

trotted off to Vermont and then Virginia to do exciting and mysterious things that we're sure he'll tell us all about next season.

By now, you're all probably saying, "but what's **Jimmy Murtaugh** up to?" Only working with such A-Listers as Robert De Niro, Drew Barrymore, Sam Rockwell and Kate Beckensale! The film is called *Everything's Fine* and Jim shot it in Stamford, playing De Niro's family doctor. But the even bigger news: his daughter Erin was married on June 14th. Congratulations, Jimmy! (and to Erin, of course)

Margaret Nichols is working like a dog in real estate and taking a class at her church and going to the beach a lot. "None of which is very newsworthy," she says. Au contraire!

James Prendergast is just kicking back and taking the days as they come, ready for new adventures, or ready to keep on keeping on. One of those new adventures included a jaunt to Pennsylvania with TACT for *My 3 Angels*.

Greg Salata's summer meanderings have included a couple of readings: *We All Fall Down*, notable in that it was for The Pop Mega Hit Theater Co.—Mel McCue's *other* company (how does she find the time?), and a new play for Pam Berlin at EST. Oddly enough, both roles required a Russian accent. "[Mel's] play was quite comically deranged, and I thoroughly enjoyed it." Greg will also be trooping out to PA in July for *My 3 Angels*; his lovely daughter Justine will be playing Marie

Louise and his lovely wife Jo-Ann will be assisting Scott Alan Evans with the workshops for the students in the Bloomsburg University Upward Bound program. So, it will be a Salata family affair in PA!

John Plumpis is spending a few weeks this summer in Saugatuck, MI performing in *As Bees In Honey Drown* at the Mason Street Warehouse Theatre. John says Saugatuck is a lovely artists' colony/resort on the shores of Lake Michigan. "A beautiful spot. Come visit!" After that he'll be back in NYC for a few weeks in August, then off to Portland Center Stage in Oregon to play Nathan Detroit in *Guys and Dolls*. "Thankfully my lovely wife will be spending much of that time with me!"

The ever-industrious **Ashley West** is working on a new play called *Madison* at Premiere Stages on the campus of Kean University. The piece is a fictional look at the life and times of James and Dolly Madison. She can also be seen in photographer Amy Arbus' new book entitled *The Fourth Wall*. In the photographs Ms. Arbus used actors from Broadway and Off Broadway productions to explore what it is to be in character but out of context.

Finally, **Jamie Bennett** is moving, and he's hopeful to survive that. He's also hopeful to survive his father-in-law coming to New York for the first time ever. He thinks they're going to see *South Pacific*.

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TACT is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and a member of the Alliance of Resident Theatres /New York

Administrative Offices

900 Broadway, Suite 905

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Our 2008/09 season is made possible with public funds from the **New York State Council on the Arts**, a State agency and is supported in part by public funds from the **New York City Department of Cultural Affairs** and by an award from the **National Endowment for the Arts**



Sweet Sixteen!
TACT Announces
2008/09 SEASON

TACT Mainstage
at THE BECKETT THEATRE
THEATRE ROW 410 West 42nd St. NYC

Oct. 5 through Nov. 8, 2008
Bedroom Farce
by alan ayckbourn *(a comedy)*

Feb. 22 through Mar. 28, 2009
Incident at VICHY
by Arthur Miller

Salon Series (For Subscribing Members Only!)
at The TACT Studio 900 Bway, NYC

The Confidential Clerk by T.S. Eliot
NOVEMBER 15 - 17, 2008

The Late George Apley
by John Marquand & George S. Kaufman
DECEMBER 13 - 15, 2008

Ladies in Retirement
by Edward Percy and Reginald Denham
JANUARY 10 - 12, 2009

Edward, My Son
by Robert Morley and Noel Langley
APRIL 18 - 20, 2009

The Tavern by George M. Cohan
MAY 16 - 18, 2009

See page 7 for **Early Bird Membership** form

Alan Ayckbourn
& Bedroom Farce
"A veteran correspondent from the sexual battlefield."
- *London Guardian*

