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Reading
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footlights!

18



Genesis Theatre's guide to the Reading stage

March 2009

FREE for theatre lovers!



2009 Season
Information

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Order Genesis tickets 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at genesiustheatre.org



Location

153 North 10th Street
(Corner of 10th &
Walnut)
Reading, PA.

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 6564
Wyomising, PA 19610

Tickets: 610-373-9500 Office: 610-371-8151

genesisiustheatre.org email: genesisiustheatre@verizon.net

Our Founders

Founded in 1971 by Jane Simmon Miller and Michael O'Flaherty, Genesisius Theatre is named after Saint Genesisius, Patron Saint of Actors.

Our Vision

The vision of Genesisius Theatre is to be the premier focal point for new and novel experiences in the performing arts.

Our Mission

We believe that the best theater is an experience of living and feeling, changing and growing, challenging and becoming. We trust in the power of this inspiring and dynamic medium to transform the artists who create it, the audiences who enjoy it, and the patrons who support it. We exist to produce and present entertainment in all phases of the performing arts that entertains audiences, educates and trains artists, nurtures emerging art, and enriches the cultural community for people of all ages in Berks County.

Board Of Directors

President: Abbe Dillon
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Footlights Editor: Jamie Howard



...from the Founder – Michael O'Flaherty

In Search of Genesisius' Alums

...Or...

Desperately Seeking Alumni

Whenever I mention to people that I've written a musical (which of course I do without any prompting whatever)...and they ask me what it's about...and I tell them it's about this amazing community theatre and the equally amazing mentor I found there...invariably their immediate reply is, "Ohmigod, I got started at a place just like that", at which point they go off into a rambling story of their humble beginnings, with all sorts of humorous, horrifying, and heartwarming anecdotes. It's always the same. It doesn't matter if the person is a Broadway star or an intern, the experience is universal.

This is, of course, what we were hoping for when we wrote "Genesisius – a New Musical", but it's a sort of validation to hear how many folks from all parts of the world have experienced the same craziness that we here at Genesisius experience every day.

But, it's not just the shared experience that is striking to me. It's the depth of emotion that is conjured up by these conversations. They don't just remember their days at their hometown or college theatre groups, they get all misty-eyed recalling those halcyon days when the only reason to be there was for the pure fun of it. There was no paycheck to worry about, no professional reputation on the line – all of the things that change when one moves from "community" to "professional".

So, it has occurred to me that all of the hundreds of people who have worked over the years at Genesisius must be out there, scattered all across the country, feeling those same emotions. Some of them were "Jane's kids", who had the good fortune to be touched by her particular charisma. Many more had wonderful experiences with all the brilliant talents that followed in Jane's footsteps. But they all had the good luck to know about the Genesisius magic. But, where are they?

Just like any family, or group of friends, it's easy to lose touch. You don't mean to, it just happens.

Well, now seems like a good time to reach out and try to find all of our alumni. Bring them back into the fold.

Two of our new initiatives are aiming to do just that. The first is a terrific new website, ourcommunitytheater.com, which, while not exclusively for Genesisius Theatre, is an attempt to gather together all the community theatre "geeks" out there who might have a story to tell. So far the response has been terrific, but we need everyone's input. Go on the site...tell your story... no matter how silly it may seem to you, it just might resonate with someone else out there. And then get all your friends to join in the fun. E-mail everyone you know, all across the globe, who may have a theatrical memory to share. You'll be surprised how similar their experiences, and emotions, are to yours.

The second part of this outreach program is our intention to start up a Genesisius Theatre Alumni Association.

(continued on page 11)

2009 Genesis Main Stage Productions

The Great American Trailer Park Musical - March 20-29

A deliciously dirty new musical about agoraphobia, adultery, '80s nostalgia, spray cheese, road kill, hysterical pregnancy, a broken electric chair, kleptomania, strippers, flan and disco. It's everything a musical should be!

1776 - May 15-25

You'll be on the edge of your seat as our nation's founding fathers fight for our freedom and draft the Declaration of Independence before your very eyes. It's a riveting musical filled with history, humor and, of course, romance.

