



Glencoe Performance Venues

325 Tudor Court
664 Vernon Avenue

Box Office & Administrative Offices

376 Park Avenue
Glencoe, IL 60022

Box Office 847-242-6000

Office 847-242-6001

Fax 847-242-6011

www.writerstheatre.org

NONPROFIT
ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO.20
GLENCOE, IL

Exclusive 2005/06 Season Sponsor



LaSalle Bank
ABN AMRO

WT

WRITERS' THEATRE
THE BRIEF CHRONICLE
ISSUE TWELVE MARCH 2006



THE CHOSEN

03 ON STAGE: THE CHOSEN 04
OPENING A WINDOW 06 ARTISTIC CONVERSATION
09 FATHERS & SONS 14 THE CAST OF
THE CHOSEN 15 FROM PAGE TO STAGE
BACKSTAGE 17 EDUCATION & OUTREACH 19
EVENTS 26 DONOR SPOTLIGHT 28 15TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

847-242-6000 | writerstheatre.org

Cover Photo: Model – Matthew Leahy, Photo by White Light, Beverly MA



Michael Halberstam
Artistic Director

Jennifer Bielstein
Executive Director

Dear Friends:

We have assembled a remarkable group of artists to guide you through this production. At the helm is Shade Murray as Director. After his successful and heartwarming work on *The Subject Was Roses* last season, *The Chosen* seemed like a worthy successor and an exciting challenge. He has assembled a fine cast and team of designers, some familiar from past Writers' Theatre productions as well as a few new faces. You'll find them all in the pages of this magazine.

We've just finished putting the final touches on next season and are delighted to share our 2006/07 15th Anniversary Season lineup with you. Our selections weave a rich tapestry of both old and new, including classic plays by William Shakespeare and Lillian Hellman and contemporary selections by Itamar Moses and Gilles Ségol. You have likely received your renewal notice in the mail already, and details of the season are at the back of the magazine. We are certain that the magnificent verse, southern discomfort, rapier wit and passionate theatricality will combine to make our 15th Season a reason to celebrate!

And finally, as you are all aware, the ticket price we charge is only 50% of what it costs us to produce each play and this is why we are dependent upon contributions. Our most profound and hearty thanks to all of you who have donated! As you also know, we place the deepest value on our artistic ventures, so your support finds its way directly into the art on our stages and reveals itself in the quality of our actors, designers and playwrights. This season we continue to have the opportunity to cover our increased expenses as we have

yet to raise another \$100,000 through the generosity of the David and Mary Winton Green Challenge Grant where any new or increased donation you make can immediately be doubled. Also, to pique your interest, be sure to open your subscription renewal letter and learn of a new initiative we have launched, called *The 100% Club*, we hope you'll join.

Yours Sincerely,



Michael Halberstam
Artistic Director

Jennifer Bielstein
Executive Director

A note from the Artistic Director:

Programming for the bookstore presents a dizzyingly exhilarating array of challenges. The setting must either be confined to a single location or allow for a very esoteric and abstract interpretation in order to accommodate multiple locations. The experience of the play must be enhanced in some way by its appearance in such an intensely intimate venue. The cast cannot be so big as to overwhelm the dressing room and the audience. Additionally, the play must be able to sustain momentum for almost five months. With Aaron Posner's and Chaim Potok's adaptation of novel *The Chosen*, I believe that we have found a play which not only answers all these challenges, but gives us the opportunity to offer a production which can rank among the bookstore's finest outings (*The Price, Crime & Punishment, Incident at Vichy, Nixon's Nixon*). The very nature of literary adaptation allows for an esoteric setting as the transference of book to stage is already a leap of imagination. A story which explores cultural divide and intolerance ultimately finds its root in the love between a father and son. The intimacy of this space can only serve to enhance the simple and universal domesticity that lies at the heart of *The Chosen*. Finally, the richness of the text and complexity of the journey provides the five actors a worthy and ever growing challenge over the changing months of the run.

March 14 through July 9, 2006

Performed at 664 Vernon Avenue

"For a word to be spoken, there must be silence, both before and after...
When I was young, my father taught me with silence. He did not trust words, words distort, words play tricks, they conceal the heart, the heart speaks through silence."

THE CHOSEN

THE CHOSEN

**ADAPTED BY AARON POSNER & CHAIM POTOK FROM THE
NOVEL BY CHAIM POTOK DIRECTED BY SHADE MURRAY**

THE CAST

Nicholas Cimino
Sean Fortunato
Jürgen Hooper
Craig Spidle
Jeff Still

SCENIC DESIGN

Jack Magaw

COSTUME DESIGN

Keith Pitts

LIGHTING DESIGN

Michelle Habeck

SOUND DESIGN

Josh Schmidt

PROPERTIES DESIGN

Sara Morgan

STAGE MANAGER

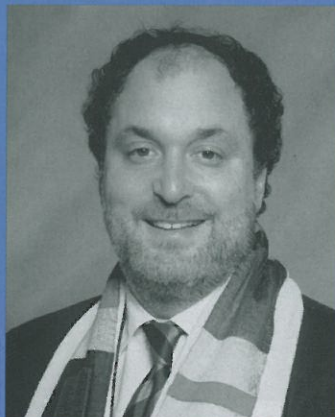
Margaret Cangelosi

In a tale as universal as it is culturally specific, Posner and Potok offer us a coming of age story about an unlikely yet enduring friendship between two Jewish teenagers – one Orthodox and the other Hasidic – and the fascinating and troubling relationship between the boys and their fathers. Despite the boys' radically different outlooks on the world, they learn to rely on each other as they bridge the divides within their faith, their neighborhood and their families. Shade Murray (*The Subject Was Roses*) directs this heartfelt story about understanding, respect and reconciliation.

Opening a Window

BY RABBI STEVEN STARK
LOWENSTEIN

CONGREGATION
AM SHALOM, GLENCOE



CHAIM POTOK'S WORK WAS ONCE DESCRIBED BY A FRIEND OF HIS AS

Welcome to the world of *The Chosen*. Chaim Potok's work was once described by a friend of his as "opening a window into the Jewish soul for Jew and non-Jew alike."

