

Chapter 7: Colleagues' Testimonials and Collaborations

Leaving SIU-E

October 20, 1980 toward the end of his SIU-E tenure, Alcine received an honor by Dr. William Vilhauer, via Dr. Hollis L. White, Dean, School of Fine Arts and Communications:

“Years of service to the university, region and nationally have been recognized by your peers in your Department, School, University.

Your excellence performance beyond the confines of this University gives the designation of Artist-in-residence at SIUE.”

Before leaving SIU-E, Alcine wrote a 1983 Brief Summation of his professional involvement since promotion to Professor:

“The greatest part of my energies when not dealing with university duties, all of which were completed to the satisfaction of superiors, has been spent developing the Mid America Dance Company, which is based in St. Louis, Missouri. This is a professional dance company of eight dancers who have been hired for a 36-40 week contract per year since 1983. MAD/CO has been touring 12-16 weeks annually on residency programs. This company has no affiliation with any university.

I was co-founder of MAD/CO in 1976, along with Ross A. Winter. The company was founded in recognition of the need of an independent, top-quality, professional modern dance company in the Midwest. I have served as the company's master teacher. My major contribution to the company has been to develop a more unified style. I also

have contributed choreography for more than half the repertory, conducted rehearsals, served as artistic director, and performed.

Since its founding eight years ago, MAD/CO has gained major regional recognition.

Since 1980, MAD/CO has been one of three dance companies sponsored by the Mid America Arts Alliance, an organization which promotes touring within the five states of Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas. MAD/CO is one of two dance companies sponsored by the Missouri Arts Council Touring Program. Both of these organizations require annual evaluations.

MAD/CO was accepted in 1980 as a performing member of the Mid-States Regional Ballet Association and is now an honor company of this organization. The company has also become greatly involved in the National Association for Regional Ballet.

The company has performed in states that are not members of the Mid America Arts Alliance. Residencies and concerts have been given in Illinois, Indiana, West Virginia, Louisiana, and Tennessee. MAD/CO has been invited to present three performances at the Riverside Dance Festival in New York City during the month of May 1983

Separate from the University and the Mid America Dance Company, for the past three years, I have been one of three dance-teaching artists for the Nashville Institute for the Arts – an aesthetic education program modeled after the Lincoln Center Institute for the Arts. Last summer the Lincoln Center Institute invited me to participate in their program in New York City.”

Mary Dempster writes again but this time describing “Wiltz – a Perfectionist by nature”:

“After she graduated from the California Institute of the Arts, Audrey Tallant came to SIUE to teach dance. That was six years ago. ‘After I saw Al’s (Wiltz) classes, I wished I would have gotten my degree from here.’ The structure in California dance schools is loose, Tallant said. ‘Here, it’s a tight structure and Al has the ability to take someone through all the pathways that lead up to becoming a great dancer.’ Wiltz teaches with the philosophy that dancers be allowed to explore body awareness, Tallant said. Three different types of art exist. The artist who creates, the choreographer; the artist who performs, the dancer; and then the teacher who can also be classified as an artist. ‘Al wants to experience all three,’ Tallant said.

To William Vilhauer, Wiltz is a perfectionist not willing to settle for second best. Vilhauer, chairman of theatre and dance at SIUE, said Wiltz has proven himself over and over in making students go further and farther with their skills. SIUE has the strongest dance program in the state, Vilhauer said, and maybe even the Midwest. ‘We don’t have as many instructors as the University of Illinois, either. We just have more to offer in dance and Wiltz’s reputation to back it up.’ As a commuter university, SIUE does have its drawbacks. Most people in the area decide to go away to school and break the home ties, Vilhauer said. The housing shortage is another problem. Teachers cannot really recruit students as they would like to because the campus does not provide enough room for them. Vilhauer is not a dancer and so depends on Wiltz for his expertise in the running of the program. A few years ago, Vilhauer directed ‘A Mid-summer Night’s

Dream' in which Wiltz played the part of Puck. The year before that, Wiltz directed 'Kiss Me Kate' in which Vilhauer played one of the leading roles.

'Al is a wonderful performer. He just has a great deal of pride in himself and is a natural. He's as dedicated in his work regardless of what he's doing – be it acting, dancing or directing.'

Moving to University of Maryland College Park

Reflecting on his career:

“What I have learned by looking into this red box is that in Edwardsville I was a big fish in little pond. And at UMCP I became a little fish in the big pond.

My ultimate intent was to be a dean of fine arts and lead the philosophy of a dance program while building collaborations with other programs.

The truth today is that a dean's position is the realization that the job entails lots of fund raising. It is a cooperate system now. Higher education has grown further and further away from its intent. Deans have no time to hear others, grow collaborations, or listen to departmental issues. They are dancing to the piper. They give lip service to university service to the students. Follow through and real change does not happen. I have been through 3 acting deans and 4 contracted as deans. The second to the last dean was hired and then resigned after 6 months.”

Administration and Teaching brief statement – Alcine Wiltz UMCP 5 year Review

“As an administrator of university dance programs since 1968 I have worked to make the best use of the human resources at my disposal. I find that the program can only be based on the specific talents of the faculty. I believe in listening to the faculty needs and desires and accommodating when the quality of the program will not be negatively affected. Each grouping of faculty, students, and their combinations has a unique character and require continued observation so a program can move forward with support from the majority. I value shared governance when the whole participates and prefer to operate by consensus.

As an educator, I am most interested in sharing the sensibilities that a knowledge and experience of movement allows. I teach with emphasis on an awareness of the humanistic realities of movement. My movement classes are informed by the ideas of Erick Hawkins and Bartenieff, with smatterings of Alexander, Feldenkrais, and Rolf. I believe in fostering a student’s acceptance of their instrument through positive suggestions for some sense of change in movement patterns. I have always been successful as teacher and know that it is my strongest talent and truest desire. Being able to lose myself in teaching, has allowed me to weather administration.”

When Alcine became a Chairperson at UMCP in 1983 he enjoyed a certain freedom in leadership. With no boss knowing or caring, he worked freely in the department. He felt like a lone ranger. He tried to work with everyone, but with weariness in the dance faculty perceptions, it was difficult to mobilize the department. The students in the studio fed him.

Mim Rosen kept in daily close touch and gave him counter perceptions. Alvin Mayes connected with him as they worked on choreography together. One person, Patty Gillespie, chairperson of Speech, Communications and Theatre from South Carolina and a strong advocate for women's rights, had a wit about her and he enjoyed their lunches from time to time.

Also Roger Mearsman, who was serving as associate dean of graduate studies when Alcine arrived at the University of Maryland College Park, became a close colleague when Alcine worked on establishing the MFA program. Roger and Alcine met almost monthly for eight years as they worked on the new building. This connection offered a real support to Alcine. His daughter graduated from the dance department prior to Alcine's coming to Maryland.

University of Maryland College Park offered Alcine and his family a wonderful change. The pace of this life was much better for raising a family. Although the administration work was heavier, he did not have to run a company seven days a week. He had the flexibility in his schedule to see son Stefan's soccer games after school and interface more in his two years of middle school and four years of high school. For Alcine it was pleasant and refreshing to go home and have meals most nights. Nancy was gone in the evenings teaching at a local dance studio. Alcine had weekends for the first time. He made his choices about his lifestyle in both Edwardsville and College Park.

American College Dance Festival Association

The American College Dance Festival Association began in 1973. It celebrated its 27th anniversary in the year 2000 on the University of Maryland campus, which was hosting the 9th National College Dance Festival in the Tawes Theater. Alcine got involved in 1980.

When he arrived at UMCP in 1983, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Festival was scheduled to be hosted by the Dance Department in the spring of 1984. He requested to delay the hosting duty to spring 1985 in order to have time to plan the festival. Alcine remembers attending his first ACDFA Board meeting in New York at Columbia College. As the Mid-Atlantic regional representative, Alcine Wiltz joined colleagues, Josh Calbot and Luke Kulich. The three men made motions and supported each other's votes. Betsy Cardin was the executive director at that time.

A memory from Luke C. Kahlich, Ed.D.:

"I THINK the first time I met Alcine was as I joined the ACDFA Board in 1984. At that time, the organization was still a bit of a process being run out of Betsy Carden's home office. Alcine and I were two of I think 4 men on the Board at that time and we were getting in trouble for proposing action and change. We believed in the organization but knew it needed to morph to really stay relevant and grow. At what I think was my first official meeting...the four of us guys sat together in a classroom at Teachers College in NYC and went for it. We figured out a system whereby one would make a motion, another would second it, a third would call for the vote and by the end of the meeting we had made what we thought was progress, but it did not sit

well with the matriarchs of the organization--after all it was their "baby" to which they had given their life blood. Change is always difficult for us human beings! In any case, I admired Alcine right away and looked forward to seeing him at each subsequent meeting. One of my favorite memories was retiring to his back porch spa in the middle of winter, following another productive Executive Board meeting."

Letter #1

February 21, 1994

Mr. Gil Carner, Chair, Theatre Search, University of Southwestern Louisiana,
Box 43850, Lafayette, Louisiana 70504

Dear Mr. Carner:

I write with mixed feelings to commend Alcine Wiltz for the position of Head of the Department of Performing Arts, University of Southwestern Louisiana. On the one hand, Alcine is an excellent candidate, fully qualified as performer, teacher, administrator, with a national reputation for building and maintaining excellent dance programs within the context of theatre and music disciplines. Even now, I am working with him to develop a highly connected management system that, within the next six or eight years, will result in a school for the performing arts here at College Park. In the next few years, the Departments of Music, Theatre, and Dance will take occupancy of a new Maryland Center for the Performing Arts, a \$100 million complex, which will house these departments and a major arts library. We will share a

common management/production operation and, in the next year, work to develop more shared curricular experiences. It is an exciting time, especially as we emerge from the shadow of what has been four long years of budgetary rescissions made necessary because of the national recession. Alcine, because of his talent and experience, should be a key player in designing our future.