Hair - July 24-Aug 2

It was the dawning of the Age of Aquarius and Apocalypse. The Flower Power generation takes over the theater in a way no other musical can!

A Chorus Line - September 11-20

17 Broadway Dancers put themselves on the line for their dream, but only 8 of them will make it. **A Chorus Line** - Do it for the Love!

The Wedding Singer - November 13-22

You are cordially invited to fall in love with one of the funniest romantic comedies of the year! Loads of 1980s nostalgia.

2009 Genesis Off Broadway Series

And The Beat Goes On: A 1960's Pop Music Cabaret - April 3-5

The Mamas and Papas, The Association, The Monkees, The Strawberry Alarm Clock and Simon and Garfunkel are just a few of the pop music artists featured in this revue.

The Laramie Project - April 17-26

More than a story about the murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard, "The Laramie Project" tells the story of the life of the town of Laramie after the murder in 1998.

The Handsomest Man in America - August 7-9

The war-torn United States of the 1860s takes the stage in a thrilling retelling of actor John Wilkes Booth's plot to assassinate Abraham Lincoln. The debut production of Wilson High School graduate and Genesis alum Sam Lupowitz's original musical.

Catch 22 - October 1-9

Catch 22 is the tale of a small group of flyers in the Mediterranean in 1944. There are winners and losers, opportunists and survivors.

2009 Genesis Special Events

Really Rosie - June 18-21

A musical based on Maurice Sendak's books. Sendak based the story on a demonstrative little girl who used to sing and dance on the stoop of her building.

CHESS: In Concert at the Reading Museum - August TBD

Using as a metaphor the world of international chess, Tim Rice originally conceived to write a musical about how the Cold War affected the lives of all those it touched.

The Belsnickel Scrooge - December 11-19

It's an all new Berks County Holiday Tradition like Christmas Village, The Reading Christmas Parade or Berks Ballet Theatre's rendition of The Nutcracker. Have you and your entire family ring in the holidays with this Christmas classic, with a Pennsylvania Dutch twist!

Genesis Theatre Tickets

Subscription Orders

Series	Price	Qty	Subtotal	Series	Price	Qty	Subtotal	Grand Total
Main Stage Season	\$100			Off Broadway Season	\$75			

Main Stage Musicals

Performance	Date	Regular Price	Qty	Regular Subtotal	Senior Price	Qty	Senior Subtotal	Student Price	Qty	Student Subtotal	Grand Total
Trailer Park		\$25			\$20			\$15			
1776		\$25			\$20			\$15			
Hair		\$25			\$20			\$15			
Chorus Line		\$25			\$20			\$15			
Wedding Singer		\$25			\$20			\$15			

Off Broadway Series

Performance	Date	Regular Price	Qty	Regular Subtotal	Senior Price	Qty	Senior Subtotal	Student Price	Qty	Student Subtotal	Grand Total
Beat Goes On		\$15			\$15			\$15			
Laramie Project		\$15			\$15			\$15			
Handsomest		\$15			\$15			\$15			
Catch 22		\$15			\$15			\$15			

Special Events

Performance	Date	Regular Price	Qty	Regular Subtotal	Senior Price	Qty	Senior Subtotal	Student Price	Qty	Student Subtotal	Grand Total
Really Rosie		\$15			\$15			\$15			
Chess		\$40			\$40			\$40			
Belsnickel		\$25			\$20			\$15			

Total Ticket Cost = \$ _____

Tax-deductible Contribution + \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE = \$ _____

Name _____

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City/ST/Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Visa Mastercard AmEx Cash Check or money order payable to *Genesis Theatre*

Card number _____ Expiration date _____

Name as it appears on card _____

Date Received _____ By _____ (SM, Director or Board Member)

Date Processed _____ By _____ Order Number _____

Special Instructions / Other Information _____

Mail order form and check to: Genesis Theatre, P.O. Box 6564, Wyomissing, PA 19610 — or order online at genesiustheatre.org
Cost of previously purchased show can be deducted from season ticket price.

