

## Generous grant allows ACAT to renovate and move on strategic planning as envisioned by Board Goals and Values Committee

### Renovations completed in time for record number of fall activities in the ACAT Studio

#### \$50,000 Grant

In June of 2005 a generous grant of \$50,000 in unrestricted monies was received by ACAT. The anonymous donor made the monies available through the Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund. Some monies were immediately dedicated to renovations (see below).

The board hopes that this will be the first in a series of contributions. The board has identified the need to engage in a substantial ongoing fund raising initiative. In a special report at the Annual Membership Meeting, the board hopes to present the result of work by both the board and the Values and Goals Committee. The committee, which has been guided by board member and marketing/branding specialist Louis Songster, consists of Louis, board chair Hope Martin, Michael Hanko, and Ruth Diamond. This committee took over following up on the work begun at the board retreat last year. We encourage all members to come out for this important meeting. Please stay tuned for updates on the annual meeting schedule and details on the agenda.

#### ACAT Renovation

Thanks to the vision and tenacity of board chair Hope Martin (and a little help from our friends), ACAT was able to make major renovations in the short window between the time the grant was received and the time the space needed to be ready for fall classes. Hope

consulted architect Fusayo Yokota and Tommy Yoshizawa and together they designed a plan for restoring the ceiling and creating new storage space that harmonized with original architect Richard Allon's design. Hope, Fusayo and consulting board members Michael Hanko, Joan Frost and Jane Tomkiewicz also chose to use tinted paint on the walls instead of plain white. The floor, which had been scheduled for a re-waxing, was completely stripped and an oil-based polyurethane was applied – this required moving everything out of the space, which was no small feat. Special thanks to Hope Martin for the unrelenting adherence to the highest possible aesthetic standards, Clare Potter for her initial suggestion and proposals, Tommy for his great work, and Martha Eddy for storage. Also to Christopher Beckstrom, Mark Josefsberg and Maro, the building super, for help in packing, moving, unmoving and unpacking. Thanks to people who normally used the space but were flexible enough to work with us

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**Save the date!!**  
**ACAT Annual Meeting**  
**February 12, 2006**  
**11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**  
 Hands-on exchange, pot luck lunch, Workshop with Barbara Kent, 2006 Barbara Kent Post Grad Announcement, membership meeting featuring a very special presentation from the Board!! Please join us!!

## Notes from the TCP

By Joan Frost

Hello all. I am sitting in a chair with my back to the November sun, wind blowing my hair, and feet resting on the stump of a newly felled tree. I'm running my mind over the events at ACAT of the last six months, remembering them, and now, with pen to paper, I'm wanting to share them with you.

Our Winter term ended with the showing of a video of Marjorie Barstow giving a workshop in Australia. This was followed by Tom Weiser, then in his second term, performing a vocal solo and leading the school through a vocal improvisation. Incidentally, Tom is now ACAT's librarian and is further refining our reference and lending libraries. In the future we will be selling off a number of books that we have determined don't belong in our library. We will also be finishing our transfer of archive and lending videotapes to DVDs.

In April, we admitted Elizabeth Reid, a student of Hope Martin's, and Masumi Kishimoto from Japan, student of Anne-Rene Lawton. The outgoing 9th termers welcomed the opportunity of having new people to work with in the daily classroom setting.

In May, the Barbara Kent Fund sponsored a visit of Jessica Wolf to the entire student body, working with breathing and voice. Here are a few samples from my notes:

Ideally, my voice rides my breath.

Capacity is the result of coordination, not about taking in air.

The lungs adhere closer to the back.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will read about the graduation of Chris, David, Suzannah, Amira, Phyllis, Sofia, and Jenna. With so many leaving (and happy to say, many of them returning to volunteer), we were delighted to take in seven new faces in the fall. We now have Lisa Lutton, who transferred to ACAT from Daria Okugawa's training in Virginia and entered in September as a "3", and six "1s": Rachel Bernsen, who had volunteered at ACAT and ended up studying with Rebecca Tuffey; Helen Hansen, a dancer from Juilliard who studied there and then privately with Jane Kosminsky; Mark Karwan, a student of Mark Josefsberg; Susan Main, student of Kim Jessor; Alejandra Martorell, student of Sigal Bergman; and Joe Morris, student of Cindy Reynolds at the Actor's Studio, volunteer student for Chris Beckstrom, and subsequently student

of Jenna Zabala. Additionally we had a student of mine join our training for three weeks while on leave from Shmuel Nelken's training in Israel and we have a potential candidate for the evening program joining us currently in Kim Jessor's Friday class.

Julia MacKenzie initially intended to re-train with us for one year and then extended her stay at ACAT for an additional year. We very much enjoyed her presence, her generosity towards the other trainees, and her ability to have a "beginner's mind". We wish her all the best in her next life endeavors.

On September 15th we had our third Open House in the past year. We want to thank Stephanie Kalka, Brooke Lieb, and all others who donated their time to make this event a success. It was well-attended and more than half the attendees asked for application packets. We intend to have another Open House in the Spring.

