



# Curtain Call

SCHUYLerville COMMUNITY THEATER NEWSLETTER

Summer 2008 (take two)

**F**RANKLY MY DEAR, WE DO GIVE A DAMN! Jason C. Polunci, director for SCT's *Beauty and the Beast* and new SCT Board member, will direct the new hit comedy *Moonlight and Magnolias* (original working title of *Gone With the Wind*). This slapstick comedy is based on a true story of what happened in 1939 when MGM studio was working on two great films at the same time; *Wizard of Oz* and *Gone With the Wind*. All production had to stop when it was realized that the boy wonder producer, David O. Selznick, made a major faux pas; he had begun shooting Margaret Mitchell's classic novel of Southern Reconstruction without a script.

In a frenzy, Selznick enlists the help of legendary screenwriter and script doctor Ben Hecht, and pulls already-frazzled Victor Fleming off *The Wizard of Oz*, hoping the iconic director might help save the day. And they're off...the stage is set for the rip-roaring farce *Moonlight and Magnolias* by Ron Hutchinson.

The men are locked away in the producer's office, blinds closed, on a diet of bananas and peanuts, they labor for five days to fashion a screenplay that will save the studio from bankruptcy and make movie history. Their only link to the outside world is the producer's long-suffering secretary, Miss Poppenguhl. The quintessential Hollywood insider story, this hysterical farce is a valentine to the golden age of cinema. The audience sees a fly-on-the-wall perspective of the creative process at work, hilarity ensues.

SCT is looking for 4 actors, 3 men and 1 woman, to bring this show alive on the stage. A paean to physical and slapstick comedy, *Moonlight and Magnolias* provides

the perfect vehicle for four character actors, hams at their very best, who also have moments of great pathos and sincerity.

CHARACTERS INCLUDE:

David O. Selznick; Hollywood studio head. Once referred to as MGM's "Boy Wonder" producer, he was the long-suffering son-in-law of the fabled Louis B. Mayer, head of MGM. Bold, brash, but above all, PASSIONATE, Selznick exudes a manic energy as he acts as "director" and "cheerleader" to his struggling writers. A similar type to Max Bialystock (Nathan Lane) of *The Producers*, he must have strong comic skills as well as be able to show a softer, more vulnerable side. Age range: APPROX 20-50.

Ben Hecht; Hollywood screenwriter and script doctor. Once a respected journalist, Hecht like many of his peers came to Hollywood to seek his fortune during the Golden Age of movies. Anxious, nervous and easily flustered, Hecht is painfully aware he sacrifices his principles for money. The moral compass of the play, Hecht is Jewish and impassioned about racial intolerance and the impending World War II. Highly intelligent and slightly tortured with PASSION equal to Selznick, just simply about different ideas. Again, he must have strong comic skills as well as be able to play dramatic moments. Age range: APPROX 25-60.

Victor Fleming; Well-known Hollywood director. Considered to be a "man's man," Fleming was a flamboyant chauvinist, full of over-the-top masculine bravado. Gallant, confident and very taken with himself, sometimes to the point of being a buffoon. A workhorse who comes through in the clinch,

Fleming would have been equally as comfortable as Hollywood Producer or a college football coach. Arrogant and outspoken, he must have strong comic skills, a real ham. Age range: APPROX 30-60.

Miss Poppenguhl; Secretary to Mr. Selznick. The long-suffering secretary; tolerant of her boss's behavior, nevertheless she has her own comic agenda in "playing the game" with these larger-than-life Hollywood personalities. Being the only contact with the outside world as they write their script, Miss Poppenguhl enjoys having access to the boy's club, and having the opportunity to comment on it with knowing asides to the audience. A Carol Burnett-type with a small amount of dialogue, this part is the perfect opportunity for an actor to prove that there are no small parts. With the capacity to steal the show, Miss Poppenguhl's understated comic brilliance shines through as she attempts to maintain some order while the lunatics are indeed running the asylum. Age range: APPROX 20-60.

Actors, SAVE THE DATE for auditions on Thursday, September 4th and audiences, MARK YOUR CALENDARS for performances October 24th – 26th. Join us for this laugh riot and discover the answer to that age-old question: "Why did Rhett Butler really not give a damn?!"

Oops!! Due to a printer error the inside of the Summer 2008 Newsletter had repeat information from the Spring 2008 newsletter. Thanks to all of our readers who noticed and let us know!! As a result, we have another edition for you: Summer 2008 (take two).  
-Your Curtain Call News Staff.

SCT'S 28<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DINNER MEETING was held on Sunday, June 1st at Longfellow's Restaurant in Saratoga Springs. A sumptuous buffet was enjoyed by more than 45 members and guests. Following the Annual Meeting, when each committee briefly reported on the year's accomplishments, the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Twig Awards were presented by Michele Peters and Lorraine Thompson with a great deal of flair and humor. Once again SCT's Twigs surpassed any of the Golden Globes, Emmys or Oscars in New York and Hollywood!!