If London has been Alan Ayckbourn's open and passionate love affair, complete with picnics in Hyde Park and hand holding by the Thames, New York is his clandestine mistress, meeting infrequently and outside the gaze of crowds for intense but brief encounters. In New York, Ayckbourn has received generally good reviews, attracted some notable talent, and found receptive audiences. Still, he remains a secret for most New Yorkers. He has had over 35 premieres in the West End, including three in 2002, as opposed to just 10 appearances on Broadway – with his last original play appearing over fifteen years ago (he has had one musical and one revival since). As of late, Ayckbourn has been seen in New York only Off-Broadway in critically successful but limited runs, including two productions imported directly from England and directed by Ayckbourn himself. Part of the lamentable bias against his work in New York is a perception that Ayckbourn is primarily a commercial writer of popular comedies rather than a playwright of great literary merit, a reputation that is thankfully in the process of changing. Ayckbourn is extremely prolific, having written 72 full-length plays to date, and he has been translated into dozens of languages and performed around the world, but Americans still remain blissfully unaware of his output, a wrong that should be righted. It is time to take Ayckbourn out of the dark hotel room and bring him into the sunlight to meet the family.

Born in 1939 to a father who was the lead violinist of the London Symphony Orchestra and a mother working as a freelance writer for women's romance magazines, Alan Ayckbourn seems genetically wired to be an artist. His mother gave him his first typewriter, contributing to an early and doubtless embarrassing stream of childhood poetry and short stories. Any illusions of a glamorous arts-infused childhood were squashed, however, and the deteriorating relationship of his parents meant Ayckbourn hardly saw his biological

Alan Ayckbourn continues on page 3

The **ACTORS** COMPANY THEATRE
scott alan evans, cynthia harris & simon jones
co-artistic directors

Bedroom Farce
(a comedy)
by alan ayckbourn
Directed by Jenn Thompson

October 5th to November 8th
The Beckett Theatre/Theatre Row
410 West 42nd St. NYC

EARLY BIRD MEMBERSHIP FORM INSIDE!

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newTACTics

The Actors Company Theatre/ TACT and Silver Blue Pictures are proud to announce the new initiative: **newTACTics**, a program to discover, develop, and explore new works for the theatre. Dedicated to finding new plays that fit within the TACT aesthetic – theatrical works that focus on the text and the actor's craft – **newTACTics** seeks to encourage new playwrights as well as experienced, produced writers to continue to write for the theatre and to discover new ways to use the extraordinary language of the theatre to tell their stories.

newTACTics is interested not only in completed plays but also in works in progress, hoping to bring them to completion through the review, development, and staged reading process.

Although TACT is known primarily for its rediscovery of rarely seen and often unjustifiably neglected works, the company has considerable experience with the development of new plays through its Mainstage productions and Salon Series of staged readings. In 2004, Artistic Director Scott Alan Evans, playwright Christopher Piehler, and members of TACT's acting company, developed the script to *The Triangle Factory Fire Project*, which TACT produced in May of that year. The play has since been seen across the country (the published script is available through Dramatist Play Service).

Silver Blue Pictures was founded in 2002 by Barry Satchwell Smith in Los Angeles. Their produced works include the World premieres of *Mstrial* at the Court Theatre and *A Tad Bazaar* at the Comedy Theatre. Their most recent movie, *The Blue Hour*, was released last year and has been officially nominated at San Sebastian, Turino and Los Angeles.

For more information about **newTACTics** or to inquire about play submissions, email **Barry Satchwell Smith** at bss@tactnyc.org

QUEENS COLLEGE
LAUNCHES MFA PROGRAM IN
PLAYWRITING
IN COLLABORATION WITH
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Dramatic developments are under way at Queens College of the City University of New York! Building on the success of its MFA program in creative writing and literary translation, the school is joining forces with TACT to launch an innovative two-year MFA program in playwriting. This unique MFA curriculum—the only one of its kind—will allow would-be dramatists to have their scripts developed and performed by members of our acclaimed off-Broadway troupe, one of the few true repertory companies in the city.

Under the leadership of "Obie"-award-nominated playwright Richard Schotter, the Queens College MFA program offers the rare interplay of practical theatre experience and intensive workshop training. In Professor Schotter's words, "There's nothing more useful and exciting for a young playwright than to see and hear his or her work performed by professional actors in a real-world theatrical setting; that's what our partnership with TACT will provide." Participants will also have the chance to cross genres and study with members of Queens College's distinguished MFA faculty in poetry, fiction and translation.

For further information, visit the Queens College MFA Web site at www.qc.cuny.edu/Creative_Writing

COMPANY NEWS

Compiled by Jamie Bennett

TACT is delighted to announce the addition of two new company members: **Todd Gearhart** and **Mel McCue**. TACT audience will recognize Todd from his stunning portrayal of Dr. John Buchanan in our most recent production of *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale*. That performance tops off several previous appearances with the company in our Salon Series, including *Kind Lady* and *My 3 Angels*.



