Explores a moment in time - conversations of the National Guard hours before arriving at Kent State University... activities of students already at Kent State University... the moment they meet face to face on May 4, 1970... framed in the trial years later.

Friday, March 19 - 8:00 pm curtain
Saturday, March 20 - 8:00 pm curtain
Sunday, March 21 - 2:00 pm curtain

B005 Music and Speech Building
BLANKET HILL
written & directed by Kay Cosgriff

Cast

Kent State Students:
Allyson Hammersley
Sarah Hart
Shannon Metelko
Kat Palcsak
Lindsey Ryb

The People:
Kayla McDonald
Erin McManus

National Guard:
John Chiara
Brandon George
John Traina

Attorneys:
Sarah Coon
Ashley Foster

Judge:
Nathan Emerine

Crew

Scenic Designer:
Mitch Domer

Lighting Designer:
Sean Jeffries

Scenic Artists:
Daniela A. Drăghici
Megan Mingus

Master Electricians:
Nathan Emerine
Darren P. Lorenzi, Jr.

Photographer:
Sarah Scanes

Light Board Operator:
Kayla McDonald

^Denotes member of Alpha Psi Omega
John Chiara (Guardsman) - Hello and welcome to the Blanket Hill. This is John’s second performance here at Kent State University. He is 22 and finishing up his last year at KSU. He plays guardsmen #3 (Unit Leader). He is proud to be a part of this production and privileged being directed under Kay Cosgriff. He hopes you enjoy your time here and being a part of history. Sit back, relax, and enjoy the show.

Sarah Coon^ (Plaintiff) - Sarah is so thankful to be involved in the last show in B005! She was seen recently as “Alicia” in Nigro x 3. Previous favorite roles include “Adelaide” in Guys and Dolls, “Scout” in To Kill a Mockingbird, and “Stage Manager” in Our Town at Copley High School. Her previous work at Kent included assistant directing The Loveliest Afternoon of the Year and Picasso at the Lapin Agile, in which she also played a cameo role. She’s currently directing a project for Fringe Fest, and is looking forward to even more directing and acting opportunities in the coming months. She would like to thank her family and Jason for their endless support, and the cast for keeping things interesting. “Forgiveness does not change the past, but it does enlarge the future.”

Daniela A. Drăghici^ (Scenic Artist) - Daniela’s efforts as scenic artist have been seen in 14, Three Sisters, Urinetown and Lysistrata. She will conclude her academic career with a BFA from Kent State University in May 2010. She has served as Scenic Charge Artist for Oklahoma!, Jane Eyre, the Musical, A New Brain, News Blues: Dance 2009 and Broken Voices: Dance 2008. She was Assistant Scenic Designer on Rent. Her prop work was seen in Three Sisters, Trojan Women and Caucasian Chalk Circle. Before leaving Kent, however, as Scenic Designer, she will actualize the world of Play 13, of The Chester Cycle Plays, which will be performed at Victoria College, University of Toronto this spring. She is very pleased to be working on Blanket Hill. She would like to thank Kay for the opportunity to work on the show, Megan for keeping track of the many lists in her life, and Darren for being her brother. ‘You can choose your friends, but you can’t choose your family.’

Nathan Emerine (Judge and Master Electrician) - Nathan has been involved in theatre since summer of 2002, mainly focusing on the technical aspect. His role as JUDGE in Blanket Hill is his second on-stage endeavor at the collegiate level. He is glad to be working with such a wonderful group of people on this production. He would like to thank each and every one of the audience members for coming out to the show. To the cast and crew: BREAK A LEG!!!