Genesisius Theatre Presents

The Great *American* **TRAILER PARK** *Musical*

Music and Lyrics by

David Nehls

Book by

Betsy Kelso

Directed by L J Fecho

Assistant Director:

James Haggerty

Choreographer:

Gabrielle Keuscher (assisted by Irving Gonzalez)

Assistant Choreographer: Meghan Blevins

Musical Director:

Chris Sperat (assisted by Andy Cusano)

Stage Manager:

Sheila Harrington

Genesisius Theatre

153 N. 10th Street,
Reading

Tickets:

610-373-9500

Office:

610-371-8151

8:00 p.m. on
March 20, 21, 27, 28

2:00 p.m. on
March 22, 28, 29

7:00 p.m. on
March 25, 26



**Order Genesisius tickets 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:
genesiustheatre.org**

Musical Numbers

Act 1

This Side of the Tracks The Girls/Norbert/Jeannie/Pippi
One Step Closer..... The Girls/Norbert/Jeannie
The Buck Stops Here.....Pippi/The “Men”
It Doesn’t Take A Genius The Girls/Norbert/Pippi/Jeannie
Owner Of My Heart Jeannie/Norbert
The Great American TV Show The Girls/Pippi/Norbert
Flushed Down The Pipes..... Jeannie/The Girls
Storm’s A-Brewin’..... The Girls/Pippi/Jeannie/Norbert

Act 2

Road Kill Duke/The Girls
But He’s Mine/It’s Never Easy Pippi/Norbert/Jeannie
That’s Why I Love My Man The Girls
Panic.....Jeannie/Tina/Pippi
Finale Company



Cast

Norbert:

Michael J. Kurowski

Duke:

Bryon Smith

Betty:

Christine D. Cieplinski

Linoleum:

Cathy Miller

Pickles:

Helene Reeser

Pippi:

Jennifer Parker Scott

Jeannie:

Amy Evans

Musicians

Christopher Sperat – piano

Matt Faranda – guitar

Michael Harbach – bass

Andrew Cusano – drums

Produced by special arrangement with
 Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

Original Off-Broadway Stage Production by Jean
 Doumanian, Jeffrey Richards and Rick Steiner in
 association with Janet Paillet.

Originally presented in the 2004 New York
 Musical Theater Festival.

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Who's Who In The Cast



Christine D. Cieplinski – “Betty”

Actress, director, producer, corporate trainer, President of Cherry Herring Entertainment Company where she oversees development/production of plays, touring shows, customized event/fund raising entertainment, DJ/Karaoke/Sound and Catering divisions. You may have seen her in CHEC's hilarious touring production "Parallel Lives: The Kathy and Mo Show". She's worked Off-Broadway as a Sound Designer, regionally as a Costume Designer at Montgomery Theater, locally as Organizer/Producer of V-day Greater Reading, a campaign that utilizes "The Vagina Monologues" to raise awareness and money to aide sexual abuse victims. Holding a Masters in Education, she teaches aspiring actors of all ages at Village Productions, Wyomissing Institute, and Gateway School for the Performing Arts. Her favorite role is directing teens in poignant plays raising self-esteem and social awareness like "And Then They Came For Me: Remembering The World Of Anne Frank" and "Free To Be You And Me". Christine was last seen on the Genesisus stage as "Mrs. Lovett" in Sweeney Todd.



Amy Evans – “Jeannie”

Amy was last seen at Genesisus in The Full Monty as "Pam Lukowski". As a BFA Theater graduate of The University of the Arts, Amy has followed her aspirations performing aboard cruise ships, in regional theater, Atlantic City, Indie. Films, and numerous NYC film and television projects, most notably as Kim Cattrall's stand in on HBO's Sex & The City; seasons 4,5,6 and the movie. She was just clearly seen in a scene on 30 Rock, as well as a featured role in the Sex & the City Movie (DVD extended version.) Currently she can be seen singing throughout the Tri State area in The Belletones female singing trio, and in wedding bands, and glass engraving fragrance bottles in department stores.