The Chosen, Potok's first novel written in 1967, is the beautiful story of two young men who, through a baseball game, form a friendship that changes both their lives. Reuven, an Orthodox Jew, and Danny, a Hasidic Jew, struggle to understand each other, though to the outside world they are simply both Jews. Through their unique relationship, Chaim Potok teaches us about religion, culture, friendship and ultimately faith. Almost

all of Potok's writings are concerned with the relationship between Jewish culture and the American secular world that it inhabits. Within this context, he explores varying beliefs within the diverse Jewish community.

While for fifteen years Danny and Reuven live just blocks from each other in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, their world views are thousands of miles apart. Danny and his father come from the world of the Hasidic community. Hasidic Jews live in a world frozen in time from centuries past. The movement originated in Eastern Europe in the 18th century and was founded by Rabbi Israel

Ben Eliezer (1700–1760), also known as the Ba'al Shem Tov. Hasidic Judaism emerged during a time of great persecution of the Jewish people, and European Jews turned protectively inward toward Talmudic study. Many felt that most expressions of Jewish life had become too "academic," and that they no longer had any emphasis on spirituality or joy. The Ba'al Shem Tov set out to improve the situation. In *The Chosen*, Reb Saunders is the tzaddik, or leader of his people. And Danny is to follow in his father's footsteps.

Reuven and his father come from the world of Orthodox Judaism, which adheres to a relatively strict interpretation and application of the laws and ethics first canonized in the Talmud and later codified in the Shulchan Arukh, the Code of Jewish Law. While they believe in traditional Judaism, they also believe in modernity, secular studies, Freud and the establishment of the State of Israel.

Zionism is the love, devotion and passion for the creation of the Jewish State of Israel. During the World War II period, Jews were divided between Zionists and anti-Zionists. The Hasidic community believed (and some still do) a Jewish homeland could and should only be formed when the Messiah comes. Therefore, they were opposed to the post-war rallies in favor of the State of Israel, which Reuven and his father so greatly support. Consequently, Orthodox Jews were despised by the Hasidim and were looked upon as Apikorsim, secular Jews who denied the basic tenets of Judaism.

The themes of assimilation and Zionism in the aftermath of the Holocaust play heavily into the story and the developing relationships in *The Chosen*. Chaim Potok always said that he wrote *The Chosen* in order to come to terms with his own Jewish upbringing. Come and enter into the window of *The Chosen* as we explore, learn and grow together.

Enjoy the show.

"OPENING A WINDOW INTO THE JEWISH SOUL FOR JEW AND NON-JEW ALIKE."

ARTISTIC CONVERSATION

Director Shade Murray recently had the occasion to interview Aaron Posner, co-adaptor of The Chosen. Mr. Posner is also one of the founders of Philadelphia's Arden Theatre where he originally adapted Mr. Potok's novel for the stage in 1999. The following conversation is a rare opportunity to eavesdrop on two exciting contemporary theatre artists, both interpretive and creative, as they examine the difference between those identities.

Shade Murray: What inspired you to adapt *The Chosen* for the stage?

Aaron Posner: Like many young Jews, I read *The Chosen* at some point in high school, or maybe even junior high. I think I liked it. Years later, all I really remembered was the baseball game.

In my early 30s I was asking myself all kinds of questions about my life, and among them were questions about what I meant when I referred to myself as Jewish—which I tended to do on a fairly regular basis, but I am not a person of faith or an observant Jew. I began to think a lot about what I meant, and, since I have the good fortune to have

a career that allows me to explore the things that fascinate me through my work, I began reading plays and books by Jewish authors with a mind to both learn about myself, and also to find something for the stage.

I met Chaim on a few occasions. I had my longest conversation with him initially in the lobby of The Goodman Theatre when we were both there seeing *Mirror of the Invisible World*, in which Chaim's daughter Namma acted. We had a nice talk and I resolved to call him when I got back to Philadelphia and ask his advice on books by Jewish authors I might think about adapting. But I thought that I should read some of his work before

I did, books I had not read since high school. I started with *The Chosen* and knew I needn't look any further. I loved it. I knew almost instantly that I wanted to put it on stage.

I found the coming of age story, the story of the remarkable friendship between the two very similar but very different boys and the fascinating and troubling relationship between the boys and their fathers utterly compelling and entirely moving. I loved how straightforward and honest the writing was. This book is not fancy or clever; it is just brilliantly good storytelling, told with integrity and simple passion. Chaim had some important things to say to the world and he looked for stories that would allow him to say them. I have great admiration and respect for stories like this – what Chaim used to call “serious literature.” By that, I think he meant works of literature that were there for a reason and had a seriousness of purpose.

I found that the more I read it, the more I loved it and, oddly, the more I found myself weeping when I read it. I took that to be a good sign. When I finally called Chaim it was for an entirely different purpose now. We talked for an hour one afternoon, I told him my ideas and the project evolved quickly from there. About a year later it was on stage.

SM: How did Chaim Potok get involved? Describe your journey of working with him.

I FOUND THAT THE MORE I READ IT, THE MORE I LOVED IT AND, ODDLY, THE MORE I FOUND MYSELF WEeping WHEN I READ IT.

AP: Chaim was a wonderful collaborator on the process. I did the lion's share of the adapting work, and then he would edit and suggest and tell me when I was horribly off track. In many places, I wanted to expand moments that were only suggested in the book. Some of these I could do myself, but when it came to Talmudic disputation or Reb Saunders' response to the Holocaust, for instance, there was no way I could tackle it. Chaim wrote those new sections, easily and quickly I might add. He obviously knew this material backwards and forwards. His generosity to me was amazing. The play is not the book. It is totally his story, but there are reflections of me in there, and of the way the world had changed since he wrote it originally in the mid '60s. It is very much the same story, with the same core, but Chaim was a great, great artist, and he knew that these things must be held lightly

THIS BOOK IS NOT FANCY OR CLEVER; IT IS JUST BRILLIANTLY GOOD STORYTELLING, TOLD WITH INTEGRITY AND SIMPLE PASSION.

and allowed to evolve and grow and change. Working with him is one of the great joys of my career.

