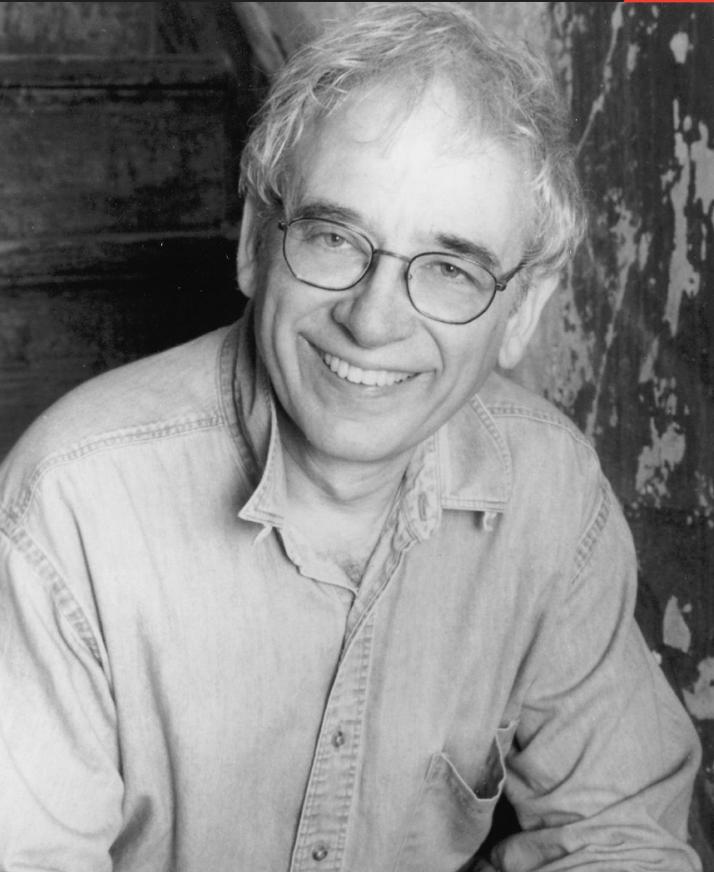


# at play

Issue 12, Spring/Summer 2006



## AN INTERVIEW WITH *Austin Pendleton*



*Director of Professional Rights Robert Lewis Vaughan and Director of Publications Michael Q. Fellmeth talk with Austin Pendleton about his New York hit, Orson's Shadow, and his life as a consummate man of the theatre.*

**ROBERT.** *Orson's Shadow* had an amazing run here in New York at The Barrow Street Theatre following Tracy Letts' fantastic *Bug* (also represented by DPS). Tracy was in your play, in the role of Kenneth Tynan. Two hits in a row — two actor/playwrights in a row — one theatre. What do you have to say about that?

**AUSTIN.** There's more to it than that. Tracy Letts caused this to happen. He told our producers (Scott Morfee, Chip Meyrelles, Tom Wirtshafter) about *Orson's Shadow*. He put together a reading with the Chicago cast, directed by the Chicago director, in Chicago, for Scott, Chip and Tom to come and see and hear ...

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## Rob Ackerman

**DISCONNECT.** Goaded by the women they love and haunted by memories they can no longer suppress, two men at a dinner party confront the lies of their lives.

## Jon Robin Baitz

**THE PARIS LETTER.** Wall Street powerhouse Sandy Sonenberg finds his personal and professional life threatened when the secret that he has been hiding for the past forty years finally starts to unravel.

## Stephen Belber

**McREELE.** An exposé article leads to Darius McReele's exoneration from a sixteen-year murder conviction. He is transformed into a media darling, but the journalist who told his story seeks to determine which way he'll ultimately fall.

## John Belluso

**HENRY FLAMETHROWA.** The sick are flocking to Henry's comatose sister's bedside, praying to be healed and claiming their prayers have been answered in this drama about faith, spirituality and the intrinsic value of human life.

**A NERVOUS SMILE.** Three parents explore the consequences and emotions they face after abandoning their children with cerebral palsy.

**PYRETOWN.** In a hospital emergency room a middle-aged single mother and a twenty-two-year-old paraplegic find love in the age of HMOs.

**THE RULES OF CHARITY.** Love and hate, cruelty and goodness are the everyday contradictions in the life of Monty, a disabled gay man.

## Jesse Berger

**THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY.** Part black comedy, part social satire, a gleefully macabre plot-twisting blender full of Shakespeare's greatest hits.

## Lee Blessing

**THE WINNING STREAK.** Can America's favorite pastime provide solid-enough common ground for the sensitive Ry to establish a relationship with the absentee father he never knew?

## Adam Bock

**THE SHAKER CHAIR.** An examination of the constrictions and possibilities of middle age as one woman is forced to redefine her view of the world and her place within it.

## Eric Bogosian

**HUMPTY DUMPTY.** Four friends gather for a holiday at a mountain getaway where unforeseen events bring them to the brink of the end of the world.

**WAKE UP AND SMELL THE COFFEE.** A meditation on making it to the top of the ladder, on falling off the ladder and on the exhilarating thrill of the ultimate crash and burn.

## Deborah Brevoort

**WOMEN OF LOCKERBIE.** While roaming the Scottish countryside looking for her son's remains that were lost in the crash of Pan Am 103, a mother from New Jersey meets the women of Lockerbie who are determined to convert an act of hatred into an act of love.

## Laurie Brooks

**FRANKLIN'S APPRENTICE.** Blending historical fiction with contemporary resonance, this thrilling play for families culminates on a stormy night with the crack of thunder, a blinding light and an experiment that changed the world.

## John Cariani

**ALMOST, MAINE.** An eccentric cast of Mainers (or Mainiacs, if you prefer) fall in and out of love in ways that only people who live in close proximity to wild moose can do in this sweetly enchanted evening.

# Serving the American Theatre Since 1936: A Brief History of Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

70  
years

*"The Dramatists Play Service came into being at exactly the right moment for the contemporary playwright and the American theatre at large."*

—Audrey Wood, renowned agent to Tennessee Williams

In 1936 a committee of leading members of the Dramatists Guild and a representative group of play agents met in Manhattan to discuss the founding of Dramatists Play Service, Inc. Their goal for the company was to provide increased competition in the growing field of amateur theatrical licensing. The committee negotiating this difficult matter was headed by the playwright Howard Lindsay and Harold Freedman, agent to Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee, among other fine authors. These two men of great integrity and intelligence were devoted to the interests of dramatists. Mr. Lindsay and Mr. Freedman realized that the establishment of a new amateur licensing agency would create and stimulate better competition. With their hard work and the help of the committee, Dramatists Play Service was formed.

Nearly every established playwright of the time turned their plays over without any advance or guarantee whatsoever, authors such as George Abbott, Maxwell Anderson, Marc Connelly, Rachel Crothers, Russel Crouse, Philip Dunning, Edna Ferber, Moss Hart, Lillian Hellman, John Cecil Holm, Sidney Howard, George S. Kaufman, Howard Lindsay, Kenyon Nicholson, Clifford Odets, Eugene O'Neill, John Patrick, Samson Raphaelson, Elmer Rice, Robert E. Sherwood, Bella and Sam Spewack, and many others.

It was planned that the committee should raise \$80,000 to launch the Play Service in business. \$18,000 was raised, and the Play Service went into business anyway. Barrett H. Clark, writer and lecturer on the theatre, and a man well acquainted with the amateur theatre, came aboard as executive director. The famous dramatists that the Play Service represented aroused the immediate attention of the public, and business began to expand beyond the resources of the Play Service's capital. More money was raised but not nearly enough. These were precarious years, but always ready to sign notes at the banks were George S. Kaufman, Moss Hart, Harold Freedman and others. There were many dark days in the 1930s and '40s before the Play Service turned the corner.

