



June/July 2007
complimentary copy

“Burlesque, Berettas and Blackmail” Begins!

Black Sheep Theatre presents David Mamet’s dark thriller, *The Water Engine*, directed by Meredith Powell, as the featured performance during an evening of theatre, song and dance.



The evening will showcase Miss Lola Goetz and a Fan Dance in the Garden of Eden, an authentic yet tasteful rendering of the age-old art form ...burlesque! Miss Goetz is portrayed by Laura Rose, who uses music and movement to entertain and delight audiences of all ages. Ruth L. Hollinger will also sing a program of hits from the 1930’s and 40’s. The festivities will be held July 6, 7, 12 and 14 at 8 p.m. and July 8 and 14 at 2 p.m. Seating is limited, and advanced tickets are strongly recommended.



Above: Chris Quinn as “Bernie;” above right, Meredith Powell in a tense moment.

Tickets for “Burlesque, Berettas and Blackmail” are \$12 in advance and may be obtained by calling (585) 663-1938 or (585) 746-7616. Special prices are available for students, seniors, and RoCo members. Call for more information. \$15 at the door. Personal checks, Visa and MasterCard accepted.

Philadelphia Story Cast

Black Sheep’s next theatrical venture begins shortly as we embark on the production of Philip Barry’s *The Philadelphia Story*. Several talented local artists have been cast and we are pleased to announce the Black Sheep debut of several newcomers to our stage. Returning to the Black Sheep lime light are Christine Wade, last seen in *Miss Julie* and currently appearing in *The Water Engine*; and Jim Toepper, who appeared in *11 Variations on Friar John’s Failure with Romeo, You Idiot*, and is also featured in *The Water Engine*. *The Philadelphia Story* will star Miss Wade as Tracy Lord and feature Mr. Toepper as Uncle Willy. Audiences will also see LuAnn Bement as Margaret Lord; Fiona Criddle as Dinah Lord; Lou Cinelli as Seth Lord; Darrin Brooks as Macaulay Connor; Susan Snachkus as Liz Imbrie; Vessy Jivkova as Elsie; and Margaret Cain as Thelma. We are still looking for three 30-40 year old men to play a few more parts, including Alexander “Sandy,” brother to Tracy and Dinah; Mac, the Night Watchman; and C.K. Dexter Haven (the Cary Grant role in the film version of the same story). Those interested should contact the director, Diane Mashia, at (585) 746-7616 to arrange a reading. Show dates are scheduled for September 7, 8, 9, 13, 14, and 15. Tickets will be available in August.

Ramblings from the A.D

by Meredith Powell, Artistic Director, RBSTC

With *The Water Engine* opening just around the corner, I thought it would be appropriate if I gave some new directors a few tips on how to stay sane in the final weeks before the show opens – specifically, the week before tech week when you start to realize all the things you still have to get for the show.



- 1) **Find some time** – even if it’s just an hour – to sit in front of the television do nothing. Do not answer your phone. Do not check your email. Do not answer your door, unless there’s someone outside yelling, “Fire!” and you actually see the smoke. (continued on p.2)

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Come Cheer on "Team Black Sheep!"

Dateline: Black Sheep's Team for Marathon

Mission: The Arthritis Foundation

Scheduled: September 16, Sunday, 8 a.m.

Goal: raise \$400 for the Arthritis Foundation

In line with our "theatre with a conscience" mandate, Black Sheep Theatre will promote and sponsor a team of marathon runners for the Arthritis Foundation's Rochester Marathon, Sunday, September 16, 2007. Liz Novak, Black Sheep Theatre's own Publicity Goddess will Captain the team of four women. Running along side Liz will be Margaret Cain, Vessy Jivkova, and Marie Quinn. The women will run the relay marathon, covering between six and seven miles each, for a total of 26 miles, throughout downtown Rochester and the surrounding areas. Jen Rybak, who also serves on the Black Sheep Board of Directors, will coach the team for optimum performance. Rybak is a seasoned and experienced runner and also an alumna of the famed Boston Marathon. The first \$200 raised by the team in sponsorships is needed to fund the team's entry fee to run the marathon. All additional donations will fund Arthritis treatment and research development. If you would like to help sponsor the team, you may do so by contacting Liz at (585) 503-5274, or at info@blacksheeptheatre.org.

Managing Volunteers

Diane Mashia, Managing Director, RBSTC

When I ask not-for-profit leaders about their greatest challenges, at the top of their list are usually two things: raising money and finding volunteers. Recruiting reliable volunteer talent can be challenging, especially in an area such as ours, rich with opportunities to get involved. There are several things you can do to increase participation of your membership and improve the retention of your volunteers.