SM: You performed the role of Reuven. Did you learn anything about your own adaptation by performing it yourself?

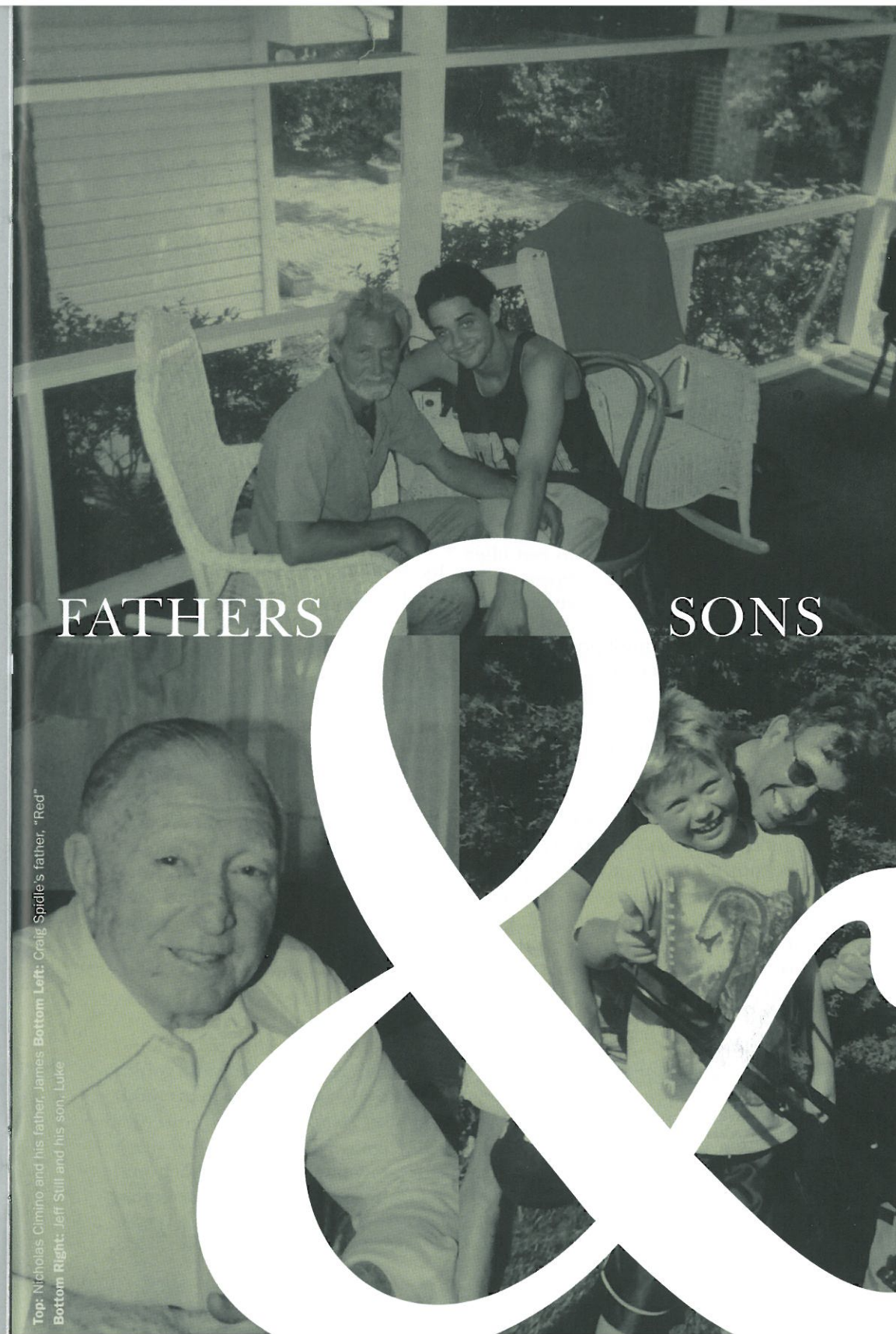
AP: I did the narrator for a week at Seattle Rep last year. The production had been extended and the actor playing Reuven was off to Vienna for another project. As I was the right age and knew the words, they asked me to step in. Simply put, it was about the most terrifying experience of my life. Sheer stage

fright and total terror of messing things up. But I got past that, and then it was fascinating... to be in a world I had written and directed.

I learned a lot by seeing the show from the inside out and watching it unfold in front of me. I realized what a difficult role the narrator Reuven is, as he has to be in complete connection to the audience and the other characters. It requires a great deal of concentration and a lot of delicate balances. It was very tiring. Overall, I had a great time, and I am very eager *not* to do it again any time soon.

SM: You had the chance to see our unique bookstore venue in action during *The Subject Was Roses*. How do you think your adaptation will play in such an intimate environment?

AP: I think it will be great, particularly touching the issue of the narrator. Given the space, there is literally no way to make him peripheral, since there is no periphery to speak of. In some productions I have seen, where they do not understand how a narrator can really function, he has been sort of left out. But I don't anticipate that issue here in this fabulously intimate space, or even here in the Chicago area where adaptation is so thoroughly understood. It is great to have this production done so relatively close to Northwestern where I was first exposed to adaptation more than 20 years ago. It feels like a homecoming of sorts, which is lovely.



Top: Nicholas Cimino and his father, James Spidle's father, "Red"
Bottom Left: Craig Spidle's father, "Red"
Bottom Right: Jeff Still and his son, Luke

FATHERS

SONS

The Chosen is as universal a story as it is culturally specific. Regardless of our heritage, Chaim Potok offers us a set of relationships both warmly recognizable and achingly familiar. The most significant and shaping of these associations is, with little doubt, that between parent and child. Certain cast members from The Chosen have been generous enough to share here their very personal reflections on the topic with us. Some of them are fathers, all of them are sons and each of their stories is beautifully unique.

