



Stage Write

The Newsletter of **ONSTAGE PLAYHOUSE**

Volume 18, Number 2

September 2008

OnStage presents a San Diego premiere: Neil LaBute's *Fat Pig*

By Teri Brown

Cow. Slob. Pig. How many insults can you hear before you have to stand up and defend the woman you love?

In association with InnerMission Productions, OnStage Playhouse is pleased to present the San Diego premiere of Neil LaBute's *Fat Pig*. OnStage Playhouse is pleased to provide much-needed performance space to one of San Diego's homeless theatres by co-producing this show with InnerMission Productions. Kym Pappas, Co-Artistic Director of InnerMission Productions, will direct this scathingly honest social commentary.

Tom surprises even himself when he falls for Helen, a bright, funny, sexy young woman who happens to be plus-sized - and then some. This doesn't sit well with Tom's friends, Carter and Jeannie. Forced to explain his new relationship to his shallow (although shockingly funny and sometimes nasty) friends, he finally comes to terms with his own preconceptions of the importance for conventional good looks. Neil LaBute's sharply drawn play not only critiques our slavish adherence to Hollywood ideals of beauty but also boldly questions our own ability to change what we dislike about ourselves. How much has our relentless pursuit of beauty turned us into an uglier species? And does love need society's blessing to be complete?

Carla Nell, Artistic Director of InnerMission Productions, will portray the bright and funny Helen in her first appearance at OnStage Playhouse, previously winning acclaim for directing *How I Learned to Drive* and *Dancing at Lughnasa*. Jenna Dawsey returns to OnStage Playhouse as the acid-

tongued Jeannie. First-timers to OnStage are Ryan Ross and Brendan Cavalier, filling the roles of Tom and Carter, respectively.

Ticket prices are \$15.00 general admission, \$13.00 students/seniors/military. Group rates are available by contacting Betsy Keller via the theatre contact information. Curtain times are Thursdays-Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 2pm. This production is produced by special arrangement with Broadway Play Publishing, Inc.

For reservations or additional information, please visit our website at www.onstageplayhouse.org or call OnStage Playhouse's box office at 619-422-RSVP (7787).



Carla Nell as Helen anchors the cast of *Fat Pig*.

- photo by Paul Savage

An Extra-Ordinary Aldea Breakfast!

By Bob Christiansen

OnStage's family drama *Ordinary People* was the most honored show from the 2007-2008 season at our annual awards breakfast, but there was nothing ordinary about the fete hosted by Fredericka Manor last month. Everyone had a great meal and a great time.

Host Brian P. Evans, along with his cohorts from *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, got the program off to a roaring start by giving us a brief but inaccurate history of Shakespeare which happened to include elements of all the 2007-08 judged shows plus our holiday special, *A Christmas Story*. See if you can identify all of last season's shows in this (abridged) biography of Shakespeare.

"He was born in 1564 in the town of Stratford-Upon-Avon, Warwickshire. In 1575, at the age of eleven, Shakespeare was given driving lessons from his Uncle Peck and was taught by his mother that a lady drinks like a man: straight up or on the rocks, with plenty of water in between. By 1588, Shakespeare had arrived in Mexico where he formed a company of Baptists. With this company, he developed a play that involved an iguana and a lesbian, but he grew tired of conducting services in praise and worship of a senile delinquent. By 1592, in depression over the fact that Ben Johnson was getting more attention, Shakespeare attempted suicide with a genuine Red Ryder Carbine Action 200 Range Air Rifle with a compass in the stock and this thing that tells time. He eventually pulled himself out of his depression by inventing baseball and taking his act to vaudeville where he eventually learned to get over his fear of ducks. He lies buried in the church at Stratford."

All six regular season shows received nominations, and five collected trophies.

Ordinary People received nine Aldeas for production (Chad Oakley), direction (Jay Mower), lead actor (Michael Dean Grulli, tie), supporting actress (Nikki Hagemeyer), lighting design (Chad Oakley), sound design (David Farlow), costume design (the cast, tie), and technical execution (Chris DeArmond). Nikki Hagemeyer was also rated by the judges as best newcomer to OnStage.

Groucho: A Life in Revue received four Aldeas for lead actor (Charley Miller, tie), principal actress (Rebecca Seubert), supporting actor (Paul Schaeffer), and costume design (Rebecca Seubert).