Michael J. Kurowski – “Norbert”

Michael has been involved in theater since high school with various theater groups including Vagabond Productions, Genesisus, and RCT. His favorite roles are "Tinman", "Judd Fry", "Charlie Awell", and "Fredrich" in Pirates. His most gratifying experiences have been the original cast of Genesisus The Musical (soon to be performed at a workshop in NYC) and as "Juror #3" in 12 Angry Men. He would like to thank his family, wife Monica, Daughters Nicole and Kaitlyn. Thank you for allowing me to indulge my passion.



Cathy Miller – “Linoleum”

Originally from the Lehigh Valley, Cathy Miller has performed with Munopco as well as Applause and Civic Theater in the Allentown area. A long time member and past president of Reading Civic Theater, Cathy enjoyed playing "Miss Hannigan" in Annie, and flying as "Peter Pan" for RCT. Cathy was adopted by Genesisus in 2006 during Promises, Promises. She was honored to play Jane Simmon Miller in Genesisus: The Musical. She was last seen in The Full Monty.



Jennifer Parker-Scott – “Pippi”

Jenny has been involved in theater for pretty much her whole life. She's done numerous shows with Genesisus both on stage and off. Some of her favorites have been "Marjory" in Genesisus: The Musical, "Bombalurina"/Choreographer in Cats, "Hope Cladwell" in Urinetown, and of course "Maria" in West Side Story. She's also been in a number of productions at RCT: "Maggie" in Brigadoon, "Tiger Lilly" in Peter Pan, "Soul Girl" in Jesus Christ Superstar, "Silly Girl" in Beauty and the Beast, and "Gigi" in Miss Saigon. Jenny has also choreographed numerous productions around Berks County.



Helene D. Reeser – “Pickles”

Helene’s musical and play credits include, “The Acid Queen” in The Who’s Tommy, “Little Sally” in Urinetown, “Mary Magdalene” in Jesus Christ Superstar, “Rizzo” in Grease,

“Mazzeppa” in Gypsy, “Margie” in Follies,

The Belsnickel Scrooge 2007 & 2008, “Fran” in Promises Promises, “Deb” in Genesis: The Musical, “Anita” in West Side Story, “Suzanne” in Picasso at the Lapin Agile, “Maxine” in Just Another Illegitimate Child of John Lennon (Genesis Theatre and Philadelphia Fringe Festival), “Candy Star” in One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest, “Katrina” in Tom Dick & Harry, and “Isabella Grossman” in Crossing Delancy with Entourage Entertainment. Interactive dinner theater credits include, “Bitsy Balboa” in Finnegan’s Wake at the Showboat Casino in Atlantic City and “Roxie” in Peggy Sue Got Buried at Harrah’s Casino in North Carolina. She would like to say “thank you Linda for always being there for me. To Fay and Sue for their amazing acting expertise, Michelle for her amazing patience and skill, Kevin for never letting me settle for anything less than my highest note possible, and Larry for his ongoing love for me and this crazy little pasttime we call the theater.”



Bryon Smith – “Duke”

Bryon Smith (Duke) offered Genesis patrons a great performance in last season’s hit musical, Sweeney Todd, in the role of “Anthony” and also performed for Genesis in Peggy

Sue Got Buried , Isn’t It Romantic, and Grease. While in Berks County, Bryon has performed many shows with Reading Civic Theatre: Beauty & The Beast (Beast), The Scarlet Pimpernel (Chauvelin), Miss Saigon (Josh), Joseph (Pharoah), and 1776 (Courier). Previous experience includes Surfflight Theatre (“Ernie” in Wonderful Life and “Robert Anderson” in Shenandoah) and Off-Broadway in The Early Show. This graduate of the American Musical Dramatic Academy in NYC also performed in the original cast of Charlotte’s Web, music directed by Charles Strouse. Dinner theatre credits include Sinatra’s My Way (Young Frank), The King and I (Luntha), Plain and Fancy (Peter), Joseph (Benjamin Calypso), and West Side Story (Riff). Bryon sends love to family and friends for their love and support.