JEFF STILL

Just typing the words makes me well up. Like most men, I want a better father-son relationship than the one I was afforded. Like many men, I grew up feeling that I missed out on having a father...and I had two!

I was born Jeffrey Michael Gargiulo to Anthony and Lucille. Unbeknownst to me, my parents were trapped in a miserable marriage and agreed to divorce in 1969, when I was not yet ten years old and each re-married within two years. Having stayed with my mother, I became the adopted son of Joseph Still and took his name, becoming Jeffrey Michael Gargiulo Still... Jeff Still for short.

My new father, Joe, was a lot of things my natural father, Anthony, was not. Anthony was quiet; Joe was loud. Anthony was a handyman;

Joe hired handymen. Anthony was the life of the party and cool and aloof at home; Joe was a "man's man" – occasionally boisterous, occasionally drunk, but always responsible, and always fair.

Joe became my "real" father because he adopted me and I took his name. When Anthony slipped out of the picture, Joe stepped in and became more of a father to me than any I had ever known. Anthony withdrew from me at most every opportunity; he was tired. Joe left me notes on the kitchen "Don't Forget" stationary saying he was proud of me. Joe, who already had three kids of his own, did not need to take in another. Joe Still treated me like a man long before I ever became one and could never understand how a man could abandon his son.

I became a father myself when my son Luke was born. Six months later my mother died and I was

FATHERS HOLD YOUR SONS. SONS HOLD YOUR FATHERS.

left with my two fathers, one who chose me and one who did not. Joe Still died just over three years ago; Anthony is still alive, living not all that far from where I grew up. I've spent eight years looking into my own son's eyes and knowing I could never, never, ever, abandon him, no matter what. I love my son and he knows that. He knows it through my actions, and he knows it through my words. On the day he was born, my sister Mickey asked, "Did you hold him?" and I said, "Yes," and she said, "Then you've already held him more than Daddy ever held you."

JÜRGEN HOOPER

I guess you could say your relationship with your father solidifies a bit when you've almost drowned with him. Dad, the water and I have a long history together, and only

about five percent of it belongs to times of peril. I learned to trust my father in water having never been misled in those early days of "Come on, Jürgen, jump in. Daddy won't let you drown." My father taught me the proper leg kicks and arm strokes to not only keep buoyant but propel myself through the water, which I suppose he deemed more than necessary after the first two times I almost drowned.

The first time was at a backyard gathering of some of my parents' friends, and a pool of only about eight feet or so at the deepest. The adults were a good ways away eating and I waddled over to the pool. The next thing I remember is staring up through the blue at my father's figure knifing down through the water to rescue me. The second time was at my Great-Uncle Jerry's backyard pool. The image that I remember is of my father running off the diving board and jumping into the water.

Pools were one thing, but vacationing at our grandparents' condo in Ocean City, Maryland, where my father taught me bodysurfing was another. He also convinced me of how much more fun being thrown off his hands could be in the ocean than the pool. The perfect timing for this stunt would be when a really choice wave was coming our way and you release just over the crest so the wave pummels you into the sand when it crashes.

The most defining moment must have been when I was twelve or thirteen years old and with my father in the water despite reports warning of riptide. It wasn't too long before the both of us realized we were having enormous difficulty getting back onto the beach. I remember walls of water rising and falling in front of us and my uncle swimming

Whatever the reason, these experiences are the first that come to my mind when asked to reflect on the relationship between fathers and sons.

NICHOLAS CIMINO

My father, James Cimino, passed away when I was a sophomore in college. Although he was too

KNOWING THAT
MY SAFETY
AND SURVIVAL
WAS HIS ONLY CONCERN
WAS AN INTENSE BONDING MOMENT.

almost vertically to try to pull me in and having the wave take him down into the sand. The look on my father's face as he kept telling me to swim sideways with the tide will stick with me always. Seeing your father afraid has a profound effect on you. Being right there beside him and knowing that my safety and survival was his only concern was an intense bonding moment.

young to die, his life seemed to me like some sort of self-made story straight from Hollywood.

My father was born in a small town in the mountains of North Carolina where he spent the summers with his mother. During the school year, he would go to Newark, New Jersey to be with his father. Those two habitats are polar opposites in regard

I WILL TRY
IN MY WAY TO MAKE HIM
PROUD, BUT THAT IS A LOT TO LIVE UP TO!

to regional mentality. To add to this, he was a member of an Italian gang in Newark called The 7-11s, complete with the nylon jacket with the logo and the 7-11 dames. Very *West Side Story*!!

Later, he was a chef in a restaurant working for his best friend, Donny Ruffulo, who was always in debt with the Mafiosos that frequented the place, forcing everybody to suck up to them. Very reminiscent of *Goodfellas*. Eventually, my father, mother and Donny moved to the south to open Italian delis, gaining great success which was lost long after I was born. Rags to Riches to Rags...

CRAIG SPIDLE

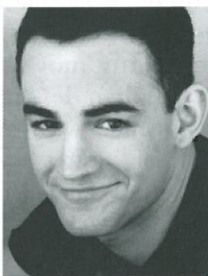
My Dad was a pool hustler. His nickname was Red. He won tournaments. Growing up, my favorite movie, of course, was *The Hustler* starring Jackie Gleason and Paul Newman. I saw men I recognized on screen.

When Dad died, he left me two things: his shotgun and his pool cue. Years later, I played Paul Newman's bodyguard in the movie *The Road to Perdition*. I brought my dad's pool cue to the set and had Paul Newman sign it. Everything had come full circle.