Consequently, and on the other hand, I would be personally and professionally diminished if Alcine left the campus. Louisiana is his boyhood home, and Southwestern Louisiana, his alma mater. And while life is rich and complex and complicated here in the nation's capital, it is not home to Alcine. He doesn't quite feel as if he fits here. I think he would be happy in Southwestern Louisiana; if so, that is more than good reason to leave Maryland. Nonetheless, I would miss him a great deal.

Alcine has for more than a decade chaired one of the largest, most successful dance departments in the country here at College Park. He also had successes before he came, notably in Tennessee. His program here is mainly an undergraduate experience in modern dance, supported by courses in ballet and ethnic dance. Several years ago, Alcine, after years of preparation, received (from the state) approval to offer a MFA degree; recession economics have prevented him from fully implementing that program. Alcine has also worked to broaden his major curriculum through courses in theatre production. In addition, his department has sponsored numerous symposia, workshops, and festivals in world and ethnic dance. Finally, he fashioned a very creative and successful certificate program for students who wished to

“minor” in dance as a way of providing a disciplined access for students who wanted knowledge of the dance but who were majoring in other fields.

Alcine remains an active performer who continues to explore a complete range of dance syntax. He is an accomplished choreographer – both for the medium of dance and for musical theatre. He has a sly wit and skillful way with others. He is a quiet man who listens both to individuals and to committees. He also finds a way to get his own point of view expressed. He very much enjoys students (his own son just graduate from the University!)

I have worked with Alcine over a range of issues – curricular, facilities, personnel, parents, recruiting, and budget. I have enjoyed the experience immensely. Alcine is a principled, honest man, a fine dancer, and a skilled academic. I commend him to you highly.

Sincerely,

Jon Boone

Associate Dean for Arts and Humanities and Executive Director, Department of Music

Letter #2

March 2, 1994

Mr. Gil Carner, Chair, Theatre Search, University of Southwestern Louisiana,
Box 43850, Lafayette, Louisiana 70504

Dear Mr. Carner and Theatre Search Committee:

I write, with heavy heart and questionable objectivity, to recommend Alcine J. Wiltz for the position as Head of the Department of Performing Arts at the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

I came to this university in 1984 from the provost's office of planning and budgeting at the George Washington University in the District of Columbia. My transition from the administrative division of a mid-size urban private institution to an academic office of a multi-campus suburban public institution was not difficult because I have the good fortune to be hired by Professor Wiltz. He is an administrator who assesses the talents of his faculty and staff and capitalizes on those skills accordingly. He directs without being intrusive.

Ten years ago, the personnel of this department were divided into several warring factions. Professor Wiltz showed great sensitivity to their differences. By listening to the concerns, then counseling, cajoling, and insisting on compromise, he was successful in affecting a peace and demanding a respect for each other.

In spring 1991 we experienced the first rescission to our operating budget. The next semester, contracts were not renewed for some full-time faculty and funding to hire part-time faculty and accompanists was reduced. Professor Wiltz has had to schedule and reschedule assignments; he has had to appropriate and re-appropriate budgets. Never have student needs and requirements or faculty research and travel lacked support and encouragement from our chairman. Never in ten years has our departmental budget ended a fiscal year in deficit.

Twice, early in his tenure, Professor Wiltz oversaw the rebuilding of our facilities destroyed in fires. More recently, he worked with architects, engineers, and contractors completing extensive renovations to our theatre, studios, lobby and labs.

Professor Wiltz initiated action and labored long to win approval from the Maryland Office of Higher Education so our department could offer a Master of Fine Arts Degree. The quest through the labyrinthine university system and state bureaucracy was inordinately paper-bound and troublesome. Professor Wiltz neither lamented the delay and tedium, nor faltered in his determination.

In his art, Alcine Wiltz is a craftsman. His choreographies and performances are vigorous and dynamic, strong and vital, inventive, varied, sometimes sad, often lyrical and always refined and flawless. But it is teaching that is his first love.

Dance majors who visit our office unanimously remark how much they learn in Professor Wiltz's courses and how much they enjoy their classes with him. He is always eager to share his time, knowledge, and energies with our students.

Whatever goals and ambitions Alcine Wiltz brought to Maryland, most assuredly those aspirations have been fulfilled and other objectives have replaced them. Alcine Wiltz is an idealist, an optimist, and innovator, a realist, and an achiever.

On a personal level, if or when Alcine leave the University of Maryland, I will lose not only a superb supervisor but a terrific friend. I will miss his patience. I will miss his positive attitude. I will miss his subtle way of galvanizing forces. I will miss his incisive leadership and governance.

I will miss his easy way of teaching those of us who are not in the arts how to appreciate movement and sound. I will miss his wonderful sense of humor, I will miss him.

Sincerely,

Mariagabrielle Viskosky, Finance Officer

Paul Jackson Interview (10/6/2014)

Paul Jackson has been a “good collaborator”. Collaboration, never the process specifically, is an organic relationship. Paul Jackson and Alcine Wiltz knew where each other was coming from. Paul was Alcine’s sounding board most of the time, the “other eye” for what was going on in the department, in programming, and in artistic collaborations.

Alcine remembers:

“When I came to UMCP in 1983, the idea of having a lighting designer on staff in the department was amazing. Our longevity of collaboration over 25 years allowed for a very fluid working relationship.

I appreciated our work and you always found the right kind of lighting for a particular piece. You are known of your expertise in the dance community and our work came easy.”

SK asks: How do you approach work?

Paul states:

“I don’t research which is far away from the theatre process canon of lighting design. I am good at telling what a piece is by its structure and intent while not looking for a

message. I let the movement reinforce what I intuit and then I support with production elements what I see in the movement. Over time I have simplified more and more. I don't want light getting in the way of the piece. I am an accompanist in the basic form of what I do. I am not precious about my feelings about a work. I see the dance and see the dancers as individuals in the space presenting whatever emotional content that is there. This concept of Simplicity was developed over the time I have worked at Maryland. I don't change color a lot but choose the same palate now for over 15 years. It makes skin look like people, faces, healthy, balances skin tones amongst different complexions. I change color if a piece demands it usually for fantasy, dreams, or time separations. When working with you Alcine, we rarely talked about what the pieces were about. I am looking at how the pieces speak."

Alcine states:

"I have seen you work and adapt from the studio theatre EE, move to Publick Playhouse and Dance Place, and then to finally end up here at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center."

Paul comments:

"Dance Place is on a par with Dorothy Madden (studio theatre EE), except that the wiring is opposite from each other....consistently "wrong". However, elements that make up a dance plot are the same worldwide. Many people in the American College Dance Festival Association are using the plots that I developed in the 1990's. Keeping the sense of intimacy in the art form is critical. The plot was very flexible and answers most needs.

Paul and Alcine continued their working relationship when the dance department moved into the ClarisseSmith Dance Theatre.

Paul clarifies:

“The Theatre model and Dance model of production has a major difference in time. The Theatre model looks at technical time where the design process is finalized before you start rehearsal driven by costume and scenery pacing. Dance usually does not spend time on that. The technical rehearsal process in dance in America is done in a day or in 4 hours, many times the same day: a compressed schedule.

In Theatre usually 2 10-hour days is the normative. Roughly 16 hours to light the theater piece until they get a sense of flow is normative. Many times I was lighting the piece while Alcine was running the piece. The Theatre model is draining on dancers on energy and is a culture different from how dance is used to working. With additional projections, you don't have to build it you have to program it and this is extremely time consuming.”

“Theatre operators train prior to the rehearsal process. The use of graduate MFA candidates for our scenic element has gone up considerably. We never get it early enough to integrate it; only one week prior to performance and then we add on, but it does not integrate. This process forces a layer on the work, which is usually not necessary. Most scenic crew do not know how to integrate it.”

Paul Jackson has blended dance technical work most of his life. He studied with Eleanor King at the University of Arkansas and took Dance Workshop in high school. He worked with Barbara Jackson (a family member) on sound scores for Eleanor splicing takes. He worked at American University and Wolf Trap with Murray Lewis and Erick Hawkins. These opposing schools taught him both techniques. Murray Lewis's stage manager allowed him his first venture into lighting operations. Paul was taught sound editing at the University of Utah for a teacher in the old women's gym. As a technical student, he learned at Utah to design work. The he and wife Moira set off for the Dakotas in the mid to late 1970s. They enjoyed collaborative work: the mantra was: Let's get together and put on a show of original work. He helped educator as a Designer the training of people who had never seen dance before. The plots were simple but always had some side light.

Under Kay Burrill, Paul learned lighting and took his only production class. He learned with "hands on" and he was known as a "make it work guy."

Paul remembers:

"It got formalized my training as an assistant to Louise Guthman assistant at Ohio State. In the dance department rarely did they present huge ballets, typically folkloric ballets. I built my own slide projector working with Murray (?) and handled more original builds in South Dakota."

Paul emphasizes that theater productions work from a script that is tried and true; the structure is a given. With dance the structure is the result of the collaboration that is a big

difference. Two weeks out from a production, you will not see the same result that goes into the theatre. The dance artist and the lighting design artist change what is needed as the work changes. Dances change every time they rehearse and also the changes are effected by what time of day the work is performed, and the human condition of the actual performers. The dance ephemeral demands that the artists try to capture a moment and put it on stage.