It was never the purpose of the Play Service to supplant rival amateur agencies. What was desired was more and better competition, because this would benefit dramatists, and the Play Service achieved this effect. Where previously advances on royalties usually ran from one to five thousand dollars, after the formation of the Play Service advances on highly desirable plays grew substantially larger throughout the industry. Additionally, as the amateur theatrical field continued to

grow, the Play Service was well poised to grow with it and to provide it with plays of the very highest caliber.

After Barrett Clark's passing in 1953, the Play Service was headed by the esteemed Margaret Sherman, a long-time employee of the Play Service. Ms. Sherman was succeeded in 1969 by the playwright F. Andrew Leslie, under whose stewardship in 1983, in a move consistent with the objectives of its founding, the Play Service began to acquire professional licensing rights, further enhancing competition for desirable plays to the benefit of dramatists. In 1983 the Play Service was presented with a special Obie Award for sustained commitment to new work. After thirty extraordinarily productive years with the Play Service, Mr. Leslie retired in 1990 and was followed by Bradley Kalos, formerly of International Creative Management, Inc. (ICM). In 1994, Stephen Sultan, also formerly of ICM and a member of the Play Service board since 1982, assumed the helm. Under Mr. Sultan's tenure the Play Service has acquired over 600 new titles, including nine Tony Award winners and nine Pulitzer Prize winners, doubled its business and cemented its reputation as the finest play-licensing agency in the English-speaking theatre. Today Dramatists Play Service is known throughout the world and works with thousands of professional and nonprofessional theatres, supporting the theatre's vital position in contemporary life. ■

*"In every town, in every school, in every organization, in every church there are people who are eager ... It is astonishing how much time and work they will be willing to give to the performance of a play. It is an exciting venture, gratifying in its achievement, and one that leaves deep satisfactions in the memory."*

—Howard Lindsay,  
one of the founders of DPS,  
in his booklet "How to Start a Theatre"

*"In those days, it was all about Broadway. I was seeing Broadway shows several times a week. Then Off-Broadway started to develop, in the beginning in the coffee houses, and we were really the first to pay attention to those plays and playwrights — for example, John Guare, Lanford Wilson, Sam Shepard. Once I went to Café Cino to see a new piece by Guare, and Lanford Wilson was our waiter. But we recognized these were immensely talented authors, and we supported them early on. So many of those plays would never otherwise have been offered throughout the country. And as a result the Play Service did and continues to do so much to make new American plays widely available. The impact has been enormous. The Play Service has enriched the American theatre considerably, all the while being scrupulous about publishing plays we could be proud of."*

—F. Andrew Leslie,  
former president of DPS,  
from his home in Massachusetts

# An Interview with Austin Pendleton

(Continued from cover)

**AUSTIN.** ... and though I knew him, because he and I are both ensemble members at Steppenwolf, I didn't know him that well. And then when we couldn't get our original Tynan to come from Chicago to do the part, he played it when we asked him to. Dazzlingly. I don't believe the play would ever have been done in New York if it hadn't been for Tracy. Playwrights are sometimes very generous people, but this is incredible. I keep thinking I haven't thanked him enough.

**ROBERT.** Peter Bogdanovich directed you, Streisand and Ryan O'Neill in the classic comedy *What's Up, Doc?* Bogdanovich and Orson Welles were quite close, weren't they? What was your relationship to Orson, and can you tell our readers what the *Orson's Shadow* post-performance talkback with Bogdanovich was like?

**AUSTIN.** Peter and Orson were great friends. Orson lived at Peter's house in Beverly Hills for quite awhile at one point, a thing Peter made hilarious and touching references to at the two talkbacks he did, which were brilliant, by the way, two of the best we had. Something else he talked about at those was his conviction, which he backed up, that much of Orson's post-*Kane* work was at least the equal of *Kane*, despite the prevailing view to the contrary that Orson struggled against all his life. The deep attachment between Orson and Peter is all over the book Peter published of the many interviews he did with Orson over the years. The book is called *This is Orson Welles*. It's over 400 pages long, and it's effectively a biography of Orson, and a brilliant one, a revelation of many sides of Orson's sensibility. I worked with Orson for two weeks in Guaymas, Mexico in 1969 on *Catch-22*. I was in every scene he was in; he was in every scene I was in. It was, how shall I say, a trip. He had so wanted to direct the movie of that book. He assuaged these feelings by effectively directing several of his key scenes, having not been invited to do so by Mike Nichols. This did not work out for the better. On the other hand he gave a wonderful performance and was unforgettable to be around. He gave his opinions on every movie director of any note, living or dead (Stanley Kubrick did not top the list), was virtually balletic verbally with a charming sort of self-deprecation that he did, and through it all was very kind somehow. It was complex and unforgettable. Just as he was and is. And inspiring and heartbreaking and gallant.

**ROBERT.** Inspiring, heartbreaking and gallant. That's the play. What haunted me when the lights went down and still does is what might have been, for all of them. Regret and hope are themes throughout *Orson's Shadow*. You and I had a conversation over dinner not long ago about Vivian and Joan. Can you say anything about Joan? If not, we could talk about Lillian Hellman — you, Lillian and Elizabeth Taylor on Broadway. You directed Elizabeth Taylor in her Broadway debut in *The Little Foxes*. More than one question, but you can handle it.

**AUSTIN.** All I can think of to say about Joan I've tried to say in the play. That she's an honest, loving, forthright woman who



Orson's Shadow Logo

somehow manages with all that to possess the soul of an artist. That she's cheerful and sad, clear-headed and passionate, angry and patient. *The Little Foxes*: Elizabeth Taylor is as sweet-natured a celebrity as I've ever worked with. Possibly because she started acting prominently as a child, she will do whatever you ask her to do, with full commitment. She's extraordinarily thoughtful of people she works with, and everybody connected with that revival visibly relaxed when they were with her, either acting with her or just dealing with her. I hope she's happy in what appears to be her retirement. She gave a lot of people a lovely time. Lillian Hellman could be impossible. She was also one of the funniest, most stimulating people I ever met. I miss her terribly. I still have conversations with her in my head, almost twenty-two years after her death. We had the worst fights I've ever had with a colleague in my professional life. We also had some of the best laughs. But whether laughing with her or fighting with her, or just ruminating with her, I always felt, strangely, relaxed. She's also one of the most flirtatious women I ever met, sort of a cross between Emma Goldman and Scarlett O'Hara. But with a subtler mode of behavior going than either one of them. Mike Nichols told me to listen to her very carefully, because as he put it she "almost always sounds wrong and is almost always right." This is absolutely correct. She managed to be dogmatic and inquisitive, hot-tempered and full of reason, all at the same time. I want to add that she's a curiously underrated writer. She wrote a lot of wonderful plays, and they're all different from each other. I'd love to direct them all. But I wish she could be around when I'd be directing them.

**ROBERT.** Which of Lillian's plays would you love to get your hands on right away if the opportunity presented itself?

**AUSTIN.** *The Children's Hour*. I directed it at Smith in 2001, while my daughter was there (she had nothing to do with the production; I just wanted to be up there while she was there). I picked the play because it had lots of good parts for women. It proceeded to knock me out. Since then I've been trying to get a big theatre to put it on, and no luck. Some have indicated that it's a homophobic play. This is flatly absurd. Some have said it's old-fashioned. It's not, really, properly played. It's a beautiful, subtle, urgently necessary play, and it's a great evening.

