NOW ON STAGE:
THE LION IN WINTER

WRITERS’ THEATRE
THE BRIEF CHRONICLE
ISSUE TWENTY-ONE MAY 2008

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THE 2008/09 SEASON!

PICNIC
By William Inge
Directed by David Cromer
September 16 – November 16, 2008

THE MAIDS
By Jean Genet
Translated by Martin Crimp
Directed by Jimmy McDermott
November 18, 2008 – April 5, 2009

OLD GLORY
By Brett Neveu
Directed by William Brown
February 3 – March 29, 2009

A MINISTER’S WIFE
A musical based on Candida by G.B. Shaw
Music by Josh Schmidt
Lyrics by Jan Tranen
Adapted by Austin Pendleton
Conceived & Directed by Michael Halberstam
May 19 – July 19, 2009

A REVIVAL OF NIXON’S NIXON
By Russell Lees
Directed by Michael Halberstam
Featuring William Brown and Larry Yando
August 19 – September 28, 2008

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
By Charles Dickens
Adapted & Performed by Michael Halberstam
December 13 – 23, 2008

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RENUEw TODAY!
Dear Friends:

We are delighted to welcome director Rick Snyder back to Writers’ Theatre after his wonderfully truthful production of William Inge’s Bus Stop two seasons ago. With The Lion in Winter, Rick has put together an incredible cast and design team. In such capable and fearless hands we look forward to a revival of true Writers’ Theatre fashion, in which a familiar classic gets a fresh, visceral, earthy, first-class staging in our intimate theatre. The dramatic family dynamics that Rick explored as an actor in August: Osage County will very much compliment the dangerous and yet highly entertaining circumstances of Goldman’s play. It is perfect summer viewing and the right show to wrap up our 2007/08 Season!

Looking forward to the 2008/09 Season, we have an exciting mix of wonderful productions for you, including two world premieres, one of which will be our first musical ever! With a talented array of actors and artists, it will truly be a season you do not want to miss. For more information about the season, please turn to page 3.

Outside of our regular season programming, we are pleased to announce a revival of Nixon’s Nixon, featuring the original cast of William Brown and Larry Yando. As only season ticket holders are guaranteed advance access to this production, we hope that you will renew your season tickets, and reserve your Nixon’s Nixon tickets today. This event is a limited run and will sell out! If you are not currently a season ticket holder, more information about our packages can be found on page 33.

On behalf of the board, staff and artist at Writers’ Theatre, thank you ever so much for joining us this season. We hope that you enjoy The Lion in Winter as much as we enjoy bringing it to you and we hope to see you again next season.

Yours Sincerely,

Michael Kate
James Goldman (1927 – 1998) was an American playwright and screenwriter who was born in Chicago and grew up in Highland Park. He earned his undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago and went on to study musicology at Columbia University until his postgraduate work was interrupted by the draft. Following his discharge from the army, he decided to become a playwright. He would later marry Barbara Deren, a producer, in 1975. James was known for his casual, yet professorial demeanor, perhaps due to his background in academia. He was an associate professor at Brooklyn College before his first play, They Might Be Giants, was produced on Broadway in 1961 giving way to a full-time writing career.

Goldman is most renowned as the author of The Lion in Winter, a contemporary dissection of the dysfunctional family dynamic by way of medieval history’s most notorious kinfolk, the Plantagenets. Although most celebrated for this play and the screenplay for the resultant movie, Goldman was a prolific writer who focused many of his novels, plays, and screenplays on history, a subject for which he had great affection. In addition to The Lion in Winter, he also wrote the screenplay for Nicholas and Alexandra (1971) and a novel, Myself as Witness, a further exploration of the Plantagenet dynasty concerning King John’s rule of England in the 13th century. Goldman, describing himself primarily as a comedic writer, once remarked, “The best laugh I ever got was in The Lion in Winter. There’s that big horrendous scene in the bedroom when Queen Eleanor and King Henry say terrible things to each other. And finally the Queen asks, ‘What family doesn’t have its ups and downs?’”

