. You must be a member of MPN to be featured in this exciting new event. Look inside this issue for guidelines, or go to our website:

www.MontanaPlaywrights.org

Join the
Network today!



Introducing our esteemed Keynote, James Still, a renowned playwright and inspiring speaker, who will join us at the **Montana Playwrights Conference**, along with many other distinguished presenters! More **details on page 4, 5 & 6** of this issue.



Pamela Mencher

Greetings from the President

Hello, MPN members and friends! We've been busy since our first newsletter published in April, 2017. Some highlights of our activities:

A **Conference Committee** has been working hard on preparations for our first **Montana Playwrights Conference** to be held on **November 2, 3**, at **Helena College**, and presented in **partnership** with **Helena College Foundation** and the **Continuing Education department** at the College. I'm pleased to report that we've received several donations from Helena area businesses and a grant from **Humanities Montana**, a nonpartisan nonprofit that brings citizens together to learn and reflect on current issues, history, and our many cultures. Based upon our ongoing fundraising efforts, we expect other major supporters to join us in the near future. A huge **thank you to Committee Members, Jane Ogle, Jan Wilson, Pearl Allen and Rob Holter** for all their productive efforts. More about conference details in the **Conference Update on page 4, 5 & 6** of this issue.

I also received a **Strategic Investment Grant** from the **Montana Arts Council** to travel Montana to present four workshops and to promote MPN. One is to be held in **Bozeman** in partnership with **The Last Best Geri-Actors Company**, at the Senior Center on **September 8**; in Browning with **Nature's Sisterhood** on **September 14**; the third in **October** at the **MEA/MFT Annual Conference**; and the fourth to be determined: either in Havre or Glendive. If you'd like to attend any of these events, please contact me at Montanaplaywrights@gmail.com, and I'll be happy to share the details. In behalf of MPN, I offer our **sincere gratitude** to the **Montana Arts Council** for this critical and much appreciated support.

And, last but not least, it gives me great pleasure to announce our newest member of the Board of Directors, **Jane Ogle**. She has accepted the appointment as our **Regional Representative for Central Montana**. Congratulations, Jane!

That's it for now! Plan to join us at the workshops around Montana, or at our first major event, the **Montana Playwrights Conference**, or at the affiliated **RMTA Reunion Party on November 3**. More details about these exciting events inside this issue!



"It's like everyone tells a story about themselves inside their own head. Always. All the time. That story makes you what you are. We build ourselves out of that story."

Patrick Rothfuss, The Name of the Wind

Helena College Continuing Education



Supporting creativity in our community



Host of the first Montana Playwrights Conference in November 2017.

Visit our website for more information on class offerings.



Your talent could be our next class! We would love to hear your ideas.

www.umhelena.edu/continuinged, email ce@umhelena.edu or call Mary Lannert at 406-447-6945.



Supporting the arts in Helena.

Please consider Helena College Foundation in your philanthropic giving.

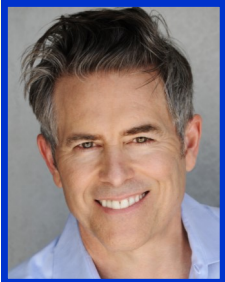
www.helenacollegefoundation.org

Montana Playwrights Conference UPDATE!

Save the dates: November 2, 3, 2017
At Helena College in Helena, MT

Conference Workshops:

Scriptwriting Techniques for Creative Writing & Master Class in Playwriting Keynote Presenter, James Still



James is an inspiring speaker, and his work has been produced throughout the world. His plays have been nominated four times for the Pulitzer Prize, and have been developed at prestigious institutions such as Robert Redford's Sundance, the New Harmony Project, Eugene O'Neill Playwrights Conference, and many others. Three of his plays have received the Distinguished Play Award from the American Alliance for Theatre & Education. James is the Resident Playwright at Indiana Repertory Theatre, and an Artistic Affiliate at American Blues Theatre in Chicago. **His workshops** offer practical techniques to use in creative writing, and an inspiring examination of successful playwriting.

Beyond Sex, Drugs and Rock 'N' Roll: The Science of Playwriting in the 21st Century Associate Keynote Presenter, Dr. Xan Johnson



Xan has been a leading keynote presenter at state, regional, national and international venues sharing research focusing on the relationship between Child Drama and Social Cognitive Neuroscience. Currently, along with science researchers, Xan received significant grants to initiate a theatre intervention program in 2016 seeking to increase social cognition and theory of mind skills in young people living in the autism spectrum. **His workshop** shows that social cognitive neuroscientists are becoming willing partners with playwrights and theatre artists in the quest to unravel, sophisticate and teach the art of social interaction through child and adult play forms and social rituals (including live theatre and experimental media).

Improv Story-Writing and Resolving Conflict Through Story Presenter, Greg Owens



Greg's primary teaching interest is the application of creative principles and process to real-world projects of social purpose; supporting people of all ages as they develop, by practicing, the skills to make things that help, impact, and empower others. **His workshops** use basic improvisational principles and techniques to free creativity; and also explore different ways of using principles of dramatic writing and scene-building to better understand and improve interpersonal communication at work and in life.