The awards ceremony of the evening continued with the coveted SCT Branch Award being presented to Christopher Tucker, a member of SCT since the age of six when he played Peter in SCT's Children's Summer Theater production of *Peter and the Wolf*. This summer, Chris will be one of the Musical Directors in the same SCT Summer Program. Chris is the only SCT member to have been awarded the Budding Twig Award as a child, a SCT Scholarship as a graduating senior and now the Branch Award as an adult. Presenter, Deana Tracy named it well, the "SCT Hat-Trick." Congratulations Christopher.

Elizabeth Ruland from Greenwich was the recipient of the Budding Twig Award which is given to a young person who exemplifies growth and potential in the world of theater. Elizabeth not only excels in her theatrical gifts but also as a student at Greenwich High School, as an active member of her church, and a contributing member of her community, to name a few. Presenter, Donna Hillebrandt, shared comments from many of the people who have had the pleasure of knowing and working with Elizabeth.

Michele Peters, assisted by Tiffany Festo, announced the 2008 SCT Scholarship winners to the

group. Each senior was awarded \$500.00 for their future studies in the area of Music, Dance, Theater Arts or Drama (see related article in this edition of *Curtain Call*).

A highlight of the evening was the entertainment. Vicki Wolfe showcased *The Making of a Musical*. Attendees were introduced to an original musical called, *Revolution*, based on the book by Martin Egan and set during the revolutionary war. Vicki, in collaboration with the late SCT member Katherine Hopkins, started to write this musical in 1999. Sidelined by

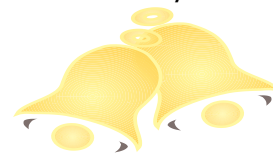


Katherine's unexpected illness and subsequent passing, the musical went into hibernation. Just recently Vicki and Elizabeth Woodbury-Kasius collaborated on the music and once again, the musical became a reality. Original songs were performed, accompanied by Kasius, with Vicki introducing the plot during each scene. SCT members, Cindy Boyka, Ralph DiMeglio, Donna Hillebrandt, Elizabeth Ruland, Chris Tucker, and Vicki all lent their voices to showcase the original songs by Wolfe, Hopkins and Woodbury-Kasius. In addition, all four of this year's SCT scholarship winners were featured on the stage. The amazing talent displayed by each of them left no doubt they were deserving of the scholarships. Full production of this "play with songs" will occur in late 2009 at a yet to be determined venue. Do not miss this local event about local history portrayed by local artists. Stay tuned for more.

The nominating committee ended the evening with the announcement of those persons elected to a three year term on the SCT Board beginning with the 2008-09 Season. Michele Peters,

Jason Polunci, Lorraine Thompson and Anna Welfley were selected by a membership ballot to serve as Directors for SCT. Officers for the 2008-09 Season will be selected from within the board at the monthly meeting in July. All members (and future members) are invited to attend the monthly SCT meetings held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Schuylerville Central School Administration Building.

Many thanks to Vice President Anna Welfley and her committee, Heather Johnson and Deana Tracy, assisted by Steven Johnson and Jason Polunci, for a great evening. The Annual Business Meeting of SCT is held the first Sunday of June each year. You may wish to consider attending next year to help wind down the previous SCT year and ring in the new!!! Mark it on your calendars!



### THE BELLS ARE RINGING.....

On July 6<sup>th</sup> Shaina Ettel (better known to us as Sara Joki) stood under the Chupah to wed Yitzchak Menda in Jerusalem, Israel

and

Tiffany Festo will meet her groom, Paul Tokarchuk at the altar of St. Clements Church in Saratoga Springs on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

Graduation bells for Marcus Lapitsky who just received his BA in Criminal Justice from John Jay College for Criminal Justice in Manhattan. Marc has already applied to the NYS Troopers and the Georgia State Police.

Adam Snowden graduated from Schuylerville Central High School with a Technical Degree in Horticulture.

Congratulations, Mazel Tov, L'chaim and all our very best wishes go out to these members of the SCT family who grew up on the SCT stage.

May all the blessings you so richly deserve come your way.



### An SCT theater-goer shares her thoughts regarding the Spring 2008 Production:

Dear Friends,

It was Saturday night and I decided to take in some theater. I arrived only 10 minutes before curtain call. There was No line and it was not a sold out show. It was actually a dessert theater. I got a seat as close to the front as possible without being too close. . . and in the center section; right where I like to be. I settled in. Those seated behind me were chatting about what they were reading in the program.