**MICHAEL.** What so amazes me is how completely a man of the theatre you are. You've acted in some terrific films and turned in performances that were just absolute gems. In fact, I recently rewatched *Two Days in the Valley*, and I couldn't help thinking that in your brilliant time onscreen you stole the whole movie! But as a man of the theatre, you have acted in and directed some of the great plays of our time; you are considered one of the nation's leading teachers of acting; you have served as artistic director of a major theatre; and now you're an extraordinarily accomplished playwright. The critics have

Continued on page 4

## NEWPLAYS

### Jean-Claude Carrière

**THE CONTROVERSY OF VALLADOLID.** English version by Richard Nelson. In a sixteenth-century Spanish monastery, the fate of millions of American natives from an ocean away hangs precariously in the balance as a papal tribunal debates over whether or not they are human. Based on a true story.

### Julia Cho

**BFE.** Thanks to a fortuitous misdeal, fourteen-year-old Panny strikes up a phone friendship that seems to be the connection she's been longing for. However, she soon finds that out in BFE, a.k.a. "the middle of nowhere," anything can happen — and usually does.

### Eric Coble

**THE DEAD GUY.** The pitch: Give a good-looking loser \$1,000,000 to spend in seven days. The catch: It will be his final week on earth. The hook: Everything — including his death — is broadcast on national TV. The best part: Viewers get to vote on how he dies! Does America have the stomach for this much reality?

### Gregg Coffin

**FIVE COURSE LOVE.** Five dates. Five restaurants. Innumerable sidesplitting laughs. A hilarious musical salute to the deliciousness of dating.

### Steven Dietz

**SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE FINAL ADVENTURES.** In this pulse-quickening play, passion and intellect collide, and the most insignificant clue can unlock the deepest secrets of the mind and heart.

### Christopher Durang

**MISS WITHERSPOON.** A chronic malcontent — and why shouldn't she be given the state of the world, Miss Witherspoon is determined to commit suicide, but it turns out that the Buddhists had it more or less right, even though reincarnation proves a lot less pleasant than advertised.

### David Edgar

**CONTINENTAL DIVIDE: DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION.** When former sixties activist Michael Bern finds proof that one of an eight-strong group of activists was an FBI informer, his quest to uncover the truth forces him to confront his former friends and, more profoundly, what has happened to his former self. A companion piece to *MOTHER'S AGAINST*.

**CONTINENTAL DIVIDE: MOTHER'S AGAINST.**

With five weeks to election day and the polls on a knife edge, Republican candidate for governor Sheldon Vine gathers his key advisors at the family home where it soon becomes clear that the most dangerous divisions are within the campaign itself. A companion piece to *DAUGHTERS OF THE REVOLUTION*.

### Gina Gionfriddo

**AFTER ASHLEY.** In this blisteringly funny and heartbreakingly truthful satire, a teenager is unwillingly thrust into the national spotlight when a family tragedy becomes talk-show fodder.

### Daniel Goldfarb

**MODERN ORTHODOX.** When, at Ben's urging, the orthodox Hershel takes off his yarmulke, his life begins to fall apart. Now Ben and his fiancée, Hannah, are determined to solve his problems by finding him a wife — on the Internet.

### Paul Grellong

**MANUSCRIPT.** In the bedroom of a Brooklyn Heights brownstone, three ambitious college freshmen confront the discovery of an unpublished manuscript that can guarantee success.

# NEWPLAYS

## David Grimm

**THE LEARNED LADIES OF PARK AVENUE.** Dicky wants to marry Betty, but her mother's plan is for Betty to wed a most pompous man. Molière meets Cole Porter's Jazz Age in this tale that asks whether reason, greed or true love will win the day.

## Rinne Groff

**THE RUBY SUNRISE.** The story of the birth and promise of television through the life of Ruby, who in 1927 struggles to realize her dream of inventing and perfecting the first all-electrical television system. Twenty-five years later, her daughter faces similar battles of will and crises of faith as she works to get Ruby's story told on network TV.

## Stephen Adly Guirgis

**THE LAST DAYS OF JUDAS ISCARIOT.** Set in a time-bending, darkly comic world between heaven and hell, this play reexamines the plight and fate of the New Testament's most infamous and unexplained sinner.

## Noah Haidle

**MR. MARMALADE.** Unfortunately four-year-old Lucy's imaginary friend, Mr. Marmalade, doesn't have much time for her — not to mention he beats up her personal assistant, has a cocaine addiction and a penchant for pornography. A savage black comedy about growing up in these difficult times.

## Jeffrey Hatcher

**COMPLETE FEMALE STAGE BEAUTY.** The career of the greatest female impersonator on the seventeenth-century stage is imperiled when the ban against women appearing onstage is lifted.

**MURDER BY POE.** A dark and dreadful night, a woman in white lost within a wood, and the only shelter is a house full of murderers in this theatrical reimagining of some of Edgar Allan Poe's most famous tales of terror.

**A PICASSO.** Set during the German occupation of Paris, this riveting drama imagines a confrontation between Picasso and a mysterious interrogator concerning several confiscated works that the great artist might have painted.

## Ron Hutchinson

**MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS.** Over the course of five days three men cloister themselves deep in the inner Hollywood sanctum, sustained only by bananas and peanuts as they work tirelessly to reshape a screenplay that's just not working — *Gone with the Wind*.

## Arlene Hutton

**SEE ROCK CITY.** A newly wed couple in rural Kentucky struggles with newfound marital expectations and challenges on the home front during The Last Great War.

## Dave Johnson

**BAPTIZED TO THE BONE.** Ottis is hustling the preacher's wife and the preacher. All three will learn the hard way that sometimes deception gets you exactly what you want.

## Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope, Jamie Wooten

**DEARLY BELOVED.** When the Futrelle Sisters of Fayro, TX come together to throw a wedding for one of their own, it's grist for the rumor mill and high jinks for all in this zany down-home comedy.

## Rolin Jones

**THE INTELLIGENT DESIGN OF JENNY CHOW.** This irreverent "techno-comedy" chronicles one brilliant woman's quest to determine her heritage and face her fears with the help of a Mormon missionary, a pizza delivery guy and her astounding creation called Jenny Chow.

justly praised *Orson's Shadow* to the skies, and Robert Simonson even wrote, "It is the best play about the dark midnight of the artistic soul in a generation." I know you are modest to a fault, but I have to ask: How did you get so good at so many things?

**AUSTIN.** I started out wanting to be a writer. I wrote the librettos for a couple of musicals in college. This was the great age of the American musical, so it was an inspiring time to do that; and I still have that hankering. But then I started to get work as an actor in New York, and then one summer at Williamstown, where I'd apprenticed and been an Equity actor for a while, Nikos Psacharopoulos, who ran the place, following a hunch, suggested I direct something. The first two shows I directed there were well received; had they not been, I'd have stopped directing then and there. Many since, there and other places, have not been, but, you know, once you get started ... Then Herbert Berghof, with whom I'd studied at HB, asked me to teach there. I had no idea what to do, so I just started copying what Uta [Hagen], with whom I'd also studied, did when she taught, added in some Robert Lewis teaching techniques (I'd also studied with him), and gradually found my way into it. I didn't get back to writing 'til I was fifty.