Where To Go To See Great Theatre

Alpha/Omega Players

Alpha/Omega Performing Arts Center

301 E. First Street, Birdsboro, PA

www.alphaomegaplayers.org

Tickets: 610-404-4844

Nine: April 17-26

Seussical, Jr: May 8-10

Footloose: July 31-August 9

Reading Community Players

403 N. 11th Street, Reading, PA

www.rcptheatre.org

Tickets: 610-375-9106

Driving Miss Daisy: April 17-26

Jungle Book: June 12-21

School House Rock: August 1-9

Purgatory and Blonde Bombshell: September 25-Oct. 4

The Heiress: November 13-22

Miracle on 34th Street: December 11-20

Ephrata Performing Arts Center

Located adjacent to the Ephrata American Legion and community swimming pool in Tom Grater Memorial Park

www.ephrataplayhouseinthepark.org

Tickets: 717- 733-7966

The House of Blue Leaves: March 19-28

Suzanne Westenhofer, A Bottom on Top Tour: April 18

Altar Boyz: April 29-May 9

Steel Magnolias: June 4-13

The Producers: July 9-25

The Last Five Years: August 20-29

Company: October 29-November 14

Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat: Dec. 3-19

Reading Civic Theatre

Performing at Sovereign Performing Arts Center

136 N. 6th Street, Reading, PA

www.readingcivic.org

Tickets: 610-373-3311

A Christmas Carol: December 4-6

Attention Theatre Companies!

Send your listing to Jamie Howard for the next Footlights:
emailjamiehoward@gmail.com

For Regional Theatre & Live Entertainment Links:

Visit our website at genesiustheatre.org and click on “Links”

Sold-Out Benefit for Genesisus at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel



Peggy Sue Got Buried

The 1950s Prom Night Murder Mystery Event

Written and Directed by LJ Fecho

Presented on January 17th 2009 by Entourage Entertainment
at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel, to benefit Genesisus Theatre

❶ The prom guests grace the floor for a “twist” contest. ❷ The band keeps the prom guests entertained with songs from the 1950s. ❸ In fear, Herman (Deric Anthony Gochenauer) clings to Chip’s (Bryon Smith) leg. ❹ Roxy (Helene Reeser) sings a song for the prom guests. ❺ Before the show starts, Gabby Keuscher, Megan Rose, Amanda Ackerman, and Gabby Lewis teach prom attendees the CARP cheer. ❻ Enid (Megan Rose) serenades Chip. ❼ Chip and Peggy Sue (Amanda Ackerman) grace the stage during the announcement of Prom Queen Candidates. ❽ Vince the Prince (Kirk Lawrence) prepares to announce the winner of the Snow Sceptor.





Costume Donations

Wanted at Genesisus

Genesisus is looking for donations of period hats dresses, men's suits, and costume jewelry to add to our permanent collection.

We are interested in items from the 1920s through the 1970s

Items may be dropped off at the theatre or you may call:

Brian Trupp – 610.796.0768

Nate Kuhns – 610.551.5748.

Thank you!



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Credit Card Reservations at Your Convenience
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Get Tickets Online at
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Our deepest gratitude to those who have supported us in the 21st Century and made possible the renovation of our Main Stage:

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...from the Founder – Michael O'Flaherty

(continued from page 2)

It's time to let our alums know that we value them and their experience, and to find out how much they value their Genesis memories. Many of these folks have gone on to become very successful in the theatrical world, while others have moved on to different careers, but I'm sure that the lessons they learned right here in this building have contributed in some way to their success. If we can find them (by phone, E-mail, or carrier pigeon) we might be able to bring them back into the family. There are so many ways to involve them...teaching master classes, giving of their expertise in business or marketing, serving on our Board, or possibly on an advisory board made up solely of alumni...the possibilities are endless, not to mention, of course, asking them for monetary support. All great organizations have an Alumni Association. It is imperative (and long overdue) that Genesis has one too. I'll be sending out letters in the near future, so, if you know how to reach any of our long-lost brothers and sisters (addresses, e-mails, or phone numbers) let me know at oflaherty860@aol.com. Be sure to include Genesis Alums on the subject line.

We're aiming to make our theatre stronger, more profitable, more diverse, and much more inclusive. You can help.

Michael O'Flaherty
Co-founder

Member Recognition — Thanks for a little extra!