The name of the production was *The Sweet Sounds of Broadway* presented in concert by the Schuylerville Community Theater at the Schuylerville High School Auditorium. The production, part narrative, was guided by the character of an old school janitor and a reporter for the "Possible Futures Times". They were discussing the demise of Community Theater in the year 2068. Their banter was laced with humor and the size of the crowd was all too real. None-the-less, an evening of sheer musical magic of Broadway tunes unfurled its volume and soothed my soul. I can't even pick a favorite performance. There were many that moved me. One of the most memorable for me would be a duet shared by Donna Hillebrandt and Elizabeth Ruland. They performed "Rachel's Song" by Vicki Wolfe from SCT's *To Gillian on her 37th Birthday*. Elizabeth sang the part of a young girl coming of age who is talking to her Mother who has

passed, and Donna sang the part of the mother. Elizabeth's performance brought me to tears and stirred emotions in me that let me know I was surely, still alive.

Another performance that stuck out in my mind was that of Kate Niver and Kelly Casey with "Bosom Buddies" from *Mame*. Both women have lusty rich voices that emanate from deep within. Complimenting their voices was their uncanny ability to perform as stereotypical female characters. They had the crowd hootin' at their performance. It was an experience that was a delight to share.

Ralph DiMeglio gave a number of stellar performances. His gesticulations rolled in sync with the volume carried by his deep masculine voice. He performed "Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'" from *Oklahoma* and "Rain" from *Once on This Island*. There were also two performances by the Bailey brothers, Christopher and Peter. They doubled the stud factor and evoked performance fantasy on a number of levels. They gave great voice . . . yes, they did.

Gisella Montanez piqued my curiosity merely by the way her name rolled off my tongue as I read the program prior to her performance. Her voice was as exotic as her name. Her operatic range was without local comparison. She performed "Blow, Gabriel Blow" from *Anything Goes*, and "Someone to Watch Over Me" from *Crazy For You*. I would love to hear her sing "Sweet Chariot".

Janelle Hammond was just a vision of loveliness as she performed, "Waiting for Life" from *Once on This Island*. Her strawberry blonde hair was long and flowing with a large yellow lily tucked behind her ear. She lit up the stage with her presence, and her voice. No stranger to the SCT stage, Patrick Doyle took full advantage of his time in the spotlight

to perform "What Do I Need with Love" from *Thoroughly Modern Millie* with an impromptu jig and his boyish charm.

Others graced the stage throughout the concert. Mrs. Potts' theme song of "Beauty and Beast" from the show of the same name was brilliantly performed by Cindy Boyka. Karey Hall Trimmings, who once played Sarah in SCT's *Guys and Dolls*, sang a powerful duet from *Phantom* with local Christopher Tucker. For those few moments, they owned the stage they shared. A trio including Tucker, Dave Roberson and Steven Johnson hit the "Fugue for Tinhorns" from *Guys and Dolls* right on the mark. And who could forget Heather Johnson (Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*) as she charmed the audience with her sweet voice and matronly physique while performing, "Always True to You in My Fashion" from *Kiss Me Kate*.

And lastly, I must mention Britney Henderson a little lady . . . HUGE presence. This petite little red head was full of fire as she performed "I Move On" from *Chicago*. I read in the program that Britney was only a junior in Greenwich High School. She is full of potential spilling over, and "move," she does.

So the performance was great, and I suppose you're curious about dessert? A fantastic selection of a dozen or so sinful sweets accompanied by a coffee bar in a "cafeteria" decked out as a park. I had toffee covered cheesecake. It was de-lish!

The evening was so wonderful. It was an experience missed by too many and not shared by nearly enough. I urge surrounding area neighbors to discover Schuylerville. The village has so much to share. Taste the culture in their air. The village would love to share it with all of you . . .

Submitted by,  
Kathy Brown



**Curtain Call** is a newsletter of the Schuylerville Community Theater, P.O. Box 143, Schuylerville, NY, 12871. SCT is a non-profit community volunteer musical and theater arts organization. SCT is governed by an elected Board of Directors.

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**SCT Announces the Board of Directors for the 2008/09 Season:** At the July Organizational Meeting of SCT, the following officers were elected to serve for the 2008/09 Theater Season: President, Lorraine Thompson; Vice-President, Jack Macica; Secretary, Deana Tracy; Treasurer, Debbi Terrio; Membership Secretary, Donna Hillebrandt and Directors, Heather Johnson, Michele Peters, Jason C. Polunci, Dennis Searles, Joann Searles, Chris Tucker, and Anna Welfley. The board meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Administration Building of the Schuylerville Central School District. All members are invited to attend to help make good things happen in the world of theater in Schuylerville and the surrounding areas. Future board meeting dates are: August 20<sup>th</sup>, September 17<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup>. Please join us.



## It's time to renew your SCT MEMBERSHIP

Membership Forms are available on the SCT Website; [www.scttheater.org](http://www.scttheater.org)

### *Moonlight and Magnolias*

Show dates: October 24th, 25th, and 26th

Auditions: September 4th

### *Company*

Show dates: May 8th, 9th and 10th

Auditions: March 12th and 13th

**Check the Web: SCTTHEATER.org**



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