Mel McCue has been working as a stage manager with TACT since 2006 and has graced our backstage on our productions of *HOME*, *The SEA*, *The Runner Stumbles* and *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale*; and in our Salon Series with *The Chinese Prime Minister* and *The Andersonville Trial*. We are thrilled to include these talented theatre artists among our number.

Eve Bianco is doing voiceovers (audio books as well as commercial), and was getting ready for a two week trip to Portugal with the kiddos. We're sure she was more excited than the email suggested. She's also "looking forward to our first summer back in the city!"

Cynthia Darlow and **Richard Ferrone** recently returned from a two week business/vacation trip out west. They attended the Audiobook Publisher's Conference and Audie Awards in L.A., then came back east, but only as far as New Mexico. Cynthia was thrilled to climb Pueblo Indian cliff dwellings ("spectacular!") with her new knees. But it's back to work on July 1st in *Tell Out My Soul* by Jacqueline Honess-Martin at the Summer Play Festival at the Public Theatre. It runs only one week from 7/1-7/6. She's also recording two new audio books, a reading of a new play *Likeness* by David Caudle (to be directed by our own Jenn Thompson), and she went off to Lewisburg, PA. with TACT in *My 3 Angels*. But her biggest summer project will be embroidering the chuppah for her best friend's daughter's wedding! Busy fingers make happy hearts, as Granny always said.

Francesca Di Mauro is going away to Italy, taking along daughter Chiara, a small suitcase, and no BlackBerry. She is greatly looking forward to being totally unconnected for awhile.

Scott Alan Evans has had a busy Spring: he directed a production of *The Constant Wife* by Somerset Maugham for the NYU Graduate Acting Program; created and directed a theatre piece with *The Seven Last Words of Christ* by Hayden for the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center; and, finally, directed the gala benefit honoring Carl Reiner for The National Yiddish Theatre at Town Hall, with Mandy Patinkin, Theo Bikel, Dr. Ruth,

Fyvish Finkel, Rene Taylor and Jerry Stiller. He was part of the merry band that traipsed off to PA with *My 3 Angels* – he taught the workshop for the students in the Upward Bound program at Bloomsburg University. For the rest of the summer, he's looking forward to getting the new TACT season off the ground – he also hopes to get a little time off!

Cynthia Harris returned to NY after performing for 8 weeks at South Coast Repertory Theatre in Richard Greenberg's newest play, *The Injured Party*. The play was well received by audiences as well as *Variety* and *The Hollywood Reporter*, but there is no further news about a potential New York run. Since returning, Cynthia's also performed in Symphony Space's annual tribute to James Joyce on June 16th, along with many New York actors, including our own Delphi Harrington, and she headed out to PA with the troupe for *My 3 Angels*.

Simon Jones has appeared as Noel Coward (again) at the 39th Annual Richard Dodge Whittemore Book and Author Luncheon in aid of the Friends of Port Washington Public Library; workshoped a new musical, *Death Takes A Holiday* (book by Peter Stone and Thomas Meehan, music and lyrics by Maury Yeston); and narrated a script for a pharmaceutical company that included the words "juxtamerular" and "angiotensinogen" in the same sentence. He can also be heard but not seen at every performance of *The 39 Steps* at the Cort Theatre on Broadway, as the BBC Newsreader. In the Fall he will return to The Guthrie in Minneapolis to star as C.S.Lewis in *Shadowlands*, and hopes everyone who's able will come for a visit.

Jack Koenig is doing summer stock up the-ah (there) in Peterborough, New Hampshire; three great roles (*Stones in his Pockets*, *Private Lives*, and *An Ideal Husband*) in eight weeks. Then he's back to NYC ("...and unemployment" – though only briefly, we're sure) on August 11th.

Darrie Lawrence also went up New England way, going to Monomoy Theatre in Cape Cod to do Sister Aloysius in *Doubt*, performance dates July 22 -July 26...Darrie says "yes, it is a summer stock quickie but I am glad to create the role on my own after doing the National Tour as understudy last year." Hey, no judgment here, girl!

Ron McClary is still in Las Vegas where soon he'll be celebrating his one year anniversary of playing one of the dads in *Mamma Mia!* at the Mandalay Bay theatre. The show was recently extended until the end of this year and he hopes to be back in NYC and performing with TACT in early January.