In early October many of us had the opportunity to meet Yehuda Kuperman for the first time as he came and observed classes at ACAT. Yehuda conducted training programs in Switzerland, Germany, and Israel for many years. Please read Joan Hurley's article describing our evening with Yehuda and his showing of his work with Patrick MacDonald, Walter Carrington, and Peter Scott.

And recently, on November 10th, Pedro de Alcantara came to our Thursday all-school time and conducted us in a variety of forms of taking our partners off balance and challenging our startle reflexes. It seemed that the question was: Are our startle reflexes over-active? Pedro delighted us with his dry sense of humor and his unconventional approach. There was a lot of energy in the room. A week later, taking off on Pedro's games, we ended up having eight trainees in a line diagonally across the room sending seven trainees back and forth between them a la windshield wipers. What can a free Alexander mind come up with, especially in an adventurous and well-coordinated group?

## Thank You Larry King

Thanks again to **Larry King**, Deborah Caplan's widower, for his generosity in providing work-study positions through the Deborah Caplan/Alma Frank Scholarship Fund. The Librarian position for the year 2005-2006 will be filled by **Tom Weiser** (see Library News on page 6). Tom has thrown himself into the project and has been doing a great job. The Space Groomer position is being shared by **Miho Nozawa**, who was the groomer last year, and **Masumi Kishimoto** (see bio on page 9). Once again thank you Larry King, Deborah Caplan/Alma Frank Scholarship Fund, Tom, Miho and Masumi!!

## Remember ACAT in Your Estate Planning

**Why not plan now  
to make a gift to ACAT  
in the future?**

Contact ACAT Board member  
Harvey Rosen for a free consultation  
at (212) 873-7098

## Errata - about Hsin-I Chen

Due to an oversight, significant biographical data was left out of the bio section on Hsin-I Chen at the end of her excellent article, "What are you practicing? The Application of the Alexander Technique in Music Playing."

She is currently studying at Teachers College, Columbia University, and is a candidate for the Doctor of Education degree (Ed.D) in College Teaching. She will receive the degree in February 2006.

In order to fulfill the requirements for the degree, Hsin-I is doing a study - her dissertation is about music education and the Alexander Technique. The topic of her dissertation is "Doing Less to Learn More - Stories of Music Learning and Teaching with the Alexander Technique".

## New Membership Opportunity

ACAT has accepted the invitation by The American Health and Fitness Alliance to appear in its Fitness Access: Fitness, Yoga, Dane and Pilates Promotional Coupon Book Program. Our listing and two guest passes will appear in the issue which will reach about 2500 subscribers about the second week of December. Those subscribers will use the passes to attend our lecture demonstration and to receive one free lesson in the Alexander Technique at our studio. All teachers that are interested in participating in this program should contact the office. We will keep a list of interested teachers and give the names out accordingly. Depending on the response of our members, we might also keep a list of teachers who wish to participate, but do not wish to teach lessons at the center.

To visit the website of the host organization please visit [www.health-fitness.org](http://www.health-fitness.org).

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## Hope Martin's Remarks to ACAT June Grads

*To Christopher Beckstrom, David Coben, Sophia Engel, Amira Glaser, Susannah Keebler, Phyllis Jo Kubey and Jenna Zabala:*

It's been a privilege to be part of your training process from your first semester to your last. I've been with you every semester; in fact, I think I met you on the very first day of your training! I feel I have a sense of each of your unique qualities. That uniqueness is your special gift. And the Alexander Technique is one of the rare approaches that asks you to study yourself, asks you to find out who you are and how you tick, what your uniqueness is, how you respond to your world. Now that you're graduating, you are commencing. Graduation is not an end, it's a beginning.

We all probably got into this work because we wanted to improve or get better on some level. Hopefully through this process of self discovery we begin to befriend ourselves. We discover that we don't have to improve. We discover that rather than getting rid of something we can get to know ourselves as we are. We can actually take an interest in ourselves and develop curiosity about the quality of our experience. Then changes happen not because we are fixing ourselves but because we are becoming more of who we really are.

Curiosity about the quality of experience is of great interest for me these days. I'm learning more and more that I don't have to be biased toward the good, nor do I have to reject the so-called bad. The outcome does not have to go the way I want, on my terms, even if that results in more release and more openness. I can be as interested in tightening as in letting go. I can get to know myself.

And that's what I'm encouraging in you as you commence on this path. When you teach a lesson or do exchanges with each other you don't have to pressure yourself to be good or to get it right. Just notice. Be interested in what you notice. Don't be afraid of what you find, don't pull away. Or, if you do, just notice it. Be interested in the quality of pulling away. Make friends with it. Then fluidity, flexibility and gentleness toward yourself develops. And it's much more fun!

