

STAGE CENTER THEATRE

NEWSLETTER FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2008

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2007-2008 Stage Center Theatre 40th Anniversary Season

Studio Series Presents *Oedi & Joe and Stew's Theatre of Brotherly Love and Financial Success*

Director's Note:

When the idea of finding a companion piece to *Oedi* (short for Oedipus and pronounced Eddie) was first presented to me, *Joe and Stew's Theatre of Brotherly Love and Financial Success* came to mind. Both plays were selected to be a part of the *Best American Short Plays* series. *Oedi* is a spoof of the Sophocles tragedy *Oedipus Rex*. In the classic play, King Laius of Thebes and Queen Jocasta leave their baby, Oedipus, for dead in the woods because of a prophesy that predicted that Laius would die at the hand of his own son. Oedipus, however, was rescued and raised by foster parents who never told him of his true lineage. Suspicious, Oedipus sought the advice of a prophet who predicted that Oedipus would kill his father and marry his mother. On the road back from the profit, Oedipus met Laius and not knowing that he was his father, killed him in a disagreement about which wagon had the right -of-way. Oedipus went on to solve the riddle of the Sphinx, freeing Thebes from the Sphinx's curse. His reward was the hand of the queen of Thebes, Jocasta, his biological mother. Thus, the prophesy was fulfilled.

Oedi

Cast: Jamie Kolacli as *Oedi*
Kara Ewerge as *Jacasta*

Hugo Rosado as *Creon*
Michael Villereal as *Tiresias*

Joe and Stew's Theatre of Brotherly Love and Financial Success

Cast: Christine Harrison as *Joe* Gail Wittenstein as *Stew*

Main Stage Presents *Private Eyes*

Director's Notes:

The cleverest and most artful piece presented at the 21st Humana Festival
– Village Voice

The memory is a dangerous place; a place with many twists and turns. Memories can recall something incompletely, selectively or can make up events that never really happened. Even in these days of video on demand, camera phones, and the circus of public websites, nothing can affect us the way our memory does. We connect the dots between the facts we think we know and fill in the gaps with our imagination and desires. Even this is not complete. There are still things that seem incomplete or wrong.

Perhaps what we need is a professional: someone who knows the details, who has the pictures, someone else who was in the room and could point us in the right direction of our own life's events. Someone who could remove all the distractions and misdirection's and simply show us *the thing itself*. Some kind of.... Private Eye...

PRIVATE EYES

Cast:

Tom Camacho as Mathew Caitlin Costello as Cory
Heather Irwin as Lisa Jim Farrell as Frank
Andrew Berlien as Cory

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR STAGE CENTER THEATRE:

Spring Season

Main Stage
7:30 p.m.;
Stage Center Theatre

Private Eyes
by Steven Dietz
Feb. 14-16, 21-23, 28-
March 1

Arcadia
by Tom Stoppard
April 10-12, 17-19,
24-26

For reservations call
the Box Office at
773.442.4274

Studio Series (in F 109)

Oedi
By Rick Orloff
and
*Joe & Stew's Theatre of
Brotherly Love*
By Jacquelyn Reingold
February 5 & 7

La Carlotta
by Andrew Behling
March 11 & 13

CMT
Student Showcase
April 22

Children's Theatre
(Performed on Main Stage)

*Monkey Magic: Chinese
Story Theatre* by Aurand
Harris

Performances starting in March
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Performances @ 10:30 a.m.;
Children's Theatre Workshop;
For reservations call Anne
Lefkovitz at 773.442.5971



Call the Stage
Center Theatre
box office for
reservations and
ticket sales at
773.442.4274
Tickets are free
for all NEIU
faculty, staff, and
students with
NEIU ID



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Early 20th Century Theatre Companies:

The Provincetown Players:

Founded in the summer of 1915, the Players were a band of amateurs who staged several of their own plays in Provincetown, MA. The group, headed by George Cram with playwrights Eugene O'Neill and Susan Glaspell, moved to Greenwich Village and created the Provincetown Players in November 1916. Cram and Glaspell (husband and wife) left the players in 1922. In 1922 the Players had a hiatus but reopened in 1923 and ran until the stock market crash and the depression in 1929.

Washington Square Players:

Created in 1915 by amateurs, the players began producing one-act plays by Chekhov, Musset, Akins, Moeller and other "unknown" playwrights of the time in a small 40-person theatre. They moved to a 600 seat theatre and produced O'Neill's *In the Zone*. In 1918 the group disbanded but regrouped in 1919 as the Theatre Guild. Some of the actors that performed with the Washington Square Players were Roland Young, Rollo Peters, Frank Conroy, Helen Westley and Katharine Cornell.

The Theatre Guild:

Founded in 1919 by Theresa Helburn, Philip Moeller and Lawrence Langner (among others), the Theatre Guild was one of the first and most influential of the "off Broadway" theatre companies in New York City during the first half of the 20th Century. The Theatre Guild had its heyday between the wars (1919-1939). In its first few years the majority of its work was in European expressionism. Later it provided an outlet for the work of such artists as Eugene O'Neill, Robert Sherwood, Maxwell Anderson, and Sidney Howard. But perhaps the most significant element of the company was the way in which it was managed. The board of directors actually participated in the entire creative process: from the choice of producers and directors to the scripts and actors. Notably, Rogers and Hammerstein's *Okla-homa!* was originally produced by the Theatre Guild. While in the 1920's, the Guild was experimental and avant-garde, in the 1930's it felt old and stayed to its younger

members who departed and became the Group Theatre. In the 1930's and 40's the Guild became more a producing agent. Recognizing what it brought to theatre here, it had the first subscription policy, extensive national tours and brought worthwhile, well-produced plays to the public for almost 30 years.

The Group Theatre:

In 1931, Cheryl Crawford, Harold Clurman and Lee Strasberg formed the Group Theatre. Born of a perceived need to develop a uniquely American style of stage performance based on the teachings of Constantin Stanislavski (thereby creating a unified style), the Group Theatre was aptly named. It sought to develop a selfless, pure ensemble devoid of "stars," but deeply rooted in solid technique. In its ten years of existence, the Group Theatre saw actors like Frances Farmer, Lee J. Cobb, Sanford Meisner, John Garfield, Franchot Tone, Morris Carnovsky, Phoebe Brand and Howard Da Silva grace its productions. Ultimately, many of those associated with the Group Theatre would be "blacklisted" by HUAC (the House on Un-American Activities Committee); but its influence on American actors became legendary. In 1947, Elia Kazan joined Crawford in founding the Actor's Studio. Eventually, Strasberg joined, became the director in 1951, and "The Method"--a direct derivation to Stanislavski's "System"--was developed there. Along with the acting component the Group had a literary group which within 10 years produced 22 new American plays with contemporary relevance. Some of those playwrights were John Howard Lawson, Clifford Odets, Paul Green, Marc Blizstein, Sidney Kingsley and William Saroyan. The Group Theatre disbanded in 1941.

Quote for the Day:

"The color, the grace and levitation, the structural pattern in motion, the quick interplay of live beings, suspended like fitful lightning in a cloud, these things are the play, not words on paper, nor thoughts and ideas of an author, those shabby things snatched off basement counters at Gimbel's."

Tennessee Williams,
Afterward to Camino Real