

2007

## Stage Center Theatre Newsletter- Jan. 2007

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## THE ACTOR'S NIGHTMARE: A PLAY WITHIN A PLAY

The third Studio Series production of the 2006-2007 NEIU Stage Center season, *The Actor's Nightmare* by Christopher Durang, will be presented on February 13 and 15 at 1:40 and 7:30 PM. Veteran Stage Center actor Christopher Leonard (*The Real Inspector Hound*, *Life Is a Dream*, *Dracula*, *The Waiting Room*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Was He Anyone?*, and *The Birthday Party*) will direct.

The leading role will be played by another veteran to the Stage Center, NEIU student Patrick Garone (*The Real Inspector Hound*, *Life Is a Dream*, *Boy Gets Girl*, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *The Birthday Party*). Other NEIU students in the cast include Jeff Roll (*Dracula*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *Was He Anyone?*) and Elizabeth Roig (*Simply Maria*). Rounding out the cast are Chicago actors Stephanie Wyatt (*The Birthday Party*) and Michelle Wesgerber.

Plot synopsis: *The Actor's Nightmare* is a play within a play. Having casually wandered onstage, George is informed that one of the actors, Eddie, has been in an auto accident and he must replace him immediately. Unfortunately, George does not recall attending a single rehearsal and believes that he is an accountant! To further complicate things, no one seems to know what play is being performed and George (costumed as Hamlet) finds himself in the middle of scenes from *Private Lives*, *Hamlet*, some play by Samuel Beckett, and *A Man for All Seasons*. Please join us in Building F, Room 109 for *The Actor's Nightmare!* \$3 admission, free with current NEIU faculty or student ID.

## Children's Theatre Workshop 2007: Destination Mudgeville

### GARY GRINKLIE'S BATTLES WITH WRINKLES and Other Troubles in Mudgeville

Written by Stefan Graves Lanfer  
Directed by Kat Matassarin  
Children's Theatre Workshop

This performance will be presented for 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Mudgeville is an unusual town, where fears big and small, real and imagined keep everyone hidden away in their homes...until Martin moves to town and something magical happens. The dates for these performances are March 14<sup>th</sup> to April 25<sup>th</sup> on MWF from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

If you are interested for your children's school program, please share

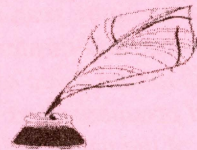
this information with them. Have them try to book now, seating is limited. Northeastern, as it has done for the past eleven years, charges \$3.00 per student with free admission for adult supervisors.

Due to previous last minute cancellations, the university has established a policy where payment is due in advance. Cancellations made less than 2 weeks prior to booked performances will result in full forfeiture of payment.

The theatre has a seating capacity of 100. To book or for more information regarding the production or the Children's Theatre Workshop, please contact Kat Matassarin at [KMatassari@aol.com](mailto:KMatassari@aol.com) or 773.442.5924.

Suggestions are being accepted for the Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 Stage Center Seasons.

Suggestion drop off locations are located either in the fine arts building (on the bulletin board), 2nd floor, or Stage Center theatre in the F Wing. Submittals are also accepted via email to [A-Antaramian@neiu.edu](mailto:A-Antaramian@neiu.edu). Please include the title of the play and playwright.



One-Act  
Playwriting  
Contest

The Competition Begins....

Prize: The selected one-act will be produced as the final production of the Stage Center Theatre Spring 2008 Studio Series.

Deadline: TBA, watch for more details in our next issue. Everyone is welcome to submit a contest entry.

## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR STAGE CENTER:

*The Actor's Nightmare*  
F109  
February 13 & 15  
1:40 & 7:30 p.m.

*Proof*  
Stage Center  
February 22-24 &  
March 1-3 @ 7:30 p.m.

"*And on the Eighth Day: Bryan vs. Darrow*"  
Recital Hall  
March 1-3 @ 7:30 p.m.

*Gary Grinklies Battles with Wrinkles and Other Troubles in Mudgeville*  
Stage Center  
March 14-April 25th  
MWF 10:30-11:30 a.m.