The 1966 Broadway premiere of The Lion in Winter was commercially unsuccessful and closed after only 83 performances despite a powerhouse original cast boasting Robert Preston as Henry II, Rosemary Harris as Eleanor of Aquitaine, and 22-year-old newcomer Christopher Walken as the young French King. Two
years later, however, the material would fare far better in another medium. “Lion as a stage piece was more than reprieved by the movie,” reflected Goldman over a decade after the fact. “It was transformed into a theater work that has been performed all over the world.” Anthony Harvey’s 1968 faithful film adaptation took three Academy Awards, including one for Goldman’s own adapted screenplay and a Best Actress prize for Katherine Hepburn. Hepburn’s Eleanor opposite Peter O’Toole’s Henry established one of the most popular and iconic battling duos in motion picture history. The film also marked the notable debuts of Timothy Dalton and Anthony Hopkins on screen.

Prior to the breakthrough achievement of The Lion in Winter, Goldman had been part of a writing team with his brother William. They collaborated on a play called Blood, Sweat & Stanley Poole and the book for John Kander’s musical A Family Affair, for which James also co-wrote lyrics with the composer. William left the theatre to go on to a fruitful career as a screenwriter (Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, All the President’s Men and The Princess Bride). And while James’s Lion gave way to a reasonably flourishing film resume (Robin and Marian starring Audrey Hepburn and Sean Connery, White Knights starring Mikhail Barishnikov) he never lost his roots in the theatre, writing the book for Stephen Sondheim’s Follies in 1971.

...IT WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A THEATER WORK THAT HAS BEEN PERFORMED ALL OVER THE WORLD.”

Much of his writing over the next few decades was almost exclusively for television, often under the clever moniker “Winston Beard.” However, his last complete work was fittingly a stage play of historical fiction called Tolstoy, based on the life of Russian author. This received a brief run in London two years prior to Goldman’s death in 1998.

HENRY AND ELEANOR: BRINGING THE LEGEND TO LIFE AND LIFE TO THE LEGEND

BY ANNE KOENIG, DOCTORAL STUDENT IN MEDIEVAL HISTORY AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

“We have all come from the Devil,” King Richard I used to say of his family, “and to the Devil we will go.” This charming piece of family identity comes to us today from Gerald of Wales, a colorful chronicler of 12th and 13th century England. Gerald’s portraits of Henry II, Eleanor and their “demon brood” were generally not very pleasant. Gerald called Richard “Henry’s successor in vice.” Richard’s younger brother, Geoffrey, possessed, in Gerald’s estimation, a tongue that was “smoother than oil,” a mixed compliment at best. And Gerald described John “Lackland,” the punching bag of medieval English history, as immature, “rude” and given over to the “seductions of youth.” Yet despite his sensationalist focus on the sexual misdeeds and excesses of Henry’s family, Gerald also spoke with unmistakable awe and praise for the King’s virtues and power. The family may have come from the Devil, and indeed, the rather disastrous reigns of Henry’s sons suggested to contemporary chroniclers that the Devil was claiming his due, but Henry himself was undeniably a great man. He was “obstinate and obdurate,” but also eloquent, subtle, merciful and brave. With his fiery hair, unruly wife and power-hungry children, he was and is the stuff of legends.

Costume Rendering for Eleanor of Aquitaine, play by Shannon Cochran. Costumes designed by Nan Zabriskie.

Ladies of the period would be found in long garments. The outer bliaut (tunic, gown) became as fitted as fabric would allow and were laced up the side or back or even sewn on to get the necessary tightness needed to show off the form.
It is no wonder, then, that Henry and his family have captured imaginations since the 12th century. New scholarship, however, now chips away at some of the most accepted and beloved stories of the lives of Henry and Eleanor, and we are beginning to see that elements of the story, once held as fact, have little basis in evidence. And yet, these elements are no less true for their factual insufficiency.

As Writers’ Theatre prepares for its production of James Goldman’s *The Lion in Winter*, the most famous modern adaptation of this famous medieval story, it thus seems fitting to revisit the process by which the real became legend and the legend, in turn, became real.

Far from changing the historical narrative on Henry and Eleanor, Goldman’s play, carefully researched, is laudably true to the tenor of medieval sources on the lives of Henry and Eleanor. It is no accident that Goldman’s “imaginary king and queen and their imaginary children” are remarkably similar to the legendary characters that grace Gerald’s pages. In fact, despite a lack of corroborating evidence, the stories that have been told about Henry and Eleanor for the past 800 years have shown a striking consistency. This consistency feeds and sustains our imagination and it has become its own historical reality. We do not know whether Eleanor truly had an illicit relationship with Henry’s father, Geoffrey, before her marriage to Henry himself. Yet the truth is almost immaterial; it is now infinitely more meaningful that both Eleanor’s contemporaries and our own have found resonance in this aspect of her legend. While Eleanor likely never slept with her father-in-law, and she certainly never rode bare-breasted on Crusade, the enduring nature of these legends suggests that the hyperboles and fabrications carry a modicum of truth, even if they carry very little fact.


