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The Season Ticket, October 1992

Columbia College Chicago

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The Season Ticket

Columbia Theater/Music Center Member Newsletter

VOLUME VIII, NUMBER 1

OCTOBER 1992

SUBSCRIBER CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

Please call (312) 663-9465 for reservations to Main Season productions and to confirm performance times for workshop productions. All workshop productions are free.

**LONG TIME SINCE
YESTERDAY**
(New Studio Theater)

Preview	October 21	at 7:30 p.m.
	October 22	at 4:00 p.m.
Opening	October 23	at 7:00 p.m.
Performances	October 24	at 7:30 p.m.
	October 25	at 3:00 p.m.
	October 27	at 4:00 p.m.
	October 28	at 2:00 p.m.
	October 29-31	at 7:30 p.m.
	November 1	at 3:00 p.m.

WONDERFUL TOWN
(Getz Theater)

Preview	November 18	at 4:00 p.m.
	November 19	at 2:00 p.m.
	November 20,21	at 7:00 p.m.
Opening	November 22	at 7:00 p.m.
Performances	November 24-28	at 7:30 p.m.
	November 29	at 3:00 p.m.
	*no show Thanksgiving	

**TELL ME SOMETHING
GOOD**
(New Studio Theater)

Preview	December 9	at 7:30 p.m.
	December 10	at 4:00 p.m.
Opening	December 11	at 7:00 p.m.
Performances	December 12	at 7:30 p.m.
	December 13	at 3:00 p.m.
	December 15	at 4:00 p.m.
	December 16	at 2:00 p.m.
	December 17-19	at 7:30 p.m.
	December 20	at 3:00 p.m.

WORKSHOPS

Rosmersholm
(New Studio Theater)

Run	November 16
	November 17
	November 18
	November 19

Road

Run	November 30 - December 5
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CURTAINS RISING ON THE MAINSTAGE

Our first show in the Getz Theater this year will be Wonderful Town by Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov with a musical score by Leonard Bernstein and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. The production is directed by Travis Stockley, Artistic Director of the Drury Lane Oakbrook Terrace Theater. Wonderful Town is based on the stage play My Sister Eileen which was itself based on a series of *New Yorker* stories.

The play takes place in the 1950's. Two small-town girls from the midwest--one an eager actress, the other her elder, brighter sister, an aspiring writer--strive to make their mark in the "big apple." Director Travis Stockley explained that, "Originally the play was written in the 50's, yet set in the 30's. We felt that both the score and tone of the play were much more evocative of the era in which it was written, so hence, we have chosen to set it in the 50's."

Mr. Stockley described the music as "late swing, early jazz and expressive of the 50's. The production lends itself to the quaint bohemianism that will provide the same effect for today's audience that the 1950's audience should have felt for the 30's."

"The setting is completely of a nostalgic Greenwich Village, one not based on gritty reality, but on a highly romanticized decadence that is more colorful and enjoyable than its realistic counterpart." Costumes and scenery will enhance the

romantic quality of this mythical Greenwich Village.

This production is meant to be "simple, pure musical theatre entertainment. There is no great social or political message intended. We simply wish the audience to have a good time," said Mr. Stockley in regards to his reason for directing this show.

Wonderful Town will be performed in the Getz Theater from November 18th to the 29th. For reservations and information call (312) 663-9465.

LIGHTS UP ON THE STUDIO

The first Main Season show this year is Long Time Since Yesterday by PJ Gibson, directed by Chuck Smith in the New Studio.

The play takes place in the present during the summer. Six black women, old college chums in their thirties, come together to mourn the passing of a friend. During this time together, they unravel the circumstances surrounding their friend's death as they discover more about each other.

Director Chuck Smith came back from sabbatical last fall and realized that there were a number of talented black women enrolled in the theater program in need of a play to showcase their talents, and Long Time Since Yesterday is that play. It portrays black women against the stereotype of needy women or prostitute types. "The women in this play are more like the black women I know. They are independent, professional, strong minded and know what they want from life and how to get it. They don't

need men to be fulfilled. There are very few men that could hold a candle to these women," said Smith.

Male/female relationships are not ignored in this play, but the portrayal of relationships between black men and women is different from the stereotypes. "The relationships are still troubled but often because the women will not give up their principles. It's an attitude of 'You can fit into my plan or not at all' for the women." Problems arise in their personal lives when they compromise that strength.

Chuck Smith feels this play illustrates the direction African-American women are taking. "This play says to black women 'Get a hold of your own destiny, take charge of your own life, and don't wait for outside help because it probably isn't going to come.'"

This lesson of independence is set within a beautiful script that sends the message not only to black women, but to people of every ethnic background and gender. As Chuck Smith said, "Although it is the black women in the audience who will be saying 'Yeah, that's the way it is,' the play's message is universal."

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

Private lessons instructor Ernest Dawkins has been teaching woodwinds at Columbia for six years. He also teaches at the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians.

Ernest grew up in Chicago listening to his father's records of such jazz greats as

Count Basie and Duke Ellington. At twelve he began to study the bass at St. Anselm School which was a few blocks away from his house. By sixteen he began to play the drums.