**MICHAEL.** The French have a saying, something like, "Twenty is young for a poet, thirty for a novelist and forty for a playwright." Of course, in French this is much more profound; but I want to make the point that in France you're still a young playwright. In your introduction to *Orson's Shadow*, you describe how the play was inspired by a conversation with a friend, and then I know you worked on the text for five or six years. How did the writing of it evolve after that meeting? Did you begin with research or did you write scenes and then research? Tell us how it came into being.

**AUSTIN.** Judith Auberjonois had the basic idea for this play: Orson directed Olivier in *Rhinoceros* in 1960, and it didn't work out, big-time. She asked me to write it for her husband, René, and for Alfred Molina, two brilliant actors. And as I began to learn as I worked on it, it was a brilliant idea. At first I was hesitant and just started researching it to see what I would find. Then one day I began writing scenes; none of these scenes are in the play as it is now. Gradually I added in Vivien Leigh, who seemed more and more important to these people, and then Kenneth Tynan, and then my fictional creation, Sean. I wrote lots and lots of scenes. I thought an overall structure would never present itself. Finally it did. This took three years. Ironically, René and Alfred have never done the play; one day I hope they do, separately or together, but meantime I've been brilliantly served.

**MICHAEL.** During the writing and the readings and the various productions, while you were continuing to work on the play, what surprised you, both in terms of the play itself and audience reactions? And at the various talkback sessions too. What about those?

**AUSTIN.** What surprised me from the first production on, and through all the subsequent productions and rewrites, was that it connected to an audience. I never really expected it to. I just got started on it, once Judith had proposed the idea, and then it became a sort of very

slowly rolling stone that became harder and harder to stop working at. But it was tough not only because I went up so many blind alleys but because each time, while I was struggling to find my way out of them, I kept thinking, "Not only is this uncastable — which proved completely untrue — but who will give a flying f— about any of these people or this story!" I think the Vivien Leigh thing anchored it, somehow, and, as I said before, she was a late addition to the idea that I came to after I kept running up against the fact that it was during the *Rhinoceros* rehearsals that Olivier, finally, after years of hesitations, made the break with her. I kept thinking that that and his fear of Orson's mysterious instability somehow connected in him, in a way he maybe didn't even fully understand. And people's responses to her character and her involvement in the play seemed to indicate that she grounded the story for them, which is strange because she was by no means part of the original idea, necessarily. Maybe another writer could have grounded without her. But she did it for me. And, significantly I think, her two long scenes were the only ones that barely changed over the rewrites and productions since the first time the play was done in 2000 in the Garage Space at Steppenwolf. I never heard a response, pro or con, in the talkbacks that surprised me. I did hear, however, some wonderful stories from some of the guests at those talkbacks. From Chris Feder, for example, Orson's daughter, from Peter Bogdanovich, from Jonathan Lynn, from Buck Henry, from Lynn Redgrave. Wonderful things. Things I wished I'd heard while I was writing it, but then I suppose that sort of thing will go on for the rest of my life with these characters, these wonderful people that this play tries to bring alive, in however inevitably limited a way.

**ROBERT.** What young playwrights and actors do you have your eye on, and why do you admire them?

**AUSTIN.** The playwright John Kolvenbach. I'm directing his play *Love Song* at Steppenwolf right now. The actor Tobias Segal. I acted in a two-hander, *The Lives of Bosie* by John Wolfson, with Tobias and directed him in a workshop of a new play by Dana Zeller-Alexis. There are others, but they're better known, and others that are not well known. But these come to mind. They're young; they're original; their craft is in place; and they're ready to go. As they will. I could make a longer list, but then it would get to be dicey about who to include and who to leave off. It would get to be hopelessly confusing and misleading.

**ROBERT.** Since you're entirely devoted to the theatre and always have been, what words of advice would you offer to young writers and actors?

**AUSTIN.** If they're interested in a life in the theatre, they're out of their minds. Which will be of help to them. Just keep the faith, that's all. Everything is arrayed against you, more than I can ever remember. But you are needed. Just get to be very good, that's all, even if it breaks your heart.

**MICHAEL.** But is there any other profession that offers so many opportunities for delight and joy?

**AUSTIN.** There probably are other professions that offer as many opportunities for delight

*Continued on back cover*

# Wendy Wasserstein

by Michael Q. Fellmeth

In January of this year the Play Service and the theatre world lost one of its most beloved authors, Wendy Wasserstein. Wendy, who, in the words of *The Times*, “spoke for a generation of smart, driven but sometimes unsatisfied women” in such plays as *The Heidi Chronicles*, *The Sisters Rosensweig* and *An American Daughter*, succumbed to cancer at only fifty-five. Although we will miss the pleasure of looking forward to a new play by Wendy opening on Broadway, she has left us with a rich legacy, a collection of plays in a voice that could belong to no other author, whose archetypal characters find themselves wrestling with trials and choices in life that are both distinctly of our time and familiar to us all.



Photo by Brigitte Lacombe

That Wendy's plays have provided splendid roles to actresses of all ages is well known. It is equally well known that some of our finest actresses cut their teeth on Wendy's characters. But while the rare excellence of her female characterizations has from the beginning been acclaimed, Wendy wrote full-bodied men too, whose behavior may have provoked consternation among her intelligent, capable women but who remain nevertheless three-dimensional creatures, flawed perhaps, indecisive, even capricious, but always believable. Such was the compassion of Wendy's vision that even her antagonists at their most antagonistic moments were allowed full humanity. But this should come as no surprise. As the words of just a few of Wendy's friends attest below, she was above all a good, kind and generous person, an uncommon woman and a gentle soul; and in her plays and in her characters, that could not help but show through.

I can think of no better way to commemorate Wendy's life than that her plays, her life's work, be seen and celebrated. Read the plays you have not read, revisit the plays you have. If you are new to Wendy's work, I envy you. You are in for an exquisite journey filled with laughter, sparkling wit and heartache. If you know her work, share it with your audiences. Let them learn what we already know, that though this remarkable woman may no longer be with us, her voice is still present, and it is positively worth listening to. ■

## Wendy's Plays Published by the Play Service:

*An American Daughter*  
*The Heidi Chronicles*  
*Isn't It Romantic*

*Seven One-Act Plays*  
*The Sisters Rosensweig*  
*Uncommon Women and Others*

"*Uncommon Women and Others* changed forever what I expect from the theatre. Although I had been reviewing plays for years, I sat there, stunned, realizing that I had never before seen women onstage talking about things my friends and I talked about, in a language and style we knew only as real life ... Her *Uncommon Women* asked, 'Why didn't someone tell us that being exceptional would have repercussions?' ... How wise she was, this girl-woman barely out of college, already able to observe social upheavals while living them."  
—Linda Winer

"By the time any of us had seen *The Heidi Chronicles* we felt she was an old friend ... the smartest one at the pajama party ... the girl who was nice to everyone. You didn't even feel intimidated by her brilliance because hadn't she written exactly what we were all thinking? Wendy had a way of letting us hear our own thoughts and laugh while we listened."  
—Jill Krentz

"Wendy had a great talent for friendship. Besides me, she was also friends with at least one half of Manhattan."  
—Billy Kimball

"Wendy was a charter member of the company of nice women, a river of accommodating humanity that flows through Manhattan just as it flows through Des Moines and Oneonta, NY, organizing library fund-raisers, running day-care centers, ordering prescriptions for elderly parents, buying all the birthday presents and giving career counseling to the nephew of a very remote acquaintance who is trying to decide between making it big on Broadway and dentistry ... (Wendy once noted in an essay) that niceness had become unfashionable and promised to be crankier in the future. It was just a literary device. Wendy understood that being considerate in a society of self-involved strivers was not for wimps. It required a steely inner toughness that was the hallmark of many of her heroines. She also knew her own nature. 'Frankly, I never want to leave a room and be thought of as a horrible person,' she admitted. But Wendy never explained what the rest of us were supposed to do when she left the room before us."  
—Gail Collins

# NEWPLAYS

## Jonathan Lichtenstein

**THE PULL OF NEGATIVE GRAVITY.** Wounded in the war in Iraq, a farmer's boy turned soldier returns home with injuries that have extraordinary consequences for his fiancée and his family.