Meanwhile, **Greg McFadden** performed in The Public's production of *Hamlet* in Central Park. Tragically, the run had to end (Get it...? Tragically? *Hamlet?*... never mind). Then he

COMPANY NEWS continues on page 8



JOIN NOW AND SAVE!

Become a member of TACT for our 2008/09 Season and see six extraordinary plays for one low price! Our Members get the best seats, the best service, and the best prices! Use this form and MAIL or FAX it in **before September 1st** and we'll even waive the processing fee!*

2008-09 MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS:

Bedroom Farce (Oct/Nov)
Incident at Vichy (Feb/Mar)

Salon Series (members only):

The Confidential Clerk (Nov) *Edward, My Son* (Apr)
The Late George Apley (Dec) *The Tavern* (May)
Ladies in Retirement (Jan)

MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES

- Exclusive access to Salon Series for you AND your guests
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The ACTORS COMPANY THEATRE

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MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS

at THE BECKETT THEATRE THEATRE ROW 410 West 42nd St., NYC

Oct. 5th through Nov. 8th, 2008

Bedroom Farce

by alan ayckbourn [a comedy]
directed by Jenn Thompson

A wickedly funny comedy that takes place over one very long Saturday night as Trevor and Susannah - doubting husband and questioning wife - travel from bedroom to bedroom reeking hysterical havoc on their family and friends, and leaving in their wake many a ruffled bed and tattered temper.

"An enormously funny evening." - London Observer.

SALON SERIES

(For Subscribing Members Only!)

at The TACT Studio 900 Broadway, Suite 905, NYC

Good Seeds, Rotten Eggs

This season's Salon Series theme revolves around heredity and how one generation so often tries to influence - even control - the next, usually with disastrous results.

The Confidential Clerk

by T.S. Eliot

NOVEMBER 15 - 17, 2008

Sir Claude Mulhammer decides to smuggle his illegitimate son Colby into the household by employing him as his confidential secretary. By so doing, he hopes his eccentric wife, Elizabeth, will take a liking to the boy and allow him to live as her adopted son. It will probably take Eggerson, Sir Claude's recently retired clerk, to resolve the complications.

The Late George Apley

by John Marquand & George S. Kaufman

DECEMBER 13 - 15, 2008

George Apley is the stuffy embodiment of old Boston tradition, suffocated and suffocating in "propriety". Will his son John and daughter Eleanor manage to break the shackles of family and tradition imposed by their elders? Or will they be crushed by the weight of their father's absurd pretensions?

Ladies in Retirement

by Edward Percy and Reginald Denham

JANUARY 10 - 12, 2009

Leonora Fiske, a retired lady of the chorus whose "investments" have paid off rather nicely, is not happy when her paid companion, Ellen Creed, invites her simple-minded sisters for a visit. When the visit turns into an extended stay, Miss Fiske is furious. Her mysterious disappearance seems the perfect solution, until Ellen's nephew, Albert, turns up.

Edward, My Son

by Robert Morley and Noel Langley

APRIL 18 - 20, 2009

An ambitious and unscrupulous business tycoon uses his power and wealth to smooth the path through life for his beloved son. His plan unravels, revealing that the flaws in his own character have influenced the behavior of his heir far more than any of his bullying interventions.

The Tavern

by George M. Cohan

MAY 16 - 18, 2009

On a dark and stormy night in a lonely tavern in the early 1800s, there gathers a strange group of people - the proprietor and his household, a mysterious itinerant woman, the State Governor (who has just been held up and robbed), and an enigmatic vagabond.

Feb. 22nd through Mar. 28th, 2009

Incident at VICHY

by Arthur Miller
Directed by Scott Alan Evans

"One of the most important plays of our time ... Incident at Vichy returns the theatre to greatness." - The New York Times

Controversial since its premiere, Arthur Miller's rarely performed 1964 play, *Incident at Vichy*, is that rare work capable of inciting impassioned responses. *The New York Times* review of the original Lincoln Center production called it, "one of the most important plays of our time."