And the funny thing is, as you get to know yourself, you get to know others. It's as if by going inside, you get to know humanity. You know how people get stuck, how they push, how they're hard on themselves,

how they can learn to let go - all of it - because you know it in yourself. The good heart you develop toward yourself will determine how you are with your students. To the extent you are at home with yourself, you will be at home with others. And believe me, this world needs people who are at home with themselves. There is much more to being a good teacher than having good hands. As you make friends with yourself, you develop a good heart to go with your good hands.

*...Generous Grant, continued from page 1*

throughout our continually changing plans. Thanks to the board for signing on to this with much less lead-time and preparation than is usually required for a task of this size.

### Record number of Fall Events

October 6: Yehuda Kuperman shared rare film footage of his and others' lessons with Macdonald, Carrington & Scott over a span of years. That was followed by a shorter film on what Yehuda has learned from those three teachers and a discussion. The response from the group of approximately 25 people in attendance was very positive. (See article by Joan Hurley on page 8)

October 15: Using Non-Ordinary Movement to teach the Alexander Technique with Shelley Senter. (See Clare Maxwell's note on page 9.)

October 21, 22, 23: AmSAT board met in ACAT's space, and invited all AmSAT teachers to meet with them at the close of their session. (See blurb and photos on page 9 and 10.)

October 22: Vocal Pedagogue Cornelius Reid's master class (including an ACAT instructor in the presentation) at Rose Studio at Lincoln Center for the benefit of ACAT. (See page 5)

November 4: Wholebody Focusing - Kevin McEvenue (Page 5).

November 10: Pedro de Alcantara was a guest teacher at the TCP. A book release party was held that evening for Pedro's new book, *Befuddled* (See page 14).

November 11: Meade Andrews once again

## Cornelius Reid gives a master class to benefit ACAT and is presented with the first official "Friend of ACAT" title

Following the positive response to the first master class given in June for the benefit of ACAT, Cornelius Reid, vocal pedagogue, generously offered to hold another master class in the same vein. In order to accommodate a larger audience, the class was held at Rose Rehearsal Studio at Lincoln Center. The class, which featured five vocalists - including AT teachers Gary Ramsay, Michael Hanco and Phyllis Kubey - was attended by about 80 people. In this master class, Alexander Technique teacher Marta Curbelo also worked with two of the singers as Cornelius worked with them vocally. In response to the query from audience member/opera singer Grace Bumbry, "What was she [Marta] doing?" Marta briefly explained the Alexander Technique and its congruence with Cornelius's teachings. The Cornelius Reid Master Class furthered two ACAT missions by providing a learning experience to our members (Member Services) and to the public (Public Outreach).

Cornelius donated the proceeds of the class - approximately \$2000 - to ACAT. Cornelius's generosity and support of ACAT was recognized with the presentation of flowers and the unique honor of the first "Friend of ACAT" designation by Board member Harvey Rosen. Special thanks go to Harvey, ACAT board member and husband of Marta Curbelo. Harvey not only assisted in every technical aspect of making the class happen but, it has been learned, was also the original impetus for the project. Over a dinner Harvey and Marta had with Cornelius and his wife, Donna Reid (a former student of Marta's and current ACAT trainee) there was conversation about the compatibility of Cornelius's teaching and the Alexander Technique. Harvey could not help but suggest some kind of collaboration or presentation, which resulted in the two master classes to date and discussions of holding yet another in the future. Donna Reid and Michael Hanco were also indispensable contributors to the organization of the master classes to whom we extend our thanks.

Thanks again to Cornelius, Donna, Harvey, Marta and all the singers who participated so that we could all learn.

## Kevin McEvenue's Wholebody Focusing

On November 4, ACAT offered members of the ACAT community the chance to hear Kevin McEvenue's presentation on Wholebody Focusing: tools for befriending emotionally stuck places that surround seemingly intractable habits.

He has been developing Wholebody Focusing over the past 25 years, utilizing principles from the A.T. and Focusing (developed by philosopher/psychologist Eugene Gendlin). Kevin began his Alexander studies in 1973. He first took lessons with Nahemia Cohen and then with Patrick MacDonald for three years before attending one year of Patrick's training program. He completed his training in Paul and Betty Collin's school (a Carrington based school) in 1979. Kevin was introduced to Focusing in 1983, became a Focusing Trainer in 1989 and a Certifying Coordinator in 1994. Kevin teaches in Canada, England, France, Germany, the Netherlands, the U.S., and Japan. He has written several books, and has produced a CD and a DVD on his work, *Wholebody Focusing*.

Focusing teaches a checking in with the "felt sense" that resides in the body around a particular content or issue in one's life. Listening to and contacting this sense allows the body's wisdom to be heard. Fresh knowing and forward movement can then unfold in often very stuck habitual places.

While both Focusing and Alexander address the possibility of changing habitual response patterns by allowing something new to happen, each has its own emphasis. Focusing helps us to befriend those aspects of ourselves that are wounded, or we consider in some way wrong or bad, by contacting the innate intelligence buried right in the heart of the struggle itself.