## David Lindsay-Abaire

**RABBIT HOLE.** Becca and Howie Corbett have everything a family could want, until a life-shattering accident turns their world upside down and leaves the couple drifting perilously apart.

## Angus MacLachlan

**THE RADIANT ABYSS.** Nothing is as it seems as the unfathomable mysteries of religion, love, bigotry and sexual rapture constellate three strivers to investigate a storefront church whose practices appear to be far removed from God.

## David Mamet

**FAUSTUS.** An ingenious and eerily moving version of the tragedy of Dr. Faustus fashioned by the bold and acerbic pen of a theatrical master.

**ROMANCE.** An uproarious, take-no-prisoners courtroom comedy that gleefully lampoons everyone from lawyers and judges, to Arabs and Jews, to gays and chiropractors.

## Martin McDonagh

**THE PILLOWMAN.** In an unnamed totalitarian state, an author of horrific children's stories discovers that someone has been making his stories come true.

## Jean Baptiste Molière

**THE IMAGINARY INVALID.** Adapted by James Magruder. A dedicated hypochondriac, Argan takes all manner of cures for his imaginary ills; but with a disingenuous wife, a rebellious daughter and an insubordinate servant, how's a man supposed to enjoy his illness?

## Charles Morey

**LAUGHING STOCK.** When The Playhouse, a rustic New England summer theatre, schedules a repertory season of *Dracula*, *Hamlet* and *Charley's Aunt*, comic mayhem ensues.

## Michael Murphy

**SIN (A CARDINAL DEPOSED).** A look at the scandalous trial of Cardinal Bernard F. Law that led the "prince of the church" to a Shakespearean-like fall from grace.

## David Nehls and Betsy Kelso

**THE GREAT AMERICAN TRAILER PARK MUSICAL.** This hilarious new musical takes place at Armadillo Acres, where Pippi, a stripper on the run, has just moved in, wreaking havoc among the other tenants.

## Lynn Nottage

**FABULATION OR, THE RE-EDUCATION OF UNDINE.** When her husband disappears after embezzling all her money, leaving her pregnant and on the brink of social and financial ruin, Undine retreats to her childhood home in Brooklyn's Walt Whitman projects, only to discover that she must cope with a crude new reality.

## Carey Perloff

**LUMINESCENCE DATING.** A maverick archaeologist attempts to reassemble an ancient statue of Aphrodite while the goddess herself wreaks havoc with her heart.

## Christopher Piehler and Scott Alan Evans

**THE TRIANGLE FACTORY FIRE PROJECT.** Using real words spoken by real people, from Ukrainian seamstresses to millionaire Fifth Avenue socialites, THE TRIANGLE FACTORY FIRE PROJECT paints a heartbreakingly clear picture of a disastrous day in American history and explores the human toll such a tragedy takes on us all.

## Craig Pospisil

**LIFE IS SHORT.** This collection of short plays takes a hilarious look at relationships from childhood to old age, gleefully portraying people at their worst — and sometimes their best.

## Lucy Prebble

**THE SUGAR SYNDROME.** Seventeen-year-old Dani surfs Internet chat rooms searching for someone who is honest and direct, but what she finds is a man twice her age who thinks she is an eleven-year-old boy.

## Heather Raffo

**9 PARTS OF DESIRE.** A portrait of the extraordinary (and ordinary) lives of a cross-section of Iraqi women that delves into the many conflicting aspects of what it means to be a woman in the age-old war zone.

## Lanie Robertson

**WOMAN BEFORE A GLASS.** Rebellious against her wealthy New York upbringing, indulging her uncanny eye for great art and artists, and becoming the *enfant terrible* of the modern art scene, Peggy Guggenheim lived a life almost too amazing to be believed.

## J.T. Rogers

**MADAGASCAR.** A tapestry of interwoven narratives that contradict, clarify and deepen the haunting story of a mysterious and unsolved disappearance that changed three lives forever.

## Burt V. Royal

**DOG SEES GOD.** What happens when America's favorite blockhead discovers that his beloved beagle has terminal rabies? A missing pen pal, an abused pianist, a pyromaniac ex-girlfriend, two drunk cheerleaders, a burnt-out Buddhist and a drama queen sister are all contributing factors to the teen-angst of America's most hapless kid.

## Sam Shepard

**THE GOD OF HELL.** After Frank and Emma agree to put up a friend on the lam from a secret government project, they are visited by an unctuous government bureaucrat who transforms their heartland American household into a scene of torture.

## Stephen Temperley

**SOUVENIR.** A musical fantasia on the life of Florence Foster Jenkins, a wealthy society eccentric of the 1930s and '40s who suffered under the illusion that she was a great coloratura soprano.

## Freyda Thomas

**THE GAMESTER.** Based on *Le Joueur* by Jean-François Regnard. A world-class farce set in eighteenth-century Paris, flavored with turn-of-the-century optimism and dark undertones reminiscent of post-millennium Vegas.

## Matthew Todd

**BLOWING WHISTLES.** A wry and heartfelt look at love and gay pride in the age of the Internet.

## Laura Wade

**COLDER THAN HERE.** Myra is slowly dying of bone cancer and as they help her plan her funeral, her husband and daughters are forced to confront the unspoken realities of their lives.

## Paul Weitz

**PRIVILEGE.** When their father is arrested for insider trading, a pair of New York rich kids suddenly find themselves coming of age far from the cocoon of Park Avenue.

# The New Diary of Anne Frank

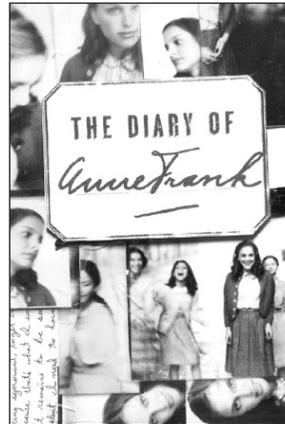
An Interview with Wendy Kesselman by Michael Q. Fellmeth

**MICHAEL.** Wendy, your adaptation of *The Diary of Anne Frank* has been received with phenomenal enthusiasm. We published the acting edition in 2001, and ever since the play has been steadily climbing the charts. This year it regularly appears among our top-25 most-popular acting editions and is now poised to overtake in popularity one of the most famous plays in the American theatre, the original *Diary of Anne Frank*. This, it seems to me, merits some talking about. I know you have a deep interest in the Holocaust, but I'm wondering what specifically led to your adaptation of the play.