*Fitting Rooms*  
F109  
April 10 & 12 @  
1:40 & 7:30 p.m.

*The Mineola Twins*  
Stage Center  
April 19-21, 26-28 & May 3-5  
@ 7:30 p.m.



## A World Premiere at Northeastern "And on the Eighth Day: Bryan vs. Darrow"

Written by Steven Brown & Michael Ullstrup  
Directed by Jim Blair

### An Intelligent Perspective of the 1925 Scopes "Monkey Trial"

The world premiere of "And on the Eighth Day: Bryan v. Darrow" will be presented in The Recital Hall at Northeastern Illinois University on the evenings of March 1-3, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. Admission is free for all NEIU students, staff, and faculty with NEIU ID. General admission is \$10.00 and \$8.00 for senior citizens and students from other universities.

Two NEIU staff members, Dr. Steve Brown (co-writer) is Professor of Educational Leadership and Jim Blair (director), who teaches theater in the Dept. of Communication, Media, and Theatre are involved in this production. In addition, NEIU student, Jennifer Noncek (stage manager), is completing her B.A. in Mathematics.

Brown, who co-wrote this original stageplay with Michael Ullstrup, and director Jim Blair have won two prestigious awards: The Wisconsin Association of Broadcasters and The State Bar or Wisconsin in 2006 and 2007. In 2005 the live radio drama of "And on the Eighth Day: Bryan vs. Darrow was broadcast on WGTD Public Radio in Kenosha, WI.

### What's This Play All About?

William Jennings Bryan (portrayed by Rob Lamont) and Clarence Darrow (Terry Lawler) square off as the high-profile lawyers who share their highly volatile and deep-rooted passion for their own points-of-view. Bryan, the Great Commoner, believed in the Biblical presentation of creationism, while Darrow, an atheist, supported the theory of evolution.

The basis for the Scopes trial was laid when the Tennessee State Legislature passed the Butler Act - which took effect on March 21st, 1925.

The essence of the Act was that it made it illegal for anyone: "... to teach any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals" in any state-funded educational institution.

In this ongoing discussion of the societal issue of faith and science, what forum was selected in 1925 to present the debate? A courtroom.

Lawyers were advocates for the respective sides of the issue. A live radio broadcast from Chicago's very own WGN Radio was invited for the first time into a courtroom.

This 1925 trial brought the proceedings directly into the living rooms of people who, for the most part, had never heard what actually goes on during a trial.

### A Final Word

Much of the misunderstanding and misinformation surrounding the trial of John T. Scopes probably comes from a fifty-year old stage play, and perhaps even more importantly, the film and the made-for-TV movies it has spawned: "Inherit the Wind."

This well known film starred Spencer Tracy, Frederick March, Harry Morgan, Gene Kelly, and Richard Crenna. The stageplay and screenplay were written by Jerome Lawrence and Robert Edwin Lee.

Eighty-two years ago, in July 1925, the conflict between religion and science in the public school system of Dayton, TN erupted into a courtroom drama that prompted Bryan vs. Darrow. The Scopes trial - or "Monkey Trial," as it was called - dominated headlines across the country. The trial lasted just a week, but the questions it raised are as divisive now as they were back then.

"And on the Eighth Day: Bryan v. Darrow" is an original stage play that presents "an intelligent perspective" on a topic that generates great interest, controversy, and passion.

Once again, the play will be presented in **The Recital Hall at Northeastern Illinois University** on the evenings of **March 1-3, 2007, at 7:30 p.m.** Admission is free for all NEIU students, staff, and faculty. For more information on tickets, please call (847) 894-5218.



The website for the play can be found at: [www.8thdayplay.com](http://www.8thdayplay.com).

### 365 Days/365 Plays

Suzan-Lori Parks wrote a play a day for an entire year. Now, each week for an entire year, a different Chicagoland theater company will mount seven of these world premiere short plays as part of the nationwide 365 Days/365 Plays Festival.

Please check out  
[www.365chicago.org](http://www.365chicago.org)  
(365 flyer, 2006)

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