- **Know what motivates people.** People volunteer for various reasons. Provide opportunities that speak to their needs: physical, social, political, personal, spiritual and familial.
- **Engage people on their own terms.** Some people have lots of time to devote and can be involved in long term projects or on-going initiatives. Others need short term or "one time only" assignments. Make sure you are clear of the time commitment you ask of people before they get involved. (continued)

Ramblings from the A.D (cont'd)

Make sure what you're watching is completely mindless and requires no thought whatsoever to enjoy it. I recommend *America's Got Talent* or something equally benign. If you try to keep up with an episode of *CSI* or, heaven forbid, *Lost*, your brain could explode. Pair an hour in front of the television with a beer, and you're golden.

- 2) **Bubble baths.** Whether you're male or female, bubble baths are a fantastic invention. They give your muscles a chance to recover from all the running around you're doing for your show, and if you have a nice lavender bubble-bath mixture to use, whether it be soap, bath salts, or bath beads, it will also provide the necessary relaxation aromatherapy. Pair half an hour in the tub with a glass of wine, and you're golden.
- 3) **Take the day off** from work. Even if it's one day before the show opens, where you can do dishes, laundry, vacuum, get your house into some sort of reasonable resemblance of a place where someone *lives*, and not a sad dwelling that was recently victim to a tornado, and you'll feel much better about where things are. Pair a day off from work with a fifth of scotch, and you're golden.
- 4) **Take a second day off** from work. You'll want to plan this about a week in advance of the show's opening, if possible, so you can run around town getting those last minute things that you haven't picked up for your cast yet. If you're lucky enough to have a props master/mistress, you can instead sit home, put your feet up, and catch up on *Maury Povitch*, to see if that chick's found her baby's daddy yet. Pair an afternoon watching *Maury Povitch* with some vodka shots (I recommend taking one every time Maury says, "[Insert name here], you are *not* the father"), and you're golden.

And finally:

- 5) **Keep your sense of humor.** No matter what happens, if you don't have your sense of humor when your show is about to open, you won't have a hope of maintaining your sanity. Hopefully you don't need to pair your sense humor with a bottle of tequila to be golden.

Above all, remember there's a reason you do theatre. There's a reason you took on this role as director. It's because you love the art form and all it brings. You love the play you're directing (or at least, you *should*). You love the people you're working with (or at least, you *should*). And finally, you weren't really that sane to begin with, so if a little more of your sanity slips away, it's not that big of a deal. *MP*

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- **Recognize efforts.** Recognition doesn't have to cost much and it really doesn't have to cost anything at all. Learn to say "thank you" on a regular basis, to your volunteers.

As for fundraising and becoming financially solvent ... we'll tackle that one next month! *DM*

Black Sheep Announces Third Great Season

Rochester's Black Sheep Theatre's Artistic Director is proud to announce our 2008 season to include our full scale productions of:

Rashomon by Fay Kanin and Michael Kanin
**A Good Ol' Fashioned Melodrama, or,
As the Soap Opera Turns** by Meredith Powell
Macbeth by William Shakespeare
An Enemy of the People by Henrik Ibsen
adapted for the American stage by Arthur Miller
Dead White Males by Wiliam Missouri Downs

Auditions will be announced in the local media as well as on the Black Sheep website. Look for various staged readings and scripted performances throughout the year.

Pay it Forward

Global Issues: *Alternative Fuels*

Black Sheep Theatre's July production, *The Water Engine*, begins with the premise of an inventor who creates a motor engine that uses distilled water as its only fuel. In choosing this production, we considered the political and economic climate of today. Given what we see happening at the gas pump these days, a exploration of alternatives to gasoline has significant merit.

Alternative fuels include ethanol, natural gas, propane, hydrogen, biodiesel, electricity, methanol and p-series fuels. Such fuels are being used worldwide in a variety of vehicle applications. Using these alternative fuels in vehicles can generally reduce harmful pollutants and exhaust emissions. In addition, most of these fuels can be domestically produced and derived from renewable sources.

The U.S. Department of Energy website (www.eere.energy.gov) is an excellent resource for anyone wishing to learn more about how alternative energies and fuel sources can drastically affect the world economy, political climate and global biosphere. Please visit the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPAAct) web site for more about alternative fuels at www1.eere.energy.gov/vehiclesandfuels/epact/.

