

Remembering a legacy: Dedicating the Angelo Zuccolo Little Theatre

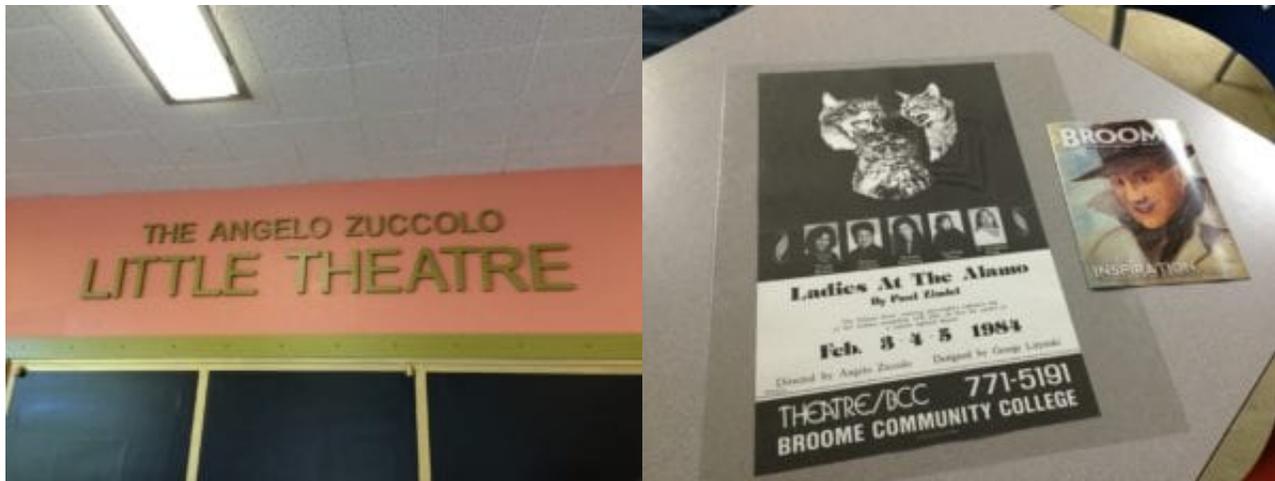
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As Marielle and Angelique Zuccolo lifted the black veil, their father's face shone forth – cast in bronze.

The bust of late Professor Angelo Zuccolo will eventually take a position at the back of the theater he helped shaped – and which now bears his name.

On Friday, May 8, friends, family members and colleagues commemorated the renaming of the Little Theatre as the Angelo Zuccolo Little Theatre and celebrated the life of the popular professor, who died in May 2013 at the age of 72. The event kicked off [Performing Arts Week](#), and coincided with the opening night performance of "Flights of Fancy: Four Plays by David Ives."



"Angelo scripted everything. Angelo scripted his own funeral," said Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer Francis Battisti, who started his SUNY Broome career in 1971, on the same day as Zuccolo. They became close friends, sharing a house and engaging in public speaking gigs together.

In a way, Battisti reflected, Zuccolo also scripted Friday's event – attended by his family, seated together at a long table in the Dining Hall, as well as long-time colleagues and students from over the course of his 30-year career.

Performing Arts Department Chair Katherine Bacon remembered performing in a play – “Chocolate Cokes,” written by playwright Bernard Mendillo, who is also Angelo's relative – across from Zuccolo and his wife.

“I didn't learn an Italian curse word until I was in ‘Chocolate Cokes,’” she joked.

Angelo's daughters – Marielle (LAAA '02) and Angelique (LAAA '98) remembered growing up around the Little Theatre – and being banished from the stage after accidentally kicking over a bucket of carnations during the opening night of *Finnegan's Wake*.

“Over the years, we saw our dad at home and we saw him at work. He was authentically consistent,” Angelique said. “Work was never work; it was play. He was always looking forward to the next show he would be doing.”

During the event, Battisti presented Zuccolo's daughters with a painting of their father. Created by SUNY Broome student Tess Zizak, the painting was featured as the cover of the Spring 2015 edition of *Broome* magazine.

The dedication of the theater in Zuccolo's memory and the creation of the bust came about through the support of the College community. Professor Jim Gormley, who knew Zuccolo for more than 15 years and performed in some of his works, initiated a petition to rename the theater, winning support of the College's Board of Trustees in July 2014. The sculpture in turn was created through the donations of colleagues and friends.

Sculptor John Giannotti, a retired Rutgers University art professor, never met Zuccolo in person, but made his acquaintance through 50 photographs and the memories his loved ones shared.

“His face was equally comfortable doing slapstick or Hamlet,” he said. “His expressive face comes through.”

“John, Angelo would approve,” Battisti said of the sculpture.

Eleven years ago, a video camera recorded Professor Zuccolo’s musing about the theater’s more otherworldly denizens.

“If you pass away, you go back to the theater you performed in as a ghost,” he said. SUNY Broome’s theater had

20 such ghosts, including two dogs and a horse who also performed on stage.

Now, Professor Zuccolo has joined the ranks of theater ghosts – and his image will reside in the place he helped shape, inspiring future generations of theatrical Hornets to achieve excellence.

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