Seemingly intractable habits often have an emotional foundation that isn't always accessible through the practice of awareness, inhibition and direction. Until the intelligence of the habit is contacted and appreciated, change can often elude us. As Kevin says, "When a part of me feels loved, it awakens to its own healing."

The event was attended by about 12 teachers and was well received.

## Stretching: the Truth

By Michael Hanko

Let's start with a little experiment: reach your arms up over your head and STRE-E-TCH! Now relax. Feels good, right?

Now let's repeat that with a little awareness. Stretch your arms up again and observe what you are really doing with your whole body. Here's a partial list of what I noticed in myself: extreme tensing in my neck, pulling my head into my torso, pushing my ribs forward and over-arching my lumbar spine, pulling my legs into my hip joints, holding my breath. Why did I think this felt good?

Alexander's directions include allowing the torso to lengthen AND widen, but when we stretch the traditional way, we over-emphasize expansion in one direction at the expense of the other. Probably "to lengthen and widen" was Alexander's shorthand for "to expand in all directions," that is, to maintain a balanced tone in the musculature during movement.

As I stretched this week in and outside of my yoga classes, I have been experimenting with allowing my body to expand in three dimensions during the movement—in other words, to get longer head to tail, wider side to side, and thicker front to back, and all of these IN PROPORTION.

I have discovered that this change in intention allows me to holistically expand in my stretches, rather than to narrow as I lengthen in a particular body part. My previous approach—in fact, an intentional departure from a state of muscular equilibrium—tended to inhibit my breathing, pull me down, narrow my field of awareness, and tighten not only the part I was stretching, but my whole self. Now I find that I truly expand—psycho-physically—and enjoy a deepening of my breath. Whichever approach I choose, the results extend throughout my entire being almost instantaneously. (You may wish to try both types of stretching on, say, a thumb, and observe your own results.)

I can only conclude that the "delicious" feeling of a traditional stretch is yet another example of my debauched kinaesthesia. My new stretches don't really feel like anything at all in the muscles. I have discovered that I can use this awareness to alert me to what I no longer wish for myself: when I "feel the

stretch," I know that this signals expansion in a single direction only, and can return to my 3-dimensional thinking to bring me back to a state of balance, which, although "delicious" in quite a different way, feels oddly enough like nothing at all.

(As with any type of feeling, however, reliance on this type of feeling (or, in fact, not feeling) as a yardstick of good use must be tempered with realization of a particular aspect of debauched kinaesthesia: that our feeling sense tends to detect most readily not on-going conditions, but changes in the status quo. If I habitually hold a stretch—say, I lift my chest—I gradually lose the ability to discern this doing. Conversely, if I lengthen out of a long-standing collapse, to me it may feel as though I am stretching certain muscles which have become used to a state of relative flaccidity.)

The implications of this new awareness on my yoga practice and on my use in general remain to be explored.

### Library News:

Tom Weiser is the new ACAT librarian, a position made possible by the generosity of Larry King. The ACAT lending library boasts several hundred volumes as well as DVDs and video cassettes. Members of ACAT have the privilege of borrowing up to three items at a time. Each item can be borrowed for up to a month. Items may be renewed unless they are on hold for other ACAT members. There is an overdue fee of \$1 per day for each item and a \$65 replacement fee for items never returned.

The ACAT library also has an extensive reference section which contains many journals, articles, pamphlets and papers. These materials may be used at ACAT only. Thanks to the hard work of previous librarians Jenna Zabala and Christopher Beckstrom, much of the material in the library has been entered into the Endnote program on the ACAT computer and can be searched electronically.

Requests for information or materials can be made to the librarian via email: [library@acatnyc.org](mailto:library@acatnyc.org) or in person. The librarian is available most Wednesdays from 2:00-5:00.

## The Benefits of Misuse

by Tom Weiser

I've been observing myself eating as part of my ACAT training. So far, I've become sensitized to my general awareness while eating (I'm usually focused on social interaction or reading, rarely on food), the way in which I pivot at my hips to lean forward towards the food (belly first!), the way in which my head moves toward the food, and the way in which my jaws open to seize the food.

Lately, I've been investigating the moment in which the food enters my mouth. When my awareness is actually on eating (see above) I've noticed that I keep my eyes on my fork or spoon, but that just before it enters my mouth, the conveyed food necessarily disappears from view. At that moment, my eyes lift up and my head tilts back, as if I was trying to open my mouth from my "upper jaw." When I first became aware of the gesture, it seemed somehow familiar. It reminded me of a young chick in a nest demanding to be fed or a baby opening its mouth to nurse.

The recognition of this evocative gesture turned my attention to a developing set of thoughts on the phenomenon of misuse. Previously, I had thought of my misuse as some kind of mistake or laziness on my part. Now I've begun to reconsider that idea.