Mike Kurowski – painting and electric
Dave Neel – revamping the wiring
Spencer Fecho – revamping the wiring
Nate Kuhns – the new sewing room
Donna Robinson – new props room
Ron Bair – 2009 Golf Tournament

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The 3rd Annual Ron Bair Commemorative Golf Outing

Monday, July 13, 2009 at the Reading Country Club

Ron Bair knows how to host a great golf tournament. Genesis presents "The class golf act in town," with tons of great prizes capped off by a happy hour with 2 free drinks, a great dinner, silent auction of artwork and sports memorabilia, a show, and a few surprises too!

1st Prize: Set of Cobra Irons, Wood, and Bag

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"Hole in One" award

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Prices are \$175 per individual golfer and \$700 per foursome.

Raffle tickets for fabulous prizes are available at \$20 per ticket or 6-for-\$100 throughout the Spring and all day of the event.

Not a golfer? Can't take the day off this year? Then treat yourself to a gourmet meal, silent auction, and a great musical revue for only \$50, or \$65 including raffle ticket.

Genesis provides a training ground for young people and fabulous entertainment for the public. What better way to enjoy a great day of golf and support the community!

For info, call Alex Miller at 610-223-4834 or email Alex at Unionjackracing@aol.com

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 Dress Circle \$50 Member \$25 Other \$

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Name (please print) _____
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Upcoming at Genesisius...

“And The Beat Goes On”... A 1960s Pop Music Cabaret

Created and Arranged by Michael O’Flaherty, Directed by L J Fecho & Music Directed by Andrew Cusano
Friday April 3rd at 8pm • Saturday April 4th at 8pm • Sunday April 5th at 2pm

On Friday April 3rd, Genesis Theatre will present a 1960’s pop revue entitled “And The Beat Goes On”. The revue features a great base set of songs from such popular ‘60s bands such as The Monkees, Simon and Garfunkel, The Association, The Mamas and the Papas, and of course Sonny and Cher.

This creation came from when Michael O’Flaherty, co-founder of Genesis Theatre, was working as the Music Director/Director of Cabaret events for the Williamstown Theatre Festival (WTF) in Williamstown, MA. For 11 summers he had the incredible job of creating 5 or 6 full musical cabarets, all

with a different theme over an 11 week period. Michael has always loved ‘60s pop music, so it seemed like a natural part of his being to create this show.


These cabaret shows would run Wednesday thru Saturday nights, and at a different venue each night. Everything had to be moved from venue to venue, lights, sound, etc. Not only did they have to come up with 5 or 6 different themes of cabarets, but also 2 slightly different versions of each show – a 9pm show and an 11:00pm show. The 9pm show featured 4-6 non-equity singers doing just the basic cabaret show. At the 11pm show many

of the stars and Equity actors joined in for the show. Obviously doing this was a huge amount of work, but it was hugely profitable and hugely popular and very successful for the WTF year after year.

After being performed at the WTF and then at the Silver Lining Club in New York City for 3 or 4 months, LJ Fecho is directing the pop revue here at Genesis with great community stars such as Mike Kurowski, Jennifer Parker Scott, Cory Donchez, Helen D. Reeser and many more!

– Shannan Denlinger


“Spellbinding, funny, and almost unbearably moving... it is both a work of art and an incisive piece of cultural history, a poem and a polemic, a performance and a balm and a benediction.”
- Variety



Greater Reading
 Executive Producer Christine Cieplinski
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Directed by Sue Snearing


Sat. April 4 8:00 pm Sun. April 5 3:00 pm

TICKETS visit www.brownpapertickets.com or call 484-332-0098

To learn more about our V-Day Campaign or “The Vagina Monologues” visit www.vspot.vday.org

This V-Day Greater Reading Campaign was made possible in part by these local sponsors:



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The Laramie Project

Written by Moisés Kaufman and the Tectonic Theater Company, Directed by John Gancar
April 17th, 18th, 24th, & 25th at 8pm • April 19th & 26th at 2pm • April 22nd at 7pm

Snapshot of a Hate Crime

Shortly after midnight, Wednesday, October 7th, 1998. The open, rolling hills of Southeastern Wyoming. A split-rail fence under a wide, star-filled sky. Two figures stand over a third, which is on the ground, tied to a rail of the fence. One standing figure raises his arm, in his hand, a gun, held butt out. He brings the butt of the gun down savagely on the head of the figure tied to the fence. Sounds of laughter and screams and sobs.

Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson leave Matthew Shepard to die, alone. Eighteen hours later, Matthew Shepard is found by a cyclist out for a joy ride. Matthew's head is severely disfigured from the blows, covered with blood except for the clean streaks where his tears have washed the blood clean. Matt's breath comes slowly, shal- lowly, barely.

On Monday, October 12th at 12:53am, almost precisely five days after the beating, Matthew Shepard dies.

Origins of "The Laramie Project"

This is the catalyst for "The Laramie Project", originally created by Moisés Kaufman and the Members of the Tectonic Theater Project. Starting in November 1998, and spanning a period of a year and a half, Moisés and Tectonic visited the town of Laramie six times, gathering interviews, court transcripts and excerpts of media coverage.

Unlike a traditional, fictional, piece of theatre, where characters are con-

strained, locked, into a specific time, the interviewees of "Laramie" exist in an ongoing continuum: They existed. They exist. They will exist.

Impossible to Know Someone's Heart

In "Laramie", the characters speak for themselves, bringing their own life experiences, prejudices, and beliefs, to their words. We can assume to know these people through their words, through research of the area, through the lens of the world as we know it, but, as we know through our daily lives, we can never know the heart of another person or the truth of an event.

This play has been divided into "moments", rather than the traditional scenes. Imagine communicating an event to someone else using only a box of pictures or reels of video. To present the material in its entirety, you will create your presentation out of carefully selected "moments" that relate the story of the event as you choose to tell it. True? Yes. Complete? Not likely.

A Playwright's Prejudices: A Roadmap

While in "The Laramie Project" the characters do, indeed, speak for themselves, the question remains, "Why these characters?" Certainly, Mr. Kaufman and The Tectonic Theater Project would have been searching for a production that would tell this story in the most compelling fashion. However, there must have been a Rubik's Cube of permutations that would have been just as compelling.

John Gancar, director of the Gen-

esius production of "Laramie", wisely tasked his cast with answering those particular "Whys?" Why these people and these portions of their interviews?

The actor's answers can help them find a direction through this piece via the map of the Playwright's construction. Telling is the repeated admonition by Father Roger Schmit, the Catholic Priest of Laramie who organized the candlelight vigil after Matthew's attack to, "do your best to say it correct." "The Laramie Project" seems to fulfill Father Schmit's request.

The Relevance of Laramie

Currently in the US, only twenty-four states and the District of Columbia, have hate crime laws that include sexual orientation. Ten years after Matthew Shepard was killed, Wyoming is the only state in the US with no hate laws whatsoever. In a country where we have come so far in our acceptance of each other, this piece reminds us that we still have some road to travel.

As Moisés Kaufman observes, "What we found so interesting about Laramie is not how different it is from the rest of the country, but how similar." While we are trained, day after day, to think of this country in terms of red/blue, liberal/conservative, us/them, the truth is, of course, that people are pretty much the same everywhere you go. Laramie isn't just a small town in Wyoming: It is a slice of who we, as a nation are. Our love and humanity and our fear and hatred; this is what is reflected in, and explored by, this piece of theatre.

We hope you will come and take this journey with us.

– Kirk Lawrence



“Isn’t It Romantic” — The Perfect Valentine’s Day Confection

“Isn’t It Romantic” – A Musical Revue about the Many Facets of Love” was presented February 13th & 14th at 8pm, and February 15th at 2pm.



❶ Chris Paolini performs “Tonight at 8” from She Loves Me. ❷ The girls tell Aaron Kemper to “Forget About the Boy” (from Thoroughly Modern Millie). ❸ Christopher Sperat and the girls in “Hey Big Spender” from Sweet Charity. ❹ The entire cast joins together to sing “Love Changes Everything” from Aspects of Love.

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