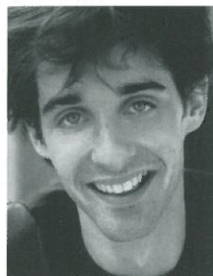
THE CAST OF THE CHOSEN



Sean Fortunato



Jürgen Hooper



Nicholas Cimino



Jeff Still



Craig Spidle

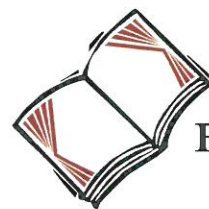


Shade directed last season's acclaimed production of *The Subject Was Roses* and most recently directed his fifth season of *A Christmas Carol*. He received the 2004 Joseph Jefferson Citation for directing *Detective Story* at Strawdog Theatre Company, a production that also garnered the top awards for production and ensemble. He is continuing to develop, along with co-creator John Fournier, *Fatty Arbuckle's Spectacular Musical Revue*, originally produced by Second City Theatricals last year. Earlier this season, he directed the Chicago premiere of *Kimberly Akimbo* for A Red Orchid Theatre. He has also

directed for About Face, Roadworks, Shattered Globe, Colbalt Ensemble, American Theatre Company, Shakespeare's Motley Crew, Seanachai and the Museum of Contemporary Art.

As the Director of Education at Writers' Theatre, Shade Murray oversees the Writers' Theatre Training Center, six teaching artists and residencies at six schools on the North Shore. In addition to his work at Writers', he teaches at Northwestern University, Chicago Academy for the Arts, Act One Studios and the National High School Institute.

Shade's upcoming directing projects include *WRLS #5* by Brett Neveu at Strawdog Theatre and Chuck Mee's *Full Circle* at DePaul University.



FROM PAGE TO STAGE

Read the book. See the play. Get involved!

Writers' Theatre, Glencoe Public Library, Highland Park Public Library and Northbrook Public Library have partnered for this exciting new program. Through the presentation of *The Chosen*, special receptions, giveaways and more, the program will enhance your experience and allow exclusive access to the art. We hope you join us for these exciting events and activities!

Events

To RSVP for any of these events, please call the Writers' Theatre RSVP line at 847-242-6018.

MARCH 16, 7:00 P.M. FROM PAGE TO STAGE KICK-OFF RECEPTION
HIGHLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY, 494 LAUREL AVENUE

Meet Aaron Posner, co-adaptor of *The Chosen*, and hear him recount stories of adapting the novel to stage and working with Chaim Potok.

APRIL 6, 7:00 P.M. A WIFE'S TALE: ADENA POTOK
NORTHBROOK PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1201 CEDAR LANE

Join Adena Potok, widow of Chaim Potok for a dynamic discussion recounting stories of her husband and her relationship with *The Chosen*, her family and co-adaptor and friend Aaron Posner.

APRIL 26, 7:30 P.M. BRIDGING THE GAP: A PANEL DISCUSSION
GLENCOE PUBLIC LIBRARY, 320 PARK AVENUE

Reverend Carl Becker of Glencoe Union Church, Rabbi Steven Lowenstein of Temple Am Shalom and *The Chosen* Director Shade Murray come together to talk about the appeal and impact of this universal story.

Book Discussions

APRIL 18, 10:00 A.M. – Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, led by Isabel Soffer

APRIL 20, 7:30 P.M. – Glencoe Public Library, 320 Park Avenue

APRIL 26, NOON – Highland Park Public Library, 494 Laurel Avenue

The Chosen (1981) Movie Showings & Discussions

APRIL 3, 6:00 P.M.

Highland Park Public Library Auditorium, 494 Laurel Avenue, led by Bob Coscarelli

APRIL 5, 1:00 P.M. & 7:30 P.M.

Northbrook Public Library, 1201 Cedar Lane, (35mm film)

WHAT'S HAPPENING BACKSTAGE AT WRITERS' THEATRE

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

WRITERS' THEATRE IN THE SCHOOLS STUDENTS EXPLORE, CREATE AND LEARN IN OUR NEW RESIDENCY PROGRAM

BY SHADE MURRAY

Theatre artists are consummate students. In preparation for an upcoming show, we immerse ourselves in research worthy of a dissertation. We study any corresponding political, social and spiritual thought. We grapple to understand scientific and technological concepts. We absorb the literature, music and art of the period to try and better understand the world we are about to present on the stage. Each time we read a passage, discover a fact or collect an image, inspiration is found and creativity is unlocked.

Theatre happens when imagination, observation and research intersect ...

It is in this spirit that Writers' Theatre has launched an exciting residency program for students in grades 1- 12. Working with the host school, Writers' Theatre identifies an area in the school's curriculum (English, History, Science, Social Studies) that would benefit from theatrical exploration. Students are asked to write creatively on that subject, supporting their stories with facts learned in the classroom. The writings are then adapted into original plays that the students rehearse and perform for their schools.

The residencies not only instill a deeper appreciation for theatre, but they reinforce the need for thorough research and clear writing skills. The residencies cover all facets of theatrical storytelling: brainstorming, research, creative writing, vocal and physical work, imaginative play and teamwork. Through the residency, students learn that:

- * *Clearly organized, well-articulated ideas have the power to change communities.*
- * *Creative thinking leads to a deeper understanding of the world around us.*
- * *Trust, tolerance and the acceptance of the ideas of others are key ingredients to the success of any project.*

Recent residencies show how this approach can be applied to English, History and Science.

CENTRAL SCHOOL OF WILMETTE RESIDENCY

This residency focuses on the universe and the solar system. Each class will create a genre story (mystery, science fiction, fairy tale) where the central problem is caused by a misconception about the universe or solar system. The heroes will use science to set the misconception straight and solve the problem.

WEST SCHOOL OF GLENCOE RESIDENCY

For three years Writers' Theatre has teamed up with Glencoe's West School for a residency centered on Illinois history. Using the theme "Illinois Time Travel," each 3rd grade class presents a 5-minute original play about the people and events in Illinois history, using a theatrical style unique to their assigned historic era. The plays are based off of the creative writing of the students.

EXPLORING MYTH AT NEW TRIER, NORTHFIELD

After studying Homer's *The Odyssey* in English class, members of the freshman class participated as actors, writers, assistant directors and technicians for *Journey into a Dream*, an original hero's journey for the 21st century. This play discussed the challenges of surviving teen pressures using a plot that reflected the hero's cycle as outlined by Joseph Campbell.