Set in unoccupied Vichy, France in 1942, *Incident at Vichy* takes place in a detention center where a disparate group of men are waiting to be interrogated. Why are they there? What are the charges? While partly a cry of outrage against the Holocaust, *Incident at Vichy* is really much more - a blistering and intense exploration of the dangers of complacency, the ability to commit evil acts, and the importance of taking action. The men are varied; they include a painter, a businessman, a German major, a Communist, and an Austrian prince. Through the differing opinions and concerns of the ensemble cast, a microcosm is formed that illuminates the prejudices, insecurities, and unbreakable determination we all have the capacity to feel. As one of Miller's characters says, sitting on a bench and waiting to receive his inescapable fate at the hands of the Nazis, "Jew is only that name we give to that stranger, that agony we cannot feel, that death we look at like a cold abstraction. Each man has his Jew; it is the other." Relevant for all times and all places, poetic and precise in its stunning language, *Incident at Vichy* is a must-see work by one of the century's most important playwrights.

Alan Ayckbourn & Bedroom Farce

continued from page 1

father. Ayckbourn's step-father from seven-onwards was quite different - he was a bank manager. Further contributing to his development as an artist, Ayckbourn, like so many of his generation, was sent to a typically oppressive English boarding school. Ayckbourn did what all slightly offbeat, artsy kids do in those situations - learn to cope. Luckily, fate soon dwelt Ayckbourn a better hand in the form of a scholarship to a fine public school.

Under the nurturing environment of a schoolmaster with a love for drama, Ayckbourn found himself in America with a touring student production of *Macbeth*, and thus began his love affair with the theater. Coming into the profession as an actor, Ayckbourn spent his early career pulling connections and taking any job he could. He worked for a time with Robert Wolfitt, the legendary larger-than-life British actor who was the inspiration behind Ronald Harwood's landmark play *The Dresser*. Through this and other various jobs, Ayckbourn got a taste of everything about the theater - acting, lighting, sound, stage management, and, of course, the art of play watching. As he learned more and more about audiences and what made them respond, Ayckbourn was ready to begin a new phase in his career - playwright.

The catalyst for Ayckbourn's writing was Stephen Joseph, an opinionated producer with strong ideas about what theater was and how to bring it to an audience. Ayckbourn was recruited by Joseph to come to Scarborough, a small seaside resort town, and assist with the creation of a new repertory theater. Unknown to Ayckbourn at the time, Scarborough would become his permanent base, his home and the breeding ground for almost every one of his major plays. Ayckbourn's intense theatrical imagination and his experiments with theatrical time and space can be traced back to Joseph's influence. Perhaps most importantly, however, was Joseph's advice to Ayckbourn when Ayckbourn complained about the lack of good parts. Write one yourself, he said - and Ayckbourn did.

Square Cat, Ayckbourn's first major play, was produced in 1959 by Stephen Joseph in Scarborough. A sort of non-musical English *Bye Bye Birdie*, Ayckbourn featured himself as a romantic pop star who accepts an invitation to the country from a rabid fan, a mother whose family is less than pleased with the situation. Far from a theatrical masterpiece, the reception to the play was good enough that it encouraged Ayckbourn to continue writing.

Improving with each play, Ayckbourn soon started to attract some "positive press." The enthusiastic review that got West End producer Peter Bridge up to Scarborough was actually written by the theater's managing director since the regular drama critic couldn't be bothered to attend. The show, *Standing Room Only*, was about a massive traffic standstill in the futuristic London of 1997. It never made it to the West End despite a lot of effort from Peter Bridge. Bridge

knew he had found a talent in Ayckbourn, however, and produced Ayckbourn's play *Mr. Whatnot* in London, Ayckbourn's West End debut.

Ayckbourn's breakthrough play, *Relatively Speaking*, opened in London in 1967. A massive success in the West End, the play is an epic tale of mistaken identity - the young boyfriend mistakes his girlfriend's older lover for her father and wishes to get his approval for marriage, and the older lover mistakes the younger boyfriend as his wife's lover. Convinced now he could make it as a playwright, Ayckbourn devoted himself full-time to the business. 1967 was also a landmark year for Ayckbourn. From that point forward, Ayckbourn's career sped up to an amazing extent. He continued his association with Scarborough and officially became the artistic director of the Library Theatre in 1971 (which was later moved and re-named the Stephen Joseph Theatre). His play *How the Other Half Loves* enjoyed enormous success in the West End. While the play is remarkable for its exploration of theatrical time and space, overlapping two dining rooms on one space and simultaneously displaying two separate dinner parties taking place on two different nights, its 869 performances must be chiefly attributed to Robert Morley, who turned the play into a star vehicle for himself. Ayckbourn's West End output grew exponentially: *Time and Time Again* in 1972, *Absurd Person Singular* in 1973, and *The Norman Conquests* in 1974.