As the ACAT librarian, I've had the privilege of reading the final papers of the graduating class and then filing those papers among the hundreds of other final papers submitted over the years. I found the experiencing very moving; the papers are quite honest and direct, unflinching portrayals of three years of hard-won growth. Placing the papers in the Black Binders of Posterity was a forceful reminder of the fact that ACAT is a lineage; our tradition is a communication from person to person, extending back to a direct hands-on link to F.M. Alexander.

David Coben's paper offered a provocative thesis: the inhibitory pause is not meant to be a repressive moment in which misuse is exterminated. Rather, it is the moment in which the student is free to examine the nature of the habitual pattern. Habit, to paraphrase Coben, is conscious thought which has been forced below the level of consciousness and therefore become separate and stagnant. The inhibitory pause is best used to re-integrate this separated consciousness. To attempt to stifle the misuse is actually a form of end-gaining and does not honor process fully, Coben asserts.

Reading David's paper re-invigorated a question of mine: if primary control is natural, why is misuse so prevalent? Are we all just stupid? David reminded me that at least in some cases we violate primary control because we believe, however unconsciously, that we're getting a benefit by doing so.

To return to my own "eyes up and head back" pattern: When I perceived it as the sort of gesture an infant would make while commencing to nurse, I realized that "eyes up" would bring the infant's gaze to the mother's face. Nursing is a social activity. It is clearly important for the infant to receive nourishment, but it's equally important for the infant to bond with the mother. The inability of mother and child to bond could lead to abandonment which would be catastrophic for the infant.

The idea that some misuse may stem from a desire for social affiliation reminded me of my current reading in *Man's Supreme Inheritance* in which F.M. Alexander says "The vast majority of wrong habits acquired by children result from their imitation of the imperfect models confronting them." Alexander stresses the need for good early education and particularly the need for good examples of use. But he seems to miss the point that a child that imitates a parent's poor use may be strengthening the bond of affiliation with its parent. Take the case of a boy who imitates the characteristic walk of his father. It's possible that the father may actually feel more comfortable seeing that the child is a "chip off the old block."

Clearly children don't make a conscious choice to imitate poor use. However the choice is not simply a mistake. It has some social intelligence to it.

This thought is a relief: it's a lot more palatable for me to think that I commit misuse because I'm trying to do something worthwhile than that I commit misuse because I'm a bonehead. The study of misuse has more interesting dimensions: What am I trying to get? Is it possible that I can get it in a more advantageous way? If I walk a certain way because as a child I was seeking affiliation with my father, can I now get affiliation with Dad more directly and walk more efficiently? Maybe he'll still like me even if I don't walk just like him.

*continued on page 8*

## Yehuda Kuperman shows films of Macdonald, Carrington & Scott

by Joan Hurley

On the evening of October 6, a group of students, faculty and certified teachers from this center and others gathered at ACAT to visit with Yehuda Kuperman.

He shared his experiences as a student with first generation teachers Patrick Macdonald, Walter Carrington and A.R. Scott and of his own extensive work in Israel.

Over many years, Mr. Kuperman, both alone and with his wife and other AT colleagues, frequented the major teaching centers in Great Britain. He was permitted to tape a number of the lessons that they received and generously brought a selection of the tapes with him to New York. It was quite a gift for the audience of 25 or so to watch these master teachers work while one of the recipients was with us, describing his own impressions and reactions to each lesson, many of which took place decades ago.

It was notable that each of the three teachers, while obviously working to principle in inhibition and direction, had very, very different styles and approaches to hands on work. We saw Patrick Macdonald taking students in and out of a chair with the regularity and effortlessness of a metronome and few, if any words. There were a number of lessons he gave in his "prime" working years and one when he was in his eighties. Mr. Kuperman personally and enthusiastically verified that Mr. Macdonald's lessons deepened over time. He was a major influence on Mr. Kuperman's development.

We viewed Walter Carrington with his hands squarely on the lumbar spine and front lower torso of Mr. Kuperman, who stood directly in front of the camera. While conducting the lesson, Mr. Carrington delivered a fairly full commentary on work related to the abdominal area. The calm clear tone of his writings is easily seen reflected in the benign authoritative presence on the screen.

A.R. Scott, who seems generally less well known here, worked very closely with Mr. Alexander. He seemed a cheery upbeat person and was quite interesting to watch. In lessons his hands move constantly over the body, with the speed and lightness of a butterfly.

It would certainly allay anyone's fear of the stereotypical repetition in the practice of the Alexander Technique to see the variety of approaches in use in these videos. Mr. Kuperman concluded his presentation with scenes of the current day community in Israel, including both formal and informal shots of a workshop conference there. He read some very moving thoughts on this own vision and philosophy related to the technique and its growth. The interest in and appreciation for what he brought continued to spark conversation and thought in the past and future of the Alexander Technique.

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*...Benefits of Misuse, continued from page 7*

In a class earlier this year, Joan Frost theorized that in the end Alexander work was primarily about our thinking. One could say that directions represent thoughts that we send out to our bodies. But thoughts are not just words, they are also the feeling tones that ride on those words. If I think my directions with a repressive, critical tone ("Allow your neck to be free, you jerk!") what kind of effect will I produce?