Residencies are custom built to needs and resources of each school. If you are interested in seeing how this innovative program would work in your school, please call Director of Education Shade Murray at 847-242-6007.

NEW YORK BY STORM

*"A two-intermission play that clocks in at not much over two hours? The Jean Cocteau Repertory manages it with Shaw's *Candida*, and it feels great. Michael Halberstam sets up some good laughs."*

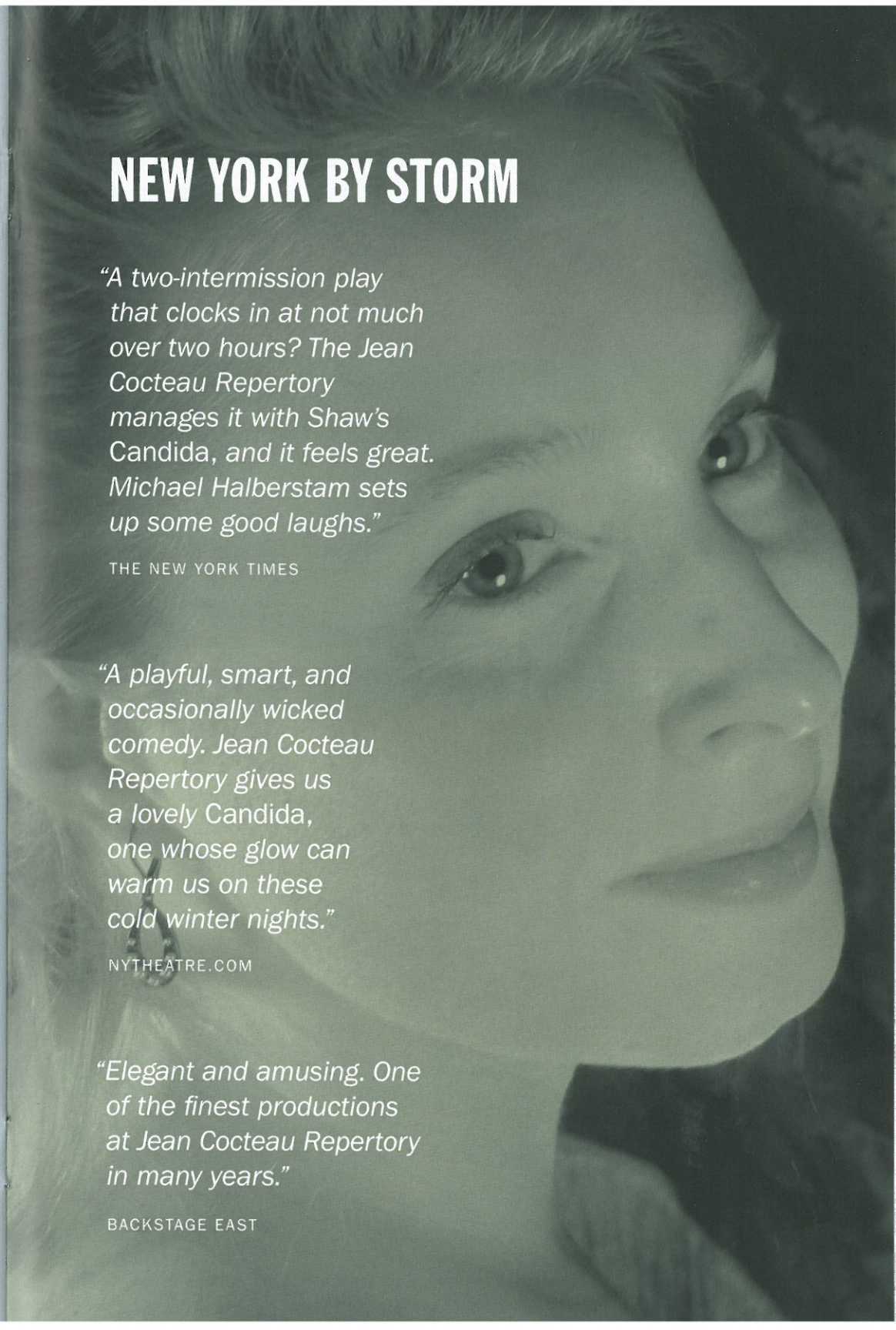
THE NEW YORK TIMES

*"A playful, smart, and occasionally wicked comedy. Jean Cocteau Repertory gives us a lovely *Candida*, one whose glow can warm us on these cold winter nights."*

NYTHEATRE.COM

"Elegant and amusing. One of the finest productions at Jean Cocteau Repertory in many years."

BACKSTAGE EAST





Artistic Director Michael Halberstam, Amanda Jones (who played the title role, *Candida*), Trustee Judy Cottle & Husband Billy Cottle



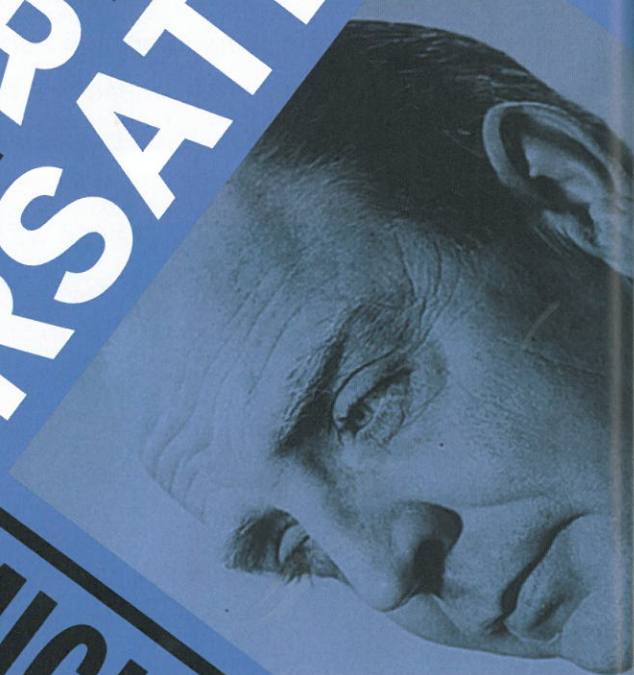
Back row (left to right): David Tillstrand (Rev. James Morell), Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein, Artistic Director Michael Halberstam, Amanda Jones (*Candida*), Board of Trustees President Tom Hodges
Front row (left to right): Angus Hepburn (Burgess), Danaher Dempsey (Marchbanks)