The *Night of the Iguana* received three Aldeas for principal actor (Ed Eigner), Set Design (Rosemary King), and Set Decor (Rosemary King and Lynne Batchelor).

Aldeas went to Kym Pappas for lead actress in *How I Learned to Drive* and to Desmond Hassing for best

newcomer to OnStage in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*.

The Barbara Silva award for volunteer contribution went to Teri Brown and Anisa and Bill Cox gave their award for "excellence behind the scenes" to Bruce Wilde. Special plaques were issued to the band members from *Groucho: A Life in Revue*, to K C Grulli for choreographing *Groucho*, and a special "Dummies and Ducks" award to Jane Russell for creating amazing props for three of the past season's shows.

OnStage Playhouse is deeply grateful to Fredericka Manor for not only hosting the event but providing the marvelous brunch buffet. Many donors to the raffle also helped make the awards breakfast not only a great time for all but a financial success.

Don't miss two special events this month at OnStage

September will be busy at the Playhouse as we offer more special readings and events.

On Sunday, September 14, for one night only at 8 pm, we will present a staged reading of *Take Me Out*, by Richard Greenberg. This is the fictional story of star baseball player Darren Lemming, who at the peak of his career announces that he is gay. Tickets are only \$5.

Later in September we are honored to have a special guest speaker, Richard Lederer, co-founder and former host of KPBS' "A Way With Words." Mr. Lederer will be at the theater on two nights, Sunday, Sept 28 and Monday Sept 29, at 7 pm. He will present a timely lecture on "Fascinating Facts About Our Presidents" based partially on his latest book, *Presidential Trivia*, which will be on sale in the lobby. Tickets are \$10 and Mr. Lederer is generously donating the proceeds to OnStage Playhouse.

Make your reservations now for these two events, which we expect to sell out. Request a reservation on line at www.onstageplayhouse.org, or leave a message on the theatre phone, (619) 422-7787.

INTERN REPORT

Our 2007-2008 student Interns are just now finishing their year of immersion in live theatre here at OnStage Playhouse. Who are they?

Luis Carrillo, Sean O'Hara, Noelle Chaanine*, Allison Stutzka*, Johnny Flores, Daniella Trimble, Maricela Galavez, and Megan Wymer*. (* = Entering college this fall.)

These young people come from high schools in the Chula Vista and South Bay area. Their interest and dedication to theatre arts has been impressive. Our tuition-free program is led by Kym Pappas. This is the second year that OnStage Playhouse and the City of Chula Vista Office of Arts and Culture have partnered in this effort.

Our talented staff of directors, designers, and theatre technicians have introduced the interns to college preparation in theatre arts, play analysis, play writing, designing sets, lighting, sound, and costumes, what directors do and how they do it, and stage management.

Bi-weekly production meetings were held covering script analysis, director's responsibilities, set design concepts, lighting and sound design concepts, and stage manager responsibilities. We also held four "round table" writing sessions for an Intern written play to be presented in 2008-2009. This year interns got hands-on experience in OnStage productions *Groucho*, *Shivaree*, and *Fat Pig*.

On August 21 the interns attended a performance of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* at the Old Globe and were given a tour of the Globe and its scene and costume shops. They met and talked with key members of the Old Globe artistic and technical staff.

We are now starting up our 2008-2009 Intern program. Our tuition-free program costs about \$275 per Intern. We have a \$1,000 grant from the Chula Vista Office of Arts and Culture and donations from OnStage patrons for an additional \$1,125. This total of \$2,125 will be sufficient for eight Interns in 2008-2009.

While there are other intern programs elsewhere in San Diego County, this is the only program available in Chula Vista and the South Bay area. We can expand the program if you, dear reader, would like to lend a hand financially. Contributions may be mailed to: Intern Program, OnStage Playhouse, P. O. Box 120044, Chula Vista, CA 91912, attn: Janis Vanderford.

This issue of *Stage Write* was produced by the volunteer efforts of Bob Christiansen, Teri Brown, Charles Nichols, and Bruce Wilde.

President's Corner

By Bruce Wilde

A couple of "Thanks Yous" this time: Fredericka Manor and everyone who worked on and turned out to support our Aldea Awards. It was a wonderful event and honored the many talented folks who make OnStage special. We raised almost a thousand dollars with the benefit and the food was terrific, too.