**FIND MORE WORKSHOPS, PRESENTERS & EVENTS
ON PAGES FIVE & SIX!**

Montana Playwrights Conference UPDATE!

More Conference Workshops:



Maintaining and Revitalizing Cultural Identity Through Oral Traditions Presenter, Michael Jetty

Mike is an enrolled member of the Spirit Lake Dakota Nation and a Turtle Mountain Chippewa descendant. He works at the Montana Office of Public Instruction as an Indian Education Specialist. **His workshop** explores how Identity is an issue with which human beings struggle throughout their lifetime. Questions of “Who am I?” and “How do I fit in?” are universal questions of the human condition. Even larger issues of “Who is an Indian/Tribal Member?” exist among Indian people themselves. Mike also discusses how oral traditions continue to impact and shape American Indian cultural identities.



Performance Techniques in Storytelling Presenters, Jud Harmon & Tony Mannen

Jud has been performing on stage for most of his life. His love of the craft and mastery of characterization is evident whenever he takes the stage as an actor or teacher. Tony has spent more than half his life in a theatre performing, directing, teaching and mentoring performers. He spent 38 years teaching speech and theatre at The College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls, Idaho. **Their workshop** offers hands-on training in performance methods for actors, storytellers and teachers.



Story in the Classroom Presenters, Janice Jamruszka-Wilson & Robert Holter

Jan's career in education spans 33 years teaching French and Spanish in Montana and planning foreign study and travel experiences. She was also an Indian Education Coordinator in Helena Public Schools. Robert has taught for nearly 3 decades at Helena High School, and also has presented theater industry workshops as well as worked in film and television. **Their workshop** covers how a theater teacher and a Spanish teacher use story to drive teaching and learning in their classrooms, and offers practical exercises for others to incorporate in theirs.



Improve Health, Communication & Business Through Story Presenter, Pamela Mencher

Pamela's work as a college professor, public speaker, playwright, author and theatre artist spans over 4 decades, and she continues to work in all these fields, among others. Currently, she wears a variety of hats in serving MPN, and writes stories, books, plays and paints pictures in her spare time. **Her workshop** offers a broad spectrum of applications of Story in relation to personal health and wellbeing, improving interpersonal communication, and how to integrate Story to be more effective in the work place.



MORE CONFERENCE INFORMATION ON THE NEXT PAGE!

Montana Playwrights Conference UPDATE!



Stay at the Conference Hotel,
a short distance from Helena College!

The Day's Inn
2001 Prospect Avenue in Helena.

Call **406-442-3280** before **October 11, 2017** to receive the Montana Playwrights Network rate: **\$89 + tax per night**. They have a free breakfast every morning.



Plan to Attend!

November 2, 2017

6:30 p.m. at Helena High's Theatre, a half block from Helena College.

Keynote Address Free to the Public

Featuring internationally renowned playwright & inspirational speaker,

James Still

Following the Keynote Address:

“Montana Tales”

An entertaining performance of storytelling, original poems, monologues, memoirs, short plays, and thought-provoking essays based upon the ‘Montana Experience’

“Montana Tales” is open to the public; admission fee: \$10
Montana Playwrights Conference attendees are admitted free
with a Conference Pass.

“A people are as healthy and confident as the stories they tell themselves. Sick storytellers can make nations sick. Without stories we would go mad. Life would lose its moorings or orientation... Stories can conquer fear, you know. They can make the heart larger.”

— Ben Okri, Nigerian Poet

Send us your entries by September 15, 2017

Competition Details

The “**Montana Monologues**” project is an opportunity for MPN members to showcase their work in performance and publication. Selected poetry, stage monologues, short essays, memoirs, and short plays will be performed at the first “**Montana Playwrights Conference**” scheduled for **November 2, 3, 2017, at Helena College** in Helena, Montana. A collection of these works will be published within two years, or later depending upon the amount and overall quality of submissions gathered in a two year period. Creative works written by members, but not performed at the annual conference, may also be considered for this publication.

Members retain ownership rights to their creative works, but featured writers are required to submit written permission for their works to be included in any MPN sponsored publication or anthology of members’ works. All proceeds from any such publications are used to support the Network, and the annual conference.

