

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF
WRITERS' THEATRE
ISSUE THIRTY-ONE
NOVEMBER 2010

THE BRIEF CHRONICLE



WT
WRITERS'
THEATRE

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“I HAVE NEVER
PLANNED ANYTHING
ILLEGAL
IN MY LIFE.

HOW COULD I WHEN I HAVE NEVER READ ANY OF
THE LAWS AND HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY ARE?”

- AUNT AUGUSTA, TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT

THE BRIEF CHRONICLE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSMAGAZINE OF WRITERS' THEATRE

ISSUE THIRTY-ONE NOVEMBER 2010

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Michael Halberstam
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Dear Friends,

It's always such an adventure to return to Books on Vernon. As the flagship performance space for much of the company's history, we're delighted to bring new life to our 50-seat theatre year after year, and this season brings a particularly exciting project. Our very own Associate Artistic Director Stuart Carden helms his first production at Writers' Theatre, directing Giles Havergal's brilliant adaptation of *Travels With My Aunt*. The marriage of the bookstore space to this fascinating and witty literary gem will provide you with a quintessential Writers' Theatre experience.

In this issue of *The Brief Chronicle* we look at the prolific author Graham Greene, from whose novel *Travels With My Aunt* was adapted. As a major literary voice in the 20th century, we examine Greene's work as it has been presented across a variety of mediums from stage to screen. It also gives us enormous pleasure to introduce you to Stuart.

It's always a privilege to honor our generous supporters as we did at the *Director's Society* 2010 Garden Party. Bringing the 2009/10 Season to a close, the Garden Party was a beautiful and perfect way to celebrate another remarkable season. In the meantime, the current season got off to a romantic start with a terrific opening night of *She Loves Me*. Also in this issue, we get to know the Writers' Theatre Teaching Artists. These four educators take the principals of the 'word and the artist' into classrooms throughout Chicago and the suburbs, nurturing future artists and integrating arts education into everyday curriculum.

Thank you again for your continued support. Each season we look forward to taking you on new and adventurous journey, and *Travels With My Aunt* will certainly be a lively stop along the way.

Sincerely,

Michael

Kate

Travels With My Aunt

BY **GRAHAM GREENE**

ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY **GILES HAVERGAL**

DIRECTED BY ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR **STUART CARDEN**

November 9, 2010 – March 27, 2011 | *Performed at 664 Vernon Avenue*

Henry Pulling, a mild-mannered retired banker, leads a quiet life tending his beloved dahlias and never strays too far from his Southwood, England home. But when his eccentric and outrageous Aunt Augusta suddenly appears in his life with mysterious information about his past, Henry is drawn from the safety of his flower beds into a series of exotic international adventures. Henry, Aunt Augusta and more than 25 of the characters they meet along the way are brilliantly and inventively portrayed by just four actors who switch identities, nationalities, ages and genders in this exciting theatrical escapade. Adapted from the celebrated novel by Graham Greene, *Travels With My Aunt* takes you on an irreverent, often hilarious and absolutely unforgettable adventure.

THE CAST: **LASHAWN BANKS, SEAN FORTUNATO, JOHN HOOGENAKKER AND JEREMY SHER**

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This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.



GRAHAM GREENE: LITERARY LEGEND

BY **BOBBY KENNEDY**, *Producing Assistant/Literary Associate*

Graham Greene was the greatest and most popular English novelist of his generation. His rich oeuvre, fondly referred to by fans as “Greeneland,” immaculately captures mid-20th century life and continues to thrill readers with its impeccably incisive yet humbly heartfelt character portrayals, all topped off by a boundless sense of adventure.

Henry Graham Greene was born October 2, 1904 in Berkhamsted, England. His father was Headmaster at Berkhamsted School and at the age of 13, Greene would leave his sheltered home for the boarding

school. Ruthlessly bullied and perpetually an outcast, his experience was so traumatic that he attempted suicide numerous times. At age 16 his parents sent him to a psychoanalyst who opened Greene up to his emotions and kindled his love of literature.