Playwright James Goldman tells us that “there are no signs of royalty, wealth or pomp” in Henry’s palace. Director Rick Snyder is interested in the simplicity and grittiness of the world of the play, so we will be portraying all the men in clothes very similar in shape to that of what we see on working peasants. Clothing of the period would be made primarily of wool and linen. Only a bit of silk or fine needlework would separate the rich from the poor.
These stories, then, that were told by medieval chroniclers and have been reframed by James Goldman, have thus become their own history. In the case of Henry and Eleanor, the entwined nature of fact and fiction from the very inception of the story is itself what gives social meaning to the story. Thus, in the end, Goldman the playwright and Gerald the chronicler, separated by 800 years, perform the same act: they immortalize the characters who occupied their own imaginations, and they immortalize the imaginative lens itself. Gerald wrote that “Life here below lasts a brief moment and is always in a state of flux. It is, then, a pleasant thought that one’s name will live forever and that, having won the right to eternal fame, one will always be praised and honored.” Today we can recognize that the fame, and thus the praise and honor, belong to writer and subjects alike.

Costume rendering for Richard, play by Lea Coco. Costumes designed by Nan Zabriskie.

In keeping with the simple, casual portrayal, the silhouette will be the short bliaut that was more practical for the working man instead of the angle-length robe that gained popularity among higher classes in the 12th century.

A REVIVAL OF NIXON’S NIXON
BY RUSSELL LEES DIRECTED BY MICHAEL HALBERSTAM
FEATURING WILLIAM BROWN AND LARRY YANDO

6 WEEKS ONLY!
August 19 – September 28, 2008
Performed at 664 Vernon Avenue

This limited engagement will sell out!
Special Season Ticket Holder Price: $54 until May 30, 2008 (Regular price: $60)

Just in time for the elections, we bring back our critically acclaimed, award-winning production of Nixon’s Nixon. This box office record-breaking production returns to our most intimate theatre for a limited engagement. Artistic Director Michael Halberstam will once again direct William Brown and Larry Yando as they reprise their tour-de-force performances as Kissinger and Nixon in this thrilling, hilarious and brilliantly imagined story of what might have happened in the Lincoln sitting room the night before Nixon resigned.
ARTISTIC CONVERSATION:  
PLAYING HOUSE WITH SHANNON COCHRAN AND MICHAEL CANAVAN

Following the trend of Tracy Michelle Arnold and Marcus Truschinski as Rosalind and Orlando in As You Like It, Shannon Cochran (Private Lives, The Father) and Michael Canavan (The Father), will appear as Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry II, King of England, in The Lion in Winter. Artistic Associate Jimmy McDermott recently interviewed the husband and wife team about the history in the play, of the play, and their own personal history.

Jimmy McDermott: The last time you both appeared on our stage was in 2001 with The Father by August Strindberg. Have you had occasion to work together on stage since?

Shannon Cochran: The Father was our first and only experience working together. In all honesty, I would prefer not to work together all that often, the way some couples do. I mean, how can you talk about anything new when you come home after work? Our first experience was certainly not typical. Michael came into The Father late in the rehearsal process because of a series of happy accidents and had to play catch-up from the moment he arrived. We didn’t have the luxury of working with the director together from the beginning, crafting the show as a team. This time around should be a lot more satisfying to all parties.

Michael Canavan: Shannon and I were also together a couple of years ago in Bug off-Broadway. I came into the show after it had been running for several months, so, once again, we didn’t share a full rehearsal experience. We performed together for over three months but it always slips her memory. I think it’s because she’d developed such a crush on Reed Birney, the actor I replaced.

Jimmy: What has been unique about your experiences performing at Writers’ Theatre?

Shannon: I started out in the bookstore space with Private Lives. I couldn’t believe we were going to do such a sumptuous, elegant play in that tiny space, but it really worked beautifully. The intimacy of the bookstore allowed us to do a kind of acting that you rarely get to do on the larger stages. I loved it. I also loved the Tudor Court theatre the moment I saw it. Though it’s larger, the construction of the space still allows for a very intimate exchange with the audience, which I think enriches the experience immeasurably.

