



Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life Welcomes New National Advisory Board Members
May 28, 2008

Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life is a Syracuse University-based consortium of colleges and universities committed to public scholarship in the arts, humanities, and design. Imagining America's National Advisory Board welcomes four new members. They are:

Kevin Bott, IA's new Page Director, Ph.D. candidate, New York University
Bruce Burgett, Professor and Interim Director of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, University of Washington, Bothell
Ron Bechet, Professor of Art, Xavier University of Louisiana
Jill Dolan, Professor of Theatre and Dance, University of Texas at Austin

Kevin Bott, doctoral candidate in the Program in Educational Theater at New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, who has recently been named IA's new PAGE Director. He is currently working on his dissertation, tentatively entitled, "A Ritual for Return: Looking at the Experiences of Formerly Incarcerated Men Creating Original Theater." Under the auspices of the non-profit organization Rehabilitation for the Arts (RTA), Bott has been facilitating theater workshops and original productions within New York State prisons since January 2006. In 2007, he directed "A Lasting Impression," the first inmate-written and performed educational film created within the walls of a New York correctional facility. Bott recently implemented applied theater initiatives at a Manhattan outpatient clinic and within a minimum security prison in northern Uganda. Reflections on his prison experiences in Africa can be found at communityarts.net and in the online journal, *Platform: Postgraduate eJournal of Theatre & Performing Arts*. Bott has been an enthusiastic member of IA's PAGE community since 2006, when he attended the national conference as a PAGE Fellow. In 2007, he served on the PAGE Fellow nominating committee, and this year, he will be joining Sylvia Gale, Steve Parks, and former PAGE Fellows in co-editing the journal, *Reflections*, in a special issue dedicated to graduates engaged in public scholarship.

Ron Bechet, Professor of Art in the Department of Art at Xavier University of Louisiana, where he served as chair of the department for eight years. Bechet has been teaching for 18 years at the college level. He holds a B.A. in Fine Arts from the University of New Orleans, and an M.F.A. in Painting and Drawing from the Yale School of Art, Yale University. Bechet has exhibited his work nationally and internationally. He has served on the board of the Contemporary Arts Center in New Orleans and served as a member of New Orleans "percent for art" Public Art Commission Program. He was the director of Xavier's Community Arts Partnership Program and has served in many arts and youth programs in the New Orleans area both as an advisor and a practitioner. He has been nominated this year for the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors grant.

Bruce Burgett, Professor and Interim Director of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington, Bothell, and graduate faculty in the Department of English at the University of Washington Seattle. Burgett is the co-director of the UW Simpson Center for the Humanities' Institute on the Public Humanities for Graduate Students and the regional Cultural Studies Praxis Collective. He is a key architect of the new community-based Master of Arts in Cultural Studies at UW Bothell. He is the author of *Sentimental Bodies: Sex, Gender, and Citizenship in the Early Republic*, and co-editor of *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* (with Glenn Hendler). He is currently working on a co-edited collection, *New Formations of Cultural Studies: Collaboration, Practice, Research*, and completing book project entitled *American Sex: Cultures of Sexual Reform in and Beyond the Antebellum U.S.* He has taught, researched, and published widely in the fields of American studies, cultural studies, and queer studies. He serves on the editorial and advisory boards of *American Quarterly* and *American Literary History*, and the executive board of the U.S. Cultural Studies Association. Burgett has been an active member of *Imagining America* for several years and is the representative from the University of Washington, Bothell campus.

Jill Dolan, Zachary T. Scott Family Chair in Drama and head of the M.A. and Ph.D. program in Theatre and Dance at the University of Texas at Austin. In Fall 2006, Dolan was inducted into UT's Academy of Distinguished Teachers. Her most recent book is *Utopia in Performance: Finding Hope at the Theatre* (University of Michigan Press, 2005). She is the author of *Geographies of Learning: Theory and Practice, Activism and Performance* (Wesleyan University Press); *Presence and Desire: Essays on Gender, Sexuality, Performance* (Michigan); and *The Feminist Spectator as Critic* (Michigan), which has been translated into Korean. Dolan has written numerous articles and essays on feminist and lesbian performance, on performance studies, and on arts advocacy, democracy, and social change, including "Rehearsing Democracy: Advocacy, Public Intellectuals, and Civic Engagement in Theatre and Performance Studies," *Theatre Topics* 11:1 (March 2001). For the last two years, she has participated as an instructor in the Free Minds Project, a community-based instructional program in the humanities for underprivileged adults returning to college, sponsored by the UT Humanities Institute. Dolan is a past president of the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE), and a past president of the Women and Theatre Program, also of ATHE. She is the former Executive Director of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, where she taught for five years in the PhD Program in Theatre. During her six years on the faculty at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, Prof. Dolan won the William Kiekhofler Award for Excellence in Teaching, and has also won a College of Fine Arts teaching award at the University of Texas at Austin. Dolan's blog, "The Feminist Spectator," can be accessed at www.feministspectator.blogspot.com. She holds a Ph.D. in performance studies from New York University.