It is a very different process than taking the existing germ of a theatre script and producing it. It is rare to meet a theatre technician who understands the dance production process.

Alcine mentions his experience at Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville gave him the opportunity to work with a few key students that he trained in dance production. Because the Theater Department there really wanted Alcine, it made all of the difference. The key individuals were willing to learn how producing dance is different. He would be clear that he could not tell how the dance would be ending, but they trusted each other that the opening night would be appreciated because big audiences always attended.

Alcine recalled that his working relationship with Paul was a good collaboration and simpatico.

Paul interjects that sound development has undergone a seismic shift because now most choreographers are building their own sound scores. MFA candidates are finding collaborators outside of the arts field to build original scores. Paul reminds, "All of it comes back to the concept of accompaniment."

When Paul worked with Jim Brown from Improvisations Unlimited, the new dances created were the ultimate example of that accompaniment process. Paul never saw the dances until they performed them. All Paul knew was the beginnings and endings.

As a lighting board operator improvisation was friendlier in the older technology with 24 sliders.

The newer digital consoles are limited now to only 10 sliders

(Paul discusses channels and LEDs and moving lights...)

Older computer boards accompany dance transitions musically with rarely under 10 counts. The whole event happens organically over time.

Paul comments on who he is as an artist:

“Musically at 5 years old I was playing piano while investigating musical theatre and violin. I advanced in music knowledge on a college level by age 9. Alcine and I worked on a subliminal level. We didn’t have to talk, we just did. We got into the space, before the performances looking at rehearsals. Much was accomplished at a non-verbal level. We were easy, intuitive, a Mutt and Jeff team, tall guy and little guy was just working away at an easy level.”

Paul reminds,

“The ease that came with Alcine is what saved the department from self-destruction. The department of two camps could not talk to each other. What Alcine brought and what I (Paul) supported was a demonstration of a common cause. The dance department at the time was a three-legged stool: third leg of the stool was Alcine, the two camps were the other legs. Alcine’s third leg of the stool pulled the

other two legs along, not quite tipping over. Paul then was able to sit on the seat of the stool and do his work”

Alcine commented that he can still remember the fire before thanksgiving.

Regarding the new building:

When Paul arrived in 1978 the dance department was going to get the renovation of Prinkert Gym by 1980. Alcine saw the plans in 1983 and one year later it was no longer a plan. The second idea was to build on the side of Taws. Instead, in November 1985, EE risers were a huge gift for improving that temporary building studio, before it was named Madden Studio Theatre. But when RTVF was cut in 1991, the new building was conceived. The money came from Governor William Schaeffer who gave \$108,000,000 and Prince George’s County gave \$10,000,000. The final price of the Center was @\$130,000,000.

Alvin Mayes (Interview) 10 6 2014

Alvin Mayes was trained as an eclectic: a Limon dancer first and in California danced with Gloria Newman (Limon and Cunningham) while also taking Jeff Slaton’s classes which were Cunningham based. In Washington DC he sought out Deborah Reilly at the Dance Project (run by Jan van Dyke) as a place to start his Maryland training usually three times a week. Alvin found that UMCP provided technical strength in the classes of Mim Rosen, teaching Hawkins and Ann Warren, teaching Limon. Alvin just loved the line and design of a Cunningham-based class offering him movement color and musicality.

Alvin came to UMCP in 1978. He was hired as an instructor for 2-3 years and to also dance with Maryland Dance Theatre in residence. At College Park he discovered how he enjoyed working with students. After five years with the company he left to focus on his teaching, which also had a bi-product of choreographing. His dances played an important role to help advance student movement ideas and experiences.

In 1985, Alvin began to work in Alciné's works which offered clear points of view and the three dances were physically different from each other:

“1. Continuance offers the skills of how you loop around and loop back in and spiral around...how do you actually do that in the patterning on the floor and in the body.

The arms have many more joints than actual to give the sense of curvature.

(The dance offered)How do you through all of the stuff to get to this is texture then another section about color with very small distinctions that are very significant.

The music base offers a rondo, coming back to your subject you can to be more nuanced. I have continued this approach in my own choreography.

The rondo devise I have taken also into my teaching. We all have a similar vocabulary, but the investigation is what makes dancer A and dancer B does it differently? When I teach a class there are 15 people....individuals. It's hard and that is what you have to do, the nuanced element.”

“2. Urban Estrangement with the key word being urban. All of the dancers had a character. A quartet....divided into 2s and 3s...the palate was really great. Alcine’s comment as a designer stuck with me, how much red was showing on each character? The costume design feature helped me be clearer about who and why we were dancing. It was a very physical dance with music as a driving force. I wanted to find out about the (musical) group. I researched them and nothing else that they did was really as dynamic as that music. I found very interesting through the piece the idea of foreground and background. Alcine was usually in the center with dancers in the background and foreground that he interacted with. Paul Taylor used it as a real devise. For Alcine I think it was distinctive and intuitive. It was only 4 of us but felt like a huge ensemble with all of the overs and throughs and unders.”

“Continuance had a repetitive rhythm....5/4 made it exciting to do that work. Second piece, Urban Estrangement, was not rhythmically driven. The dancer lived through the rhythms. When a cast changed in Urban (Estrangement) that decision really made a difference.

Over about 5 years, different women performed the work. Shorter women came in later and it changed the imagery; therefore Alcine had to adjust to this perception of himself with his placement on stage. All of Alcine’s works have been like chamber dances, showing intimate relationship between the folks. Whether it was a huge space or a small space, in Alcine’s work you still had the small ensemble. Everyone contributes.”

“3. ‘Yesterday Toward Tomorrow’ was a hard dance, but I could understand the music. In talk back session, some audience members had trouble getting past the music to watch the dance. Karen Bernstein was my partner. Alcine gave us a framework and let us grow the movement. We thought it was all about Alcine and Nancy. We asked Alcine to make a piece for us, yet we hoped he did not feel obligated to make us a dance.”

Alcine remembers:

“One of my dance teacher, Ms. Katie and her husband had died. After returning from a former student’s wedding, Wendy Warfield Kelly, the music that I had been listening to just spoke to me: Meredith Monk work. Katie’s whole family came to see the work.”

“I (the dancer) was dead, and some audience members saw actually the husband taking care of a sick wife. Or she was taking care of a sick person giving permission to die.

Karen and I just thought it was about how Alcine and Nancy, wonderful dancers, now had their two careers moving in different directions.

Loved the end with the woman using the skirt and letting go of the husband’s spirit.”

Alvin:

“He (Alcine) starts with an image, sets a framework, fleshed it out. The images were so strong they were there and the audience makes of it for what they want it to be for themselves. His works are more like a poem, than a narrative. The movement had loaded images and possibilities, but the audience has got to take it. During talk backs we

would ask, 'What would the difference be if she was lying and Alvin was standing? Was it about race communication? That was actually the first time that I felt free to talk about race. Asking: what it is like to dance this close to someone of a different race? But race was not part of this dance at all"

Alvin's first perception of Alcine was that the entire junior faculty was so happy that he was an active artist coming in as their chairperson. He gave Alvin the impression that he had this vocabulary that he had been working with and he was interested in knowing what other vocabulary was out there. He liked that Alcine played with the Laban stuff but that it did not over take him. It was just another vocabulary.

Alvin states:

"His first job was to bring a community together. He was somewhat successful. He was clearly not trying to be the boss of any of the faculty there. He empowered people who felt powerless in the beginning. He was reassuring from a different point of view."

Musical Theatre Collaborations

Ms. Libby Francis and Everett Ross Mason from New Martinsville, West Virginia

Alcine Wiltz enjoyed 39 years and over 30 musical theatre productions with the West Virginia community of New Martinsville. For 26 years (1968 -1994), Ms. Libby Francis from Martinsburg, West Virginia asked Alcine to help him with her choir and then high school musicals. Alcine worked with the Lyric Theatre, a community theatre produced by Ms. Libby, from 1997 – 2010. All those years she watched him and declared: “You are a natural born teacher.” She referred to his innate ability to elicit movement from his students and offer the community a constantly fresh artistic event. The community watched for Alcine to return each year because he made “It happen”. The people wanted to participate in “IT”. Everett Ross would polish the work that Alcine set on the group each year from the 1970’s until 1994, the year Ms. Libby passed.

Cathy Susan Pyles

“Spring 1968, New Martinsville, West Virginia - a funky little river town at the base of the Northern Panhandle. I was a 15-year-old theater geek and I have Lee Abrams and Libby Francis to thank for that. Yes, I liked the Beatles, but I spent my allowance on show tune albums first (\$6 of my hard-earned cash to buy my first Broadway cast album of Oliver, because Libby had done it when I was in the 8th grade). Fast-forward to sophomore year when Libby announces that we will be doing OKLAHOMA and that she has applied to WVU to see if they will send us a choreographer. Libby managed to wrangle half of the football team to portray the farmers and the cowmen. You can imagine their dismay when she announced that they would be dancing in the show. (Visions of sugar plums

danced in their heads –wearing tights no less.) In walks Al Wiltz --- wearing blue jeans and a striped T-shirt, with that goofy lop-sided grin. He's standing on one side of the room—the fellas are all standing on the other side-- arms crossed, feet planted on the ground. They stared at him ... He stared back, then stepped forward and began.