Michael: One of the truly unique elements of the Writers’ Theatre experience in the bookstore space was the way audiences would talk to the cast through the curtains that defined the dressing rooms. It always sounded so spontaneous, they just had to say something about what they felt and there we were, a few feet away, it was irresistible. And perhaps because the performance had just ended, some would address their comments to the characters. It was great. It was also fun to overhear bits of conversation from other audience members who seemed to have no idea the actors were within earshot.

“THE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE SHOW SEEMED REAL AND PAINFUL.”

Michael: When did each of you first encounter The Lion in Winter?

Shannon: I saw the film when it first ran on television, back when dinosaurs still roamed the planet. Those used to be such big events, the first network airing of a major motion picture. I’ve never seen a stage production or the made-for-TV movie version, so I come to this with a fairly clean slate.

Jimmy: When did each of you first encounter The Lion in Winter?
Shannon: Of course I saw the movie as a teenager and one of the very first plays I did as a professional was The Lion in Winter. In fact, I was the young princess, Alais, and worshipped the actors playing Henry and Eleanor. They were so gifted with the language and so natural and familiar. The relationships in the show seemed real and painful, and just loved seeing how they translated the audience's response to these characters.

Jimmy: Have you played historical figures before? What type of preparation does that require?

Michael: To the best of my memory, I have never played an historical figure before…at least not on the stage. I did play James Monroe on a sitcom once and the preparation consisted entirely of putting on a very unpleasant wig. In the case of Eleanor and Henry, there is so much information available on the internet, it's a little overwhelming. Knowing the opinions of historians, or the guy at Wikipedia, is helpful, but actors frequently fall into the trap of putting on a very unflattering wig. They can engage with the internet, but not do biographical facts. You can learn so much about carriage and posture, as well as hair and apparel, of course.

Shannon: Usually for me, it requires doing some background reading on the period and perhaps the character. I'm reading a fascinating biography by Alison Weir, called Eleanor of Aquitaine, appropriately enough, which delves into the events which lead up to the play's action. I like to do some research into the arts and crafts of the period — music and paintings, fabrics and jewelry, weapons, tools, furniture and other things that you can engage in with your senses. They can give you a feel for a person in their original time and place. In the case of Eleanor and Henry, there is so much information available on the internet, it's a little overwhelming. Knowing the opinions of historians, or the guy at Wikipedia, is helpful, but actors frequently fall into the trap of putting on a very unflattering wig. They can engage with the internet, but not do biographical facts. You can learn so much about carriage and posture, as well as hair and apparel, of course.

Michael: Our primary responsibility is to the work of the playwright, not to the historian. That's one of the reasons it is so helpful to immerse yourself in the arts and crafts of the period — music and paintings, fabrics and jewelry, weapons, tools, furniture and other things that you can engage in with your senses. They can give you a feel for a person in their original time and place that lives more comfortably in your body than do biographical facts.

Jimmy: What edge do you think being a married couple gives you in playing these roles?

Shannon: I'm not sure it gives us an edge. Good actors always seem to find a way to convey marriage and intimacy in a completely believable way. I think we may have a bit of a shorthand with each other which should lead to a slightly more efficient way of working in rehearsal. We're the only two guest stars on the set of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine, and we're the only two guests on the episode, with the exception of Jonathan Frakes, a series regular on Star Trek: The Next Generation, who was guesting as his character's evil twin brother. The director was so busy kissing up to Mr. Frakes that he never bothered to learn Michael's or my name the entire week! Come to think of it, I don't think he gave us any direction either. So we basically only had each other to communicate with. It was a classic case of the character as mean as it's written in the script, and we still think it's just us.

Michael: It allows us to communicate with grunts and nods. Imagine that! I think the best story is that we met on the set of Star Trek: Deep Space Nine. We were the only two guests stars on the episode, with the exception of Jonathan Frakes, a series regular on Star Trek: The Next Generation, who was guesting as his character's evil twin brother. The director was so busy kissing up to Mr. Frakes that he never bothered to learn Michael's or my name the entire week! Come to think of it, I don't think he gave us any direction either. So we basically only had each other to communicate with. It was a classic case of the character as mean as it's written in the script, and we still think it's just us.