Montana Monologue Competition Guidelines

1. All members of the Montana Playwrights Network (MPN) may submit up to two creative works per year for consideration in the “Montana Monologues” project. You must be a member to participate. Send us your best!
2. Writers’ themes must clearly illustrate an aspect of Montana life, past, present or future.
3. Poetry must not exceed 20 lines, and stage monologues, short essays and memoirs must not exceed 500 words. Only unpublished works are eligible for consideration. Short plays may not exceed 8 pages of dialogue in standard manuscript format.
4. The work submitted may be comedic, tragic, inspirational or non-fiction. It should be “stand-alone”, and must not depend upon a larger body of work in order to be enjoyed, understood or performed; however, excerpted work may be submitted if it meets the “stand-alone” requirement.
5. **For Stage Monologues:** Monologues must be clearly intended for live theatrical performance or auditions, and exhibit standard theatrical playwriting techniques. Avoid writing a static “memory piece” or disguising an essay or memoir as a theatrical monologue. Create monologues that offer present, in-the-moment performance by an actor. Be certain the monologue contains a dramatic arc that creates dramatic action and sense of progression in performance. Your monologue should be consistent with material often used by successful actors in auditions.
6. The works submitted must not require the use of multiple props or costumes, although one prop or costume piece may be specified for any genre or style.
7. Submit your work in Word or PDF format. Limit one piece per file. Type size is 12 point, and use Times New Roman as the font. Double-space any memoir or essays.
8. Submit to: montanaplaywrights@gmail.com, and label your email subject line as “Montana Works Submission.” **Submission Deadline, September 15, 2017.**

[Montana Playwrights Network Membership Form](#)

Type of Membership: **Check One:**

Individual Membership: \$35 _____ **Organizational Membership:** \$50 _____

Student Membership: \$15 _____

(Please identify the school where you are enrolled, and also your education level; for example, "I am a sophomore in College.")

Name of School: _____

Education Level: _____

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Telephone: Home: () _____

Cell: () _____

Mailing Address:

Twenty-five (25) Word Bio:

[Send this completed form, and your check made payable to:](#)

Montana Playwrights Network

Mail to: Montana Playwrights Network; PMB 2052, 1 Jackson Creek Road, Clancy, MT 59634.

[Or you can sign up using our simple online application process on our website.](#)

FOR ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS ONLY:

Send a jpeg or tiff file of your organization's logo to: montanaplaywrights@gmail.com

**For a complete description of our Membership Benefits,
please go to our website at:**

www.MontanaPlaywrights.org

It's a Party!

Announcing a festive reunion for all **RMTA family, friends & guests** from around the Rocky Mountain Region.



Save the date: November 3, 2017, in Helena, Montana.

**For more information, and to RSVP, contact Pamela Mencher at
MontanaPlaywrights@gmail.com**

We've been working on organizing our first RMTA Reunion Party and have some information to share:

- ◆ **Our Reunion Party Hotel** is the same as the **Montana Playwrights Conference Hotel: the Day's Inn** on Prospect Avenue in Helena, just a short distance from the party at Marianne Adams' place. **Book your room by October 11, 2017**, and ask for the Montana Playwrights Network rate. Their number is **406-442-3280**. The rate is \$89 per night + tax. They also serve a great free breakfast every morning.
- ◆ **Plan to attend a one-night only performance on November 3 of "Barrymore's Ghost"**, directed and produced by **Tony Mannen**, and starring **Jud Harmon**. (RMTA Trivia Question: When was this magnificent show performed at an RMTA Festivention, and where?) The performance will be in the Helena High School Theatre and **curtain is at 7:00 p.m.** The party starts shortly after the performance at Marianne Adams' house, a short distance away. A big shout-out of **thanks to Marianne for hosting**, (with help from Pamela Mencher).
- ◆ **Tony and Jud will also be presenting a workshop** at the first ever Montana Playwrights Conference **along with** former RMTA Keynote speaker and presenter: **James Still**; Associate Keynote: **Xan Johnson; Rob Holter**; and **Pamela Mencher** with others. **You can register for the Conference at www.HelenaCollege.edu/continuingeducation** after August 15. See **page 4, 5, 6** of this newsletter **for more details**.
- ◆ **Visit our website: www.MontanaPlaywrights.org for updates** on the Conference and RMTA Reunion Party and share this information with your RMTA family, friends and colleagues!

Post Scripts



- On this **back page of MPN News**, we'll print any announcements you might like to share with our membership and the general public that highlight writers' news and associated events around Montana. Send us information that's not longer than 80 words (or so) and we'll include it in the next MPN News issue to be published in September, 2017.
- The **Experimental Theatre Coop** invites Montana playwrights to **submit short plays** for a possible production in the **2017 Last Chance New Play Fest**, coming to Helena, MT in November. Plays must be original work, not previously produced or published, and written on the theme of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Pieces must work with minimal sets and require no more than four actors. Submitted plays will be judged blind and must have a run time of 8-12 minutes. Their website: www.experimentaltheatrecoop.org.
- Keep your eye on our website for more information about the **Montana Playwrights Conference, Meet & Greet** get-togethers around our great State, and associated MPN activities.
- Get to work on those submissions for **Montana Monologues!** Don't forget that you need to be an MPN member to be eligible to submit your creative works for this exciting project.
- **Share this newsletter** with your friends and anyone else who you think might be interested in our events, joining the Network, or attending the Montana Playwrights Conference in November at Helena College. It promises to be educational, inspiring and entertaining for everyone!