



rochester's
**Black
sheep**
theatre
coalition

**complimentary copy
march 2008**

Our New Digs!

**274 N. Goodman Street, Suite D313
Rochester, NY 14607**

Black Sheep Theatre moves to the Village Gate!

Boy have we been busy! Summer 2007 brought a hugely successful production of David Mamet's *The Water Engine*, directed by Meredith Powell. Our final production at the Rochester Contemporary Art Center, the play starred Louie Podlaski as Charles Lang, and featured David Spiro, Christopher Woods and Gina Menzer-Kunz.

Finding ourselves homeless, the hunt was on for a new space, and we were fortunate to find a permanent location in the Village Gate Square.

First up at our new digs was *A Night of Terror!* Three creepy one act plays were performed in October, including *The Shirkers*, *The Monkey's Paw*, and an original work by Meredith Powell, *The Shadowy Third*, from a story by Ellen Glasgow.

We've settled in quite nicely, having turned what was little more than a concrete box into a cozy and intimate setting. Still seating only 50 patrons at once, Rochester's Black Sheep Theatre is poised to make an indelible mark on the theatre scene in Rochester.

Stay tuned for more success stories ...!

Ramblings from the A.D. Meredith Powell

You're a young actor starting out in the theatre and you're trying to get your start, so you check the Web sites of every local theatre company waiting to see postings for auditions. You see they have shows coming up, maybe there are some roles

you're right for, and after all, everyone has to start *somewhere*. As you continually check the Web sites, though, you start to notice that many of the plays are being cast without the auditions *ever being posted*. What has happened? Did you miss the auditions? Were they listed in another spot? Or is something else going on? (continued on page 2)



The Ewe is Back!

After a long hibernation, *The Tattooed Ewe* returns, bringing you the latest in Black Sheep Theatre news, information, education and projects!

Please enjoy your complimentary copy. If you have a story, article ideas or feedback for our editorial staff, please contact us at info@blacksheeptheatre.org.

Thanks, and enjoy The Ewe!

Comedy at its Finest

Theatre opportunities abound in Rochester! And Black Sheep is no exception. Here are just some of the terrific projects we have planned for the year. See more theatre!!!

***The Philadelphia Story*, by Philip Barry**

Directed by Meredith Powell

July 18, 19, 25 and 26 @ 8 pm. July 20 @ 2 pm

The Broadway hit and beloved classic centering on Tracy Lord of the Philadelphia Lords, the inhibited and spoiled daughter of the privileged, comes to Black Sheep's "Little" theatre! Divorced from her childhood friend, C.K. Dexter Haven, Tracy is now engaged to George Kittredge, a successful young snob. The day before the wedding a gossip weekly sends a reporter and a camera woman to report the wedding arrangements. Tracy finds herself growing interested in Connor, the fascinating reporter, and when she over-imbibes at the rehearsal dinner, she ends up taking a moonlight swim with the charming Mr. Connor, only to meet her ex-husband and fiancé on the way back home (in a bathrobe and carried by Connor, no less). The tables are suddenly turned and Tracy finds herself rethinking her recent matrimonial decision. A charming tale, *The Philadelphia Story* remains an intelligent, sophisticated, classic romantic comedy-farce of love and marriage, human growth and class distinctions.

***The Hill of Victory*, by Meredith Powell**

Directed by Louie Podlaski

October 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25 @ 8 pm, October 12 and 19 @ 2 pm

Come see the show that started it all! Fran Gelica, a Hollywood writer, and Stella Kubrik, a director, have a long line of failures behind them in the hunt for that elusive prize - a hit show. Finally they've got their shot, with "Victory Hill," a dreadful night time soap opera set in, of all times, the 1890s. But they've got a hook, something they believe will make the show a hit - a plan to tape each show live on air in front of a studio audience! What they've also got is a cast full of rivals, no actors for their commercials, and a producer and network censor trying to sink the show. It's mayhem, music, drama and delicious divas all mixed in. Don't miss "The Hill of Victory!"

