

Act

ANN ARBOR CIVIC THEATRE

Spotlight

September, 2005



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Ann Arbor Civic Theatre

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Office Hours: M-F, 9am-2pm

05-06 season sponsors



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From the Managing Director and the Program Director

'Another Winning Season'

As we wind down from our relaxing vacations and ready our kids for school, we feel that rush of excitement at the start of another terrific season. Rehearsals for *West Side Story* are well under way, and we are busy filling season and individual ticket orders. The play selection committee is already gearing up for the selection of the 06-07 season, and our new Board president, Tiff Crutchfield, is eagerly jumping into the position. Something we are particularly excited about is our expanding educational program. Junior Theatre has long been a strong children's program with an educational emphasis, and we have been increasing our educational efforts to include adults, as well. Through generous grants from Pfizer and MCACA, we have held workshops on various aspects of theater performance and production over the past two years. This summer, we held a week-long summer camp for youth on all aspects of auditioning, and hope to expand our Junior Theatre program this winter

A Classic Comes to Life

by Wendy Sielaff

When the thought of doing *West Side Story* entered my mind, I quickly dismissed it because I knew it was an American theatre treasure. However, the songs kept creeping into my head and before long I knew I was about to take on a huge task. Every song in the show is familiar to almost everyone and must be sung well. The choreography in the show is legendary. To change the show would be like putting Santa

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Anthony Provenzola and Annie Reinboltz are star-crossed lovers in *West Side Story*.

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From the Managing Director and the Program Director (continued)

to include classes for younger children. We are always looking for new ways to educate members in theater performance and production, so if you have any ideas for workshops or programs you'd like to see at Civic, let us know!

We hope you are as excited about the 05-06 season as we are, and we look forward to seeing you in the audience, on (or behind) stage, or in the studio!

Cassie & Suzi ■

New Volunteer Coordinator



Heidi Philipsen, our volunteer coordinator, is moving on to a full-time job at UM. We thank her for her efforts and wish her well.

Stepping in for Heidi is our own Valerie Wilkinson. With all of Val's experience on and backstage and in the office, there's probably not a single A2CT volunteer Val doesn't know. If by some remote chance you don't know her, look for her in the office (she helps out when she can), at the box office (or on/backstage) during shows, or directing the upcoming Junior Theatre production of *Dorothy Meets Alice*. If you need to contact Val about volunteering, you can still use the volunteer@a2ct.org address or leave her a message on line 4 of the A2CT office voicemail. ■

Volunteers Save the Shop!



On a hot Saturday in August, a small but intrepid group of A2CT volunteers got together to clean/sort/organize the costume and props area of our storage space. Led by **Susie Berneis** and

Alix Berneis, these hardy souls spent hours up to their elbows in downed costumes and jumbled props. At the end of the day, the aisles were cleared, the props un-jumbled, and a serious dent was made in the organization of the costumes. **Andy Hoag, Ashley Cambers, Mark Bernstein, Chris O'Brien, Kelsey Durkin, and Katie Rose** gave up a precious summer Saturday to do their "Civic" duty. Although serious progress was made, Susie and Alix would like to have another workday this fall when the weather is cooler. Make sure to thank the above volunteers when you see them, and keep your eyes open for an e-mail about the next work day. Look also at the beautiful rearrangement of the set construction area, courtesy

of **Mike Sielaff** and **Cathy Cassar**. Flats, platforms, and wood pieces are organized and easy to access, thanks to their hard work! ■

Annual Meeting a Rousing Success



The A2CT annual membership meeting was held June 16 at Arbor Brewing Company. ABC generously donated the use of the Tap Room and provided delicious food for nibbling. In addition to a by-laws vote and an update of the various committee efforts over the past season, new Board members were elected. They are: Jimmy Dee Arnold, Tanya Dabney, and Tiff Crutchfield. In addition, the appointment of three community members was announced: Joe McKeown, Linda Haffey, and Linda Carriere. Outgoing Board members Anne Bauman, Anthony Provenzola, and Board President Brian Harcourt were thanked for their efforts and contributions over the past two years. Door prizes (a pair of season tickets and a chocolate basket donated by Schokolad) were awarded, and lots of good conversation and fun was had. If you were unable to make the meeting but would like to become involved in one or more of our committees, please contact the office at 971-2228 or online at manager@a2ct.org. ■

More Fundraising Fun at the Firefly



Given the overwhelming response to and success of the *Steppin' Out* event at the Firefly this past May, we are looking to produce another show in December. Show organizer extraordinaire Curt Waugh is already planning and scheming and organizing. We will keep you posted! ■

Upcoming Auditions



Two sets of auditions are on the horizon: Junior Theatre's *Dorothy meets Alice*, September 6 or 7 from 4-6pm with callbacks September 8. Production dates are November 3-6.