Black Sheep

In the Wings

Now Playing:

The Water Engine

by David Mamet

directed by Meredith Powell
Starring: Louie Podlaski, Gina Menzer-Kunz, David Spiro and Christopher Woods

Featuring: Katherine Mueller, Vince Dalba, Kim Niles, Christopher Quinn, JP Simpson, Troy Sullivan, James Toepper, Christine Wade, Diane Mashia, with a special appearance by Meredith Powell

July 6, 7, 12, and 14 @ 8pm
July 8 and 14 @ 2pm
Rochester Contemporary
137 East Avenue, Rochester
Tickets \$12 and \$15
Group, Senior and Student prices available
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Rochester's Black Sheep Theatre Coalition Board of Directors

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Rochester's Black Sheep Theatre is a coalition of performing and visual artists promoting education and community service through the fine arts. We are in residence at the Rochester Contemporary Art Gallery (RoCo) on East Avenue in the City of Rochester. www.rochestercontemporary.org. For more information, please call 585-746-7616 or info@blacksheeptheatre.org



Pennies for Plays!

Black Sheep Theatre has begun a new fund raising campaign, "Pennies for Plays." Our goal is to raise \$10,000 within the next five years ... *all in pennies*. That's one MILLION pennies!

The campaign runs now through June of 2012 and is the brain child of Managing Director, Diane Mashia. "I've always been inspired by stories of people who set seemingly impossible goals and overcome insurmountable odds to reach them," she said. "I also recently read a story about a man in New York City who tried to pay for his lunch from a street vendor using pennies and was refused service. It caused quite an uproar and ended up in court and everything." Mashia then thought it might be fun to combine those two ideas in a creative fund raising initiative.

Here's your chance to do something with that extra pocket change that does nothing but take up space and is more trouble than it's worth ... and you can help fund future Black Sheep Theatre projects at the same time! Look for your favorite Black Sheep member with a "Penny Pouch," to hit you up for your loose change. Remember: *pennies only!* Unless it's copper, you can keep it!

Overcoming the Stage "Jitters"

By Diane Mashia, director *The Philadelphia Story*
Now appearing as "Mrs. Varec" in *The Water Engine*

Actors are a superstitious type. We can't mention "the Scottish play" by name in a theatre and God forbid you should wear peacock feathers in your costume! Many of us also have our "traditional" rituals and routines we use to help us prepare and focus for a performance, that range from uniquely personal to the downright bizarre. I myself usually pray or meditate to get focused so I can remember my lines and blocking. I generally don't eat for several hours up to a performance, but I was curious to know what other rituals, ceremonies, or habitual patterns the actors appearing with me in *The Water Engine* use to keep them grounded and calm before "breaking a leg."

"I need music that makes me excited and emotional," shares Gina Menzer-Kunz. "The last Black Sheep show I acted in, I played Dashboard Confessional and danced around until the house opened. Song and dance does it for me!" Says Louie Podlaski, "I honestly don't do anything and have no superstitions and I never get stage fright. The only tradition I have is before auditioning I always watch the movie *Tootsie*."

"I get horrible stage fright," says Katie Mueller. "While I'm waiting for my cue I'm usually trying to find a way to get out of performing. What I really need is someone to push me on stage. Once I'm on I'm fine. But the anticipation kills me! As for rituals, I usually make sure to have a tissue in my bra. It's a tradition I started in ninth grade. Not only does it calm my superstition but it's good to have in case I get a runny nose."

Podlaski adds, "I abstain from sex until after opening night, so after we open ladies, come get some!" *DM*

Education Director Appointed

Black Sheep is pleased and proud to announce the appointment of Jeanine Gallina, a professional education administrator and academic advisor, to the office of Black Sheep Theatre Coalition's Education Director. Gallina will work closely with the Board of Directors to spear-head the Coalition's educational branch.

Gallina holds a Master of Science degree in Educational Administration from the State University of New York at Brockport, and her Diversified Work Experience Coordinator Certification from Nazareth College. She attended Pepperdine University School of Law and also has a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from Niagara University. Says Gallina, "I've been looking for an opportunity like this for a long time. I'm delighted to be working with Black Sheep and such an enthusiastic Board. It's great to hear about actors and other performers who are interested in using their art to educate and enlighten, as well as entertain."

Jeanine will be developing several educational initiatives in 2008 and 2009, including programs for students, parents and educators in the Rochester city and surrounding schools. We are very excited about these initiatives and welcome your ideas. Please contact Jeanine at info@blacksheeptheatre.org.