It was this last play which had the greatest impact on the perception of Ayckbourn. While *Absurd Person Singular* was viewed as a massively entertaining comedy and enjoyed a long Broadway run in addition to its West End production, *The Norman Conquests* established Ayckbourn as a dramatist not merely content to produce easy, simple commercial comedies. A trilogy of plays taking place in different locations around the same house, *The Norman Conquests* are a stunning tour-de-force, viewable as separate plays but combinable into one massive tapestry in a marathon back-to-back performance. More than just a theatrical feat, however, *The Norman Conquests* display Ayckbourn's talent for turning bitter and harsh relationships into comedy. The critics responded and began to see Ayckbourn as more than a pleasing writer of light comedies.

Peter Hall, then director of the National Theatre, took notice. Faced with financial burdens and the construction of a new theater complex, Hall needed a play that could be commercially successful and still stay true to the non-profit National Theatre's mission of presenting engaging, complex work with artistic value. *Bedroom Farce* was the result, written on commission for the National and the first play Ayckbourn wrote for a subsidized rather than a commercial theater. Ironically, *Bedroom Farce* turned out to be one of Ayckbourn's lighter, funnier, and more accessible plays, but in Peter Hall's diaries, he astutely notes that "it has a serious and true heart...[the play is], among all the jokes very sad." A huge success for

the National when it premiered in 1977, *Bedroom Farce* was transplanted, cast intact, to America, becoming Ayckbourn's fourth Broadway play. While it ran for some time, it failed to attract an audience in line with the English production, something Ayckbourn attributes to an American assumption that a National Theatre sponsored play was supposed to be dark, serious, and suitably deep. Still the production garnered 4 Tony Award nominations (including Best Play) and won two of them. The National (and its audiences) were pleased, and Ayckbourn began a long relationship with the theatre that has led to many more productions (the latest, *House & Garden*, premiered in 2000). Stateside, Ayckbourn would not have another Broadway production for 12 years.

Still, Ayckbourn never slowed down. He had nine West End premieres in the 80's, ten in the 90's, and is going strong in the 2000's with five and counting. He is, to this day, still the artistic head of the Stephen Joseph Theatre in Scarborough. After a stroke in 2006, Ayckbourn has announced that he will be ending his tenure as artistic director of the Stephen Joseph Theatre in 2009, but he plans to continue writing and directing one new play a year, continuing his fifty-year relationship with the theater.

While his work has continued to grow and evolve, *Bedroom Farce* seemed the perfect candidate to reintroduce Ayckbourn. Recently revived by Ayckbourn himself in Scarborough and in the West End in 2002, it is time for New York audiences to learn what Londoners have long known. Aside from a few small productions in the 80's, *Bedroom Farce* has not been in New York since the initial 1977 Broadway production. It displays many of the things that make Ayckbourn unique - comedy that relies on situation rather than one-liners, inventive stage layout, and a refusal to sacrifice the realism of his characters for cheap laughs or neat candy-coated endings. It is a very funny play, but one that rings emotionally true and lingers in the air, laughter masking tears.



Alan Ayckbourn

4 The Season Round-Up

The **ACTORS** COMPANY THEATRE

"The Actors Company Theatre is easily among the city's most valuable troupes."

Peter Filicia, Theatermania.com



January, 2008

The Andersonville TRIAL by Saul Levitt

With Company Members: SIMON JONES, SCOTT SCHAFFER, SEAN ARBUCKLE, JOHN PLUMPIS, JAMES MURTAUGH, LARRY KEITH, JAMES PRENDERGAST, RICHARD FERRONE, JAMIE BENNETT and Guest Artists: DAVID CHRISTOPHER WELLS, SHANNON MICHAEL WAMSER

Stage Manager **MEL McCUE**
Music by **AMIR KHOSROWPOUR**
Directed by **GREGORY SALATA**



February, 2008

IF MEN played CARDS as WOMEN Do by George S. Kaufman

With Company Members: GREGORY SALATA, SCOTT SCHAFFER, JAMIE BENNETT, & RICHARD FERRONE



& The DOCK Brief by John Mortimer

With Company Member: LARRY KEITH and Guest Artist: JOHN HORTON

Stage Manager **AMY M. SCURA**
Music by **AMIR KHOSROWPOUR**
Directed by **JOHN PLUMPIS**