It wasn't until a band from St. Louis moved in next door when Ernest was 17 or 18 that he began to appreciate the saxophone. They played all night and often local jazz artists such as saxophonist Guido Sinclair would come over to jam.

Ernest finally decided he had to play the saxophone, but by this time his family's patience was beginning to wear thin, with all the other instruments Dawkins had tried. Consequently, Ernest practiced away from home until he saved up enough money to begin taking lessons at the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians where he studied with James Johnson, Chico Freeman, Henry Threadgill and Wallace McMillan.

Two years later at the age of 21, Dawkins began teaching at the AACM and the Vandercook College of Music. Soon he became a member of the AACM and formed his own group, New Horizons, around 1978 or 1979. Most of the members were from the AACM except Ahmeen Muhammed who was an old friend and had started playing music with Ernest as a child.

New Horizons has performed in Europe as well as in the Chicagoland area at Ravinia, the Chicago Jazz Festival and many venues around the city. In describing his music, Ernest calls it Great Black Music or Free Form Jazz.

New Horizon's first recording is pending release and the

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

group is due to record another in November. Recently the band recorded the soundtrack for the documentary Assassination of Malcolm X which Ernest greatly enjoyed working on. When asked what attracted him to music the most, he responded, "I work to spread good will to heal the world."

Ernest Dawkins has enjoyed teaching at Columbia. As a member of AACM he feels it is important to encourage individual creativity. Teaching at Columbia allows him the freedom to encourage students to begin to learn to use their creativity.

This year the department welcomes back instructor Susan Osborne, recently arrived from California. Susan has been living in California with her husband Brad Mott, another one-time Columbia instructor, and their two children.

Susan did her under-graduate and graduate work at the University of Minnesota. As part of her graduate work she apprenticed as an intern for a year at the Guthrie Theater before coming to Chicago to perform at Marriott's Lincolnshire Theater in her first "star" show, Blithe Spirit with Barbara Eden.

It wasn't until the Goodman Theatre asked her to do the first performance of their now traditional A Christmas Carol in 1978-79 that Susan moved to Chicago. She performed several other shows at the Goodman including the premiere of David Mamet's Lone Canoe which opened while a national convention of arts critics was in town. "Not only did the show receive bad reviews in Chicago but it was

panned from California to Florida with a brief stop in Kentucky."

However, after this difficult time, Susan became good friends with Columbia faculty member Pauline Brailsford when they were both up for the part of Lady Macbeth at the Body Politic Theater. Pauline received the part but the director asked Susan to coach voice for the cast. Pauline and Susan soon became fast friends.

The friendship took them through a wonderful experience in co-directing a production of Twelfth Night. She also directed Eve at Body Politic, both shows received Jeff Nominations. Susan directed several other successful shows including Hedda Gabler at Court Theatre, and The Birthday Party for which she received an NEA Grant at Court.

At Columbia, Susan directed her husband Brad Mott, Rondi Reed, and Laurie Metcalf in The Man Who Came to Dinner. A lover of co-direction, Susan and Caroline Latta directed both Stage Door and Street Scene and later Susan directed Transformations (a production based on improvised characters set in Anne Sexton poetry), her last project at Columbia before the move to California.

Susan first began teaching at Columbia when present Theater/Music Department Chairperson Sheldon Patinkin arrived. She began her career at Columbia as a voice teacher recommended by faculty member Pauline Brailsford. According to Susan the department was vastly different than it is today.

Susan recounts, "The basement

studio was dirty and had a small, terribly rickety stage. Back then we were only supposed to use the third floor and Getz Theater, but I had snuck my class down to the basement. However, while one of my students was practicing her vocal warm-ups on the stage, her warm-up turned into a scream. I looked up to see a large rat scurrying down the aisle and up the stage." Luckily the department has undergone many changes since then.

Susan's teaching methods have played their part in the changes that have taken place in the department. "Theater is a difficult business to be in. If you don't have stamina you won't make it. I hold the same standards for my class. There is no such thing as an excused absence in my class. If you're too sick to come to class, perhaps you don't have the stamina for acting. It sounds a little rough, but I've actually gotten thank you notes from students for my hardline methods."

Susan will most likely be traveling back to California to be with her husband and children when the semester ends, but Chicago remains her home.

WHAT'S NEWS

Producing Director Mary M. Badger designed lights for The Songs of War at the National Jewish Theater. As producing director of the American Blues Theatre Mary produced Monsters II...Visiting Hours at Bedrocks Club.

Artist-in-Residence Kathleen Perkins is directing The

Matchmaker by Thornton Wilder at COS Players.

John Cashman, Audio/Visual Coordinator, and his band Simply Complex are currently playing the club circuit around the Chicagoland area and are planning to release a CD next fall.

Faculty member Terry McCabe recently directed The Picture of Dorian Gray at Wisdom Bridge Theatre.

Part time teacher Bette Coulson is appearing with Evelyn Binz in "An Evening Concert" at the Harold Washington Library Center Auditorium as well as in a benefit recital at Sixth Grace Presbyterian Church.

