



rochester's
Black
sheep
theatre
coalition

**complimentary copy
may/june 2008**

It's all about "Ewe!"

Hey gang! We know you probably receive dozens of this type of newsletter, which is why we strive to offer something of value to you, our loyal reader of *The Tattooed Ewe*. There are lots of places you can go to read about auditions, performances, workshops, classes, and the like. We want to be *your* newsletter. What do you want to know? What would be the most value to you? If you have a story, article ideas, feedback for our editorial staff, or if you'd like to write for the *Ewe*, please contact us at info@blacksheeptheatre.org. We really want to hear from you!

The Philadelphia Story

New dates announced!

**Now playing: July 18, 19, 25, 26, August 1 and 2 @ 8:00 p.m.
July 20 and 27 @ 2:00 p.m.**

The Broadway hit and beloved classic centering on Tracy Lord of the Philadelphia Lords, the inhibited and spoiled daughter of the privileged, comes to Black Sheep's "Little" theatre! Divorced from her childhood friend, C.K. Dexter Haven, Tracy is now engaged to George Kittredge, a successful young snob. The day before the wedding a gossip weekly sends a reporter and a camera woman to report the wedding arrangements. Tracy finds herself growing interested in Connor, the fascinating reporter, and when she over-imbibes at the rehearsal dinner, she ends up taking a moonlight swim with the charming Mr. Connor, only to meet her ex-husband and fiancé on the way back home (in a bathrobe and carried by Connor, no less). The tables are suddenly turned and Tracy finds herself rethinking her recent matrimonial decision. A charming tale, *The Philadelphia Story* remains an intelligent, sophisticated, classic romantic comedy-farce of love and marriage, human growth and class distinctions.

Black Sheep's production of *The Philadelphia Story* stars Ruth Hollinger, Susan Snachkus, Fiona Criddle, Marlena Gaby-Dater, Jim Toepper, Louie Podlaski, Darrin Brooks, Vince Dalba, Carl Webeck, J.P. Simpson, Jennifer Rybak, Kevin Swift, Rich Hughson, Steve Elliott, with a special cameo appearance by Meredith Powell, who also directs.

Tickets are available in advance for \$12 by calling the Box Office at (585) 746-7616. Student, Senior and Group rates are also available.

Ramblings from the A.D.

Meredith Powell

In our last issue I touched a bit on precasting, but wanted to delve further into what can result when roles are precast. It is my humble opinion, having experienced both "sides" of the casting table, that when a show is precast and it



is not clearly stated that the show is being precast, even partially, two things happen: a) actors who are used to attending auditions and are waiting, sometimes eagerly, to show off their stuff, become confused, possibly cooling to the theatre company and b) a grave disservice is done to the actors in the community by dismissing someone who (*cont'd*)

NEXTFEST FEATURES LOCAL TALENT

Festival of New and Emerging Artists

Black Sheep Theatre's First Annual Celebration of Rochester-area playwrights, directors, and actors

In keeping with the spirit of our **Mission Statement**, which includes a directive to provide: 1. "an extraordinary live performance experience, with an emphasis on interactive, unique and experimental formats and emerging artists," and 2. "educational opportunities for students to develop communication, collaboration, teamwork, interpersonal and creative skills for a life-long journey of learning," Black Sheep will stage what's been dubbed **NEXTFEST**. This three-day long festival will feature the play writing talents of seven local, non-professional playwrights.

We began with a call for submissions to all Western and Upstate New York playwrights. Plays were to be new, unpublished and never performed. We received ten wonderful submissions from eight talented playwrights. Judging was done "blind," our judges not knowing who had written what. After careful deliberation and collaboration, our judges decided unanimously on the top three submissions.

Congratulations to our Grand Prize Winner, Ms. Nancy Preston Stark, who was awarded a \$100 cash prize and a complimentary season pass to Black Sheep's remaining 2008 and complete 2009 season. Nancy's prize winning play, *War Rhythm*, will be performed on the Festival evening of May 17. Coming in second and third place respectively were *The Knitters*, also by Nancy Preston Stark, to be performed on Friday, May 16; and *Bus Stop Prophet*, by Carl Girard, to be performed on Sunday, May 18.