Mainstage Season at Theatre Row 410 West 42nd St. NYC

The ECCENTRICITIES OF A NIGHTINGALE

by Tennessee Williams
Directed by Jenn Thompson
April 27 through May 24, 2008

with
**Mary Bacon*+, Nora Chester*+, Cynthia Darlow*+,
Francesca Di Mauro*+, Todd Gearhart*+, Larry Keith*+,
Darric Lawrence*+, John Plumpis*+,
James Prendergast*+, Scott Schaffer*+**

PSM **Mel McCue+** AD **Jay Cohen** ASM **Syche Hamilton**
Press & Publicity **Joe Trentacosta** General Manager **Cathy Bencivenga+**
Springer Associates PR

Sound design by **Daryl Bornstein+** Props by **Jennifer Blazek** Music by **Jonathan Fairman+**

Scenic design by **Bill Clarke** Costume design by **David Toser+** Lighting design by **Lucrecia Briceno**

* member Actors' Equity Assoc.
+TACT company Member



The opening scene of *Eccentricities*
Photos by Stephen Kunken

REVIEWS for ECCENTRICITIES

"Excellent ... Heartbreaking ... The production is brisk and taut." - *The New York Times*

"A Haunting, vibrant revival ... An exquisite work." - *Variety*

"Transcendent ... must viewing for anyone who cares about Williams' exalted position in American theatre." - *Theatremania*

"A rare treat ... lovely ... lyrical. A Must See." - *Curtainup*

"Wow, Wow And Wow. And Wow. This lovingly produced revival ... is absolutely essential for anyone interested in Williams' work." - *Edge NY*

"Superb...a master class in Williams" - *The New Yorker*

"A revival of extreme importance ... A revelation." - *Wolf Entertainment Guide*

"If you care about American theatre take this opportunity to see this work." - *Nytheatre.com*

"Tender and affecting ... Stunning." - *Offoffonline*

"Sensitive ... Impressive" - *Backstage*

"Terrific ... its delicate music will hover in your heart." - *Theatre Scene*



Mary Bacon as Alma and John Plumpis as the Salesman in *Eccentricities*.



Mary Bacon and Darric Lawrence as Mrs. Buchanan in *Eccentricities*.



Cynthia Darlow, Ashley West and Mark Montgomery in *The Runner Stumbles*.
Photo by Jennifer Maustrais

Mainstage Season at Theatre Row 410 West 42nd St. NYC

The RUNNER STUMBLES

by Milan Stitt
Directed by Scott Alan Evans
October 27 through November 24, 2007

with
**Jamie Bennett*+, Cynthia Darlow*+,
Christopher Halladay*, Chris Hietikko*, Julie Jesneck*,
Christina Bennett Lind*, Mark L. Montgomery*,
James Murtaugh*+, Ashley West*+**

PSM **Dawn Dunlop*+** Assistant Director **Barry Satchwell Smith** ASM **Mel McCue+**
Press & Publicity **Joe Trentacosta**/Springer Associates PR General Manager **Cathy Bencivenga+**

Sound design by **Daryl Bornstein+** Props **Esther Neff** Music by **Joseph Trapanese**

Scenic design by **Dana Moran Williams** Costume design by **David Toser** Lighting design by **Mary Louise Geiger+**

* member Actors' Equity Assoc.
+TACT company Member

REVIEWS for RUNNER

Images of metal bars, white on black like Wedgwood patterning, run around the shallow stage where the Actors Company Theater revival of "The Runner Stumbles" is set. The bars sometimes denote a prison, sometimes a church confessional; often the sense of constraint that fetters the lead characters, a priest and a nun; and always the eye to detail that makes this production, directed by Scott Alan Evans, so compelling. - *The New York Times*

"An intense revival under the aegis of the estimable Actors Company Theatre." - *Backstage*

"The set design by Dana Moran Williams is wonderfully practical, beautiful, and ironic." - *New Theater Corps*

"The nine-person cast brings deep emotionality to the production." - *Backstage*

2007/2008 Guest Artists

Actors

Mike Anderson
Nicola Victoria Buck
Curzon Dobell
Matt Fraley
Todd Gearhart
Christopher Halladay
Chris Hietikko
John Horton
Julie Jesneck
Christina Bennett Lind
Mark L. Montgomery
Joel Rooks
Dana Smith-Croll
Shannon Michael Wamser
David Christopher Wells