My investigation of eating, coupled with my reading of David Coben's paper has led me to the conclusion that inhibition and direction might be better approached as a loving exploration ("What are you trying to do? Let me help you accomplish that more easily") rather than as a repressive correction ("Stop making the same stupid mistakes!")

The idea of spending three years studying a technique of sending loving thoughts to my body makes me cringe. I therefore assume that it's probably a worthy endeavor.



## Free Members Workshop on Group Teaching by Clare Maxwell

Shelley Senter (ACAT, 1994) taught a four hour workshop for ACAT teacher members and associate members on her method of teaching group classes. Shelley has found that the complexity of movement experienced in dance structures can actually help rather than hinder the process of learning the Alexander principles. Although she has developed many of her teaching methods working with groups of dancers, she has also taught the principles through dance to groups of people, such as firemen, with no dance training at all, and has found that the expanded awareness that can arise in doing unfamiliar movement patterns can assist many people in having a direct experience of awareness, inhibition, and direction. In Shelley's words, "complexity can launch simplicity."

Shelley shared ways that she has learned to use language to clarify what she means to dancers. An example would be the common term of "core support," which comes from Pilates training, and for many people can mean pulling the upper and lower body tighter together; Shelley prefers to use the term "core emptiness" to imply that when parts of ourselves are allowed to expand away from each other in space – knee joint away from tailbone, or fingers away from back, that internal space is created that can support us in movement. She went on to share a simple floor lesson structure, and then to teach a dance structure from a piece created by Trisha Brown. Everyone, dancers and non-dancers alike, participated. The group broke up into two groups, "watchers" and "dancers", and then we experimented with reversing roles: having the dancers, while dancing, watch the "watchers." Participants noticed a marked change in ease and spaciousness of movement when they were able, through watching the watchers, to inhibit the habitual tension associated with performing.

The content of the discussion among colleagues was very rich, with insightful comments from both experienced and new teachers. The wealth of information that the ACAT community has to offer was in evidence during this workshop, and it was a real pleasure to soak it all in.

...Zito, continued from page 10

founder Judy Liebowitz and by ACAT grad Amy Pell. I continued to take lessons on and off from the time I graduated from Juilliard until I went into training in 1996, studying with Jane Kosminsky (who had been one of my movement teachers at Juilliard) and with Susan Martin Cohen. I still remember very vividly the day (near the end of my first year of actor training) when Judy said "it is clear that this work has struck a deep chord with you, and I wouldn't be surprised if you became a teacher one day."

Following a brief career as an actor, I then became a teacher of voice for actors, eventually teaching at Juilliard. After seven years of teaching at Juilliard, I was finally able to organize my schedule so that I could enter training. My plan had always been to incorporate the Technique directly into my voice teaching. At Juilliard, I am fortunate that the Technique is required for all actors in all years of training, and even more fortunate to have developed such terrific working relationships (and personal friendships) with ACAT grads Carolyn Serota and Jaye Daugherty, who teach the Technique in the Drama Division. With two such fine teachers as these responsible for imparting the principles of the Technique, the job of helping students apply those principles to vocal use is greatly simplified for me — and the experience enhanced for them.

When I graduated from ACAT, I never imagined becoming Chair of the national organization, but I attended AmSAT AGM's regularly (for the record, my work schedule at Juilliard has seen to it that I am always out of town during the ACAT AGM), and found myself speaking up at business meetings. That's how I came to be founding chair of the AmSAT Continuing Education Committee, a position I held for four years as I oversaw the drafting and passage of AmSAT's Continuing Education Requirement. In that context, I had a lot of interaction with the Board, eventually becoming a member-at-large, and as of last June, Chair.

With regard to my experience at ACAT and its relationship to my experience on the Board, I will say three things:

1) first and foremost, ACAT prepared me by providing me with incredible training in the Technique.

2) ACAT's broad-based, faculty training instilled in me an understanding of — and deep respect for — all of the various lineages of the Technique, an essential element in guiding a national organization of teachers.

3) the ACAT faculty's emphasis on communication skills and working with a group helped me refine the skills necessary for group problem-solving, which has helped