Well folks, you have never seen such a transformation in your life. About forty-five minutes later these guys were jumping, slappin' their thighs, and hopping around like the macho cowboys that they were. It was amazing and thus my love affair with Al Wiltz began. The only horrible part of this entire experience was the fact that I had been cast as Aunt Eller -- a great part mind you -- but not a dancing part. So I just kept coming back to every rehearsal to sit and soak in all that Al had to teach while my friend Jennifer had the amazing experience of dancing the lead in the dream ballet. Okay, I'll admit it -- I was damned jealous!

A year later, we were thrilled to find out that Al would return to choreograph our production of 'Carousel'. I made sure that I was cast in a young girl role this time as I was not going to miss out on the opportunity to dance with Al. He put me in 'June is busting out all over' and I was thrilled. Of course my friend Jennifer got to play Louise -- yes that Louise -- the one with the big dancing role, damn her! I got my revenge though. The following year I got to dance with Steve Ratcliffe in the King and I, while Jennifer sat on the sidelines and played the tortured Tuptim and someone else got the lead in the ballet (go Sheila!)

Like many of us from those first Al Wiltz years, I went on to a career in the arts, both as a teacher and a performer eventually fulfilling that crazy childhood dream of dancing on Broadway. You cannot imagine the unbelievable thrill it was to be playing the Kennedy Center years later in the national tour of 'Crazy For You,' and open my dressing room door to find Al and Nancy standing there grinning at me. They have no idea that I would never have been there if it had not been for them. Nancy, thank you for sharing your beloved Al with our crazy little town for all those years. God bless all four of you (insert Libby and Lee here). Crazy Auntie Mame was indeed alive and well in our funky little River town!"

Alcine's work continued with setting works: "Gypsy" in 1997, "Oklahoma" in 1998, "Anything Goes" in 1999, "Mame" in 2000, "My Fair Lady" in 2001, "Guys and Dolls" in 2002, "South Pacific" in 2003, "Chicago" in 2004, "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Coat" in 2006, "King and I" in 2008, and "Sound of Music" in 2010, to name a few.

Jen Tobin

"The experience of working with Al has been life-defining. Dancing with the master! You have to learn something. I have attempted to use the basics of what I saw Al do for over 45 years: be engaged and relevant as student and teacher, collaboration will exponentially make for growth and success, and you can (and should) be artist and administrator."

Alcine loves his work in musical concert theatrical dance as much if not more than his passion for modern concert theatrical dance.

Alcine declares:

“I don’t have to trade or not be true to THE ART to do another art...because it is all art....it reaches a different audience...it’s all art.” All evolves lights and Alcine wants in it.

Susan Kirchner asked: What made you choose to perform the Characters you did in musical theatre and modern concert dance?

“It was I think part of my personality, that impishness, physical characteristic, those long ears. One reviewer from Maryland wrote a review that commented of my long ears.....caused by Father Dumbo.

One West Virginia University young student was coming up a stairway, and said, “Oh it is Dr. Spock.” (from Star Trek TV show). My Grandfather also had long ears. I also have his smile.

So the quality of my sprightly movement and my lightness and love for the mischievous perhaps helped me choose and land the characters that I played. I love to let my inner person laugh and say ‘did you see what I just did?’”

Alcine reflects on his performing work in Musical Theatre:

“Moving from the modern dance intense abstract to the musical theater puzzle was great fun. It was as if it was a toy with costumes and sets. I had an outline, a successful

script and then I was allowed to play around with talent. I was able to put into casting, like coloring within the lines. The line was there and I and the talented people around me added the shapes and shades until it created the work. I didn't have to defend the musical. My song and dance man was always with me."

David Jolliffe

"I was so pleased—honored beyond words—when Al invited me to SIU-Edwardsville in the summer of 1972, at the end of my second year in college, to play a role in his production of "Celebration" and in someone else's production of "Hotel Paradiso". Prior that summer, the theatre had been a side show for me. After that summer (followed by an autumn term abroad in Oxford), I returned to Bethany College with a unified focus on acting and directing."

Jen Tobin

"By example, Al encouraged me to be creative, innovative, be aware of the world, to have passion, be dedicated, and look at the big picture and stay focused. I am better for even my feeble attempts to try to be like him. Al was not just my teacher, he is family. Like dance, he has invested his whole self in each of us."

On Thursday August 13, 1970 Carol Clarkin (Telegraph staff writer) reports:

“Director – choreographer Al Wiltz III pulled all the stops in a rapid paced, happily cast and beautifully staged production, which hopefully will open the way for future musicals at the university.”

In Thursday November 11, 1971, Ethel Channon from The Daily Alestle reports of Alcine’s character performance of Puck, the messenger of the king of fairies:

“Wiltz, who acted in the role of Puck, messenger of the king of the fairies, was superb. Wiltz is head of the dance program at SIU-E. He certainly showed by his performance his talent and his qualifications for teaching. To use a trite phrase, he danced his way into the hearts of the theatergoers. All of his movement seemed to be perfectly coordinated.....He moved through the whole performance smoothly. His voice was loud and his soliloquies could be heard even into the lobby.....Additional credit should be given to Wiltz who also choreographed the entire play. All of the dance sequences appeared to be well coordinated and the actors looked as though they had been dancing since childhood.”

Working inside musical theatre productions, Alcine learned a great deal about working inside frames. Normally the directors would create a scene, and then Alcine could fit whatever choreography for point A and go to point B. During 1970’s, he began to guide the entire choreographic process as the director/choreographer of musical theater productions.

Always in humor, Alcine loves to laugh. He points out that most of life is funny if we can just get past the drama. Roles Alcine played include Puck in “Mid-Summer’s Night Dream”, The Herald in “Morrat Sade”, MC in “Carbaret”, Sir in “Roar of a Greasepaint”, and George M Cohen in “George M”. He hopes to one day play Fagin in “Oliver”.

“Roar of a Greasepaint” reviewed by Telegraph correspondent Cathy Cullen July 30, 1977 offered a photo of Al Wiltz as “Sir” surrounded by his Urchins:

“Sir seems to combine the characteristics of a leprechaun and a Fagin. The slightly built SIU-E director of dance Al Wiltz appears in a bright yellow-and-green, ragged three-piece suit and instructs his Urchins in a quick, lively voice on the benefits of ‘honesty, integrity, and foul play’.

The dancing by individual couples is well practiced, but the chorus itself is not synchronized, lending to the Urchin atmosphere. Choreography by Wiltz comes as close to extravaganza as possible for this small stage and university budget. Jennifer Lee Coffield, directing the musical as a master’s thesis project, should be congratulated for communicating subtle complex themes and for producing a play under the unusual circumstances of having her professor as a leading character.”

“West Side Story” showcased Alcine in The Intelligencer by Dick Norrish January 30, 1974:

“The hand of dance professor Al Wiltz III, who directed and choreographed, is evident throughout the production. Wiltz keeps his two rival New York City street gangs – the

Sharks and the Jets – moving throughout the evening in numbers such as the ‘Prologue’, ‘The Dance at the Gym’, and the very skillfully states fights. “

Phillip Lookadoo

“Al Wiltz is one of those remarkable people who change your life, without your realizing it until after he has completed his transformation.

My junior year, I was in the King And I. At the end of Act I, the four priests donned our orange robes and walked across the back of the stage, and at the end of Act II, with the old King dying and the new young King announcing his new "order" for bowing "not like lowly toad," we four priests walked to the center of the back of the stage and stood there, just before the curtain closed. The next year, I was Tony Brockhurst, one of the male leads in The Boyfriend.

My tenor voice got me the part, but now Libby Francis expected me to dance. I had easily mastered walking across the stage the year before, so how hard could it be to dance? (Or so I thought...) I imagined myself dancing with the female lead (the beautiful Kim Burton) and I figured there are worse things that could happen to a guy! And then I learned that in The Boyfriend, when Tony dances, the stage is empty...just Tony carrying a large box with a red ribbon. No beautiful girl at his side. No singing of some soaring tenor aria to captivate the audience. Nothing but a mute Tony dancing back and forth across the stage carrying a box. This is not something I can do.”

“In walked Al. Rather than look at Libby and say with his eyes, "This guy has literally no physical coordination, surely this isn't the best you could get!" (Though I'm sure that

thought crossed his mind many times!) Instead, Al jumped into his work, teaching me basics of dance, "your left foot, no the other left foot!" This is called a box step. Let's work in a grapevine. Plus many more steps whose names I no longer recall. And more significantly, with his ever-present infectious smile and his inexhaustible confidence, in two short weeks, Al actually had me believing that I could go onstage and do this dance!"

When it came time for the curtain to go up, I was nervous, but instead of being afraid I would screw it up, I wanted to go onstage and do that dance to show Al that I learned from him and that I got it!

A transformation of a small-town boy in West Virginia, compliments of Al Wiltz."

Jeff Haught

"The single most intense rehearsal period I have ever been involved with occurred in high school. Nothing professional or amateur in 40 years of theatre compared to the four week basic training we endured in the 1975 cast of 'Godspell.' We worked from 8am till 3, blocking and choreographing. (In those days, when Libby said we got out of class, we got OUT OF CLASS!). Then from 4-6 we had dance technique class, and we were back at 7pm rehearsing until 10pm. Libby had swung some kind of artist-in-residence contract for Al so we had him FOR A MONTH!

Every picture, every move, every moment of 'Godspell' was meticulously detailed, and his patience and attention to detail was astounding. Of course, we had arguably ounce for ounce the best cast I had ever seen. Bernie, Mindy, Becky, Kim, David, Marc, Diane,

Carole, Bob, these guys could hang! And we got to see a side of Al we rarely encountered; he was not just the kind, encouraging, inventive guy that came in once a year. For the first time, we got to see the Professor, the pedagogue, the scholar. It was one thing for us to love him; from that time on, we were in AWE of him.”