**INHERENTLY
CINEMATIC,
HIS STORIES HAVE
BEEN CONTINUOUSLY
ADAPTED INTO FILMS**

Greene excelled upon returning to school and went on to attend Balliol College at Oxford University. In addition to publishing a volume of poetry (*Babbling April*, which sold poorly), he founded the Mantichorean Society, whose secretive antics around campus would live on in the espionage plots of his future novels. After graduating, he worked as a trainee with the *Nottingham Journal* before becoming a sub-editor for *The Times* in London. The monotony of journalism

TRAVELS WITH MY AUNT IS UNIQUE IN THAT GREENE LABELED IT A NOVEL, RATHER THAN AN ENTERTAINMENT, DESPITE ITS LIGHTER TONE AND SIMILARITY TO EARLIER WORKS.

propelled Greene to continue writing creatively. His third finished novel finally attracted a publisher and *The Man Within* arrived in 1929 to critical acclaim and great success. *Stamboul Train* (published in America as *Orient Express*) was an even bigger triumph in 1932.

In addition to solidifying Greene's stature as a member of the English literary elite, his two early masterpieces, 1938's *Brighton Rock* and 1940's *The Power and the Glory*, were the first of what are referred to as his "Catholic works." Along with two other absolute

gems—1948's *The Heart of the Matter* and 1951's *The End of the Affair*—the books prominently feature Catholic themes and characters, even though Greene insisted he was not a Catholic writer; rather, he merely considered himself a writer who happened to be Catholic. A testament to their lasting impact, *TIME* magazine included both *The Power and the Glory* and *The Heart of the Matter* on its 2005 list of "The 100 Best English-language Novels From 1923 to the Present."

Inherently cinematic, his stories have been continuously adapted into films, including *Our Man in Havana* (with a 1959 film adaptation starring Alec Guinness) and *The Quiet American* (first adapted in 1958 and again in 2002, the latter earning actor Michael Caine an Oscar nomination). Greene's own foray into screenwriting, 1949's *The Third Man* starring Orson Welles, remains one of the most highly-regarded film noirs, with the British Film Institute lauding it the best British film of the 20th century.

Raised Anglican, Greene converted to Catholicism for Vivien Dayrell-Browning. The novelist fell for the 19 year old in 1925, writing her almost 2,000 letters in 30 months. They married in 1927 and would have two children before separating in 1947. Greene was a prolific philanderer, but never without remorse; his Catholic faith heaped tremendous amounts of guilt on the writer's conscience and irrevocably bound him to both his current and former loves. Greene's lengthy romance

with Catherine Walston—a beautiful wealthy married woman who converted to Catholicism because of the author's books, even going so far as to ask him to be her godfather—would ultimately lead to his separation from Vivien. Despite the many affairs perpetuated throughout his lifetime, Greene never divorced his wife or remarried.

Second only to his love for writing was Greene's penchant for travel. Beginning with an expedition to Sierra Leone and Liberia in 1935, the novelist traversed the globe over the course of his life. He often documented his trips, as he did with West Africa in *Journey Without Maps* and Mexico in *The Lawless Roads*. Later travels took him to West Africa again (for the British Secret Intelligence Service during World War II), Anacapri, Italy (where he wrote many of his later books), America, Vietnam (where he collected experiences for *The Quiet American*), Cuba and Paraguay.

Greene had the quirk of dividing his books into novels and entertainments. Thrillers such as *Our Man in Havana* were deemed entertainments, while more serious efforts such as *The Power and the Glory* were classified as novels. *Travels With My Aunt* is unique in that Greene labeled it a novel, rather than an entertainment, despite its lighter tone and similarity to earlier works in the entertainment vein. In fact, he began the novel more for his own amusement, confessing he had "no notion of what might happen [in the story] the next day." However, its

GREENE WAS A PROLIFIC PHILANDERER, BUT NEVER WITHOUT REMORSE

classification suggests that Greene had finally come to accept that his entertainments were just as significant as his novels. Never again would he release a book labeled an entertainment, and in the *Collected Edition* of Greene's works all are referred to as novels.

Greene died in 1991 at the age of 86 after his life spanned almost the entire 20th century. The legacy he left behind is stunning, with almost all of his work still in print and nearly half considered both masterpieces and essential documentations of their time. His writing style was so recognizable and popular that newspapers often held contests asking for parodies—which Greene often entered under a pseudonym, although he never won first prize. Queen Elizabeth II awarded him the Companion of Honor in 1966 and the very prestigious Order of Merit in 1986 for his esteemed contributions to our language's illustrious literary tradition. ■



INTRODUCING STUART CARDEN

BY BOBBY KENNEDY, *Producing Assistant/Literary Associate*

Since joining the Writers' Theatre staff in August 2009, Associate Artistic Director Stuart Carden has been a vital and beloved addition to the company, providing a fresh perspective and seamlessly integrating into the culture of the organization. As he directs *Travels With My Aunt*, Writers' finally welcomes the accomplished director to Books on Vernon.