## ACAT grad Ralph Zito currently serving as AmSAT chair

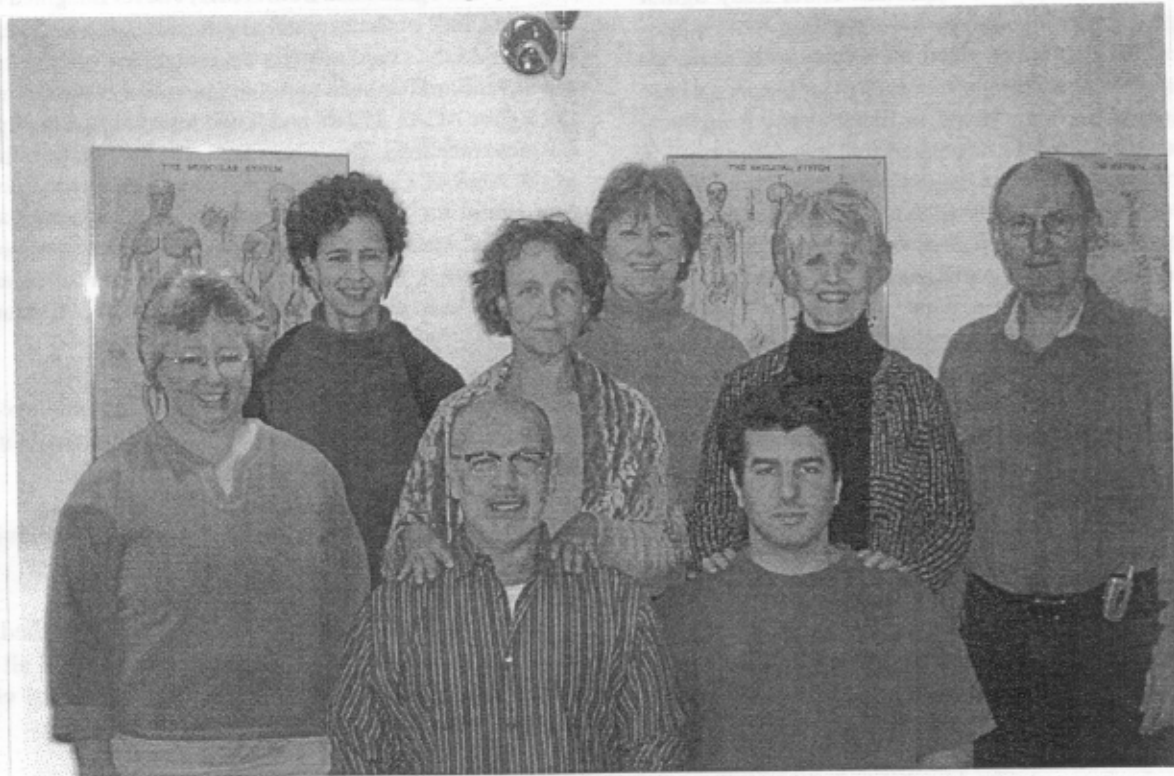
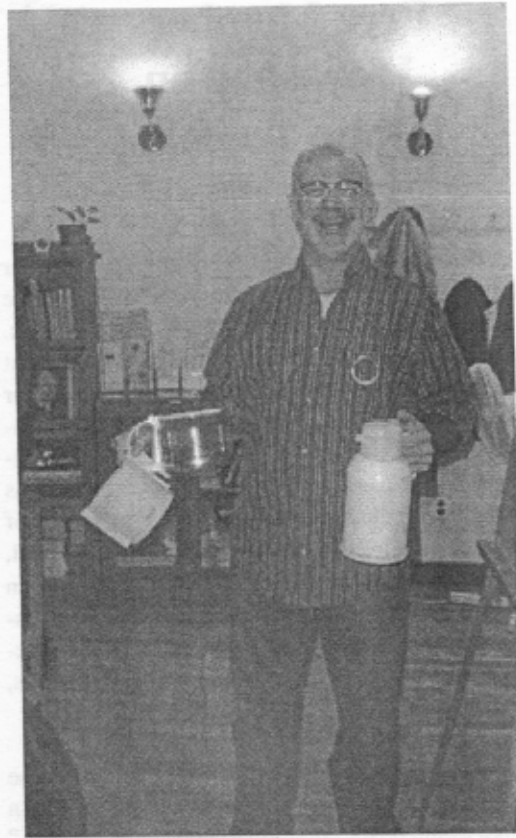
### AmSAT board uses ACAT studio for mid-year planning meeting

Under the leadership of ACAT grad Ralph Zito, the AmSAT board had a mid-year face-to-face planning weekend in NYC on the weekend of October 21. ACAT was pleased to offer its space for this auspicious meeting. ACATNews wishes to recognize and thank Ralph for his past and current service. We asked Ralph to share with readers some of his thoughts about the Alexander Technique, ACAT, and AmSAT

From Ralph Zito:

I graduated from ACAT in June of 1999. I had first been introduced to the Alexander Technique when I was an acting student in the Drama Division of the Juilliard School from 1981-1985, where I was taught by ACAT

...Zito, continued on page 9



The current AmSAT Board, at ACAT (left to right): Clare Creese, AmSAT administrator Indrani Kowlessor Gallagher, Ralph Zito, Fran Robertson, Fay Putnam, JoAnn F. Bibb, Blake Ferger (seated) and Glenn Kenreich

## Cornelius Reid Master Class Photos



Board Member Harvey Rosen presents Friend of ACAT award to Cornelius Reid (seated at piano)



Donna Reid and Cornelius Reid greet opera singer Grace Bumbry (with unidentified person at rear center)

& Thai Yoga Bodywork please visit [www.jennazabala.com](http://www.jennazabala.com).