**WENDY.** The director Jim Lapine and I had been friends for years but had never worked together. He was the one who suggested me for the new adaptation. The moment he told me, I was elated. Rereading Anne's diary was a revelation. Anne was a real writer, something I'd never realized when I first read the diary. The diary was crucial for Anne — it sustained her throughout the years of hiding. I wanted to make her words shine. That decision especially involved the phrase that has come to be totally identified with Anne: "I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart." Yes, Anne, spirited, optimistic Anne, wrote these words, but they are part of a far darker, more pessimistic entry: "I see the world slowly being transformed into a wilderness, I hear the approaching thunder which will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions." Anne did not know how her story was going to end, but we know, and to make the horror more evident to today's audiences, I juxtaposed Anne's generosity of spirit with the Nazi breaking into the attic, his gun held high, with the reverberating scream of "RAUS!!!"

**MICHAEL.** Yes, that moment in particular seems emblematic of your version. The original was very much a product of its time, the 1950s, when the Second World War was still palpable, the Cold War at its apex, and there was a real and understandable desire for hope. Not that your adaptation abandons hope, but I think *The Times* said it well: "Undeniably moving. It shatters the heart. The evening never lets us forget the inhuman darkness waiting to claim its incandescently human heroine." You have read just about everything there is to read on Anne, and you have talked with people who knew her. What during your research was especially illuminating?

**WENDY.** The trip to Amsterdam made a profound impression on me. The night I arrived, I stayed up 'til three talking passionately with two Dutch historians as obsessed with Anne as I. A few hours later we drove to Westerbork, the transit camp. As Mr. Dussel says, "From there, like clockwork, every Tuesday a train leaves for ... the East." The Frank family was in the



last transport of cattle cars deported to Auschwitz. The railroad tracks are all that's left in Westerbork. I was deeply affected by the Amsterdam trip, and much of what I felt during that experience found its way into the new adaptation.

**MICHAEL.** It was your first Broadway production. What was that like for you? How about working with your young star, now a global celebrity, Natalie Portman?

**WENDY.** People warned me about the pressure, pressure, pressure of working on Broadway, but it seemed no more pressured than any other theatre situation, and I loved all the moments, joyous and difficult. Natalie was wonderful to work with — although she couldn't believe how I kept revising. After our run at the Colonial Theatre in Boston, I wanted many of Anne's voiceovers spoken aloud, and Natalie was not too thrilled about that. Gradually, however, she came to enjoy doing them onstage, and eventually her favorite moment became Anne's voiceover: "When I write I shake off all my cares. But I want to achieve more than that. I want to be useful and bring enjoyment to all people, even those I've never met. I want to go on living even after my death!"

**MICHAEL.** What do you think Anne would make of her story being told to a new generation, a generation whose parents, even whose grandparents, did not live through the Second World War, a generation for whom the Holocaust may seem like just another distant historical event?

**WENDY.** I believe that Anne would absolutely have wanted her story told — she told it herself, revised it painstakingly, wanted it published after the war. But I believe for Anne that would have been just the beginning. She felt the suffering of others deeply. She would have wanted all the other stories told too.

**MICHAEL.** There has been a disturbing resurgence of Holocaust deniers in recent years. One would like simply to dismiss them as cranks and loons, but unfortunately some of them are well-spoken and manage to find their way into print and the media. What would you say to them?

**WENDY.** There will always be those who deny the truth, no matter how much evidence is before them. Hopefully, the play says much to counteract that. Anne always spoke the truth, even when most painful for her. Her words will live on.

**MICHAEL.** Your adaptation has helped ensure that, Wendy. Thank you. ■

*In addition to her version of The Diary of Anne Frank, Wendy Kesselman's remarkable and affecting portrait of young literary and romantic awakening, The Notebook, is available from the Play Service at [www.dramatists.com](http://www.dramatists.com).*

Dramatists Play Service licenses hundreds of professional productions each year. For your convenience, here's a schedule of some of them. You can access an even more comprehensive list of professional and select nonprofessional productions by visiting [www.dramatists.com](http://www.dramatists.com) and viewing PAGE TO STAGE.

# page to stage

May – August 2006

## ALABAMA

**BAT BOY: THE MUSICAL** story and book by Keythe Farley and Brian Flemming, music and lyrics by Laurence O'Keefe. Birmingham Summer Fest. Birmingham. June.

## ARKANSAS

**PROOF** by David Auburn. Valley Performing Arts. Waskita. June.

## CALIFORNIA

**ANNA IN THE TROPICS** by Nilo Cruz. PCCA Theaterfest. Santa Maria. June  
**PCCA Theaterfest**. Solvang. July.  
**'ART'** by Yasmina Reza, translated by Christopher Hampton. Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Santa Cruz. July.  
**BROOKLYN BOY** by Donald Margulies. TheatreWorks. Palo Alto. July.  
**THE GOD OF HELL** by Sam Shepard. Geffen Playhouse. Los Angeles. June.  
**THE GOOD THIEF** by Conor McPherson. Rubicon Theatre Company. Ventura. August.  
**THE LONG CHRISTMAS RIDE HOME** by Paula Vogel. Magic Theatre. San Francisco. May.  
**M. BUTTERFLY** by David Henry Hwang. TheatreWorks. Palo Alto. August.  
**A NERVOUS SMILE** by John Belluso. International City Theatre. Long Beach. June.  
**STEEL MAGNOLIAS** by Robert Harling. Marmac Repertory Theater Company. Azusa. June.  
**VALHALLA** by Paul Rudnick. New Conservatory Theatre. San Francisco. May.

## COLORADO

**CROWNS** by Regina Taylor. Denver Center Theatre Company. Denver. May.  
**DINNER WITH FRIENDS** by Donald Margulies. Theatre Aspen. Aspen. July.  
**ENCHANTED APRIL** by Matthew Barber, from the novel by Elizabeth von Arnim. Creede Repertory Theatre. Creede. June.  
**THE FOREIGNER** by Larry Shue. Theatre Aspen. Aspen. August.

## CONNECTICUT

**THE ARCHBISHOP'S CEILING** by Arthur Miller. Westport Country Playhouse. Westport. August.  
**FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIR DE LUNE** by Terrence McNally. Hartford Stage Company. Hartford. May.  
**HOWIE THE ROOKIE** by Mark O'Rowe. Irish Arts Centre. Fairfield. June.  
**TAKE ME OUT** by Richard Greenberg. Theatreworks. Hartford. August.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**FROZEN** by Bryony Lavery. Studio Theatre. Washington. July.  
**MOJO** by Jez Butterworth. Studio Theatre. Washington. July.  
**PAUL ROBESON** by Phillip Hayes Dean. African Continuum Theatre Company. Washington. May.

## DELAWARE

**EXITS AND ENTRANCES** by Athol Fugard. Contemporary Stage Company. Wilmington. June.

## FLORIDA

**CROWNS** by Regina Taylor. Asolo Theatre Company. Sarasota. May.  
**Seaside Music Theater**. Daytona Beach. June.  
**DINNER WITH FRIENDS** by Donald Margulies. American Stage Company. St. Petersburg. July.  
**FIVE COURSE LOVE** by Gregg Coffin. ACT Playhouse. Coral Gables. May.  
**HANK WILLIAMS: LOST HIGHWAY** by Randal Myler and Mark Harelik. Maltz Jupiter Theatre. Jupiter. June.  
**HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH** text by John Cameron Mitchell, music and lyrics by Stephen Trask. Florida Studio Theatre. Sarasota. May.  
**LIFE X 3** by Yasmina Reza, translated by Christopher Hampton. Banyan Theatre Company. Sarasota. August.  
**OLEANNA** by David Mamet. Mosaic Theatre. Plantation. May.  
**THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW** by William Nicholson. Banyan Theatre Company. Sarasota. June.