Ashley Foster (Defense) - Blanket Hill is not only Ashley’s first show at Kent State University, but her first and last appearance in B005. Her most recent performances include, “Leisl” in The Sound of Music, “Miss Speare” in Maid to Order, and “Ronnette” in Little Shop of Horrors. She looks forward to local as well as regional credits as she continues to do what she loves – perform! Her achievements to date are the direct result of her family, friends and boyfriend. She thanks them for their never ending support and love. Her performance in Blanket Hill is dedicated to her Grandfather, Howard North. She is honored to be part of a show that portrays such an important event in America’s history, and wants to thank the cast and crew for an unforgettable experience. Ashley hopes that after leaving today’s performance, everyone in the audience will truly realize that May 4th, 1970 was a humanizing and tragic day that changed our nation forever.
Brandon George (Guardsmen) - This is Brandon’s first show here at Kent State. He has performed in numerous shows at Cuyahoga Community College where he attended before transferring here, including roles as Creon in The Burial at Thebes, The Player in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, and Orin Scrivello in Little Shop of Horrors. He is proud to be a part of this show and is proud to be performing with this cast in such a powerful show.

Allyson Hammersley (Student) – Allyson is in her fourth year as a theatre student at KSU. She has performed in BOOS shows such as: The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant and “Am I blue?” In high school she performed in A Midsummer Night’s Dream as Robin Starveling, The Perils of Lulu, and Harvey as Mrs. Chumley. She loves acting because it something that is creative, artistic and beautiful. She feels like that whenever she performs and it’s a great feeling. She hopes that her passion for theatre will help her in the future as a career. She loves performing in front of people because she wants to show them her artistic abilities in order to put a smile on their faces.

Sarah Hart (Student) – Sarah is a freshman, is proud to be making her theatrical debut here at Kent State University with the production of Blanket Hill. Although fairly new to the stage, Sarah has been involved in commercial and film productions since she was 12. Growing up in the Baltimore/DC area Sarah has had the opportunity to work on commercial productions such as The Silver Diner, WETA, Cox Communications, and Sylvan Learning Center. She has also been featured on an episode of the HBO series “The Wire” and had the privilege to land a principal role in the full length independent film An American Affair, starring Noah Wyle and Gretchen Mol. Apart from her love for the film industry and her new love of the stage, she stays active here at KSU by being a member of Delta Gamma Fraternity and a member of the Fashion Student Organization. Sarah would like to thank her Mom (Tracy), Dad (Ted) little brother (Alex), Grandma and the rest of her family and friends for all their support! Enjoy the show!

Sean Jeffries (Lighting Designer) - Sean is a first year graduate student from Frostburg State University, Frostburg, Maryland. He is working towards an MFA in Design Technology/Lighting. He spends his summers at Seagle Music Colony, Schroon Lake, New York as part of technical team responsible for all aspects of production. He has served as Event Electrician for John Farr Lighting in Washington D.C. Sean also spearheaded the winter tours for Windwood Productions national tours for four years. Some of his lighting designs include A Raisin in the Sun, Eurydice, The Magic Flute, The Fantasticks, Hansel and Gretel, You’re A Good Man Charlie Brown, Thoughts of a Colored Man on a Day When the Sun Would Not Set, and Eurydice, Once in Paris, Sleep Deprived and Out of Control! Here at Kent State University, his Lighting Design was seen in Wright Curtis for 14 and will again be seen KDE. Additionally, he was Assistant Lighting Designer for Oklahoma!, Master Electrician for Dancing on a Dime. Although challenged by the snow and cold, he does not consider them to be deterrent. But as he continues to pursue a career in lighting design here at KSU, he does so miss those buckets of crab!!
Kayla McDonald^ (The People and Light Board Operator) - Kayla, a sophomore theatre major, is proud to be performing in her third show at KSU and to be a part of the B005's final show. She has recently been seen as 'Lil Bit' in How I Learned to Drive (Kent State University), 'Judy' in A Chorus Line (Lorain Palace Civic Theatre), 'Tsar Alexis' in Ubu Roi (Kent State University), as well as in many other venues including The Beck Center of The Arts and Huntington Playhouse. Later this year, Kayla will be seen in the other student production at Kent State, The Dead Bee Conspiracy, and in Toronto, Canada in Play 13 of The Chester Play Cycles. Kayla would like to thank everyone involved for working so hard and being so accepting to her late rejoining of the cast. When not on stage, Kayla also competes in the upper levels with the Kent State Equestrian Team. She would like to thank her family (both real and faux) for all the support, especially lately!