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The Lion in Winter holds a particular significance for this director. He played the role of Henry II while attending Illinois State University. When asked about his experience as the monarch, he remarks “I can’t remember much about it. I just remember I had lots of hair and that I was doing a Peter O’Toole impression because I thought he was so cool in the movie.” Rick also had his first opportunity to direct in college in a class “I did the Lenny/Curly’s wife scene from Of Mice and Men. One of my favorite plays ever. My roommate Chuck, a little guy, played Lenny. It worked anyway. I am still proud of that.” After graduation, Rick went on to build an impressive career as an actor with over forty credits at Steppenwolf alone. But he only recently returned to directing, a shift he found to be “truly refreshing and enlightening” in 2003 while helming Things Being What They Are at Steppenwolf. “I understand actors,” Rick elaborates, “Acting is hard. I learned quickly that an actor needs a director. They truly cannot know how they are being perceived and they certainly cannot see the whole picture. I try to take care of them. I enjoy that more than I can say.”

With such an eclectic mix of plays on his resume, one is tempted to ask Rick what is it about a script that draws him in as a director. He would respond, “Under the clever dialogue and mental fencing they are people driven by very real basic emotions, fears and desires. It is timeless that way. Nothing changes really.”

I grew up with three older brothers and a very creative and resourceful mother. Every fall she would build us Halloween costumes from scratch. One year I was Dorothy and my brothers were the Lion, the Scarecrow, and the Tin (foil) Man. Another year we were Goldilocks and the Three Bears. Mother insisted that our middle brother, Allen, six years old at the time, fulfill his predetermined role in the bear trinity. In his pink apron and pearl necklace and a wooden spoon in hand, he was the most miserable and indignant Mama Bear anyone had ever seen.

– LAURA COOVER

There was the incident of Little Christmas. My girlfriend Marguerite and I expected to stay aloof when some relatives came over to my grandma’s house the week after Christmas. So we pulled out the chess board. Little did we know we would be putting it away, just a few moves in. My great aunt Cecilia pulled us in with the conundrum of whether to get a dog, because it could scare off intruders, but then again it could just bark and make her think there were intruders, ruining the sense of safety it was there to create. My great uncle Dave designed Marguerite and my future, informing us that our first few kids could be bagpipers, but any more than that and they’d have to be drummers. After my grandma’s own Irish cream was passed around, we were all singing a hearty round of “In the Band.” We young folks learned a thing or two about partying from our elders that night.

– MICHAEL FAGIN
Our family motto, attributed to an unknown source, has always been: “Sarcasm, family size...subtle yet bitter.” The dinner table was always a place to exercise one’s wit, and a successful outing results in the reducing of your adversary to tears of laughter. In our opinion there are no better people to ruthlessly make fun of than the ones you love, and no one more likely to return the favor.
— Christopher McInden

My family once burned a house practically to the ground. We hadn’t spent a Christmas together in several years and a friend of the family offered their mountain cabin in Tennessee. I came from Chicago, my parents from North Carolina and my brother from Texas. We stayed up half the night in front of the fireplace, eating and talking, and the fireplace sleeve became overheated (not our fault technically, bad construction) and the whole chimney caught fire. We spent the rest of the night watching the fire department try to save the living room. Strangely, the friend hasn’t been heard from since.
— Shannon Cochran

My mother told me about the time one of her aunt’s water broke at Thanksgiving dinner. The aunt was understandably embarrassed but my mother says this kind of event is not the big deal they make it out to be in movies and everyone went on eating. “You know how we are about food,” she said, and I guess I do now.
— Michael Canavan

My parents took the ’80s like champions; they were divorced three years in. So now my family gathers in dichotomy. My mom’s side, all Berwyn born and bred, smoke around the dinner table and toss scathing sarcasm at each other like the failed Czech revolutionaries they see themselves as. My mom is an amazing cook and, in the end, we all find common ground in her culinary excellence and a shared nap. My father, who reinvented himself as a family man when marrying my Jewish stepmother, often leads the family in prayer before dinner, which is weird for me. However, the convention is calming and my new little brother and sister are as adorable as they are hyperactive. All in all, my family gatherings are as fragmented as the ’80s but they have one thing the decade totally lacked: love and compassion. Nonetheless, I’d stay away if I were you.
— Robert Belushi

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— Robert Belushi
At our final performance of *The MLK Project: The Fight for Civil Rights* at Francis Parker Elementary in Chicago, we had a dialogue that was unprecedented in the program: a student expressed a sense of disillusionment over the death of Dr. King. Unprecedented not because no one had ever pointed it out before, in fact, it was often the one irreconcilable point most noted by younger audiences as they struggled to grasp the positive message in Dr. King’s death. I say “unprecedented” because we had never been challenged to consider the implications of the death of our title hero. What did his death say about hope and the cost of freedom? How did the struggle for peace and unity ultimately result in violence?