On a rainy Saturday in January, twenty-five Writers' Theatre donors, Board members, staff and friends enjoyed a fabulous three-course meal at fave celebrity hot spot, *Il Buco*, before heading across the street to see Artistic Director Michael Halberstam's New York directorial debut production of George Bernard Shaw's *Candida* at the Jean Cocteau Repertory. The ensemble-based cast was at their best, and the intimate space, not unlike our own theatre at Tudor Court, was perfect for Michael's interpretation of this Shaw classic. There was much laughter and rousing applause from the audience, which seemed to agree with the warm reception critics have bestowed on the production. The performance was followed by a champagne reception, anecdotes from Rhoda Nathan, President of the Shaw Society and a discussion with the cast.

"This trip was so much fun, I hope we have the chance to do it again sometime," said Gail Hodges, wife of Writers' Theatre Board President, Tom Hodges. "I'm so glad we came. The evening was just great," added Writers' Theatre Trustee Judy Cottle, whose husband, Billy, joined in the festivities. Other guests included long-time supporters Bob and Andrea Knight; Gean Luber and her nephew, Chance; Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein; Writers' Theatre Co-founder Marilyn Campbell and her husband Michael; and Linda and David Laundra, founders of the Writers' Theatre in New York City.

The critically-acclaimed production was originally scheduled to close on January 29, but, due to popular demand, was extended through February 12.

CAVIAR WILLIAM
BROWN
RICK SNYDER
CONVERSATION
MICHAEL
HALBERSTAM



The champagne flowed at the 2nd Annual Caviar & Conversation on Wednesday, January 11, 2006 when Artistic Director Michael Halberstam hosted Rick Snyder, Steppenwolf Ensemble member and Director of *Bus Stop*, and Writers' Theatre favorite William Brown starring as Dr. Gerald Lyman in *Bus Stop*, for an evening of conversation at Writers' Theatre. These three witty and wildly different artists engaged in a lively discussion, sharing anecdotes from their remarkable careers, inspirations for the production of *Bus Stop* and the passions that drive them professionally. The conversation was followed by a reception where members of the Director's Society had the opportunity to mingle with Michael, Rick, William and cast members from *Bus Stop* while enjoying cocktails, caviar and additional delectable fare provided by Finesse Catering.

The Director's Society of Writers' Theatre is the group of dedicated patrons who share our passion for the written word. They provide the financial foundation that allows us to create a nurturing artistic home for world-class artists while producing nationally acclaimed productions. We established the Director's Society to acknowledge these patrons and provide them with a window into the creative process. Writers' Theatre extends privileges of membership to individuals who provide an annual gift of \$1,000 or more. With behind-the-scenes rehearsals and special member-only events, membership is bursting with privileges. For more information on membership, please contact Director of Development Sherre Jennings Cullen at 847-242-6005.

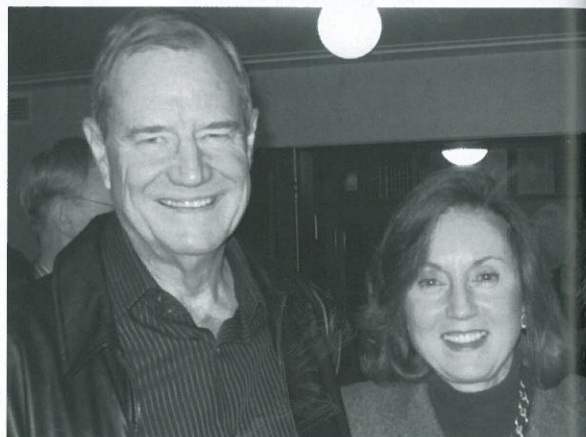


Top: Actor William Brown, Director Rick Synder and Artistic Director Michael Halberstam

Right: Bill & Stephanie Sick

Below Left: Director of Development Sherre Jennings Cullen, Betsy Colburn and Trustee Carol Dawley

Below Right: Irene Pritzker and Liesel Pritzker



Top Left: Kip Kelley, Director Rick Snyder and Board of Trustees President Tom Hodges

Top Right: Nicole Williams and Larry Becker

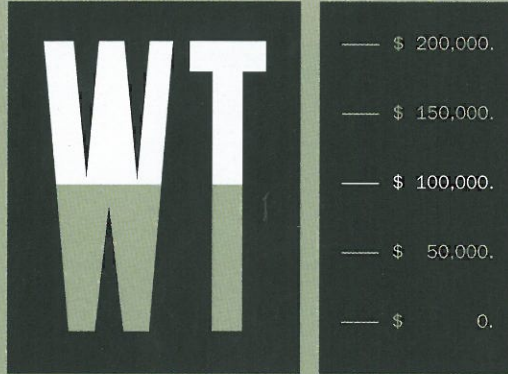
Above: Trustee Bruce Tranen & Jan Tranen and Trustee Susan Belgrad & Don Belgrad

Left: Rick Melcher & Trustee Barb Melcher and Artistic Director Michael Halberstam



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

The Writers' Theatre Challenge Grant Surpasses \$100,000!



The Challenge Grant, sponsored by David & Mary Winton Green, has reached the important milestone of \$100,000. This number represents the halfway point to the final goal of \$200,000. Through the Challenge Grant, the Greens have generously offered to match all new or increased gifts made to the Theatre before July 31, 2006.