Carden was born outside of Louisville, Kentucky in 1973, where his Welsh and Scottish ancestors were some of the earliest settlers. His parents and their siblings were the first generation in the family not to farm the land; instead his mother spent 25 years as a grade-school teacher before transitioning into a literacy specialist, while his father's interests led him to jobs in real estate, banking, insurance, a stint as a gelato maker and now he currently works as an organic farmer. Speaking about his upbringing, Carden recalls, "my brother, sister and I had an ideal kind of childhood. At home our mother gave us a passion for books and ideas, but because we grew up

on farms and near deep woods, we spent as much of our time outside exploring. This freedom fed our imaginations and allowed us to cultivate our own distinct, curious personalities and pursue our own passions."

THE ENERGY AND EXPERIENCE [STUART] BRINGS HAS INVIGORATED THE ARTISTIC LIFE AT THE THEATRE COMPANY.

His passions led him to Hanover College in Indiana where the future director started as a biology major with a focus on animal behavior and evolutionary theory. However, his priorities changed after he took an acting class with theater department head, Dr. Tom Evans. Carden recalls, "it activated my imagination in exciting new ways." The new found theatre enthusiast's focus changed from acting to directing after he helmed his first play, *Line*, an

absurdist piece by Israel Horovitz. “I immediately found the process so thrilling and infuriating that I knew I could spend the rest of my life as a director.”

While at Hanover, Carden received two awards that cemented his desire for a life in the theatre: a grant to study directing at The Mossovet Theatre in Moscow and a post-graduation honor (from actor Woody Harrelson, a Hanover grad) to serve as the “theatre lackey” and stay at the college for another year—acting, directing and designing for the theatre department. The experience led to an internship at Actors Theatre of Louisville under legendary Artistic Director Jon Jory, an early mentor of his. He also met another mentor at ATL with a wildly different directing aesthetic than Jory’s: the avant-garde theatre director Anne Bogart. After his internship, Carden followed Bogart to New York and assisted her SITi Co. on a number of new and devised pieces. Carden remembers, “I was steeped in incredibly divergent approaches to theatre at an early part of my career, one psychological and rigorously text based and the other highly physical, which have provided a compelling tension in the way that I think about directing.”

In 1999, Carden moved to Pittsburgh to attend the Masters of Fine Arts program in Directing at Carnegie Mellon University where he studied under another mentor, Mladen Kiesolov, resident director of the Bulgarian

I WAS STEEPED IN INCREDIBLY DIVERGENT APPROACHES TO THEATRE AT AN EARLY PART OF MY CAREER—ONE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND RIGOROUSLY TEXT BASED AND THE OTHER HIGHLY PHYSICAL

National Theatre. After graduation, he relocated to Chicago to pursue a freelance directing career and quickly developed a relationship with Silk Road Theatre Project, directing multiple Midwest and world premieres for the company. His production of Shishir Kurup’s Bollywood-inspired *Merchant on Venice* (an updated South Asian adaptation of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice*) made numerous citywide top ten lists in 2007. The successful director moved up the ranks at Silk Road, eventually becoming Associate Artistic Director of the company.

For seven years after graduate school, Carden worked “bi-coastally” (Lake Michigan and the Allegheny River), directing freelance in Chicago for most of the year and teaching summer courses at Carnegie Mellon. Right after graduate school, he started directing in Pittsburgh for Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre, tackling productions such as Marivaux’s *The False Servant* and Marie Jones’s *Stones in His Pockets*. Tracy Brigden, Artistic Director of City Theatre (a Pittsburgh theatre company dedicated to developing and

producing new work) was impressed by these productions and hired Carden to direct their Young Playwright’s Festival, later graduating to regional premieres on the main stage. In 2007, Carden was offered the Associate Artistic Director position at City Theatre and moved to Pittsburgh full-time. This was just six months after he married his wife, Neysa Page-Lieberman, Director of Exhibition and Performance Spaces at Columbia College Chicago—who did not make the move, instead staying with her job. In his own words, “what the hell were we thinking?!”

“I IMMEDIATELY FOUND THE PROCESS SO THRILLING AND INFURIATING THAT I KNEW I COULD SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE AS A DIRECTOR.”