Improv-a-thon 2008 a Success!

February 8 – 9, 8 pm to 8 pm

Actors, singers, improvisors and other performers converged on Black Sheep's "Little" Theatre last month for 24 fun-filled hours of performance hilarity. Primarily a fund raiser, the evening featured the antics of Rich Hughson and Jeff Peden of Airplay Jugglers; the play-writing talents of Meredith Powell and Louie Podlaski; and the improv talents of Liz Novak, Jen Rybak, Troy Sullivan, Amanda Kellogg, Diane Mashia and a number of guests. Actors were invited to seek pledges from sponsors, for either a flat dollar amount or a per-hour pledge. Although none of the participants made it the full 24 hours, some came close with 12, 15 and 18 hours for many! A second Improv-a-thon is planned for September. To participate or make a pledge, contact info@blacksheeptheatre.org or call (585) 746-7616.



Jeff Peden
(above) and Rich
Hughson of
Airplay Jugglers,
at Improv-a-thon
2008.



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Ramblings *(continued from page 1)*

I have chosen this topic because our Managing Director was recently contacted by a young actor who was running into this exact problem and wanted to know if we were holding open auditions for any upcoming productions, or if we were casting "by invitation," since he has been noticing this trend with local theatre companies. Generally, I am not a fan of precasting productions. Maybe it's because my background is acting, or maybe it's because I've wasted time on auditions that I really had no shot at getting because the director already had someone else in mind and *no one* else really stood a chance, or maybe it's my innate sense of fair play. Having said that, I do think there are times when it's acceptable to precast:

- 1) When it's a small production (like a one-woman or one-man show).
- 2) When the part calls for a *very* specific "type" (I was involved in a production of "Great Expectations" a few years ago and Miss Havisham was precast, and frankly needed to be, and the director stated that up front).
- 3) When it is an original production, with a part (or parts) specifically written for certain actors.
- 4) When your theatre has a history of low turnout at auditions.
- 5) When you have made it clear that your policy is to cast by invitation and not by audition.

I am sure there are quite a few directors on the planet that can come up with a larger list than that, but those are the only ones that pop into my mind. Yes, it's natural for directors to have an idea of what they want – maybe even a hope for who they'll get – but deciding ahead of time has consequences, sometimes for the production, most often for the acting community. But we'll have more on that in our next issue. *M.P.*

Black Sheep "In the Wings"

An Enemy of the People by Henrik Ibsen

directed by Michael H. Arve

Starring David Spiro, Rich Hughson
Steve Elliott, Amanda M. Byrd, Meredith Powell
Phillip Ortolani and Vince Dalba
with Michael H. Arve as Peter Stockmann

March 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29 @ 8pm
March 16 @ 2pm
274 N. Goodman Street, Suite D313
Tickets \$12 and \$15
Group, Senior and Student prices available
Box Office (585) 663-1938

SAVE THE DATES!

April 5 @ 7:30 pm
Celebrate Spring! Wine Tasting

May 16, 17 @ 8 pm
May 18 @ 2 pm
Festival of New
and Emerging Artists

Tickets and info call:
(585) 746-7616

Calendar 2008

All events take place at the Black Sheep "Little" Theatre, 274 North Goodman Street, Rochester, Suite D313, unless otherwise noted.

March 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 27, 28 and 29

An Enemy of the People
by Henrik Ibsen
Adapted by Ed Scutt and Michael Arve
Directed by Michael Arve

April 5

"Say Hello to Spring" Wine Tasting
7:30 p.m.

May 16, 17, 18

Festival of New and Emerging Artists

June 13 and 14

Black Sheep's 2nd Annual "White Elephant" Sale
26 Kerry Park, Pittsford, NY 14534

July 18, 19, 20, 25, 26

The Philadelphia Story
by Philip Barry
Directed by Meredith Powell

July 29, August 5, 12, 19, 26 and Sept 2

Acting Classes

September 5 – 6

Improv-a-thon 2009: "Nothing is sacred. No one is safe."
24-hour acting marathon

October 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25

The Hill of Victory
by M.L. Powell
Directed by Louie Podlaski

November 8

"Haunted Holiday" Wine Tasting

December 27

Holiday Celebration
Place TBA

For more information, tickets, reservations, or to join our team of volunteers, please contact info@blacksheeptheatre.org.

