

Stage Center Theatre

NEWSLETTER FOR OCTOBER 2007

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

2007-2008 Stage Center Theatre 40th Anniversary Season

Final Weekend for *Mrs. Warren's Profession*

Director's Notes.

"I am convinced that fine art is the subtlest, the most seductive, the most effective instrument of moral propaganda in the world, excepting only the example of personal conduct; and waive even this exception in favor of the art of the stage, because it works by exhibiting examples of personal conduct made intelligible and moving to crowds of unobservant, unreflecting people to whom real life means nothing."

From "The Author's Apology" to *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1902)
by George Bernard Shaw

Shaw wrote *Mrs. Warren's Profession* at a time when prostitution, with all the associated social problems of sexual abuse, sexually transmitted disease, drug addiction and poverty, was widespread. It wasn't Shaw's choice of topic that was innovative, for the "fallen woman" character had frequented the English stage in the past. What was new and brazenly risky was his depiction of prostitution as a social problem reinforced by government, church and the popular public attitudes of the time.

Shaw contended that many women in England were forced to choose prostitution over acute poverty or starvation because the opportunities for employment were so dismal. In tonight's comic play you will be introduced to one Mrs. Warren who chose prostitution as a way out of poverty and then used some of her earnings to provide an education for her daughter, Vivie - an education which would give Vivie opportunities Mrs. Warren never had.

Vivie steps into adult life as a self-sufficient, independent-thinking woman of a new century. She embodies characteristics of the "new woman": gainfully employed, smoking in public and almost certainly endorsing women's right to vote. For Vivie, her work is her life; her life is her work. Has she "made it," as we would say today? You decide, as you see our main stage season's opening production of Shaw's comedy, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*.

Rodney Higginbotham

Mrs. Warren's Profession by George Bernard Shaw

Director:	Rodney Higginbotham	Stage Manager:	Rachel Backing
Set Design:	Jessica Kuehnau	Light Design:	John Rodriguez
Costume Design:	Jana Anderson	Sound Design:	Nikola Rangelov
Cast:	Jeff Roll	David Mitchell	Cheryl Lyman
	Tom Camacho	Kyle Young	Megan Bublely

Finding the Sun Director's Note:

There are so many layers in *Finding the Sun* that sometimes it's overwhelming. Will I get my point across? Will people connect with it? Are the actors feeling it, whatever it is? The concept of *Finding the Sun* shows us that among many things, sometimes we forget the wonderful things about life. If we take a step back from the bigger picture to see the smaller one, we can see how taking a breath, no matter how tiny it is, can help propel us from one point of life to another.

Hugo Rosado

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR STAGE CENTER THEATRE:

40th Anniversary Party
September 20, 2007
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Building F

Upcoming Events

Mrs. Warren's Profession
George Bernard Shaw
October 4-6, 11-13, 18-20
@ 7:30 p.m.; Stage Center
Theatre

Finding the Sun
Edward Albee
October 23 & 25 @ 1:40 &
7:30 p.m.; Studio Theatre;
F 109

Miss Julie
August Strindberg
November 13 & 15 @ 1:40 &
7:30 p.m.; Studio Theatre;
F 109

The Skin of Our Teeth
Thornton Wilder
November 29-Dec. 1, 6-8,
13-15 @ 7:30 p.m.;
Stage Center Theatre

For reservations for Stage
Center Theatre Perform-
ances and Studio Series
Performances call the
Box Office at 773.442.4274

Wiley & the Hairy Man
Susan Zeder
November 2—December 5;
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Performances @ 10:30 a.m.;
Children's Theatre Workshop;
For reservations call Ann
Hartdegen 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



Editor:
Anna Antaramian

Column editors:
Karol Bayley, Patrick
McGuire & Becca Raven
Uminowicz

PDF editor: Cyndi Moran

Please visit our website at:
www.neiu.edu/~stagectr/

Finding the Sun by Edward Albee

Director:	Hugo Rosado	Stage Manager:	Sara Moss	
Set Design:	Hugo Rosado & Jessica Kuehnau	Light Design:	John Rodriguez	
Cast:	Duncan McNab	Joe Mack	Melanie Bujan	Stephanie Wyatt
	Carrie Peters	Layla Schwartz	Albert Clark	Patrick Garone

September Newsletter Quiz Answers

1. What does the WPA stand for and who ran it?

The WPA stands for the Works Progress Administration (renamed The Works Projects Administration in 1939) and was created during the “second hundred days” of Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s presidency (the summer of 1935). Having been elected (1933) during the “Great Depression” (1930’s after the Stock Market Crash) Roosevelt and his Congress tried to implement a series of important relief and reform measures. In 1935 the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the National Labor Relations Act, and the Social Security Act were created. The WPA created jobs for Americans doing what they were trained to do: some building highways, streets, bridges, parks; others creating art, literature, theatre and music. The Theatre section of the WPA was the FTP (the Federal Theatre Project).

2. Who headed the FTP and why did it close?

Hallie Flanagan was the National Director of the Federal Theatre Project from 1935-1939. The FTP was created to “provide free, adult, uncensored theatre” at low prices. Ms. Flanagan had taught at Vassar and created the Vassar Experimental Theatre and took a leave of absence to head the FTP.

The FTP, at its height, employed 10,000 people in 40 states. A few of the theatre projects provided were:

Living Newspapers: sponsored by the NY newspaper Guild and created by Elmer Rice

Negro Theatre (in the Lafayette in Harlem)

CCC Theatre Project: *The Lost Colony*

Done in an outdoor theatre created by the WPA in Roanoke Island, NC
Federal Theatre Workshop (*The Cradle Will Rock*)

Experimental Theatre (in the Daly)

It Can’t Happen Here (Sinclair Lewis, adapted by Lewis and Moffitt) was produced simultaneously in 22 cities

The Federal Theatre Project closed because congressional conservatives made accusations that the FTP was infiltrated by communists. The project was disbanded in 1939.

3. What group did Elia Kazan, Stella Adler, et al., belong to?

They belonged to the Group Theatre, founded in 1931 by Harold Clurman, Lee Strasberg and Cheryl Crawford. The Group (created in 1931) was an attempt to create a theatre collective providing training in a unified style of acting and providing a forum for new American plays of social significance. They used Stanislavsky’s Moscow Art Theatre as their model, and, over a 10 year period, they created 22 new American plays with relevance and social commentary. Basic members of the Group had been a part of the Theatre Guild (created in 1919 after the war) but had broken with them because the Guild became too commercial and less experimental. The Group theatre parted company in 1934 when Strasberg and Adler debated Stanislavsky’s intended focus (internal vs. external).

Those two different acting camps exist today. Information gathered from Research notes from Professor Antaramian and the Cambridge Guide to American Theatre, ed. Wilmeth and Miller, Cambridge University Press, 1993