Sheila Kulp Wahamaki

Three 'Al lessons' I live by:1) Simplicity sells! Many times I get caught up in directing or working on projects or teaching and stop and say 'Keep it simple'. It works!! 2) Say 'I can'. The minute you say 'I can' ...you can!! 3) This one is the 'Umpa Umpa ump addie Umpa'. Okay.... I really don't know how to spell this but it was the sound Al gave us for the energy inside that carries you forward. It gets rid of 'lead bottoms'. I always start any performance, stage or classroom, saying this 'umpaa...' and I have confidence and energy!! All of this I have shared over the 30 years I have been teaching and directing. You blessed my life and so many lives. Thank you Al and I love you!

David A. Jolliffe

“There’s a wonderful bit of symmetry at work as I write about Al Wiltz’s influence. For many reasons, I’m a very lucky man, but one of the reasons is that I get to do lots of ‘Al Wiltz’ kinds of

things. At this moment, for example, I just got home from a great weekend in Washington, DC, where I took seven outstanding high school students from small towns in rural east Arkansas. We met our Senator; we went to see the historical sites; we saw excellent theatre. But we also did a lot of just talking, and our conversations were very much like those we used to have with Al when, as small-town teenagers in New Martinsville, West Virginia, we'd get to hang out with him after rehearsals. What's your vision for yourself, Al would ask us. (Not in those clunky words, though.) What's your vision for the world you're going to inhabit? How are you going to make that vision come true? In these wonderful moments, I think I learned something from Al about how to affirm young people—their minds, their hearts, and their art. I don't confuse affirmation with praise, and neither did Al when he worked with us. He praised us when we did well; he affirmed us consistently.

And thank heavens Al knew how to affirm me as a performer, especially as a dancer, in Libby Francis' Magnolia High School musicals. As one of those hopping cowboys in Oklahoma that Cathy Pyles mentioned, and then as Enoch Snow in Carousel,

and then as the Kralahome in *The King and I*, I think I danced about as well as a fire plug wearing a dance belt could. I still remember doing those floor stretching exercises at the beginning of rehearsals and yelping out loud: “My body won’t go in that direction!” I was so pleased—honored beyond words—when Al invited me to SIU-Edwardsville in the summer of 1972, at the end of my second year in college, to play a role in his production of *Celebration* and in someone else’s production (Lynn Kluth’s *Poopsie Vilhauer’s*) of *Hotel Paradiso*. Prior that summer, the theatre had been a side show for me. After that summer (followed by an autumn term abroad in Oxford), I returned to Bethany College with a unified focus on acting and directing.”

“Though my job title has always had some version of ‘English teacher’ in it since 1976, I continue to try to do projects that have an ‘Al Wiltz’ flavor. Last fall, I took a professional production of *Julius Caesar*, using eight actors, to six different high schools in rural Arkansas, and in each school we built a large group of students into three big mob scenes—1.1, 3.1, and 3.2—so that when we performed the play, the kids were part of

the cast. We had only one day to rehearse and one day at each school to perform, but so often during those intense days, I would remember Al's being on the Lincoln Theatre stage with us New Martinsville kids. Libby would be in the audience; Fred Fonner would be in the light booth; Madame Stephanie would be at the piano, the greatest accompanist and best audience anyone could ask for. From all of them, we got art, craft, and savvy. From Al, we got those entire thing in spades, with crystalline focus and abundant joy thrown in. What lucky kids we were!

Alcine reflects on his work in Musical Theatre:

“Moving from the modern dance intense abstract to the musical theater puzzle was great fun. It was as if it was a toy with costumes and sets. I had an outline, a successful script and then I was allowed to play around with talent. I was able to put into casting, like coloring within the lines. The line was there and I and the talented people around me added the shapes and shades until it created the work. I didn't have to defend the musical. My song and dance man was always with me.”

The reason why a Director/Choreographer is critical for musical theatre or opera productions:

“In musical theatre or opera productions the performer is taught scores, not the choreographed dance numbers. There is a style chosen that I encourage for the actors for that particular show. Character development of how one changes from scene to scene. I wanted that choreographed as well. The directors complained. They do not have a scene of how the actors moved nor how the sections are choreographed. The entire production needs to be crafted by the choreographer, more importantly the Director/ Choreographer. Not anywhere in the Opera program is there a mention under communications or a category stating that a choreographer even existed. There is rarely respect.”

Interviews: August 7, 2015 in New Martinsville, West Virginia

Everett Ross Mason (10 years as Alcine’s rehearsal director 1997 – 2007)

Kay Edgell

Dawn Edgell Kelly

Location: Everett’s home 1pm

Susan Kirchner gave background on the project and then asked:

When was your first encounter with Alcine?

ERM:

“It started with Libby and Jennifer Cofield. I started in 6th grade with ‘Anything Goes’.

Jennifer had so much energy and pulled you into it. In 7 and 8th grade I was interviewed by Libby (Frances). I was front and center in my first show with Al: "George M" in a tap dance. I learned so much from Al that first week and that carried over to high school and to family. I worked with Al in the afternoons and into the evening.

You were usually here on your birthday in March during your Spring Break.

The best show I can remember was 'Super Star'...what a beautiful show.

I was a little sophomore kneeling in front of the cross. It was very powerful for me.

Libby would take us to do 'Hosanna'.

'Super Star' was a beautiful show and controversial.

I remember the line: 'Life is a banquet and most sons of bitches are starving.'

We worked before Al came.

Libby would use those choirs to prepare us.

She geared us to be ready for Alcine."

AW:

"Libby had you all prepped. She prepared you in lines and music and all of you had that readiness.

In the later years, after college, you also taught them about shifting their weights and bits of choreography before I arrived."

ERM:

“I had a sketch for you to see. I was terribly spoiled. Dawn and I have talked a lot about it.....It was all Libby.”

AW:

“It was a most unusual high school (Magnolia High School).

Libby was unique and won my heart when I choreographed Oklahoma in 1968.

There was something about her walking up on the porch in ‘Oklahoma’. Her love for the students, which I have, and we shared this love of teaching.

I valued this time with her as an older teacher. We both desired communication and passion.

As long as Libby wanted to do the show, I would come back.”

DEK:

“She did not treat you like high school students. She treated you like stars.”

AW:

“She showed respect for students. It was a self-discipline she taught us.”

ERM:

“Experiences with Libby and Al occurred in a show that had a life of 3-5 performances.

It carried over to our everyday lives

We would go to Wearing (?) in the summer with no air conditioning.

Libby had her gin in the suitcase and she was happy.

She would tell us that this whole thing is a learning experience.

When I went to West Liberty College, it was the same thing.

However there, the choreographer had everything written down. I got in trouble. I offered my opinion. They put me in the back in the room, behind the potted plant.”

AW:

“All of the arts are about discipline. The testimonials come up over and over again. The work ethic that is taught in the art resonated with people.

The sweat is your background and integrity.”

ERM:

“Libby never understood the influence she had on Steve Radcliff or Jennifer Cofield.”

DEK:

“There is no one that can live up to Libby now.

She had the influence and she knew how to bring people with talent together.”

SK: “Let’s talk about community theatre now.”

AW:

“When she retired we started doing community theatre.

Everett, how did you prepare them for that?"

ERM:

"Jo Mitchell was her right arm. She did a lot for Libby.

Libby and I talked and she taught me that you had to let stage mothers in.

Libby would tell me to be very tolerate of the community and stage mothers.

It started with auditions. Community theatre auditions was more intense than at the high school. You had to start from zero because they had no background.

You would a call rehearsal and only ½ cast would come.

We had to make it work.....to keep it moving.

Rehearsals were two nights during the week, plus Saturday and Sunday.

We started in October and worked until May before the show was to go on stage.

Libby was so in tune to detail and wanting it to look as good as it could.

Community people didn't want to give the time or detail to make it work."

"In The King and I', after her heart surgery, I had this little girl on the stage. Libby said she needed to step two steps stage left. Then corrected me with "No no, one step upstage." Libby wanted to make sure the blocking was perfect. At that point I said, "She's back".

AW:

“Libby said to me, “Do you think it really needs to be that way?” I said, “Now Libby, how do you think it needed to be?” There were moments when she interjected. It was a marvelous period to be in the theatre with her.

In the end, the community still got a descent performance.”

ERM:

“Talking about ‘Anything Goes’. Tuesday of that week Gail fell and broke her hip. Dawn didn’t want to be a part of it. There was no way Dawn could compete with Gail. Gail was a good actress and a wonderful performer.

Bruce (Ensinger) said to Dawn, “Are you going to sing or do I have to do it for you.

I can’t sing it from the pit for you.”

DEK:

“Another time there was that little girl cast who could not sing. Libby told Dawn to stand right beside her and sing in her ear. Bruce could not stand it anymore.”

ERM:

“Music was always first when we prepared for the shows. It drove the choice of shows.

I always wanted to do “Carousel” and “Brigadoon”, but we never had the singers.”

“There were people who wanted to take Libby’s place. Libby was always a above it. It rolled off of her.”

AW:

“In the theater you always find people with a force. Libby was always the lady and she always got what she wanted.”

ERM:

“Libby would tell me: ‘That girl is really very good....you should put her in the middle.’ She cared about your talent and she encouraged anyone with talent.”

DEK:

“She was never afraid of anyone.
She had a wonderful relationship with the high school principal, George Mullet.”

AW:

“I met George Mullet and he said anything you need is yours.”

(Discussing people taking on a variety of roles)

AW:

“We worked in Central Elementary when I only had a weekend for ‘Oklahoma’.