Directors/Designers/Production

John Anselmo, master electrician
Drew Barr, director
Jennifer Blazek, props master
Lucretia Briceno, lighting designer
Patrick Cecala, technical director
Bill Clarke, set designer
Jay Cohen, asst. director
Raquel Davis, lighting designer
Syche Hamilton, stage manager
Sung J. Hong, composer
Mel McCue, stage manager
George Alberto Pires, wardrobe supervisor
Amy M. Scura, stage manager
Rien Schlecht, wardrobe supervisor
Joseph Trapanese, composer
Dana Moran Williams, set designer
Harris Yulin, director

Interns & Volunteers

Kristen Vaphides
Kristin A. Vieira
Matt Herzfeld
Tammy Forward
Reena Bahadur
Aurora Zinder

Guest Speakers TALK BACK

Kevin McMullen (coordinator)
Paul Senzer
Anne Kaufman
Dan Dillon
Michael Bachrach
Thomas Vandanabeele

Thank you one and all!

We're asking company members to name their favorite five roles with TACT. Margaret Nichols has been a company member since 2001/02. She'll be featured in *BEDROOM FARCE* this Fall.

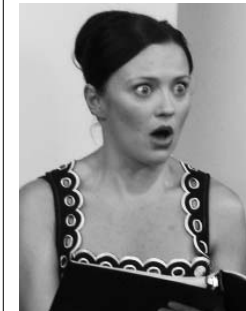
Margaret Nichols MY FAVE 5



Publicity photo for *The Rivals*



Eurydice in *Eurydice*



Josefa in *A Shot in the Dark*



Zoya in *A Handsome Man*



Sadie Thompson in *Rain*

By happenstance I was cruising the TACT website recently on a lazy mid-afternoon summer day—clicking on company members names to reminisce and remind myself of past productions. I surprised even myself to find that I had 20 TACT credits to my name. 20! Gosh, has it been that long? Have I been that busy? Has the company been charmed/fooled/generous/supportive of me for that long? Well, quite obviously, the answer is "YES."

TACT welcomed me early in my New York tenure as a young actress, and I could not be more grateful for the artistic abundance with which its actors, designers, directors and, of course, family of audience members, welcomed me. As I think about it, it really has been an "old-school" education. The likes of which harken back to bygone days, before formal graduate school programs and elliptical computerized lighting. My years with TACT call to a time where an actor cut their chops in a world of necessary theatrical extremities. Where a single company would choose a group of plays to hold fast, deem it a season, and cross their fingers as they distributed the roles to its members. I could not have been blessed with a more prosperous character diversity as my schooling, and I am thankful to my fellow artists' and our audiences' continual patience and support as I take those stumbling steps that are necessary for growth.

So with all that being said, my FAVE FIVE:

Lydia Languish in *THE RIVALS*, by Richard Sheridan. She's pretty, petulant and perfectly adorable. And what incredible language!

The title role in Jean Anouilh's *EURYDICE* was a wonderfully dark challenge - a French woman looking back on her glamorous, alternative life and how true love gone awry can alter the course of our lives forever.

The sexy, good-hearted, welcoming maid Josefa in *A SHOT IN THE DARK*, by Henry Kurnitz, was great fun. An innocent seductress with an inadvertent wake of men in her past; a simple, foolishly devoted woman who only wanted to enjoy life's pleasures and live in the moment.

Zoya in Ostrovsky's *A HANDSOME MAN* (adapted by Scott Alan Evans and Greg McFadden) was a wife torn between a blinding love for her charismatic husband and good old-fashioned common sense. Why is it that women's intuition is so often skewed by a man's chiseled face and a dazzling smile?

And, last but not least, Sadie Thompson in *RAIN* proved to be my most challenging role to tackle in such a short period. A woman trying to escape her dark past and make a fresh start is derailed and deflowered by a close-minded religious zealot. Her bright and shiny exuberance is mowed down by a constricting belief of what is right and wrong in this world. A powerful play that still deeply resonates today, when holy wars are still being waged the world over.

All these roles, and more importantly, the artistic community that TACT provides have been such a gift. In these times of over-stimulation where we can no longer even ride in a taxi unassaulted by the media, to focus on words, slow down and appreciate our theatrical history and take pride in theatrical excellence is not only a luxury, it is our soul's necessity. How fortunate we all are to share in these experiences.