NextFest will also feature the work of Ed Scutt of Greece, Robert Hutter of Brighton, Dean Harper also of Brighton, Louie Podlaski of Gates, and David Feldman of Syracuse. Directors include Diane Mashia, Meredith Powell, and David Spiro, who makes his Black Sheep Directorial debut.

Tickets and weekend Festival Passes may be purchased by calling Kathy at the Box Office at (585) 746-7616.

Black Sheep Needs Your STUFF!

For our Annual "White Elephant" Sale

Those of you who have been around in theatre long enough know that a big portion of a company's time is spent in raising capital to fund the many entertaining, educational, informational, and artistic programs local theatre makes available to the community. Black Sheep is no exception! We are currently looking for donations for our **Second Annual "White Elephant" Yard Sale**, taking place on June 13 and 14. Anything goes! Clothing, sporting goods, small appliances, CDs or DVDs, accessories, electronics ... whatever it is that's taking up space in your garage or attic, we'll take it off your hands! And as a non-profit organization, Black Sheep donations are tax deductible. Simply bring your clean, **pre-priced** items to our drop-off and sale location at 26 Kerry Park, Pittsford (one block EAST of Pinnacle Road at Lehigh Station Road). If you prefer, you may contact info@blacksheeptheatre.org or call (585) 746-7616 to arrange a pick up! "One artist's junk is another one's treasure!" Your gift is PRICELESS!

Ramblings (continued from page 1)

may be perfectly right for – and very good in – the part because "this is the only person I want" blinders have been put on before auditions are held. Having been involved in more than one show where an actor has either left or been fired, the director also runs the risk of being stuck in an awkward position if the "only person they want for a part" has to step down suddenly and they haven't been open to casting other people in the role.

This is especially true if a theatre holds "open" auditions when the director already knows who they're going to cast, or exactly who they'd like, so long as that person reads. I've seen that on the "other side" of the casting table, and try to give the actors I audition more time to see what they can do than just their monologue. I personally, and many people I know, have been to such "open" auditions, and they do little more than build resentment when you're made to stay for hours after doing your monologue only to read one or two lines from the script; or worse yet get a callback simply to have your presence completely forgotten and never make it on stage (this has happened to me and more than one close friend). For a young actor, or someone who feels constantly "typecast," this can be incredibly discouraging. And some directors who have never been on the "other side" of the casting table are often completely oblivious.

This is not to say I think directors *shouldn't* precast, I just think they should be *clear* that they're precasting. It's perfectly fine for directors to "hope" for a certain actor in a part, but unless they state, "All roles are open except for the part of Margaret" then they are being dishonest to the actors attending their auditions. I'm currently in the process of precasting our summer production, *The Philadelphia Story*, which I will openly tell anyone who asks. But we have already tried to mount this production once, we were unable to secure a key role at the time, we have historically had a low turn-out at auditions, and I am not willing to let this production I fall through again by taking my chances with an open audition. So, to any actor who had their heart set on a role and feels they should have been considered for a part in this play, contact me now. Or start showing up at our auditions. If you don't show up, we don't know you're out there, and we will continue to cast by invitation, which is not what we want. To all the young, struggling actors out there – don't give up, but remember, if you don't bring your talent to our theatre, we can't use it. *M.P.*



Board Members Diane Mashia, John Clay, Jen Rybak and Meredith Powell, at the White Elephant Sale, 2007. Not pictured, the White Elephant.

Black Sheep "In the Wings"

NEXTFEST

Festival of New and Emerging Artists

Featuring the work of Contest Winners:
Nancy Preston Stark
Carl Girard

With other plays by Ed Scutt, Louie Podalski,
David Feldman, Dean Harper, and Robert Hutter

May 16 and 17 @ 8pm and May 18 @ 2pm
274 N. Goodman Street, Suite D313
Tickets \$8 – Festival Passes \$15

Box Office (585) 746-7616

SAVE THE DATES!