I did get to see 'Carrousel', "Joseph', and 'King and I' in production.

ERM:

"How did Libby meet you in Morgantown?"

AW:

"I was hired to teach in the PE dance courses in the women's school and part time in the theatre department. The theatre department asked me to choreograph 'West Side Story' for that 1969 February.

Joe Goles' wife, Gloria, was a friend of Libby and told her: 'I just saw this young guy and you have to use him for your spring production.'

Libby called me and I only had so much time, but I told her yes, I can do that.

I met the choral director and talked about this musical.

We worked at the elementary school on the 3rd floor. It had a long stage. It was not a theatre.

There were all of these young people there who were not sure what to do.

I started them moving, but I knew nothing of their voices.

I taught them basic square dance stuff. There was something there. That is when I found Jennifer Cofield. I asked if she could stay to work with me further. I believe Cathy brought her a sandwich.

That was nice. Then I moved to Illinois, and Libby calls in November.

We are doing 'Carousel'. I told her I live in Illinois. Libby said, so when can you come.

I can come spring break I said. Libby said then get your ticket and I will meet you at the airport."

DEK:

"Over the years you came and created. Let me ask you. When you started choreography, did you have something before you came? As a young person, have you always created off the top of your head? Libby allowed us to choreograph our own things for our show choirs."

AW:

"When the dancers are in front of me, there is composition and I take these instruments and began. I do a lot of preparation when reading the script and the music. I teach whoever is in front of me. When I see something that catches my eye, I coach from that point. The choreography is chosen as I relates from everyone.

I always warm up from my body."

ERM:

"I studied with Betty Mackie, Alcine, and at West Liberty took dance.

Libby would spend summers Fred Warring's and the Pennsylvanians.

Artie Shaw taught radio choirs. We sang and had choreography classes.

The Blenders directed a show choir.”

“After Alcine would leave, it was magic, the Wiltz style.”

The following are the list of musicals Alcine choreographed for New Martinsville:

Oklahoma

Guys and Dolls

Mame 2000

Anything Goes

Joseph

My Fair Lady

South Pacific

Sound of Music

King and I

SK:

“It has been 4 years since Libby died in 2011?”

ERM:

“Yes. She kept the Restoration Council, but she didn’t care for Arts Link.

Now I don’t have a (financial) backer. I won’t go into a production without that. We never did it for money, however we had to pay the professional people.”

4:30pm – 5:30pm

Tour of Lincoln Theatre

Kay and Everett, Barbara Morse, Barb Daly, Bruce Ensinger and Alcine

Location: City Hall Restoration Council Meeting room from 5:30pm – 6:30pm

(Barb and Bruce played double piano during performances and rotated during rehearsals.)

BE:

“I knew choreographers and did dance things in Wheeling.

What impressed me about Alcine was the dance break. We think in phrases.

You were seeing visually what I would do in phrasing.....like knitting...understanding by design.....

Sketching in rough rhythms that was master teaching....once you got that down you would master the next thing.

I told myself that this man is like crazy. He would pace and move and ask for me to play it again. What I like working with you most was the cuts, to make it musical, to deal with a ball gown and turn it into a bikini.”

“I worked with Alcine about 6 years in a row, and then a break for 2 years, and then I got back in the saddle. You worked with people who had no dance skills.

When the college group you directed was on the cover of Dance Magazine, then you had dancers, like Michelle Meinser. You could speak to them in their dancer language. I could only image what you would do when you had a whole troupe.

The music was the most important thing. It really comes back to the music telling us what to do. What you did was put these layers on top. Then you gave them what to and what to brush up on.”

AW:

“All of the cuts over the years we made....it really was a puzzle. I never felt rushed but we always had time to do what I needed....a very easy flow.”

BE:

“You had repeat offenders. You remembered how to work with them from the course before and then knew what they could do if you pushed them.

If you cannot feel beat, you are helpless.”

“Barb and I both knew what kindergarteners could not do these things.....feeling the down beat. We were inspired by things that we saw you do. A lot of young educators think they know everything. We watched Tim Wall teaching beats with music and bouncing the tennis ball....and set a timer....it was torture....very difficult.”

BD:

“With adults you have to work developmentally.”

AW:

“Editing the Broadway musicals by cutting to find the essence of what we were doing and putting in movement. That was important cutting.”

BE:

“Modulations were involved. We had to turn the end of the phrase to make it work. I needed to rely on my theory background. The nightmare was Libby’s Gala and AL sent singing on tape. We had to find the songs and find the keys, find order of the songs, certain vocal numbers. Then it had to go in the order of the show that it was happening. We stayed up at Jo Mitchells to hide from Libby. Of course there were always threats of the flood.”

“Eleca Bellas Estes (?), also an accompanist for 1977 ‘Godspell’ and ‘Jesus Christ Super Star’ and ‘Gorege M’. Bruce and Eleca played the in the two piano piece of Rogers and Hammerstam before the show. Bruce and Eleca played for ‘Guys and Dolls’ in 1978.

ERM:

“All of our collaborations were very cooperative.”

BE:

“Al took beautiful notes. The spoken word and directives were so important. Working alongside with Libby, knew when we needed to fix something.

Like a recipe, the cooks always agreed on the effects. It goes back to the music...especially after Libby retired. ‘South Pacific’‘Oklahoma’what a great piece.

Alcine made them look great. The key was to find the character.

Everyone had their rolls.”

AW:

“I needed to make very few revisions.”

BD:

“Al had the ability to make amateurs feel like they were on Broadway and the freedom that you gave them through dance. You never intimidate them...always worked with them with respect. You are always patient.”

BE:

“Mary Ann was a wonderful Seamstress. Gail was a great actress. With Gail it was her show and she just got better.

ERM:

“In King and I ‘Shall We Dance’, the King was not feeling it.

BE:

“He was not feeling the anticipatory beats. Clare didn’t do anything to help him. Gail really led him into that movement. I told him it is like throwing the football to feel the anticipatory beats, but dance needed to do this. My playing didn’t get it if he didn’t move. He had to physically move to get it. It was just like someone driving a stick shift for the first time. Clare figured out...she knew it.....but she could not guide the King.”

BE:

“When we worked with the high school, it was very structured and the students could get out during the day. Al could also do ensemble things in the evenings. We have to work on Saturday or Sunday to get some recordings down on tape. Evenings went really late at the community theater. That was hard on the high school students.”

AW:

“Working with students were part of the choir and they had discipline with Libby for 4 years...discipline. We did not have discipline when people came from their jobs or did not know basic theatre etiquette. Community players did not see their part as a whole....just saw their part.”

BE:

“It was the comradely between the freshmen and then sophomores. They would also welcome the added new comers.”

BD:

“There was great satisfaction pulling into the production. They were not accustomed to Libby as their director. We produced remarkable productions with real talents.”

BE:

“I would like to ask a question for the choreographer’s perspective:

When you listened to the music and you have to make cuts, how is that different from your choice of music for added movement? Did you, like Balanchine, think everything out?”

AW:

“No, I knew the music well. When I go to the room with the dancers, I have a thought. I look at music as an environment and then I see the dancers and have a reaction to the music and watching to the dancers and then back to the music....I do it in layers. Not like choral music. Most choreographers who have come in my time have eventually found

their way not trying to over predict themselves. The key was to find what is in those instruments and explore how to make it work for them.”

BE:

“Libby let it evolve and have an organic life.”

AW:

“It’s never the same again...that is the beauty.

If you ever do a series of things through time then it has it’s own life. You rehearse and rehearse. When I had the company, I could redo the material and it would change.”

BE:

“Picasso is finished but he may redo it...variations on the theme. When a score looks finite, it still has to be translated. That is what we do....it is told and told and told and finally written down.”

AW:

“Dance likes to have its own rhythmthe visuals are in your dancers.”

Closing statements....thank you for giving your gift to us and sharing.

From: ermason@suddenlink.net<ermason@suddenlink.net>

Date: Wed, Aug 12, 2015 at 11:35 PM

Subject: Re: Thank you

To: alcine.wiltz@gmail.com

It was a pleasure having you all here and thank you for all the many years of inspiration you have me. I told Susan that the day had been a wonderful tribute to Libby. A tribute that we had not been able to give to her. She was and had become a very close friend to Kay and I. You and Libby continue to inspire me every day. I was so blessed to have been a part of the magic the both of you created. I will come and visit and we will stay in touch.

Thank you for everything

Everett

From: Alcine Wiltz

Date: Wed, Aug 12, 2015 2:38 PM

To: Everett Mason;

Subject: Thank you

Everett,

Thank you so very much for organizing the events of Friday. Your luncheon was so gracious and the interviews were an important addition to the materials we are gleaming for the E-Portfolio to pass on to the Performing Arts Library at the University of Maryland. The dinner at the end of the day was so cathartic for me. It seemed to be a sense of closure for me that I wasn't aware that I needed. Driving toward home on Saturday, I became aware of this feeling.

Thank you for the many years of your developing the material I set in a week. Getting a production on stage and into performance requires a great deal of effort and a giving spirit. You gave so much for so many through the years. Especially to Libby! She could not have continued without you at her side.

Best wishes in all that you do. Please know that you have an open invitation to come and spend time with Nancy and I whenever it suits you.

Fondly,

Al

Musical Theater at University of Maryland College Park

Carolyn Black-Sortir (4 3 2015)

AW:

“As a director, to have a movement coach for Opera students and actors, that can be helpful. They get into situations where they have to get into or out of a position. It is a quick fix if people know their body well enough. You can coach them quickly especially in transitions. “

“First year MA Opera students do a scene study. When I watch, there are things quite awkward. I went over to talk to the student about how to do it. Their immediate response if they have trained with Alcine is immediate and usually positive. This next step would get beyond the movement class and how help actually with application. Mid-April is the big Opera. I hope to talk with Crieg Kier about coaching the new 2nd years while they are beginning to prepare for the following Opera.”