Photo Gallery

Top to bottom: Louie Podlaski and Diane Mashia, *The Water Engine*; Beth Winslow and Jennifer Blatto-Vallee, *The Shadowy Third*; Jennifer Blatto-Vallee and Fiona Criddle, *The Shadowy Third*; Colista Turner and Louie Podlaski, *The Shirkers*; John Clay, Ken Dauer, Chris Woods and Kathy Dauer, *The Monkey's Paw*.



The Monkey's Paw, as Himself



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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 274 North Goodman Street, Suite D313, in the Village Gate Square. For more information, please call 585-746-7616 or info@blacksheeptheatre.org

Black Sheep's Artistic Director Named one of Rochester's "Up and Coming" Women

Rochester's Black Sheep Theatre is pleased to announce that Artistic Director, Meredith Powell, has recently been named one of Rochester's Up and Coming Women by the Rochester's Women's Network. Powell was chosen from dozens of candidates and is only one of 15 women being so honored this year.

"It completely took me by surprise," said Powell. "Especially since I am being honored in the category of The Arts. I don't yet do theatre as full time paid work," she continues, "so it's gratifying to see women in the performing arts in Rochester being recognized."

Diane Mashia, who nominated Powell, adds, "Merrie is very well deserving. When I first approached her about the nomination, we both thought she had a pretty good chance of being chosen, but we were still anxious. I can't tell you how pleased I am that Meredith won the award."

Powell will be honored with the other recipients at the RWN's Business Conference Luncheon at the Rochester Convention Center on May 2. Black Sheep will have a booth in the Exhibit Hall that day, to promote *The Philadelphia Story*, their up and coming production, in July of this year.

For reservations and information about the awards luncheon, contact the Rochester Women's Network at (585) 271-4182 or www.rwn.org.

Are you a Professional or an Amateur?

Guest columnist, Michael H. Arve

- The Amateur lives to glorify his talent.
- The **Professional** lives to glorify his craft.
- The Amateur thinks his success is due to his natural talents.
- The **Professional** knows that his success comes more from his work than any one of his abilities.
- The Amateur expects his successes to find him.
- The **Professional** strives to create his successes the way he desires them.
- The Amateur is certain he knows his craft.
- The **Professional** is certain he will never truly understand it.
- The Amateur's idea of great success is to be "the best" actor.
- The **Professional's** idea of great success is simply to be an actor.

Michael H. Arve is a nationally known award winning Director and published poet. He is currently serving as the Theatre Association of New York State (TANYS) Chair for Festival 2008; TANYS V.P. for Public Relations and Conferences and Workshops; and Director of Development for the Greater Rochester Repertory Companies, Inc. He is directing and starring in Black Sheep Theatre's An Enemy of the People.

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Black Sheep Membership

Theatre ain't cheap! Did you know one script for one actor can cost as much as \$21? Or that rights and royalties to perform a playwright's work can be anywhere from \$50 to \$200 *per performance*? That costumes must be made or rented (and dry-cleaned!) and can run in the thousands of dollars for one production?

You can help! Every dollar counts and your generous (tax-deductible) contribution becomes part of our legacy to provide quality theatre, service and educational programs. Please consider becoming a Black Sheep member and becoming part of a "Theatre with a Conscience." Annual contribution levels:

Studio Head - \$1000
Producer - \$500
Director - \$200
Playwright - \$100
Wandering Minstrel - \$50
Crew Member - \$20

Receive a variety of gifts and benefits with every donation!

To give of your time, treasure or talent, please contact Troy or Amanda at info@blacksheeptheatre.org.
Your gift is PRICELESS.