Guys and Dolls, November 6 or 7 with callbacks November 8. Production dates are January 12-15. Audition specifics for all shows this season are available on our website at www.a2ct.org. All auditions take place at the A2CT studio. ■

2004-2005 Season Awards Ballot (please complete both sides)

DIRECTIONS FOR VOTING:

- You must be a member to vote.
 - Complete entire ballot and fill in all categories.
 - If this ballot is used by a couple, please
- clarify who Voter A and B are and vote accordingly.
- Please return this by Friday, October 14th.
 - Clip and send completed ballots to A2CT,
- 322 West Ann Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104.
- You may also fax them to 734/971-2769.
 - You may also vote online at www.a2ct.org.

Names of A2CT members voting on this ballot (maximum of 2 per form)

Voter A. _____

Voter B. _____

How many of A2CT shows did each of you see in the 2002-2003 season? A. _____ B. _____

The Best Performance Values: each voter may vote for one selection in each category below:

Best Play

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Inherit the Wind*
- Our Town*
- Lysistrata*

- Jon Elliott (Mr. Webb), *Our Town*
- Karl Kasischke (Simon Stimson), *Our Town*
- Richard Casto (Magistrate), *Lysistrata*
- Kevin Stacy (Cinesias, Secret Service), *Lysistrata*
- Edmund Senkowski, (Sec. Svc., Manes, Herald), *Lysistrata*

Best Musical

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- On the Town*
- Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*
- Cabaret*

Best Supporting Actor in a Musical

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Glenn Bugala (Pitkin W. Bridgework), *On the Town*
- Eric Beitchman (Pharoah), *Joseph and the Amazing...Dreamcoat*
- Michael A. LaFlamme (Jacob/Potiphar), *Joseph and the...Dreamcoat*
- Jeff Steinhauer (Levi/Butler), *Joseph and the Amazing...Dreamcoat*
- Brandon Cave (Asher/Baker), *Joseph and the...Dreamcoat*
- David P. Curtis (Herr Schultz), *Cabaret*
- Jeff DiFranco (Ernst Ludwig), *Cabaret*

Best Director of a Play

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Jon Elliott, *Inherit the Wind*
- Glenn Bugala, *Our Town*
- Catherine Zudak, *Lysistrata*

Best Actress in a Play

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Shauntya Adams (Rachel Brown), *Inherit the Wind*
- Amanda Akins (Emily Webb), *Our Town*
- Tiffany Mitchenor (Lysistrata), *Lysistrata*
- Ramona Wildgoose (Women's Chorus Leader), *Lysistrata*

Best Director of a Musical

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Emily Perryman, *On the Town*
- Wendy Sielaff, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*
- Chris O'Brien, *Cabaret*

Best Actor in a Play

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Larry Rusinsky (Henry Drummond), *Inherit the Wind*
- David Keren (Matthew H. Brady), *Inherit the Wind*
- Thom Johnson (Stage Manager), *Our Town*
- John Boonin (George Gibbs), *Our Town*
- Andrew Hoag (Men's Chorus Leader), *Lysistrata*

Best Actress in a Musical

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Caitlin Frankel (Hildy Esterhazy), *On the Town*
- Joy Martin (Claire de Loone), *On the Town*
- January Provenzola (Ivy Smith), *On the Town*
- Amanda Brown (Narrator), *Joseph and the Amazing...Dreamcoat*
- January Provenzola (Sally Bowles), *Cabaret*

Best Actor in a Musical

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Timm Gillette (Gabey), *On the Town*
- Dann Smallwood (Ozzie), *On the Town*
- Brandon Cave (Chip), *On the Town*
- Reynaldo Arceno, Jr. (Joseph), *Joseph and the Amazing...Dreamcoat*
- John Jarboe (Emcee), *Cabaret*
- Karl Kasischke (Clifford Bradshaw), *Cabaret*

