

Stage Center Theatre

2008-2009 Stage Center Theatre Casting for the Spring Theatre Offerings

Queer Strindberg: A play in two acts by Max Guilius

Director: Kyle Martin *Stage Manager:* Ryan Wheel
Set Design: Jessica Kuehnau *Light Design:* John Rodriguez
Costume Design: Jane Martine *Sound Design:* Joey Martin
Technicians: Laura Navarro/Carlos Rivera
Cast:

Cheryl Lyman Andrew Berlien Pearl Paramadilok Michael Wagman
Kathleen Griffin

Illusion by Pierre Corneille

Translated and adapted by Tony Kushner

Director: Chris Leonard *Stage Manager:* Tiffiny Blake
Set Design: Jessica Kuehnau *Light Design:* John Rodriguez
Costume Design: Elizabeth Wisler
Cast:

Harold LeBoyer Brad Cantwell Barbara Brendt Nick Shea
Shelly Rad Colleen McCready George Christopher Tom Camacho

The Jungle Book by R. Rex Stephenson

Children's Theatre Workshop

Director: Anne Lefkovitz *Stage Manager:* Tiffiny Blake
Set Design: Jessica Kuehnau *Light Design:* Eric Senne
Costume Design: Jacqueline Curley/Kelly Holt *Sound Design:* Nick Allen
Assistant Director/Choreographer: Lisa Cantwell
Cast:

Matt Calabrese Roel Garza Michael Abbinanti Nicole Ross
Ken Richmond Norris Narsa Norma Saldana Paula Short
Servando Cadenas Kelly Holt Jacqueline Curley Yvette Mohill
Diana Perez Tiffiny Blake Brandon Levy Chris Ferrari
Tristan Duncan DaVies

**Pieces of Eight* and *Lettice and Lovage* cast and crew information to follow in March Newsletter*

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR STAGE CENTER THEATRE

Spring 2009 Season

Winner of the 2009 Ronald Williams Playwriting

Competition

Queer Strindberg: A play in two acts

by Max Guilius

February 17, 18, 19, 20 @ 7:30
p.m.; Studio Theatre, F 109

Illusion

by Pierre Corneille

Translated and adapted by Tony
Kushner

February 26-28, March 5-7, 12-14
@ 7:30 p.m.; Stage Center Theatre

Pieces of Eight: Pure Sterling

March 17, 18, 19, 20 @ 7:30 p.m.;
Studio Theatre, F 109

The Jungle Book

by R. Rex Stephenson

March-April, Monday, Wednesday,
Friday @ 10:30 a.m.; Stage
Center Theatre

Lettice and Lovage

by Peter Shaffer

April 16-18, 23-25, April 30-May
2 @ 7:30 p.m.; Stage Center
Theatre

For reservations call



Box office
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:

Colleen
McCready

Column Editors:

Karol Bailey,
Patrick McGuire,
Becca Raven
Uminowicz,
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Research:

Dee Bolos

PDF Editor:

Cyndi Moran

Director's Notes

Winner of the 2009 Ronald Williams Playwriting Competition *Queer Strindberg: A play in two acts*

Granted, *Queer Stringberg* is an uncanny title for a play, but it may best fit the infamous Swedish 19th century playwright, novelist, poet, and historian Johan August Strindberg (1849-1912). Tonight, we explore alternative interpretations of Strindberg than the typical, "hetero-normative" narrative. As such, the equally notorious Swedish Queen, Christina Wasa (1626-1689), is a perfect dramatic counterpart. Their "return" from history to our stage forces Strindberg to explore a gender, political, sexual, and psychological identity that may be difficult to accept, but may be closer to historical "fact."

Without question, Strindberg was a paranoid, misogynistic (not just sexist), and fatally flawed man. Still, Strindberg remains more infamous than others in the theatre canon, many of whom expressed views that were equally offensive.

One of Strindberg's greatest flaws may be that his work is simply too strange to be so important (and too important to be so, bloody strange). It seemingly never grants solidarity with the reader/audience, and yet much of it can be found in almost every collection of classic theatre. We, in the theatre, return to him, almost despite ourselves.

His worst work is dogmatic quackery, earning him his justifiable reputation. His best work, though, challenges us to re-examine--and if necessary destroy--every truism of western society (including assumptions about performance and staging). And, what Judith Butler calls "gender trouble" lies at the intersecting point of almost every, major dramatic *chiasmus*.

Ultimately, *Queer Stringberg* is about how the theatre is the best, and perhaps only, home for the permanent exile. Tonight, we hope our stage becomes a space where the odd, unsettled, and the "queer"--in the broadest sense of the term--find the safety and freedom "to be."

. . . And we hope you feel at home.

Max Gulias

Illusion

Pierre Corneille wrote *L'Illusion Comique* in 1636, referring to it at that time as his "strange monster." Although the original work is an interesting if lesser play by France's eminent neoclassicist, it is an extremely odd piece. Blending high tragedy with comedy, *L'Illusion Comique* divides itself equally in space and time between an old man's search for his long lost son and the escapades of that son as he pursues the woman he loves. The two stories are united in the final act in a moralistic and political message in favor of Corneille's profession.

Despite its oddities, the play was fairly successful in its day. Over the years, however, *L'Illusion Comique* has lost its appeal to the point where few if any productions are mounted outside France, until recently. Using the original work as inspiration, modern American playwright Tony Kushner (*Angels in America*) has written a greatly revised version of *L'Illusion Comique*, discarding those elements that have lost some of their value for modern audiences, including the formal neoclassical verse and structure, and heightening and developing the double edged comic-tragic tone of Corneille's original.

Kushner's *The Illusion* is a modern work that develops Corneille's themes of the purpose of art in the present day and the ambiguous, disturbing power of love. He places these themes in a post-modern structure, an environment built from and commenting upon classical elements in order to provide a new perspective on the world around us.

Chris Leonard