

# NEWS RELEASE



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## *ASF Awards Winners of Young Playwrights Competition*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

MONTGOMERY, AL (Friday, May 9, 2008) This Saturday, May 9, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival awarded the top ten finalists of their 2008 Young Southern Writers' Project Playwriting Competition. The competition exists to encourage literacy, creativity and advocacy for theatre by reading plays submitted by students from across Alabama and the southeast. Ten finalists were honored, with third place going to Kasey Elizabeth Jowers from Hoover High School in Hoover, Alabama for her play *The Water Closet*, second place to Genevieve Murdick of Murphy High School in Mobile, Alabama for her play *Lifting Horses*, and first place to Mary Margaret Locker of Florence High School in Florence, Alabama for her play *When Leopold Was King*.

The keynote speaker at the ceremony was actor and playwright James Bowen (currently starring in ASF's world premiere *Rocket City* and formerly of the cast of *Crowns*) and attended a Theatre in the Mind lecture before seeing a performance of *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

James Bowen has performed in over forty Equity productions since appearing in *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* in 1999 (directed by ASF's Geoffrey Sherman). In Detroit, where he makes his home, he has received numerous critics' awards and citations for his work in *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Plowshares Theatre), *Master Harold and the Boys* (Plant Ant Theatre), *Driving Miss Daisy* (Meadow Brook Theatre), *74 Georgia Avenue* (Jewish Ensemble Theatre), and Janet Choe's *How High the Moon* (Plowshares Theatre). Bowen was born and raised near Montgomery, Alabama.

In the search for the best plays, ASF artistic staff members read each work and gave feedback to each student that enters a play in the competition. The 100 plus submissions came from as all across the state, ranging from Florence, Hoover, Huntsville and Mobile, Alabama. The winning plays will be read in May of 2009 year at the Southern Writers' Project Festival of New Plays as well as at Barnes and Noble Bookstores in Montgomery, Birmingham and Mobile. For more information, please call (334) 271 – 5326. Please see the attached fact sheet for a list of finalists.

*The Alabama Shakespeare Festival is among the largest Shakespeare theatres in the world. Designated as The State Theatre of Alabama, ASF has been located in Montgomery since 1985 when it moved from Anniston as a result of Mr. and Mrs. Wynton M. Blount's gift of a performing arts complex set in the 250-acre Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park.*

*This program/project has been made possible by grants from the Alabama State Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts.*

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## Fact Sheet

### *2008 Young Southern Writers' Project Competition Awards Ceremony*

2007-2008 Season

Produced by the Alabama Shakespeare Festival

**Date:** May 10, 2008 at 10:30 AM

**Location:** The Octagon Theatre at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

**Website:** <http://www.asfeducation.com/playwrights/index.html>

<b>Finalists:</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Play title</b>	<b>School</b>
	Emily Jones	<i>Contempt of Court</i>	Florence High School, Florence, AL
	Andrew W. Husted	<i>Play it Real Pretty</i>	Florence High School, Florence, AL
	Mary Margaret Locker	<i>When Leopold Was King</i>	Florence High School, Florence, AL
	Ryan Groch	<i>The Smiths</i>	Florence High School, Florence, AL
	Katherine Corrigan	<i>Preconception</i>	Hoover High School, Hoover, AL
	Amanda Lynn Evans	<i>All For the Money</i>	Hoover High School, Hoover, AL
	Kasey Elizabeth Jowers	<i>The Water Closet</i>	Hoover High School, Hoover, AL
	Michael Cash	<i>Dysfunction</i>	Hoover High School, Hoover, AL
	Andrew Stahlman	<i>Dream Date</i>	Huntsville High School, Huntsville, AL
	Genevieve Murdick	<i>Lifting Horses</i>	Murphy High School, Mobile, AL

**Synopsis:** The Young Southern Writers' Project accepts submissions from high school students from all over the southeast. The plays are read and judges on their creativity and quality. Ten finalists and three winners are selected each year and the winning plays are read the at the Southern Writers' Project Festival of New Plays the following year, as well as at Barnes and Nobles locations across the state of Alabama.