Best Supporting Actor in a Play

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Meghan Berry (Hannah Blair), *Inherit the Wind*
- Anne Marie Mann (Mrs. Brady), *Inherit the Wind*
- Kathleen Beardmore (Mrs. Gibbs), *Our Town*
- Patrice Pederson (Mrs. Webb), *Our Town*
- Anne Bauman (Mrs. Soames), *Our Town*
- Alexandra Berneis (Calonice), *Lysistrata*
- Emilie Litzell (Myrrhine), *Lysistrata*
- Patricia Smith (Lampito, Old Woman), *Lysistrata*

Best Supporting Actor in a Musical

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Justin Brewer (Bertram Cates), *Inherit the Wind*
- Mark Bernstein (E. K. Hornbeck), *Inherit the Wind*
- Thom Johnson (Judge), *Inherit the Wind*
- Tony Putman (Rev. Jeremiah Brown), *Inherit the Wind*
- Edmond J. Reynolds (Doc Gibbs), *Our Town* **more >**

Best Supporting Actress in a Musical

A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)

- Wendy Sielaff (Maude P. Dilly), *On the Town*
- Kaarina Quinnell (Fraulein Schneider), *Cabaret*
- Laura Rodriguez (Fraulein Kost, Chanteuse), *Cabaret*

2004-2005 Season Awards Ballot

(continued)

The Best Production Values: each voter may vote for one show in each category below:

Best Set Design

- A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)
- Leo Babcock, *On the Town*
 - Dick Vail and Jon Elliott, *Inherit the Wind*
 - Mike Sielaff and Cathy Cassar, *Joseph and the...Dreamcoat*
 - The cast, *Our Town*
 - Aimie Lockwood, *Lysistrata*
 - Gerry Harrison-Lowe and Chris O'Brien, *Cabaret*

Best Lighting Design

- A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)
- Nathaniel Madura, *On the Town*
 - Thom Johnson, *Inherit the Wind*
 - Tiff Crutchfield, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*
 - Nathaniel Madura, *Our Town*
 - Nathaniel Madura, *Lysistrata*
 - Don Smith, *Cabaret*

Best Costume Design

- A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)
- The cast, *On the Town*
 - Alexis Elliott, *Inherit the Wind*
 - Cheryl Berteel and Barb Wells, *Joseph and the...Dreamcoat*
 - Nan Wirth, *Our Town*
 - Valerie Wilkinson, *Lysistrata*
 - Carolyn Sutton, *Cabaret*

Best Prop/Special Effect

- A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)
- Cathy Cassar, *On the Town* for the taxi cab
 - Dick Vail, *Inherit the Wind* for courtroom furniture
 - Mike Sielaff and Cathy Cassar, *Joseph* for the Sphinx
 - The cast, *Our Town*, for the live sound effects
 - Larry Rusinsky and Nathaniel Madura, *Lysistrata* for the Mortar Fire effect
 - Gerry Harrison-Lowe, Chris O'Brien, Don Smith, Carolyn Sutton, *Cabaret* for the rapid change from Kit Kat Club to Concentration camp in the finale

Best Music Director for a Musical

- A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)
- Ben Cohen and Timothy Semanik, *On the Town*
 - Debra Thomas, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*
 - Heidi Blythe and Ryan Hourigan, *Cabaret*

Best Choreographer for a Musical

- A. B. (1 person voting? Use column A)
- Emily Perryman, *On the Town*
 - Tawna Dabney, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*
 - Susannah Stempky, *Cabaret*

John Rae Cameo Award will be decided by committee this year.

PLEASE RETURN BALLOT TO A2CT BY 2 PM FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14
MAIL: 322 West Ann Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. FAX: 734/971-2769.

And the Award Goes to....

Where to go for the ceremony



The annual A2CT awards event will take place Saturday, October 29 at Washtenaw Community College's College Theater in the Liberal Arts Building. Cocktails and schmoozing begin at 7pm, and the awards show begins at 8pm. There is NO home football game that day so roads should be passable! There will be entertainment as well as awards.

As we did last year, the awards will be determined by a combination of votes from an anonymous panel plus votes from A2CT members. If you are not currently a member (or aren't sure if you are current) contact the office. If you are certified as an up-to-date member, you may vote. Look for ballots on the other side of this page or pick one up in the office. You may also fill out a ballot on our website at a2ct.org to get your ballot to us. Deadline for ballots is 2pm Friday, October 14. ■



President's Corner

Dear A2CT members, Greetings! I'm Tiff Crutchfield and I will be president of A2CT's Board of Directors for the current fiscal year, through June 2006. I've been involved at Civic since 1998, and in addition to occasional onstage appearances in small roles (most recently in last year's *On The Town*), I'm quite active backstage, as a producer, production designer (including lighting design for *West Side Story*) and Board member. For the past year I've been Vice President and chair of the Fundraising Committee.