CBS:

“Leon Major is one of the finest directors alive. He allowed me to come to UMCP at the age of 53 as a Voice performance major with more mentoring by him in directing. This training allowed me to have a special focus in directing. I was so earnest and he was so relaxed. He said, ‘I will take you on and mentor you and you will take all the courses for

vocal performance to understand your role in Opera.’ He explained everything to me in productions. He is amazing and wonderful to work with. I found the younger students inhibited physically which surprised me. I felt more physically looser.”

AW:

“Leon came to the campus to build this Opera program and he came to me and asked to work with me as he thought I would be a good fit with my Musical theater background. Early in my profession I was determined that I would not give up theater and only do the dance. In the early 1990s, my job just didn’t allow me to have that flexibility. I was insistent that I teach the incoming dance major students in fall semesters and then also teach the advanced dance students in the spring. I recommended people to Leon. Graceanne Adomo was hired to teach movement. Virginia Freeman was hired upon Graceanne’s departure. When I had stepped down as chairperson for the dance department in 2004, I took a yearlong sabbatical and came back with plans to remain on faculty for three more years. Leon heard that I was going to be retiring in 2008 and asked if I would be interested. Virginia was planning on retiring in 2009 so I took the invitation.”

CBS:

“Had you done Opera?”

AW:

“Mid 1990s a guest director was brought who wanted a choreographer to do a big party scene in Tawes recital hall. . That was the only connection I had had with the Maryland Opera Studio program. Leon had sent his opera students to take my first year dance

majors class but only 3 Opera students stayed. They didn't want to move that much and were intimidated. So I began in fall 2006 to teach the first semester of movement classes to the first year students. I started to get them to understand the anatomy of the instrument and basic body mechanics and the mind body connections.

CBS:

"How do you do this with Opera students?"

AW:

"Lay them on the floor, show the skeleton, and see what instrument is. I ask them to understand bits about it. Feel the body weight and the curve of the spine. There is a progression: on the floor on the mats and then walking. You have to use the weight and space. You have to focus on your kinesthetic responses and proprioceptors.

During the second semester I give them opportunities to feel their body shifts of weight and positions across the floor. Movement patterns and directions are explored with movement styles and a little jazz focusing on rhythmic patterns.

In real Opera you bring in real dancers. But I didn't have that option."

CBS:

"In "Miss Haversham's Fire", Carolyn produced a video of the creation of the production. The video is edited and shows a wonderful video of Alcine actually working with the students on stage in such huge costumes."

AW:

"As a choreographer-director I have to make all of that work; sets and costumes. For "Haversham" the costumes were rented and didn't fit very well."

CBS:

“Are you ever in on those early planning meetings?”

AW:

“I told Nick, yes, I will choreograph but I need to be at every production meeting that you all have. I had to fight for space at every meeting. The set designers would have to say yes to my space quests.”

CBS:

“If you were not at those meetings, would it have gone worse?”

AW:

“Yes: I was not on their list to meet. Never do they include the choreographer for meetings about time in the space. I fought this battle with the theatre department. My decision in 1968 was that I would never work on musical theater pieces unless I was the director -choreographer. I love to work in the studio and then also on the stage.”

CBS:

“Were you always choreographing for the Opera people that you worked with?”

AW:

“Always. The ones who have had the movement were an example for those who have not worked with me.”

CBS:

“I like the physicality but I have not had the dance. I have noticed that Opera students can become too focused as we work on getting them less inhibited physically. Their eyes

begin to water and it is a personal thing. Many of them are bigger and they are more sensitive about their bodies.”

AW:

“They are sensitive. But I am a hands-on teacher who touches them all the time during classes and they get over it very soon. Knowing the instrument and finding the confidence in their own space is important. They must feel the 3 dimensionality of the body. It’s all about accessing the support to fill the space, especially on the stage.”

CBS:

“Giving them a whole way of thinking is important. Your physicality plays a big part in their singing.”

AW:

“Students were finding the difference in what the vocal coaches were telling them and relating to them as different from what they were learning with me. When you relax you are getting the binding out of your system. You need to get that muscle free to get that release. It is like a kink in the hose. A lot like Alexander and Feldenkrais.”

CBS:

“Leon was ahead of his time. The approach to singing is so important. You can’t get the support or have the freedom if the support isn’t there.”

AW:

“Students kept saying things and Justina (rehearsal accompanist) came to me and I said, “Lets sing a few notes and make a physically adjustment where I saw holding or the skull

where it is related.” To find that balance it is very difficult. When they are taught to play to the balcony the head often locks back. It is possible with an opening through the cervical and the lift of the entire clavicles, neck and skull. The first time students see the older students do it and then they try it.”

CBS:

“Your support for singing the Aria just started this fall?”

AW:

“You have to create the drama with your entire body. You have to stay around it and be in the flow.”

CBS:

“You were referencing things that you did in class on the stage. In my training I never got this direction, just how to sit, get up and walk.”

AW:

“This awareness does come in the first semester. I take them on the stair ways and on each step I teach them how to control their walk.”

CBS:

“Leon was my co-advisor when I arrived at UMCP because it did not have a directing program. I had to fulfill the DMA for voice and in addition Leon allowed me to participate in all of the Opera studio classes. I also had a teaching fellowship. Any directing/assisting with Leon was extra. I felt like an interloper.”

“One exercise that we had to do: Pat diamond would give us a phrase. We would take a minute to discuss the phrase and then he said, ‘Make a tableau.’”

I taught the undergraduates all the different languages and directed my own scenes.

I saw how you worked with Leon. All of this was wonderful to see and extra stuff.”

“I remembered being Assistant Director in ‘The Shadow Boxer.’ People really loved the movement part of it. The movement seemed more central to everything going on. It was a contemporary piece with people moving on and off the stage.”

“I was involved with research in different libraries, archives, images of Joe Lewis for projections. The production meetings were fascinating. It had to be wonderful how Alcine would make it work as well. The actors had to deliver different movement styles. How did you decide on the movements?”

AW:

“I start with who is in the room and I start working by throwing out ideas.

Once you get them going I have to stick with the choreography. The most additional changes I can do is make a few little changes in space.”

CBS:

“You bring such a treasure chest of things to try.

Leon said, ‘Alcine, can you fix it?’”

AW:

“Yes, in the 1970s, directors thought I was their plumber.

It is about movement and it can communicate an awful lot. There is a kinesphere you need to use and it makes performing so much easier.”

CBS:

“The reports were that movement was there and Andrew really moved well.

I was impressed with your reminder that you had to be precise, forward and back, very specific. Jerrod Lee was in a wheel chair and he is still around. I am sure singers would talk to you about their tightness.”

AW:

“Yes certainly, however; through the studio class I would give them the vocabulary to use for many of our coaching sessions.”

CBS:

“In Florencia there were many transitions, many bird’s on poles. The boat set and then the boat splits which makes it more complicated.”

AW:

“Whenever I used water, the 1st in the ‘King and I’ and then what was created for ‘Uncle Tom’s Cabin’. See the boat crashed and the actors needed to work together and everyone had to work together. The lead actor was very guarded.”

CBS:

“Yes, She was young and cute and I wanted her to stick out her rear-end and she wouldn’t do it. She was really difficult. You were brought in to help her relax and she

was very temperamental. I saw you teach them to fall out the boat...roll and go into the water. There was so much the movement around the boat.”

CBS:

“In ‘Miss Haversham’s Fire’, Leon was gone and there was no one to work with. Todd only wanted to work on his scenes. You were not getting the time.”

AW:

“I would stay around to ask for time for the next day and he only gave me about 15 minutes. I had 14 dancers crossing the stage at the same time. If Leon was there, I could have battled for the stage.”

CBS:

“Opera is about music but communication is so much a part of it. The visual plays so much in what the audience is getting.”

AW:

“As it is in foreign languages. You have to give them a lot in body.”

CBS:

“Leon talks so quiet and then Alcine comes in and there is so much energy. It is so different. You walk the talk.

You relocked that ball scene on the spot?

AW:

“Never get enough rehearsal time for the movement sections. I only have 10 minutes for that ball scene on stage.”

CBS:

“In Opera, you stand there and then the dancers come in. In ‘Boheme’ the plot is carried still by dancers. Now a day’s people really do care for you to just stand there and sing. Now the science of voice also includes paramount study of the body and movement and how I move around in space.”

AW:

“Contemporary directors have movement in their more diverse backgrounds. Straight actors are really being trained seriously in movement. In the 1980s choreographers were being brought in for more input, but still not as directors.”

CBS:

“And it wasn’t seen as dance, but more as awareness that the body played an important role in singing.”

AW

“Yes, in the late 70’s University Champaign and SIUE School of Music brought them down to Edwardsville. Theater and dance and music all wanted them. It was Alexander technique.”

CBS:

“A ten day festival on Argento, I really got to work with Alcine in “Letters to Miss Manners” I was a little frustrated by being criticized for staging something that should

not be staged. Those were some most difficult moments for me but the audience loved the moments. Argento let me know that he was not pleased.

And the lead, Carmen did not learn her music.

Judith Martin was Ms. Manners. Her husband commissioned a work for his wife's 60th birthday. All these letters all over the world to and from Ms. Manners gave proper etiquette about how to behave at the theater. The advice itself was very clever and delivered as a song cycle.