## GEORGIA

**THE LAST SUNDAY IN JUNE** by Jonathan Tolins. ACT Express. Atlanta. May.  
**A NERVOUS SMILE** by John Belluso. Synchronicity Performance Group. Atlanta. August.  
**PROOF** by David Auburn. Springer Opera House. Columbus. May.  
**THE STORY** by Tracey Scott Wilson. Theatre in the Square. Marietta. May.

## HAWAII

**THE FOREIGNER** by Larry Shue. Manoa Valley Theatre. Honolulu. May.

## IDAHO

**THOM PAIN (BASED ON NOTHING)** by Will Eno. Boise Contemporary Theatre. Boise. May.

## ILLINOIS

**CRUMBS FROM THE TABLE OF JOY** by Lynn Nottage. Goodman Theatre. Chicago. May.  
**THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW** by William Nicholson. Northlight Theatre. Skokie. May.

## INDIANA

**THE FOREIGNER** by Larry Shue. Shawnee Theatre of Greene County. Bloomfield. June.  
**THE PILLOWMAN** by Martin McDonagh. Phoenix Theatre. Indianapolis. May.  
**STEEL MAGNOLIAS** by Robert Harling. Beef and Boards Dinner Theatre. Indianapolis. July.  
**Derby Dinner Playhouse**. Clarksville. May.  
**Wagon Wheel Theatre**. Warsaw. August.

## IOWA

**MASS APPEAL** by Bill C. Davis. Old Creamery Theatre Company. Amana. August.  
**STRING FEVER** by Jacquelyn Reingold. New Ground Theatre. Bettendorf. May.

## KANSAS

**FIFTH OF JULY** by Lanford Wilson. Kansas City Actors Theatre. Kansas City. June.  
**OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS** by Joe DiPietro. New Theatre Restaurant. Overland Park. August.  
**TALLEY'S FOLLY** by Lanford Wilson. Kansas City Actors Theatre. Kansas City. June.  
**TALLEY & SON** by Lanford Wilson. Kansas City Actors Theatre. Kansas City. July.

## LOUISIANA

**KIMBERLY AKIMBO** by David Lindsay-Abaire. Southern Repertory Theatre. New Orleans. May.

## MAINE

**SYLVIA** by A.R. Gurney. Acadia Repertory. Mt. Desert. August.

## MARYLAND

**CRUMBS FROM THE TABLE OF JOY** by Lynn Nottage. Center Stage. Baltimore. May.  
**HEDDA GABLER** by Henrik Ibsen, adapted by Jon Robin Baiz. Olney Theatre. Olney. June.  
**HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH** text by John Cameron Mitchell, music and lyrics by Stephen Trask. Musical Theatre Factory. Frederick. July.  
**JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL & LIVING IN PARIS** production conception, English lyrics, additional material by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman, based on Jacques Brel's lyrics and commentary, music by Jacques Brel. Olney Theatre. Olney. June.

## MASSACHUSETTS

**ENCHANTED APRIL** by Matthew Barber, from the novel by Elizabeth von Arnim. Shakespeare & Company. Lenox. May.  
**THE HEIDI CHRONICLES** by Wendy Wasserstein. Berkshire Theatre Festival. Stockbridge. August.  
**LOVE LETTERS** by A.R. Gurney. Payomet Performing Arts Center. North Truro. July.  
**MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS** by Ron Hutchinson. Cape Playhouse. Dennis. July.  
**A NERVOUS SMILE** by John Belluso. Williamstown Theatre Festival. Williamstown. July.  
**SYLVIA** by A.R. Gurney. Cape Playhouse. Dennis. August.  
**TWO ROOMS** by Lee Blessing. Miniature Theatre. Chester. August.  
**WONDER OF THE WORLD** by David Lindsay-Abaire. Barrington Stage Company. Sheffield. July.

## MICHIGAN

**I AM MY OWN WIFE** by Doug Wright. Performance Network. Ann Arbor. July.  
**ZOMBIES FROM THE BEYOND** by James Valcq. Tibbits Opera House. Coldwater. August.

## MINNESOTA

**I AM MY OWN WIFE** by Doug Wright. Jungle Theatre. Minneapolis. June.  
**LOOKING FOR NORMAL** by Jane Anderson. Loose Cannon Productions. Minneapolis. May.  
**PROOF** by David Auburn. MSUM Straw Hat Players. Moorhead. June.  
**TO FOOL THE EYE** by Jean Anouilh, adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher, translated by Stephanie L. Debnar. Commonwealth Theatre. Lanesboro. June.  
**A WALK IN THE WOODS** by Lee Blessing. Escena Productions. Minneapolis. July.

## MISSISSIPPI

**CROWNS** by Regina Taylor. New Stage Theatre. Jackson. May.

## MISSOURI

**THE MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS OF 1940** by John Bishop. Ozark Actors Theatre. Rolla. July.

## MONTANA

**OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS** by Joe DiPietro. Opera House Theatre. Philipsburg. July.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

**BREAKING LEGS** by Tom Dulack. Barnstormers Theatre. Tamworth. July.  
**POLISH JOKE** by David Ives. Winnepesaukee Playhouse. Laconia. August.  
**PROOF** by David Auburn. Barnstormers Theatre. Tamworth. August.  
**SYLVIA** by A.R. Gurney. Winnepesaukee Playhouse. Laconia. July.

## NEW JERSEY

**DEAD CERTAIN** by Marcus Lloyd. Bickford Theatre. Morristown. May.  
**EPIC PROPORTIONS** by Larry Coen and David Crane. Bickford Theatre. Morristown. May.  
**EXITS AND ENTRANCES** by Athol Fugard. New Jersey Repertory. Long Branch. May.  
**GOING TO ST. IVES** by Lee Blessing. Cape May Stage. Cape May. August.  
**K2** by Patrick Meyers. Cape May Stage. Cape May. June.  
**PROOF** by David Auburn. Arts Trust. Succasunna. May.  
**WITH AND WITHOUT** by Jeffrey Sweet. Blueberry Pond Theatre Ensemble. Weehawken. June.

## NEW YORK

**'ART'** by Yasmina Reza, translated by Christopher Hampton. Hangar Theatre. Ithaca. July.  
**I AM MY OWN WIFE** by Doug Wright. StageWorks. Hudson. August.  
**MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS** by Ron Hutchinson. Cortland Repertory Theatre. Cortland. August.  
**THRILL ME: THE LEOPOLD AND LOEB STORY** by Stephen Dolginoff. Kavinoky Theatre. Buffalo. June.

## NORTH CAROLINA

**DRIVING MISS DAISY** by Alfred Uhry. Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre. Mars Hill. June.  
**GOD'S MAN IN TEXAS** by David Rambo. Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre. Mars Hill. August.  
**HANK WILLIAMS: LOST HIGHWAY** by Randal Myler and Mark Harelik. Southern Appalachian Repertory Theatre. Mars Hill. May.  
**THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO** by Alfred Uhry. Hot Summer Nights at the Kennedy. Raleigh. July.  
**THE LONESOME WEST** by Martin McDonagh. Temple Theatre Company. Sanford. May.  
**THE MUSICAL COMEDY MURDERS OF 1940** by John Bishop. Central Piedmont Community College Summer Theatre. Charlotte. July.  
**OLEANNA** by David Mamet. Hot Summer Nights at the Kennedy. Raleigh. August.  
**SHAKESPEARE'S R & J** by Joe Calarco. North Carolina Stage Company. Asheville. May.  
**THOM PAIN (BASED ON NOTHING)** by Will Eno. Man Bites Dog Theatre Company. Durham. June.