After a stellar but lonely two years at City Theatre—directing on the main stage and producing both the Momentum Festival of New American Plays and the Young Playwrights’ Festival—Carden returned to Chicago last summer to be with his wife, where he planned to resume freelance directing and teaching. The return perfectly coincided with a vacancy at Writers’ Theatre, and at the urging of friends in the industry, he applied for the Associate Artistic Director position in Glencoe. During the interview process Artistic Director

Michael Halberstam described his vision for the future of new work at Writers’ and the opportunity to take a leading role in the Literary Development Initiative. Carden remembers thinking, “I’ve found my new home.”

Carden continues to direct at some of the most established regional theatres in the country, including The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, where he has directed Martin McDonagh’s blistering and bloody satire *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, Marilyn Campbell and Curt Columbus’s adaptation of Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* (which had its world premiere at Writers’ Theatre in 2003) and he has also returned to City Theatre to direct David Harrower’s *Blackbird*. Next season, he will return a third time to St. Louis to helm Sarah Ruhl’s recent Broadway debut, *In the Next Room (Or the Vibrator Play)*.

In addition to directing *Travels With My Aunt*, Carden has taken the lead in both casting the entire 2010/11 Season and stewarding the development of new work at Writers’ Theatre, which in the coming year will include two world premieres, several play readings and workshops of exciting original musicals. The energy and experience he brings has invigorated the artistic life at the theatre company. Writers’ Theatre is proud to have such an accomplished and sought after director as part of our staff and looks forward to sharing with audiences his take on *Travels With My Aunt*. ■

FUNNY FAMILIES

At the center of Travels With My Aunt is the flamboyant and outrageous Aunt Augusta who enters and up-ends the life of her straight-laced nephew Henry. The Brief Chronicle asks the cast if they have any unconventional relatives, family friends or mentors that have changed their view of the world.



LaShawn Banks

Mrs. Matthews was our pastor's wife who saw a spark in me that she thought should be nurtured. I was enrolled in our church's afterschool program, where we read, studied and took music lessons. It was a very formative time for me because in other areas of my life I was painfully shy. Thanks to her I was reading at a high school level and dancing Irish lilts by the fourth grade. I understand now what was of fundamental importance to her; it was helping children to find their voices and become productive members of society. A path was forged and a journey begun, and I am still on that journey and proud to be so. I like to think she would be proud of me as well.



Sean Fortunato

My high school acting teacher was a bit like a crazy aunt to me. She was a fearless comedian—never afraid of looking silly. She would certainly do and say outrageous things, but it was the absolute seriousness with which she'd handle a funny situation that made her unique. She also brought her improvisation teachings into her real life. In improv she would tell us, you should never say "no." "Accept, accept, accept," was her mantra. This strategy helped me deal with some of the potentially awful situations I faced early in high school. Rather than quietly taking the verbal abuse of my peers, I had new tools to deal with them, and through her example I realized that it didn't really matter what they were saying anyway.



Jeremy Sher

My dad's brothers, Uncles Julius and Stanley, were bachelors and lived together in a dumpy apartment until they died, in their 80's. Julius used to take me out in his silver Chevette with the nub of a pillow he'd always be rubbing like a binky. "Magasaki!" he'd yell when we'd slowly pull away on the green light. When someone would pass him doing 30 he'd holler, "slow down, you hamburger!" Stanley was a military attaché during World War II, and spoke several languages. He used to tell me, "go get yourself a 'diccionaire couchant'—you know, a lady friend. Best way to learn languages." He'd wink at me and pour more cheap gin into his plastic cup. They argued with each other incessantly. They hated each other. And they absolutely needed one another.



John Hoogenakker

When I was three, my family moved into a condominium complex in an underdeveloped swath of land in the southern portion of Charlotte, North Carolina. As I grew up, I had ample opportunity to explore the constantly developing environs we now called home, and it was on one of those occasions that I first met John Levin, who was probably in his late 60's. I was testing a parachute, constructed of plastic shopping bags, which would assist me with braking when biking at a high speed.

John lived at the top of a hill and had a great vantage point to observe the start of each run on my bike. I noticed him watching me and said, "hello." He said, "hello" back, and offered some technical advice. John was a Major in World War II (he would later give me one of his insignias) and had parachuted before. He could clearly relate to what I was attempting. John offered the novel idea of ditching the bag and starting out with the parachute spread out behind me, since the feel of the parachute catching the wind was what I was really going for after all. He was right.