Donors to Writers' Theatre can enjoy many benefits throughout the year. Members of the Director's Society (those giving \$1,000 or more) benefit from a VIP ticket exchange hotline, while all donors giving \$150 and above will be recognized in the Footlights program as well as in *The Brief Chronicle*. Writers' Theatre also sponsors private events throughout the year, created to bring our donors closer to the art and artists of Writers' Theatre. If you are considering a first-time gift or increasing your donation to meet the Challenge, we hope that a look at our upcoming events at the top of the next page will convince you to help support the mission of Writers' Theatre. Director's Society membership benefits are extended for a full year.

Call 847-242-6004 to Make Your Gift Today! All new and increased gifts will be matched.

Upcoming Director's Society Events

Design Lecture, April 25, 2006

DIRECTOR'S SOCIETY, \$1,000 AND ABOVE – Join us for a lecture given by the design team of *The Chosen*.

Anatomy of a Scene, May 16, 2006

PARTNER, \$500 AND ABOVE – This evening was created to give our donors an insider's look at a current production. This event features a discussion with the actors, designers and director of *The Duchess of Malfi*.

Private Dinner with Michael Halberstam, June 21, 2006

VISIONARY, \$10,000 AND ABOVE – An exclusive evening of dinner and conversation with Artistic Director Michael Halberstam.

Annual Garden Party, July 9, 2006

DIRECTOR'S SOCIETY, \$1,000 AND ABOVE – A highlight of the season and a delightful way to enjoy the artistic excellence of Writers' Theatre in the picturesque setting of one of the North Shore's premiere gardens.

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS



JENNIFER LITOWITZ

Originally from Elk Grove Village, Jennifer now lives in Glencoe with her husband Alec and their four young sons. Jennifer received her B.A. in English Literature from Northwestern University and her J.D. from Loyola University Chicago. She is on the Board of St. Elizabeth's Nursery School where she is also Co-Director of Enrollment. Jennifer and Alec were inspired to join the Vision Fund after seeing one performance.



PAM PHILLIPS

Pam is the owner of Pam Phillips Fitness Ltd. in Winnetka. She has been a long-time supporter of Writers' Theatre and is currently Co-Chair of the 2006 WordPlay Gala. She is on the Board of What Women Want for the Juvenile Protection Agency and on the Women's Boards of Evanston Hospital and Northwestern University where she received both her B.S. and her M.A. in speech/language pathology and radio, tv and film. Pam has four sons ages 17-26. She married Roger Weston in 2003 and they live in Winnetka.

The Writers' Theatre 15th Anniversary Season

Another Part of the Forest

By Lillian Hellman | Directed by William Brown
Featuring Matthew Brumlow, Joel Hatch and Kymberly Mellen
September 26 – November 26, 2006

Set in Alabama in 1880, this melodrama is filled with southern discomfort. With chilling lies, shocking intrigue, war profiteering and shady financial dealings, the Hubbard Family gives J.R. Ewing a run for his money. Directed by Writers' Theatre favorite, and resident southerner, William Brown.

Bach at Leipzig

By Itamar Moses | Directed by Nick Bowling
January 23 – March 25, 2007

Germany, 1722. Seven musicians are invited to apply for the prestigious and lucrative post of organist at the Thomaskirche. Insecurities, shortfalls of talent and wildly clashing ideologies collide, creating marvelously farcical complications in a wild and witty exploration of the nature of music, ambition and art. Written by one of the nation's foremost young playwrights, this deft and witty play draws its inspiration from historical events while taking much delight in its fictional flights of fancy.

The Puppetmaster of Lodz

By Gilles Ségala and Translated by Sara O'Connor | Directed by Artistic Associate Jimmy McDermott
March 13 – July 8, 2007

Finkelbaum, a once revered puppetmaster, has barricaded himself in an attic after escaping from Auschwitz. It is now 1950 and the war has been over for five years. Not convinced that the Allied troops have ended the war, the puppetmaster sees any attempt to lure him out of his room as merely a ruse to recapture him. Meanwhile he prepares for his greatest puppet show ever – the story of his life – while recreating his loved ones as puppets, and reaching out for understanding amidst the confusion. Ultimately hopeful, moving and eminently theatrical, this beautifully articulated story will enjoy heightened poignancy upon our stage.

Othello

By William Shakespeare | Directed by Artistic Director Michael Halberstam
Featuring James Meredith
May 22 – July 15, 2007

The grandeur of one of Shakespeare's most compelling stories and the signature intimacy of Writers' Theatre will create the potential for theatrical nirvana. Othello is one of Shakespeare's masterful dramas that tells the story of a general led into a frenzy of jealousy and insecurity by his most trusted soldier. Whispers, secrets, lies and manipulations unravel domestic bliss into shreds of insanity. Come closer to Shakespeare than you ever thought possible and fully realize the glorious language, intricacies of plot and breathtakingly specific psychology of characters as scribed by this literary giant.

Renew your subscription today!

Call 847-242-6000 or visit www.writerstheatre.org

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Tom Hodges

President

Gillian Goodman

Vice-President

Christopher Knight

Vice-President

Bruce Tranen

Vice-President

Norman Cutler

Treasurer

Lorel McMillan

Secretary

Carol Dawley

Immediate Past President

Betty Askow Lilienfield

Founding President

Arthur Anderson, Jr.

Susan Belgrad

Jennifer Bielstein

Lorry Borowitz

Carl Boyer

Sara Cohan

Howard Conant, Jr.

Judy Cottle

Michael Halberstam

Jennifer Litowitz

Thomas Mann

Barbara Melcher

Jean Nerenberg

Pam Phillips

Christine Pope

Bobbie Schultz

William E. Taylor

Rachel Weinstein

Pam Zdunek

THE BRIEF CHRONICLE TEAM

Kory P. Kelly

Director of Marketing

Editor, The Brief Chronicle

Michael Halberstam

Artistic Director

Jennifer Bielstein

Executive Director

Lindsey Becker

Development Associate

Sherre Jennings Cullen

Director of Development

Jon Faris

Management Associate

Dennis Hull

Associate Director

of Development

Jimmy McDermott

Artistic Assistant

Shade Murray

Director of Education

Nichole Webster

Director of Audience Services

LOWERCASE INC

Design