If you have ever seen the play, you could argue that the main character, Alaya, is inspired to find inner peace when she interviews poet and civil rights activist David Hernandez. Up until Dr. King’s death, Hernandez was a supporter and participant in violent protest. “Peace after revolution,” says Hernandez in the play. “That was our motto: Peace after revolution.”

Later in the play, Alaya re-tells the moment when Hernandez is inspired by King’s death and discovers that his words are more powerful than his weapons. Recalling that monumental moment in history he proclaims, “It was on this anvil that my pen was forged.”

Still, it was impossible to ignore the fate of our celebrated hero and the implications made, not necessarily by the play, but by the unfolding of history. But I turned the question back around to them. You tell me. What is the cost of freedom? Are peaceful protests still relevant? Effective? Aren’t there enough laws to protect us?

Since the prospect that an African-American man or a woman might become president has been at the forefront of media coverage, the issues of prejudice, socio-economic disparity and the racial divide have been more prominent in the thoughts of Americans than they perhaps have been since the Civil Rights Movement. Discussing the cost of freedom, a young lady at Francis Parker said that freedom is much more affordable for some than others. She talked about the need to close the economic gap in American society so that freedom is, well, free…for everyone.

So, while *The MLK Project* takes a retrospective look at the Civil Rights Movement and issues of racism and inequality, it also prompts progressive discussions and provides fertile planting ground for new ideas and laws; marching grounds for social reform. One seemingly cynical student said that laws were irrelevant, that laws don’t change people, people change laws.

“But what changes people?” I asked.

“People,” he said. People.

The *MLK Project* will return again in winter 2009. Book your date today!

**January 19 – February 27, 2009**

*For more information please call Mica Cole, Director of Education, at 847-242-6007.*
On April 4, 2008, Writers’ Theatre celebrated its annual WordPlay Gala with over 350 friends and supporters. The glamorous benefit, held at The Peninsula Chicago, celebrated the art and artists of Writers’ Theatre and championed its bright future. The Gala was a resounding success, raising over $380,000 in support of continued artistic ambitions.

Gala Co-Chairs Patty Becker, Christie Osmond and Christine Pompizzi organized a thrilling evening which featured delectable cuisine, an exciting Live Auction and a rousing performance directed by Writers’ Theatre favorite William Brown. The evening commenced with a cocktail reception studded with theatrical displays offering a glimpse into the work behind the magic produced on the stages at Writers’ Theatre. Guests were then invited into the Grand Ballroom for a gourmet dinner with the glimmering lights of Michigan Avenue creating a festive backdrop for the evening. The performance featured cast members from the acclaimed Writers’ Theatre production of As You Like It. Wittily weaving together a satirical look at Writers’ Theatre’s previous and upcoming seasons, the performance was the highlight of the evening showcasing the vocal talents of Tracy Michelle Arnold, William Brown, Katie Jeep and Marcus Truschinski. The performers returned to the stage for the grand finale, a beautiful rendition of Andy Hansen’s delightful In the Springtime from As You Like It. Another highlight of the evening was the Raffle, featuring a 2008 Triple White Limited Edition Volkswagen Beetle or $20,000 cash as the grand prize. To the delight of all in attendance, the winning ticket belonged to Chris Knight, Board President. He promptly returned the prize, adding to the evening’s financial success. Guests were delighted when Chicago favorite Garrett Popcorn was delivered at the end of the night as a party favor.

The Writers’ Theatre Board of Trustees congratulates the Gala Co-Chairs on the tremendous success of the 2008 WordPlay Gala, and extends their gratitude to everyone who helped make the evening possible. Every year, the Gala Host Committee is the driving force behind the event. By filling their tables with enthusiastic theatre supporters, the Host Committee ensures the success of the Gala. We would like to recognize the following Host Committee members:

Philip & Janice Beck  
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1. Emily & Board President Chris Knight;  
It took hundreds of generous people making donations, purchasing raffle tickets and bidding on Auction packages to help Writers’ Theatre exceed its Gala fundraising goals. The Board of Trustees would like to thank all those who participated in the Gala through their generous donations, including:

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The Annual Director’s Society Garden Party

On July 13, 2008, Writers’ Theatre will toast its Director’s Society members at the annual Garden Party to be held at the home of Bill & Stephanie Sick overlooking Lake Michigan. The event will feature cocktails, hors d’oeuvres and an exclusive performance.