...and now meet our new trainees...

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Born in Japan, **Masumi Kishimoto** (2nd term) began dancing and acting at the age of 16. In 1999, she began intensive training at the Alvin Ailey school and graduated from the dance certificate program in 2002. She has studied mime and physical comedy under the direction of Gregg Goldston (mime artist) since 2002. Since then she has also choreographed pieces that were a collaboration of dance and mime. In 2004, she discovered the AT when she injured her foot, studying with Anne-Rene Petrarca. She entered training at ACAT in 2005.

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### ACAT grad Kaori Yoshino fills void - produces a new 18" skeleton!

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By the time you receive this edition of ACATNews, we hope to have a sample skeleton in the office for your viewing. Again, many thanks and congratulations to Kaori for taking the initiative and filling this great need of the community.

## Meet ACAT's Recent Grads and New Trainees!

**Christopher Beckstrom** currently seeks to create opportunities to translate his theories into practice and to further explore the process of developing artistry with the Alexander Technique as the essential through line. His work revolves around the question: *What if* an actor had the ability to continuously monitor the balance between tension and relaxation throughout the actor's entire body as the actor moves and performs, how would/could the profession of acting change? He believes that the occasional performer/performance that one considers exceptional can become the everyday expectation as the commitment to conscious awareness by the community expands. Eventually, Chris's dream project of the Alexander Laboratory Theatre will become reality; in the meantime, he is pursuing further graduate theatre studies at New York University.

**David Coben** came to the technique after having had a history of chronic back pain and repetitive strain problems as a musician. He trained in Amsterdam at the training course of Arie Jan Hoorweg and at ACAT. His interests include music (guitar, bass, piano and voice), tai chi, chi kung and zen meditation. He has a private practice in Manhattan and Brooklyn. He is happy to work with students who, due to limited finances, cannot afford lessons with more senior teachers.

**Sofia Engel** writes, "Graduating from ACAT in June 2005 was a bitter-sweet moment for me. Bitter because a three year long enriching period of time was coming to an end and sweet because that moment meant for me the fulfillment of a deep burning desire: to learn, grow and share my knowledge through being an Alexander Technique teacher. I know that I am going to be a student of this work for the rest of my life and that I will always be as thrilled as I am today to meet through my work people from different walks of life and having different reasons why they come for lessons in this Technique. I know that every lesson that I will give will add another dose of gratitude on my part that I became part of the community of the Alexander Technique teachers."

**Amira Glaser** graduated from ACAT in June of 2005. She is building her private practice in both Astoria, Queens and Manhattan. She is also teaching a weekly group class at Gilda's Club in Downtown Manhattan. Amira would love the opportunity to assist other teachers in their group classes or private sessions, primarily as an assistant teacher, but also, if needed, as a skilled administrator. Amira has an extensive background in the performing arts, and is very interested in working with the general

public and people who are dealing with issues of pain or discomfort; her desire is to bring her skills into a group practice with others involved in integrative healing or into a college or university setting. She would greatly appreciate any referrals! She can be reached at 646.246.7983 or [lessons@amiraglaser.com](mailto:lessons@amiraglaser.com).

**Susannah Keebler** is from Dallas, TX where she began studying dance as a child. She attended and received a B.A. in dance from Bennington College in Vermont and moved to New York soon after. She became interested in the AT through her interest in dance and various other practices. Susannah was certified by ACAT this year and is building her practice in Brooklyn and Manhattan.

**Phyllis Kubey** tells us, "I am so proud to be a teacher of the Alexander Technique and a part of the ACAT and larger Alexander community. I began my teaching practice in summer of 2005 and am thrilled to be working with a lovely group of students of all different ages and professions. I continue to learn and grow with each lesson taught and with each passing day as I continue to enjoy my singing, my tax practice, and most of all my wonderful life mate, Charlie - all areas, I believe, enhanced by my Alexander work. Life is very full and rich!"

**Jenna Zabala** is a Certified Teacher of the Alexander Technique and a Certified Thai Yoga Bodyworker. Jenna recently completed training at ACAT. She earned her certification in Thai Bodywork with renowned instructor Jonas Westring. Jenna earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in Dance from the City College of New York, and her work as a performer has been dramatically shaped by the Alexander Technique.

Jenna works with her students to uncover the essence of mind and body balance. She gently yet powerfully assists others in using the Alexander Technique to enhance wellness, health and happiness. In particular, Jenna is passionately committed to helping her students feel comfortable in their bodies and restore harmony to their lives.

Her expertise in both the Alexander Technique and Thai Yoga gives her a unique approach to both disciplines; her highly developed awareness of energy lines that run through the body and her mindfulness toward proper body alignment work synergistically to heighten the effectiveness of these complementary disciplines. If you would like to learn more about the Alexander Technique

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