John was one of the best friends I have ever had. He provided, for me, an inimitable model of how a grown man could be humorous and human in a single breath. He gave me the gift of humor as a means of expressing one's love for another and I would not be who I am this day if I hadn't met him that day, with my parachute.

WHY HERE?

The Brief Chronicle series continues with Writers' Theatre Artistic Director Michael Halberstam in conversation with *Travels With My Aunt* director and Writers' Theatre Associate Artistic Director Stuart Carden, who shares his insights into the wild adventure that audiences can expect at *Books on Vernon*.

MICHAEL HALBERSTAM: This is the first show you are directing here at Writers' Theatre. What about *Travels With My Aunt* captivated you?

STUART CARDEN: Lately, I've directed a spate of dark, emotionally taxing plays. In fact I was directing *Crime and Punishment* and delving into the psyche of one of the most tortured characters in all of literature when you suggested I read *Travels With My Aunt*. When I read it I laughed. At first I laughed at the characters; at the outrageous flamboyance of Aunt Augusta, the priggishness of her nephew Henry, and the worldview of a 16 year old pot-smoking American girl, oddly named Tooley. Then I laughed at the audacity

of the adaptation that asked four male actors to play more than 25 roles with a dizzying array of personalities, ethnicities, races, ages and accents. In addition, those characters travel from London to Paris to Istanbul to Paraguay by taxi, train, plane, boat and foot. Finally I laughed—with one part fear and one part thrill—at the idea that all of this will be taking place in our intimate bookstore space.

The play has great resonance and complexity too of course. It is after all based on a Graham Greene novel and even though he set out to write a “comic” novel, his incredibly perceptive and somewhat cynical world-view couldn't help but find its way into the story. This is one of the pleasures of the piece—the contrast between the story as a lark and the thematic knots that begin to form. One of those knots that I find particularly captivating in the play is the tension between the comforts of home versus the freedom of travel and change.

MH: You touched a little bit on the idea of actors taking on multiple roles in the production. Can you tell us more about that?

SC: It is a fairly common convention in contemporary plays for an actor to perform multiple roles. Think *I Am My Own Wife*, *Stones in his Pockets* or *Passion Play*. This tradition goes back to the theater's roots when the first Greek actor stepped out of the chorus and gave voice to multiple characters. Shakespeare may have played with this idea too, as some scholars have theorized that in his original production of *King Lear*, the actor playing Lear's daughter Cordelia also played The Fool. Whether this was an economic or thematic decision is up for debate. Part of the pleasure of seeing a play like this is watching an actor completely transform in an instant from one character to another. For me the thrill is not only marveling in an actor's technical skill but also the inherent implications of this transformation.

In *Travels With My Aunt*, adaptor Giles Havergal puts a fascinating

spin on this tradition. While he employs a similar convention, asking four actors to play multiple roles, Havergal also cleverly has each of these actors play the same role, the rather mild-mannered retired banker, Henry Pulling. Beyond it being quite fun to see four interpretations of the same character, I have a theory that Havergal employs this shared approach to heighten our interest in Henry and bind us to his journey.

MH: The play is an adaptation of a 1960's British novel. How will the material speak to our audiences?

SC: I asked Giles Havergal a version of this question when we spoke by phone. I wanted his impressions on how audiences at the premieres of *Travels* in Edinburgh and New York reacted differently given the key characters are British. Very enthusiastically he said, “no, audiences responded almost identically.” Certain British references or colloquialisms landed more piquantly in London but American audiences “got” the subtle satire of the American characters much more fully than British audiences.

WHY NOW?

WHY HERE? WHY NOW? CONTINUED

But more than the humor translating successfully, what audiences really connect to in the story is something quite universal: the clash of generations. Admittedly, the 1960's revolution of free-love and free-expression that completely overturned the more conservative values of the post-war generation was a particularly fierce and contentious clash, but every generation in its own way collides, reacts and defines itself in relation to the previous one. Havergal cleverly pointed out during our chat that "the intriguing thing that Graham Greene does is introduce Henry (who is a product of a more conservative generation) to the 1960's and the new world not by a young person as you might expect but rather by an older person." This is a marvelous conceit and a powerful image that universally resonates with audiences.

MH: How will the intimacy of Books on Vernon influence your production?