Some may recall that I'm not new to Civic's presidency, having served once before in 2000-01. The contrast between those days and now couldn't be more stark. When I took office five years ago, I presided over a small and shrinking board with no committees, no staff, no money and a cloudy future. We were finalizing arrangements to sell the Platt Road building and one of my biggest tasks that year was to coordinate our move out in November 2000. We landed at the seedy but sort-of-lovable space on Washington Street and almost immediately began putting together the Civic Theatre that we know today. We hired Cassie and Suzi, we managed to produce a short but successful season and we began rebuilding the board. By the time my term ended in June 2001, the seeds were planted and Civic has continued to grow and thrive ever since.

What a difference five years makes. Now I preside over a large board filled with dedicated and talented people from within Civic and from the larger community. We have a range of active committees, whose important questions draw the interest and tap the expertise of an even larger group of people. Thanks to the stability and leadership of our staff we have seen improvements in our operational efficiency and the expansion of our programs. Financially we are in great shape, with a large capital reserve and an improving fundraising program, including a new endowment fund that will help provide financial security far into the future. Our productions continue to set ever-higher bars for excellence and we routinely draw talented players from all over southeastern Michigan. We do face some challenges: we need to continue to strengthen our technical culture until it is as robust as our performance culture; we perform in large venues and leave many empty seats, so we need to expand and focus our marketing efforts; we have to elevate our fundraising activities and hone the messages that will garner higher levels of support. All in all, our challenges are those of a vibrant and

growing organization, and solving them offers all kinds of opportunities for anyone to get involved, and happily, we see lots of involvement at all levels.

It's amazing how fast five years can fly by, and it begs the question: Where will Civic be five years from now? What kinds of shows will we do? Where will we rehearse? Where will we perform? How will we fit into a burgeoning and competitive local theater scene? I could write whole columns about my ideas of an expansive future for A2CT, but I'm just one person and even as president, my ideas are just one person's thoughts. Civic always seems to work best by consensus, and that only arises when lots of us are willing to think about, and share ideas about, the topic in question. So, give it some thought... what are your ideas about the future?

Tiff Crutchfield, A2CT Board President ■

West Side Story (continued)

in a blue suit. Unacceptable! How was I going to do justice to this show? I vowed to keep it pure and true to its original form. I was on a mission.

I knew Tawna Dabney would be the choreographer for the job. Lots of sexy Latin dancing; she could do it. Debbie Thomas agreed to take on the job of the music, affirming my conviction for a well sung show with an orchestra to match. The show was beginning to fall into place. The more I talked about this the more I found out this was a beloved show. I found people to staff it that were passionate about this piece of work. Mike Sielaff, Cathy Cassar and I sat down to design the set. Months later we came up with a design that I could accept. That was a big part. Susie Berneis agreed to costume the gangs. She is a veteran so I was comfortable. The usual suspects Bob Skon, Tiff Crutchfield, John

Reiser and Torey Berneis rounded out the staff.

Next up was casting. Over 80 people came out to audition. The talent was overwhelming. Many hours later we put together a cast that fit the bill.

Rehearsals are great. The Sharks and Jets are coming to life. Tony and Maria are in love and Riff and Bernardo hate each other. I am so excited!

I hope you will agree that what you will see is a beautiful work that has stood the test of time. No blue suit for Santa in this show. ■

West Side Story runs Thursday September 15-Sunday September 18, at Mendelssohn Theatre at the Michigan League Building at U of M. Showtimes are Thurs.-Sat. 8pm, with a matinee Sun at 2pm. Tickets are \$15 on Thursday; Fri.-Sun. adults \$24, students/seniors \$21. For more information, as always, visit us at www.a2ct.org or call us at (734)971-2228.

Show sponsor:





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ANN ARBOR CIVIC THEATRE



BRINGING DRAMA TO ANN ARBOR FOR 75 YEARS, AND IT SHOWS.

05-06 'love with a twist' season

- 09/05 West Side Story
- 11/05 All My Sons
- 11/05 (Jr.) Dorothy Meets Alice
- 01/06 Guys and Dolls
- 03/06 A Thousand Clowns
- 04/06 The Nerd
- 05/06 (Jr.) The Reluctant Dragon
- 06/06 The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas

If we have your email address, this is your last hard copy of the A2CT *Spotlight*. With our next issue we will send it to you electronically!