Erin McManus^ (The People) - Erin is a junior BA Theatre Studies major. Past credits include Oklahoma!, Six Characters in Search of an Author, She Loves Me, Twelfth Night and Three Sisters. Also, a special thank you to Kay for allowing her to be part of this show! Thank you to this lovely cast for making this show so much fun!

Shannon Metelko (Student) - Shannon is a sophomore theatre major, couldn't be more excited to be in her first production at Kent State. Although it's bittersweet being involved with her first and last production in the B00, she is very thankful for this great opportunity. Shannon is also avidly involved with the student radio station, Black Squirrel Radio, and the dance department-having just preformed in the Student Dance Festival last weekend. She'd like to give a shout out to her friends and family for all their support.

Megan Mingus^ (Scenic Artist) - Megan has served as Scenic Charge Artist for 14, and will be doing so for Grapes of Wrath, as well. She was Assistant Scenic Charge Artist on Jane Eyre, and her efforts as scenic artist have been seen in Wonderful Town, A New Brain, Three Sisters, Twelfth Night, Rent, and Oklahoma! She has served as Stage Manager on Dance 2009: Dancing on a Dime and SDF 2010, as well as Assistant Stage Manager on SDF 2009 and KDE 2009. She feels honored to be working on Blanket Hill. She would like to thank Kay for giving her this opportunity, and Daniela for leading her and guiding her throughout her days here at Kent.

Kat Palcsak (Student) - Kat is proud to be a part of the last show to ever take place in "the B00"! Recent Kent State student productions include The Dutchman as Lula, Watermelon Boats as Kitty, and Trojan Women as Hecuba. During her college career she also appeared in Holes as The Warden, at The Karamu House in Cleveland. Kat is in her final semester here at Kent and is looking forward to joining the theatre force in "the real world". She is interested in acting and directing and plans to attend graduate school in the future to help purse her goals. Kat would like to thank her friends and family, mentors, cast, crew, the bell, audience...everyone! --They all know why they deserve her gratitude! Finally farewell to "the B00"...this is a great piece to say good bye to it with!
Lindsey Ryb (Student) – Lindsey is proud to be a part of such a wonderful, touching production. Past credits include Six Characters in search of an Author, Ursula in Bye Bye Birdie, Pippin, Cabaret and many more. Lindsey has worked for organizations such as Playmakers Youth Theatre and The Talent Group – her dream is to one day run her own Youth Theatre. She is currently finishing up her junior year as a theatre major and is excited to see what the future may bring. A big thank you to the cast, crew, director, family and friends for all that they do! “If you are not living on the edge, you are taking up too much space.”

Sara Scanes - Sarah is a Visual Journalism student at Kent State. She became a part of this project while documenting the final show in the BOOS for a photography class. She has never been in a show here at KSU, but was active in theater in high school. As a part of student media, she helps manage the Daily Kent Stater's Web site as the Multimedia editor of KentWired.com. Currently, the only thing in her fridge is hummus.

John Traina (Guardsman) – John is “home grown”. Originally from Wellsville, Ohio he began his journey in the world of theatre very early on. His first show was “Mickey Mouse” the musical. He played the role of Mickey. The decision was made – he wanted to be an actor. As a theatre major at Kent State University, he exposed the world of struggling writers in New York City in “Downtown”. It was produced here in the BOO. John accepted the role of an Ohio National Guardsman eagerly and made it his own in Blanket Hill. Although this will not be his last show, he is very glad to be in the production that retires the BOO. He has learned when you want to fight for something you believe in – “simply sit down and sing”. He wants to thank all those who have helped it do just that as especially those that do it with him – “simply sit down....and sing”.
Director's Notes:

I was not aware of the Kent State Shootings until my roommate mentioned the event as walked past the monument on our way to the Kiva. As she began talking, pointing to Taylor, I looked over the hill and out across the commons and wondered why no one has written this story. It needs to be a play. People had given commentary and there was a series of monologues told about the Four but not a play. A story about the men in the Ohio National Guard who were on their way to Kent and the students who were already at Kent - both just starting their day. Did they know about the government's attitude regarding demonstrations or the University's position the day of the shootings... or how the parents even found out their child was dead. I wanted to make it personal. Jewish traditions are steeped deeply within the culture but why something is done can vary. There are several reasons given why rocks are placed on headstone when the gravesite is visited, the one I embrace and share with you is the rock represents a milestone. We remember. Blanket Hill began as a classroom project in Dr. Bednerik's class. It had several staged readings. Every time it was read, it was clear that people had very strong opinions. Certain events made it personal for me. I present them to you here tonight. Dr. Bednerik thank you for seeing something in me I did not even know was there.

Special Thanks

Heroes come into your life at different times for different reasons but it always seems right at the exact note they are needed - my heroes are Steve Meshenberg, Darren Lorenzi, Daniela Drăghici, Jessie Black, Jim Koehnle, Nate Emerine and Vickie Weaver.

The Company of Blanket Hill would like to thank Charles Richie, Roundtable, and the Department of Theatre and Dance for producing Student Theatre Festival and all the members of the committee for choosing "Blanket Hill". They would also like to thank Marya for taking the time to be Blanket Hill's project advisor.

This one is for you George!

All they did was sit down and sing.
Kay Cosgriff (Director) - Chicago has been home since leaving Kent State University several years ago. While at Kent, she was Claude Purdy’s Assistant Director for Spunk! at the Cleveland Playhouse, Eric Barr’s for Inherit the Wind at Porthouse and Alan Benson’s for Antigone at Wright Curtis Theatre. She participated in the American College Theatre Festival for both her direction of True Believers as the playwright for Window Chit Chat. She secured an internship at Steppenwolf and left for Chicago. Once there, she directed Boover Boys (Jeff nominated), Bent, Zastrozzi - The Master of Discipline and Bleacher Bums all at the Organic Theatre. Mass, at the Blue Rider Theatre garnered her “An After Dark Award”. The French government’s Award for Excellence was financial - greatly appreciated, and given to her for the staging of Le Petite Luis the production was then taken to Scotland for Fringe Festival. Her work has also been seen at Karamu, Cleveland Public Theatre, Ohio Theatre Alliance Festivals, St. Edward and Magnificat High School, International Thespian Festivals, Dublin Fest, Cain Park, Greenbrier Theatre, The Royal George Theatre and Naked Angels. She is back at Kent to finish a degree. She has applied to graduate schools on the east coast which is home - New York City. Her MFA will be in playwriting. Always a free spirit in most decision making, she will continue directorial observations independently. JoAnne Akalaitis, founder of Mabou Mines and a five time Obie winner will be her first. Kay has very fond memories of Theatre Kent as well as Porthouse, but she wants to especially thank Robert Wolin and Stephen Zapytowski for their patience. Through drafting and design classes, they introduced her to USITT standards – she can not only read a ground plan but understands the timelines involved in technical theatre... Suzie Campbell for guiding her through the collaborative process with Costume Designer and Kathy Cummings for doing the same as a Lighting Designer. Dr. Rosemarie Bank, who not only challenged her ability to absorb information but who introduced her to numerous theatrical arenas from Aristophanes to Dada - how they worked then and if done properly - still work today. Dr. Marya Bednerik who introduced her to playwriting. “A Chorus Line” is her favorite musical directorial credit. The director asks the dancers – “What are you going to do when you can’t dance anymore?” Kay knows. She would also like to thank the Master Director. She understands what she has is a gift and may not always be hers to share. For now it is and she thanks Him for it.

Kay Cosgriff is a member of SDC (The Stage Directors and Choreographers)