SC: The intimacy of the Books on Vernon stage puts an exquisite kind of pressure on the way we develop each character. In a larger space you might create a "character signifier" that is specific to each role that an

actor utilizes every time they change into that character. For example, let's say every time an actor crosses his legs in a certain way and lowers his vocal placement; the audience takes this as a cue that he has switched to a new character. This approach provides a clear short hand that indicates character shifts. Due to the exceptional intimacy of the bookstore, however, we are both challenged and given permission to work with more nuance. While signifiers will definitely be a part of our approach as we define the physicality, vocal pattern, tempo and gestural life of each character, the proximity of the audience to the actors asks for much more specificity, subtlety and ultimately, truth. The arch of an eyebrow, a hitch in the rhythm of speech, a pursing of the lips, a tremble in the voice or a shift in weight from the heels to the toes is all you need for a character transformation to register with the audience. We've cast four inventive and fascinating actors and I look forward to seeing what insights and character detail they bring to each of their many characters. ■

WHAT'S
HAPPENING
BACKSTAGE
AT WRITERS' THEATRE

A GARDEN PARTY WITH **THE *DIRECTOR'S SOCIETY***

On July 25, 2010, 100 of Writers' Theatre's closest friends gathered at the home of Trustee and Board President Elaine Tinberg for the 2010 *Director's Society* Garden Party, a thank you and celebration of the 2009/10 Season. Upon arrival, guests were immersed in the spirit of New Orleans; sipping hurricanes and sampling succulent Cajun-style hors d'oeuvres, they were serenaded by the lively notes of the Paradise Jazz Band while enjoying the beautiful weather. The afternoon culminated in the premiere of a suite of new songs written for *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Writers' Theatre Artistic Associate Joshua Schmidt, the composer of 2009's *A Minister's Wife*. The magnificent occasion was generously sponsored by Credit Suisse.

Events like these are among the many benefits offered to members of the *Director's Society*, a group of Writers' Theatre's most generous supporters. *Director's Society* members provide a secure financial foundation for the theatre through annual contributions of \$1,000 or more.

For information on becoming a *Director's Society* member, please contact Director of Institutional Advancement Carol Dawley at 847-242-6005.



1. Illinois State Senator Susan Garrett with Artistic Director Michael Halberstam and Executive Director Kate Lipuma
2. Trustee Christopher Knight and his wife Emily
3. Trustee Beth Kronfeld and husband Matt Means with Director of Institutional Advancement Carol Dawley
4. Trustee Pam Phillips Weston and her husband Roger
5. *Director's Society* members Mike and Jill Schield with Director of Education Nicole Gilman
6. *Director's Society* members Amalia and Bill Mahoney with Trustee Christine Pompizzi and her husband Michael
7. Development Manager Amber Bel'cher with *Director's Society* Member Ann Cole and Executive Director Kate Lipuma
8. Artistic Director Michael Halberstam with Trustee Mary Pat Studdert, Artists' Council member Mary Green and Executive Director Kate Lipuma

SHE LOVES ME OPENING NIGHT

The Writers' Theatre 2010/11 Season began September 23, 2010 with the opening of our first large-scale musical, *She Loves Me*. Writers' Theatre's most loyal friends and supporters were present to enjoy this delightful love story from the creators of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Afterwards, they joined Artistic Director Michael Halberstam and the cast for a celebratory reception featuring delicious morsels and miniature ice cream cones provided by Hel's Kitchen. In good cheer, everyone raised a glass of champagne (provided by Good Grapes of Glencoe) and toasted the beginning of yet another season of world-class theatre.

**A special thanks to our sponsors
for *She Loves Me*:**

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STUDDERT**

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Opening Night Sponsors



1. Executive Director Kate Lipuma and *Oh Coward!* director Jim Corti
2. *Director's Society* members Laura Kracum, Sara Pfaff, Bianca Juarez with her husband Rick Carpenter
3. *Director's Society* members Lloyd and Jan Culbertson, Mark Dawley and Chris Pfaff
4. Artistic Director Michael Halberstam, *She Loves Me* actress Jessie Mueller and guest with Production Sponsor Mary Pat Studdert
5. *Director's Society* member Sonia Marschak and Mary Bridges
6. Elizabeth Geraghty of the Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation and Artistic Director Michael Halberstam
7. Writers' Theatre Trustee Joe Dillon (Corporate Production Sponsor from Harris Bank) with his wife Kristin

FOOTLIGHTS & CANDLELIGHT

An exclusive entertainment package sold at Writers' Theatre's annual WordPlay Gala, *Footlights and Candlelight* provides a unique experience in addition to an evening of superb theatre. On June 6, 2010, Irene and Liesel Pritzker invited 14 guests to join them at a performance of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. During the intermissions, the group enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and champagne in a private salon. Following the performance they were treated with an opportunity to raise a toast on the intricate set with Artistic Director Michael Halberstam, Executive Director Kate Lipuma and *Streetcar* cast members Matt Hawkins and Stacy Stoltz. The party adjourned to the parlor for a delicious three course Cajun-inspired meal provided by Restaurant Michael of Winnetka.