If you are already a member of the Director’s Society, please watch the mail for your invitation. If not, it’s not too late to join. The Garden Party is just one of the many benefits offered to members in recognition of their generous contribution of $1,000 or more.

For more information, or to join the Director’s Society, please contact Associate Director of Development Kellie de Leon at 847-242-6012.
SPONSOR SALUTE

Through the generous support of our sponsors we are able to produce shows of the quality for which Writers’ Theatre is so well known. Below are the sponsors who made The Lion in Winter possible:

**JPMorgan**

JPMorgan is a global leader in financial services. Through the JPMorgan Private Bank, the firm delivers customized wealth management advice and solutions, leveraging its broad capabilities in investing, tax and estate planning, family office management, philanthropy, credit, fiduciary services and special advisory services to help its clients advance toward their own particular goals. For more than 150 years, JPMorgan’s comprehensive product offering, commitment to innovation and integrity, and focus on placing the interests of its clients first and foremost have made JPMorgan an advisor of choice to people around the world.

**NES Rentals**

NES Rentals is a leader in the industrial and construction equipment rental industry. The company rents a wide variety of aerial lifts that position workers and materials to elevated work areas allowing them to get their job done quickly and safely. NES Rentals operates 80 branches locations in 29 states.

**Scott Byron & Co.**

Scott Byron & Co. is an award-winning landscape architectural company based on Chicago’s North Shore. The company is dedicated to creating environments that its customers are proud of and in which they can live or work comfortably. By offering an integrated system of design, installation, and maintenance, Scott Byron ensures its customers’ design and plant investment while sustaining the beauty of landscapes, allowing them to mature over time.

TOURS

Enchanted April

On Saturday, March 8th, twenty trustees and dedicated supporters of Writers’ Theatre traveled to Milwaukee to see a performance of *Enchanted April*, the play at Milwaukee Repertory Theater directed by Artistic Director Michael Halberstam. The group participated in an engaging costume lecture before watching the delightful production. After the play, everyone enjoyed a fabulous dinner at Kilwat. A great time was had by all.
The Stratford Festival

October 2–5, 2008

Join Artistic Director Michael Halberstam and Chicago Tribune former Chief Theatre Critic Richard Christiansen on a delightful and exhilarating trip to The Stratford Festival in Ontario, Canada.

A former Stratford Festival company member himself (1990, 1991), Michael invites you on this magnificent Shakespearean adventure, which continues Writers’ Theatre’s 13-year tradition of excellent performing arts tours around the world.

The trip includes roundtrip airfare on American Airlines, all transfers, accommodations at the charming Queen’s Inn, gourmet meals at award-winning restaurants, exclusive preparatory seminars and the best available tickets to Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, Love’s Labour’s Lost and Caesar and Cleopatra starring Christopher Plummer. Guests will also have the opportunity to add an optional performance of The Music Man.

The cost of the trip including airfare, accommodations and tickets is $1,950. The space on this tour is limited to 22 places, and reservations must be received by August 1, 2008. For reservations, please contact Associate Director of Development Kellie de Leon at 847-242-6012.

The 2008/09 New Year’s London Tour

Writers’ Theatre is pleased to announce the dates for our annual New Year’s Trip to London! This year, the tour will run from Tuesday, December 30 through Tuesday, January 6.

The trip will include accommodations at the exquisite Waldorf Hilton, and tickets to six must-see shows including Twelfth Night starring Derek Jacobi as Malvolio. Other highlights are dinner at Scott’s, one of London’s hottest new restaurants, and tea at the elegant Goring Hotel which is frequented by the Royal Family. The trip promises to be filled with unforgettable experiences, exclusive access, and first-rate theatre.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive information about this or other tours, please contact Associate Director of Development Kellie de Leon at 847-242-6012 or kdeleon@writerstheatre.org.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:
THE LION IN WINTER

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* Pre-Show Lectures

June 22 and 29, 2008 at 5 p.m.