Thanks to Teri Brown and the awesome cast and crew of SHIRAVEE for their joyful show, starting off our new season on just the right note.

FAT PIG is our next production, starring Carla Nell and directed by Kym Pappas, this comedy has a razor edge, examining our cultural obsession with appearance and being thin. Tell your friends not to miss it.

ONSTAGE PLAYHOUSE AUDITION NOTICE

1984

Drama from George Orwell. Adapted to the stage by Robert Owens & Wilton E. Hall and William A. Miles Jr. Directed by James Michael McCulloch.

Auditions will be held at OnStage Playhouse at 291 Third Avenue, Chula Vista, on Sunday, Sept 7 and Monday, Sept 8, 2008. No appointment is necessary, but please arrive by 7 pm.

Audition will be by cold readings, and the director asks that you come prepared to read a half page from your favorite book. Please bring head shot and theatre resume. For more information, please leave a message on the theatre telephone at (619) 422-7787. Rehearsals will be held on weeknight evenings. Character descriptions are on the OnStage web site at www.onstageplayhouse.org.

1984 opens Friday, Oct 31, and runs through Saturday, Nov 29. Performances are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8 pm and Sunday at 2 pm (no performance on Thanksgiving, Nov 27).

Around the County

We encourage you to support other community theatre companies in the county. Here are some of the upcoming shows being offered by our sister theatre groups in San Diego County.

A Shot in the Dark

Patio Playhouse, Escondido
Sept 19 - Oct 12
Call (760) 746-6669

The Taming of the Shrew

Coronado Playhouse
Sept 5 - Sept 28
Call (619) 435-4856

High Valley Hullabaloo

PowPAC, Poway's Community Theatre
Sept 13 - 21
Call (858) 679-8085

Stage Write

ONSTAGE PLAYHOUSE

Office Staff: Michael Turk Woodbury,
Lyandra South
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Board of Directors

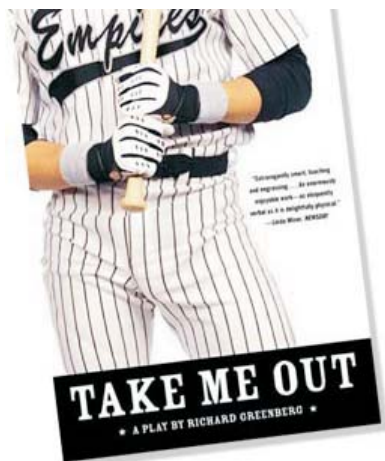
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| Desmond Hassing | Paul Schaeffer |
| <i>Past President</i> | Betsy Keller |

Theatre telephone: (619) 422-7787

Visit us on the web at

<http://www.onstageplayhouse.org>

email: OnStagePlayhouse@excite.com



A staged reading Sept. 14 at OnStage Playhouse.
See page 2.

PLAYING AT ONSTAGE...

Fat Pig

Scathing comedy by Neil LaBute
Directed by Kym Pappas
Sept 5 - Oct 4, 2008

1984

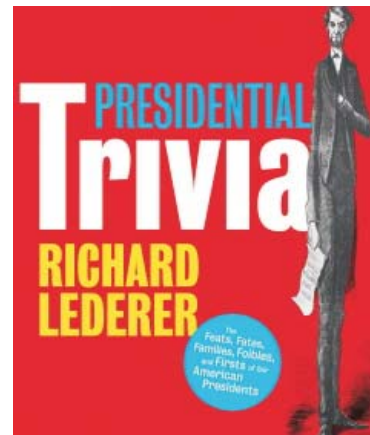
Drama by Robert Owens & Wilton E. Hall Jr.
and William A. Miles Jr. from George Orwell
Directed by James Michael McCulloch
Oct 31 - Nov 29, 2008

Performances are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings at
8:00 pm and Sunday afternoons at 2:00 pm.
(No performance Nov 27)

ONSTAGE PLAYHOUSE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ORGANIZATION.

OUR THEATER IS LOCATED IN DOWNTOWN CHULA VISTA AT 291
THIRD AVENUE, NEAR F STREET. LOOK FOR THE GREEN AWNING.

OnStage Playhouse is supported in part by a grant from Supervisor
Greg Cox and the County Board of Supervisors.
The 2008 Student Intern Program is funded in part a grant
From the Chula Vista Office of Arts and Culture.



Richard Lederer to lecture at OnStage. See page 2.