Director's Society Members Irene and Liesel Pritzker with Artistic Director Michael Halberstam, Executive Director Kate Lipuma, *A Streetcar Named Desire* cast members Matt Hawkins and Stacy Stoltz, and guests (in alphabetical order): Lindsay Baran, Stella and Terry Boyle,

Judd Holzman, Dr. J. Larry and Michelle Jameson, Leah Karpel, Dr. Jayesh Meta and Dr. Seema Singhal, Jeff Nearhoof, Robert and Allison Sierens, Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Sheehan, and Dr. Christopher Strauss

MARK YOUR CALENDARS DON'T MISS THESE EXCITING UPCOMING EVENTS:

THE MAKING OF... SERIES

**A SERIES JUST FOR YOU, OUR SUBSCRIBERS, MEMBERS
AND SUPPORTERS!**

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13 - 6:30 PM

Join us for the second event in *The Making Of...* series on **Monday, December 13, 2010 at 6:30-7:30pm**, at Books on Vernon. Don't miss what promises to be an interesting and fun look behind the scenes of Writers' Theatre. Sound Designer and Composer Mikhail Fiksel will join Associate Artistic Director Stuart Carden to discuss the intricacies of live Foley work (sound effects) and the creation of sound and music for *Travels With My Aunt*.

All *The Making Of...* events are free, but space is limited; please RSVP to specialevents@writerstheatre.org or by calling 847-441-8194.



BEHIND-THE-SCENES BRUNCH SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2011

Director's Society members should mark their calendars for Sunday, **February 13, 2011** for the second annual Behind-the-Scenes Brunch. Artistic Director Michael Halberstam and William Brown, director of *Do The Hustle* will discuss the nuances of collaborating with a playwright on a new script as compared to reinvigorating a classic text like *Heartbreak House* by George Bernard Shaw, which Brown will direct later this season. It is sure to be a culinary delight with fare provided by Restaurant Michael of Winnetka to compliment an enlightening look into the creative process. We hope you will join us!



MEET THE WRITERS' THEATRE TEACHING ARTISTS!

Jennifer Avery, Lara Dossett, Amanda Jane Dunne and Nicole Ripley are Writers' Theatre teaching artists who work in schools throughout Chicagoland. Here, they share some particularly special teaching moments:

Jennifer Avery is a professional actor who has performed across Chicago for the past 15 years. Avery uses theatre games and writing exercises to teach the art of storytelling. Along with Writers' Theatre, Jennifer teaches for After School Matters, ChiArts and Timeline Theatre Company and leads a performance/poetry workshop at Senn High School. Avery was recently named the Artistic Director of Evanston's Next Theatre Company.

"Since we started the Novel Series Study Plan, it has become a profound and exciting experience to teach for Writers' Theatre. This curriculum has made so many kids love to read and express themselves through their experiences with literature. Last year I got to teach To Kill a Mockingbird (one of my favorite books) to an 8th grade class at Alcott Elementary School. The students created a play which presented a series of mock trials using the characters from the novel. Their play was funny and touching and delved into many of the themes and issues of the book."



Teaching Artist Jennifer Avery leads students in a small group discussion.

Lara Dossett is a theatre artist in Chicago who has worked with Northlight Theatre, The House Theatre of Chicago, Dream Big Performing Arts, Steppenwolf Theatre and Writers' Theatre to develop education programming, create curriculum and teach in-school and after school residencies. Her goal is to empower every student to live more presently as citizens and to be active participants in their lives and their communities.

"Teaching for Writers' Theatre is a wonderful challenge because every residency is created specifically for each classroom, ensuring an experience that will have a lasting impact on the students. At Rogers Park Elementary we studied a novel that is written in poems. Each student wrote a poem relating to the essential question of the novel: 'What makes a family?'" One fifth grader wrote about her unborn little brother and how she would take care of him for his entire life and couldn't wait to meet him. It was incredibly beautiful and insightful for a child who is only eleven years old."