## OKLAHOMA

**STEEL MAGNOLIAS** by Robert Harling. American Theatre Company. Tulsa. May.

## OREGON

**FROZEN** by Bryony Lavery. Artists Repertory Theatre. Portland. May.  
**HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH** text by John Cameron Mitchell, music and lyrics by Stephen Trask. Triangle Productions. Portland. July.

## PENNSYLVANIA

**BOSTON MARRIAGE** by David Mamet. Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre. Pittsburgh. June.  
**THE FOREIGNER** by Larry Shue. People's Light and Theatre Company. Malvern. June.  
**INCORRUPTIBLE** by Michael Hollinger. Totem Pole Playhouse. Fayetteville. July.  
**MAN FROM NEBRASKA** by Tracy Letts. People's Light and Theatre Company. Malvern. May.  
**MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS** by Ron Hutchinson. St. Vincent's Summer Theatre. La Trobe. July.  
**OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS** by Joe DiPietro. Northeast Theatre. La Plume. July.  
**THE PILLOWMAN** by Martin McDonagh. Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre. Pittsburgh. May.  
**PROOF** by David Auburn. Millbrook Playhouse. Mill Hill. July.  
**THE SANTALAND DIARIES** by David Sedaris, adapted by Joe Mantello. Millbrook Playhouse. Mill Hill. July.  
**SYLVIA** by A.R. Gurney. Totem Pole Playhouse. Fayetteville. August.  
**THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES** by Eve Ensler. Open Stage PA. Harrisburg. June.

## TENNESSEE

**COLLECTED STORIES** by Donald Margulies. Tennessee Women's Theater Project. Nashville. May.

**DEARLY DEPARTED** by David Bottrell and Jessie Jones. Tennessee Repertory Theatre. Nashville. May.  
**DEATHTRAP** by Ira Levin. Chaffin's Barn. Nashville. August.  
**FROZEN** by Bryony Lavery. Playhouse on the Square. Memphis. June.  
**THE MISS FIRECRACKER CONTEST** by Beth Henley. Gaslight Dinner Theatre (Renaissance Center). Dickson. June.  
**THE STORY** by Tracey Scott Wilson. Playhouse on the Square. Memphis. July.

## TEXAS

**'ART'** by Yasmina Reza, translated by Christopher Hampton. FMPA Theatre. Flower Mound. June.  
**HANK WILLIAMS: LOST HIGHWAY** by Randal Myler and Mark Harelik. Galveston Island Musicals. Texas City. June.  
**I AM MY OWN WIFE** by Doug Wright. Zachary Scott Theatre Center. Austin. July.  
**NICKEL AND DIMED** by Joan Holden, based on *Nickel and Dimed, on (Not) Getting by in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich. Stages Repertory Theatre. Houston. August.  
**TAKE ME OUT** by Richard Greenberg. Watertown Theatre. Addison. May.  
**THOM PAIN (BASED ON NOTHING)** by Will Eno. Dallas Theatre Center. Dallas. June.

## VERMONT

**MOONLIGHT AND MAGNOLIAS** by Ron Hutchinson. Dorset Theatre Festival. Dorset. June.  
**STEEL MAGNOLIAS** by Robert Harling. Saint Michael's Playhouse. Colchester. July.  
**THREE DAYS OF RAIN** by Richard Greenberg. Oldcastle Theatre Company. Bennington. August.

## VIRGINIA

**ENCHANTED APRIL** by Matthew Barber, from the novel by Elizabeth von Arnim. Heritage Repertory Theatre. Charlottesville. July.  
**STEEL MAGNOLIAS** by Robert Harling. Swift Creek Mill Theatre. Colonial Heights. June.

## WASHINGTON

**THE MISS FIRECRACKER CONTEST** by Beth Henley. Spokane Interplayers Ensemble. Spokane. June.  
**THE FOREIGNER** by Larry Shue. Taproot Theatre. Seattle. May.  
**THE INTELLIGENT DESIGN OF JENNY CHOW** by Robin Jones. Seattle Public Theater. Seattle. May.  
**SYLVIA** by A.R. Gurney. Merc Playhouse. Twisp. June.

## WEST VIRGINIA

**MR. MARMALADE** by Noah Haide. Contemporary American Theater Festival. Shepherdstown. July.

## WISCONSIN

**THE FOURTH WALL** by A.R. Gurney. Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. Milwaukee. August.  
**MASTER CLASS** by Terrence McNally. Peninsula Players Theatre Foundation. Fish Creek. June.

## CANADA

**'ART'** by Yasmina Reza, translated by Christopher Hampton. Act Productions. Brampton, Ontario. June.  
**AS BEES IN HONEY DROWN** by Douglas Carter Beane. Theatre Muskoka. Toronto, Ontario. July.  
**LIFE X 3** by Yasmina Reza, translated by Christopher Hampton. Great Canadian Theatre Company. Ottawa, Ontario. May.  
**LOVE LETTERS** by A.R. Gurney. Victoria Playhouse. Prince Edward Island. August.  
**LOVE! VALOUR! COMPASSION!** by Terrence McNally. Atchoum Production. Montreal, Quebec. July.  
**THE MAGIC FIRE** by Lillian Groag. Shaw Festival. Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. June.  
**THE PAVILION** by Craig Wright. Renaissance Arts. Toronto, Ontario. May.  
**QUILTERS** by Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek. Aha! Communications. New Hamburg, Ontario. May.  
**ROMANCE** by David Mamet. Pilot Project Theatre Company. Toronto, Ontario. May.  
**THE SYRINGA TREE** by Pamela Gien. Thousand Islands Playhouse. Gananoque, Ontario. August.  
**THE WEIR** by Conor McPherson. Theatre Newfoundland Labrador. Corner Brook, Newfoundland. July.

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and joy. I'm just not in them. I can't imagine my life without this one. I mean, I can, but I'd rather not.

**MICHAEL.** You have so many wonderful stories. You had, for instance, such a unique relationship with the great Arthur Miller. Please share a little about it with our readers, and I beg you to tell the story of when you went to see *The Crucible*.

**AUSTIN.** I loved Arthur Miller. I love his work, and I loved him. I directed two of his

plays at Williamstown, two of my favorites, *After the Fall* and *The American Clock*, and acted twice in a musical he wrote with Stanley Silverman called *Up from Paradise*, adapted from his play *The Creation of the World and Other Business*, itself adapted from the Book of Genesis. (Arthur didn't fool around.) The musical is very beautiful and touching. And very funny. Arthur was very funny. We insulted each other cheerfully many times. After a preview of *The Crucible* at the Roundabout a few years ago (okay, sixteen years ago), I found him surrounded in the lobby afterwards and announced that I thought he had "real promise." Once, that wonderful wife of his, Inge, told me that she had met someone who said to her, "You know Austin Pendleton!" Without missing a

beat, Arthur said, "You denied it, I hope." Stuff like that. His sense of humor was very off-center and funny, much like the humor in his plays — for which he is, I think, too rarely given credit. Also, when you worked on one of his productions, his aesthetic was, well, quirkiest than people seemed to think. He was structurally very daring. People just take for granted now how daring *Death of a Salesman* is, and the two plays I mentioned earlier are downright radical that way. And he was restless, always trying to get deeper and more revealingly into the things that obsessed him in his life and work. I think it's an amazing body of work, and I loved knowing him.

**ROBERT.** Thank you, Austin.

**MICHAEL.** It's been a pleasure. ■

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