Writers’ Theatre guest artists will guide patrons through the inner-workings of the play. The pre-show lecture for The Lion in Winter will be held at the Woman’s Library Club (325 Tudor Court, Glencoe).

** Post-Show Discussions

June 17, 18 and July 15, 16, 2008

Audience members will have the opportunity to engage with artistic staff and cast members to ask questions about the process, the characters and the production.

Dinner Theatre

Enjoy a meal at Morton’s The Steakhouse, consisting of a salad, entrée, dessert and a glass of wine for only $83, including tax! For more details or to purchase your meal, call the Writers’ Theatre Box Office at 847-242-6000.
Please join us in welcoming the following people to the Writers’ Theatre community!

New Trustee
Janice Beck was born in Cleveland, Ohio and spent her childhood in La Crosse, Wisconsin. She attended the University of Wisconsin, graduating with a degree in Communication Arts: Radio-Television-Film. After living in Boston and Washington, D.C., while her husband finished his studies, she moved to Chicago. Beck has worked with many community organizations, including as dues treasurer for the Junior League, treasurer and president of the Northwestern University Settlement House North Shore Board, manager for various Winnetka Hockey Club teams, program co-chair and House Walk co-chair for the Garden Guild of Winnetka and the Field Museum Women’s Board. Beck has lived in Winnetka for 22 years with her husband Phil and their three boys, Jeffery, Stephen and Gregory. Janice participates in numerous current events groups, a film group and two book groups and has a passion for skiing, golf, reading and, of course, the theatre!

Staff Update
Kellie de Leon
Associate Director of Development
Kellie, a proud native of Littleton, Colorado, has resided in Chicago since 2003. She received her BA in Theatre Arts from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After college, Kellie wore many hats including co-founding a theatre camp in Colorado, acting and teaching in Maryland and touring with the Repertory Theatre of America. She spent the past four years in Development at a non-profit organization in the Loop. Kellie resides in Chicago with her husband, Jose, and is excited to bring her development skills and passion for theatre to Writers’ Theatre.

Margaret Reeder
Director of Audience Services
Margaret comes to Writers’ Theatre with over 10 years of experience in Ticketing and Audience Services. Her first box office position was with Shear Madness at the Blackstone Hotel. Since then, she has managed the box office at Theatre IV, Virginia’s largest theatre, and worked for over seven years with Chicago Shakespeare Theater as the Director of Ticketing and Guest Services. Margaret is thrilled to be a part of Writers’ Theatre’s staff and looks forward to seeing you at the Theatre.

Thank You for Joining Us This Season
This year has been filled with plays ranging from classic to contemporary and from funny to touching and even chilling — all of which received rave reviews from audiences and critics alike. As we look toward the 2008/09 Season and the wonderful productions we have lined up for you, we would like to encourage you to renew your season tickets so that you won’t miss a moment!

Renew today!
As a Writers’ Theatre season ticket holder, you will receive the theatergoing experience that fits into your life while guaranteeing access to all four season shows...all this at one GREAT price! Your season packages will include:

More Shows!
- Guaranteed tickets to the 2008/09 Season productions: Picnic, The Maids, Old Glory and A Minister’s Wife.
- Exclusive advance access to limited-run engagements during the 2008/09 Season, including Nixon’s Nixon and A Christmas Carol.

More Savings!
- Season Ticket Holders save up to 30% off single ticket prices!
- FREE ticket exchanges by phone, mail and fax, with no upgrade charges if you change to a different day of the week.
- Book tickets for your friends and they will have access to great seats before tickets go on sale to the public at only $50 per ticket to any show of the four season productions.

More Flexibility!
- The Rain Check is a NEW benefit that allows you to make up a missed performance at no cost via our waitlist.
- Swap your season tickets from one season production to another once during the season with the Trade-A-Show Benefit.
- Exchange your ticket at no charge up to 24 hours prior to your scheduled performance.

More Service!
- Receive a free, one-year subscription to The Brief Chronicle, the Writers’ Theatre newsmagazine, providing an in-depth look at upcoming shows and events.
- Courtesy reminders will be sent to all season ticket holders one week prior to your scheduled performance.

Simply choose between The Membership that maximizes your flexibility or The Subscription that allows you to determine your schedule up front and call the Box Office to purchase or renew today!

The Membership: $180
Or
The Subscription: $200
Up to 30% off single tickets!
Up to 25% off single tickets!