Teaching Artist Lara Dossett watches as students rehearse their introduction.



Teaching Artist Nicole Ripley practices a scene with students.



Teaching Artist Amanda Jane Dunne introduces a student performance.

Nicole Ripley serves as a Teaching Artist as well as Writers' Education Liaison coordinating *The MLK Project: The Fight for Civil Rights*, the annual touring outreach production. She has also taught for Steppenwolf Theatre, Northlight Theatre Company and is currently the resident K-3 theatre teacher at Evanston's Dewey Elementary School. She is co-creator of *Project US*: a participatory theatre program that tours to schools promoting conversations around sexual health.

Ripley has worked in Northern Thailand with Gabfai Theatre and Sojourn Theatre in Oregon on a community-engaged devised production focusing on area issues and bringing communities together in conversation.

"I have the honor of touring with The MLK Project: The Fight for Civil Rights, which follows a young Chicago student as she studies the Movement. After the performance I facilitate conversations around race and racism as they exist today and our continued fight for social justice. I am continually humbled by students' willingness to ask difficult questions and to deeply investigate our social and societal fabric. It is moving to be a part of interracial, intergenerational, interfaith conversations that are getting deep into issues. I am continuously inspired by young people who, often against odds, are changing themselves and each other with the responsibility to continue to work for the legacy of tolerance and equality."

In addition to working with Writers' Theatre, **Amanda Jane Dunne** has taught for Steppenwolf Theatre, Northlight Theatre, American Theatre Company, Dream Big Performing Arts Workshop and Redmoon, as well as with the Los Angeles based Fringe Benefits since 2006. She is a founding member of Genesis Ensemble, with whom she is a performer and director creating ensemble-devised performances.

"When I was teaching at Kilmer Elementary, I worked with an 8th grade class on an adaptation of The Giver, where they wrote and inserted their own memories into the piece. The wrote about saying goodbye to a relative going to jail, remembering a baby sibling being born, looking forward to seeing mom waiting on the stoop after school and wanting to be a scientist to name a few. The memories and aspirations of these students and the beautiful way in which they articulated themselves was inspiring."

Bring a Teaching Artist
to your school!
Go to
writerstheatre.org/education
for more information.



Writers' Theatre Executive Director with Board of Trustee President Elaine Tinberg

ANNOUNCING WRITERS' NEW PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES, ELAINE TINBERG

Writers' Theatre is pleased to announce the election of Elaine Tinberg as the new President of the Board of Trustees. Tinberg joined the Board in 2009 and has consistently shown an extraordinary level of dedication, enthusiasm and leadership. In addition to serving as a member of the Finance Committee, she recently hosted the 2010 *Director's Society* Garden Party at her home in Winnetka. Please join the entire Writers' Theatre family in welcoming Elaine Tinberg into her new role!

A former CPA, Tinberg is retired from the business sector and is now an active community leader. She served on the Winnetka District #36 Board of Education and the Board of Governors (Treasurer) of the Winnetka Community House. She was also a founding member and Co-President of the Winnetka Public Schools Foundation and President of Winnetka Public School Nursery. Tinberg is currently a Director and the Treasurer of Erika's Lighthouse, a Winnetka based organization which is dedicated to educating the community about childhood and adolescent depression. She also volunteers for the Plants of Concern program run by the Chicago Botanic Garden. Tinberg lives in Winnetka with her husband, Rich and has two grown children.

Travels With My Aunt

NOVEMBER

sun	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat
7	8	9 7:30	10 7:30	11 8:00	12 8:00	13 4:00/8:00
14 2:00/6:00	15	16 7:30	17 Private Event	18 Private Event	19 Private Event	20 4:00/8:00
21 2:00/6:00	22	23 7:30	24 2:00/7:30	25	26 8:00	27 4:00/8:00
28 2:00/6:00	29	30 7:30				

DECEMBER

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JANUARY

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FEBRUARY

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MARCH

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20 2:00/6:00	21	22 7:30	23 2:00/7:30	24 8:00	25 8:00	26 4:00/8:00
27 2:00	28	29	30	31		

■ Writers' Wednesdays – Post-Show Discussion after evening performances only.

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Artistic Director
Michael Halberstam
Executive Director
Kathryn M. Lipuma

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