Argento arrived at the premiere. We orchestrated it for a small ensemble. The original stages were for the song cycle on manners for opera, church, how to act, etc.

Alcine became the man who delivered all these different letters to Carmen.

I said to Alcine, here is my idea....and he just made it happen. The most excited was the Opera piece, campy like a silent movie. Alcine came in a villain cap and it was very funny. People loved it. The flourishes in the music were reflected in the dance movements. Alcine appeared up in the balcony in the end.

So, Carmen still didn't know her music. Alcine comes in to deliver a letter to her and part of it was dropped. The paper was her music score. She didn't know what to sing next. Eventually she sees it on the floor but the timing was broken. Alcine added so much to that piece. The audience was laughing and screaming. The dancing element gave the whole storyline. Leon thought it went a little too far."

AW:

"When arts work together in collaboration, what is created is very exciting"

Musical Theater at University of Maryland College Park

Scot Reese (3 20 2015)

Alcine:

“Our collaboration was wonderful. Through that process...both of us are teachers

Can we talk about how we worked as teachers and theatre directors?”

Scott:

“The way we started working together--- we were in two different departments

I felt was strange that theatre was hiring outside of UMCP. I didn't know that the dance

department wanted to work with theater. Jane Eyre 2005. Jane required period

movement. I found out that Alcine choreographed and directed lots of musicals. We

needed to create this work from whole cloth since we have neither seen it on Broadway.

We first began working with Dr. Sparks, the musical director.

As we started to work on music, we listened and listened then began to storyboard.

We knew where all was taking place. This work was a novel that was adapted to stage

and then the musical adaptation adapted to stage.

It did not have fully realized sets....sets were activated....a window flew in and all scene

changes were choreographed.

Scott directed very few musicals, his experience was 'Company' at Northwestern University in graduate school.

"Clearly, a Director does one thing, and a choreographer does another.

With Alcine, I didn't feel responsible for so much of the show. He brought a wealth of knowledge. He mentored me through it as well as the students.

Our vocabulary was wonderful. As Jane left the orphanage and had to get dressed, each person in the cast helped her get dressed right in front of audience. We made the dressing as part of an onstage event.

"Jane Eyre" was a complicated show. The music, movement, and dance needed period movement and dress. We made it seem effortless and found a vocabulary."

Alcine:

"It just clicked. Scott had a wonderful rapport with the students and it made it very comfortable for Alcine to move into working as a co-director. It was truly a great working relationship.

I had sworn off of working with directors back in 1968.

Rich's (Sparks) daughter after seeing "Jane Eyre", said it was like watching a ballet...it just flowed."

It all comes from the text and story we were telling.

Scot:

"The acting is the process if the students know they have an intuitive sense. If I got stuck, Alcine said, 'where are you and what do you need?' The students needed to find

their own blocking and stage work. We worked collaboratively in that way for them together. I remember our lead, Rochester, lost his voice. Really he didn't have a voice. Like 'My Fair Lady', we did not have a choice, he sang by talking on patter."

Alcine:

"Also the Bed was too big to bring it in and out electrically. We just told them to physically do it...bring it in! We offered good modeling with the period of movement.

Scot:

"Urine Town", 2007. We had such fun. We had more sets...big Urine Wall town. Electronics and hydraulics were not working. The stairs were not working. This play was a different structure and different kind of energy."

Alcine:

"Very Contemporary. We let the kids go and had to pull them back. It contained many musical theatre numbers.....styles of West Side...Titanic....tap on top of desks. An homage to musical theatre forms."

Scot:

"So much teaching. If we needed a tap dance, we asked who can tap? Two people could tap and then they taught the others to do a time step.

The students got to use their personalities and their skills.

For the big number, we had a vocabulary.

Rich and Scott and Alcine were able to work in different rooms.

There was never ownership. We were modeling and teaching students about professional productions.

The three of us agreed with each other already...we just did the work.

When we did get on stage, working with students we know it's going to change so much. Students change so much in 4 weeks. We are not dumbing things down. We see them growing exponentially."

Alcine:

"Kids know. We were modeling as co-directors. It's so much more fun to work that way."

Scot:

"Students saw and felt the unity. The work stayed all about those musical movements. We gave them the line."

Alcine:

"What an incredible set."

Scot:

"We used the half curtain as shadow. Breck was so good with this. It allowed us to dive off that deep end." James Joyce The Dead 2009.

I always look for musicals for more women than men. We have 70% female and 30% male students and I didn't want to go outside of the department for men.

I did Dubliners in graduate school. It was a story with music, rather than a musical. All of the musicians were using their own instruments.

In the 1st Act, people were coming into a holiday party to perform for each other. The 2nd Act showed inner thoughts and monologues. We pre-recorded that music.

We worked arranging with Rich in Baltimore to record it all.

This play gave the students both the live music and the pre-recorded music as part of their training within one musical.

We knew the story. We knew the music. We knew how we were going to tell it. We had to create our own vocabulary with sense of period.”

Alcine:

“Each character was so defined. We developed movement motifs they would repeat. Character shape that we used around the stage also with Tableau work.”

Scot:

“The work was underscored throughout the whole, like a chamber work.”

Alcine:

“Servants had distinct energy that was around the main characters.

End of shows informed the beginning of shows.”

Scot:

“There was a husband and wife fractured. We didn’t know why she left in the snow. We asked why should we get her off the stage?”

Alcine:

“You have to have the maturity and time that things can uncover themselves with time. This evolved. We didn’t make bad choices.”

Scot:

“It provided a canvas....you are looking at Currier and Iveys scene...not your best Christmas.

Jason (a student) is now working in NY. Remember he could not keep his fingers together in that dance you were trying to.”

Alcine:

“I just said to him that we would go work in the other room. Now he had a work ethic.”

Scot:

“Jason worked at the Kennedy Center, and I could not tell him any different than the professionals working there with his work ethic.

Lindsay Roberts, a voice major, was told that she didn’t need to do a musical. She became Dr. Sparks’s assistant. She did audition for “Urinetown” and got a small part and dance sequence.

Lindsay was taking her time. She now is swinging 3 leads while working on a MFA in arts management.

Our UMCP student body are artist scholars...they want to collaborate.”

Alcine:

“They are full artists and very intelligent.”

Scot:

“It is always about the process, then a good product will follow. We are really good at process. When this happens, the students come to their next project with new skills and

more vocabulary. When the professional has a mixed background of music, dance and theatre then the collaboration can happen. Working this way is about not wasting time. Alcine always told me that you have to model three times good behavior. But the one time you make a mistake, they will latch on to that.”

Charlie Rutherford Retirement Toast April 16, 2008

“I met Alcine Wiltz in 1983. His hair was ash blond; mine was salt and pepper....and relatively more in evidence than it is now. He was just starting his tenure as Chair of the Department of Dance. In Buildings EE and AA – shortly to be connected by a passage was and renamed the Dance Building.

Yes, I said in 1983: the Comcast Center, CSPAC, the Campus Recreation Center, the Plant Sciences Building, and the Kin Engineering Building weren’t even pipe dreams. The McKeldin Library was half its present size. On this campus it is not unusual for a Chair to serve for ten years. Alcine served as Chair until 2004. 2004! Twenty-one years as Chair of the Department. And he has stayed on as / eminence gris/ until 2008.....25 years.

And we’ve only seen slightly more than half of his professional career stretching back in his “salad days” through the Midwest to the gulf coast. We never saw as a lad in New Orleans, never saw him teach at SIU Edwardsville; we never saw his work as co-founder,

director, choreographer, and performer with eh Mid America Dance Company in the 70's and 80's."

"But what we experiences has been extraordinary: For those of you who have been Alcine's students, you know how committed he has been to provide you with the kind of fundamental, building-block education in modern movement techniques – both in the classes he has taught (and of late he has undertaken DANC 248 the cornerstone course upon which all the blocks are placed) AND in a way the department curriculum has been structured, not Alcine's executive province, to be sure, but in which his hand is truly felt."

"Of late he has retooled himself pedagogically; in 2006 he RE-taught himself Kinesiology as he could teach DANC 370, Kines for Dancers. Just think of the long hours spent alone in his office – just Alcine and the skeleton."

"Many of us have known him also as an administer, a fireless advocate for Dance and the Arts in the 1990's – along with colleagues from Theatre and Music – visited numerous performing arts Centers throughout the U.S. gleaning ideas for the Clarice Smith design, spent countless hours in meetings with the representatives of Moore, Ruble, and Yudell in College Park and in Santa Monica. The fruits of those labors are all around you."

"How many of you who watched the brilliant MDE concert tonight in the Dance Theatre thought back nostalgically to those days of yesteryear in which the audience (those lucky enough to have a seat and not have to sit on the floor) perched on rock-hard

benches with problematic backs (unless you were 6'4" or so), the music occasionally drowned out by the roaring air conditioner (or-much worse – felling the lack of any air conditioning). The dancers with one single entrance/exit upstage left and no wings to work with were every bit as resourceful as the audience.”

“Look how far we’ve come on Alcine’s Watch. We have an MFA. We have facilities to boast about. We continue to graduate students, graduate and undergraduate students alike, of whom we can be very, very proud.”

“Through twenty-one years as Chair, with the support and expertise of an extraordinarily dedicated faculty, Alcine kept the Dance Department moving forward, through years of resource slashing, through “value engineering” perpetrated upon on CSPAC, through fires in AA and EE he kept the department on course. And here we are, gathered to bid him farewell. So I ask that you raise your glass to our friend and colleague, our teacher and sometime Chair, Alcine Wiltz”