Artist-in-Residence Barbara Robertson is appearing in Awake and Sing at Steppenwolf Theatre and will be appearing in House of Blue Leaves at Court Theatre.

Make-up teacher Tom Mula is the solo performer in The Circus of Dr. Lao at Next Theatre in Evanston. This summer Tom directed Dr. Faustus at Oak Park Festival Theatre, Jeff nominated for Best Music. The production also featured Columbia College students Ajay Naidu, Greg Webster and Crislyn V'Soske. Tom will be appearing as Scrooge this season in A Christmas Carol at The Goodman Theatre.

Theater Department Chairperson Sheldon Patinkin directed Clifford Odets' Awake and Sing featuring faculty member Barbara Robertson at Steppenwolf. Columbia students Mark Fossen and Bill O'Connor worked with Sheldon as Assistant Directors. Sheldon will also be in Tel Aviv for three weeks in September and

WHAT'S NEWS

October directing an improv troupe as part of the Cameri Theater.

Acting instructor Brian Shaw recently finished filming an independent movie entitled "Tethered Hearts." At Columbia he will be directing a faculty workshop of Rosmersholm by Henrik Ibsen opening in November.

Artist-in-Residence Bobbi Wilsyn sings aboard the Odyssey cruise ship for special occasions with a jazz trio led by new Columbia staff accompanist, Dave Rice.

Chuck Smith, Theater Faculty Artistic Advisor, this season will be directing Long Time Since Yesterday in the New Studio.

Director of the Contemporary Music Program, William Russo's work was recently directed by Doc Severinsen for the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra as well as by the Minnesota Orchestra. Mr. Russo will be writing the music for The Joseph Holmes Dance Theatre Company's new dance work to be choreographed by Randy Duncan and performed at the Civic Opera House as well as in Columbia's own Getz Theater.

Faculty member Bob Heitzinger was in Drury Lane Oakbrook Terrace's production of Meet Me In St. Louis. This December Bob will be the bass soloist for Handel's "Messiah" at St. Clements Church. Bob will also act as spokesperson at tradeshow for Kodak, Sprint and Thomson Industries.

Artist-in-Residence David Woolley is currently performing as Guido Crescendo one of The

Swordsmen at the Texas Renaissance Festival. He will be choreographing stage combat for Columbia's Class Bash and Road.

Production Manager Patrick Fitzpatrick recently managed the Chicago production of Six Degrees of Separation at the Briar Street Theatre and stage managed A Moon for the Misbegotten, co-produced by Wisdom Bridge Theatre and Vienna's English Theatre, currently running in Vienna.

Faculty member and arts critic Albert Williams recently won the 1992 Peter Lisagor Award for Best Arts Criticism-Features/Reporting in a non-weekly newspaper for his criticism in Windy City Times.

Artist-in-Residence Jeff Ginsberg is collaborating on Duck, Duck, Goose with Marcia Wilkie at Live Bait Theater. To close Columbia's season, Jeff will direct Jean Anouilh's Leocadia in the New Studio.

Faculty member Susan Padveen and Jeff Ginsberg were recently named co-artistic directors of the National Jewish Theater. Padveen directs Murray Schisgal's The Songs of War to open the season featuring faculty member Paul Amandes. Jeff will be directing Steve Feffer's The Wizards of Quiz immediately following.

Camera Techniques instructor Arnie Aprill recently directed and co-wrote Womandingo for City Lit at Victory Gardens Theater.

Body Movement instructor Nana Shineflug received an "Arts Plus" Initiative from the National Endowment for the Arts for her company, The Chicago Moving Company, to direct a

three year cooperative arts education project. The company will also be working with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in a concert for children on October 24th and 26th.

Faculty member Paul Amandes is appearing in The Songs of War at National Jewish Theater. This summer he performed in the Goodman Theatre's Riverview. Two plays with music co-written by Paul appeared at the Curious Theatre this year. This winter Paul will be co-directing Translations by Brian Friel with Cecilie O'Reilly at Columbia in the Getz Theater.

Artist-in-Residence Chris Phillips designed lights for Control Freaks at Center Theatre, The King and I at

Oakbrook Drury Lane and Hospitality Suite at Victory Gardens as well as scenic and lighting design for Loyola University's Mother Courage. Upcoming lighting design projects include In a Nutshell and Improvisations in the 5th Dimension for Ballet Chicago's premiere at Steppenwolf Theatre and The Wizards of Quiz at the National Jewish Theater.

Artist-in-Residence Joann Shapiro who workshopped The Fever at Columbia last year, moved the play to the Chicago Dramatists Theater for its midwest premiere. Alumni Jill Kraft is producing. Former Columbia student David Shapiro is the solo performer, and faculty member Brian Shaw designed the set.

STAFF

Editor: Erin Philyaw

Contributors: Mary Badger
Ernest Dawkins
Susan Osborne
Travis Stockley
Norm Holly
Susan Padveen
Chuck Smith
Sheldon Patinkin
William Russo