June 13 and 14
White Elephant Sale
Yard Sale at
26 Kerry Park, Pittsford, NY

July 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, July
31, August 1 and 2
The Philadelphia Story

Tickets and info call:
(585) 746-7616

Calendar 2008

All events take place at the Black Sheep "Little" Theatre, 274 North Goodman Street, Rochester, Suite D313, unless otherwise noted.

May 16, 17, 18

Festival of New and Emerging Artists

June 13 and 14

Black Sheep's 2nd Annual "White Elephant" Sale
26 Kerry Park, Pittsford, NY 14534

July 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, August 1 and 2

The Philadelphia Story
by Philip Barry
Directed by Meredith Powell

July 29, August 5, 12, 19, 26 and Sept 2

Acting Classes

August 22 and 23 (tentative)

A Walk in the Woods

September 5 – 6

Improv-a-thon 2009: "Nothing is sacred. No one is safe."
24-hour acting marathon

October 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25

The Hill of Victory
by M.L. Powell
Directed by Louie Podlaski

November 8

"Haunted Holiday" Wine Tasting

December 27

Holiday Celebration
Place TBA

For more information, tickets, reservations, or to join our team of volunteers, please contact info@blacksheeptheatre.org.

An Enemy of the People



With Michael Arve (who also directed), Amanda M. Byrd, John Clay, Vince Dalba, Steve Elliott, Rich Hughson, Phil Ortelani, Meredith Powell, David Spiro. With John Christensen, Tony Gerardi, Louie Podlaski, Jim Toepper, and Christopher Woods. Stage Management by Jillian Christensen; produced by Diane Mashia.

Rochester's Black Sheep Theatre Coalition Board of Directors

Officers:

Artistic Director	Meredith Powell	Managing Director	Diane Mashia
Technical Director	Kevin Swift	Secretary/Treasurer	Kathy Clay
Publicity Director	Liz Novak	Education Director	Jeanine Gallina
Community Relations Liaison	Debbie Smola	Membership Directors	Troy Sullivan and Amanda Kellogg
	Louie Podlaski	Graphic Arts Director	

At Large:

John Clay
Vince Dalba
Jennifer Rybak
Jim Toepper
Chris Woods

Rochester's Black Sheep Theatre is a coalition of performing and visual artists promoting education and community service through the fine arts. We are in residence at 274 North Goodman Street, Suite D313, in the Village Gate Square. For more information, please call 585-746-7616 or info@blacksheeptheatre.org

Black Sheep's Artistic Director Honored as one of Rochester's "Up and Coming" Women

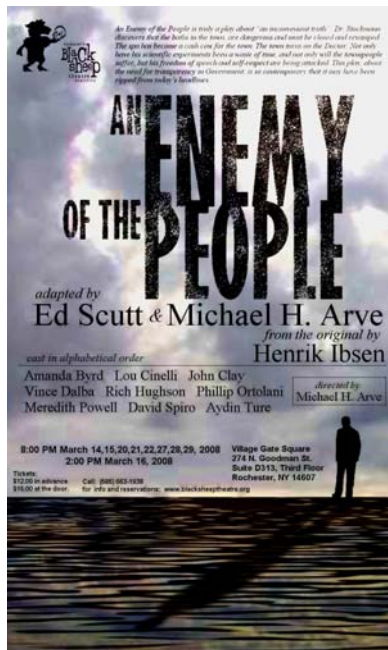
Rochester's Black Sheep Theatre was pleased to honor our Artistic Director, Meredith Powell, as one of Rochester's Up and Coming Women by the Rochester's Women's Network. Powell was chosen from dozens of candidates and was only one of 15 women being so honored this year.

Along with sister recipient, local actor and community volunteer, Gretchen Woodworth, Powell was honored at a luncheon at the downtown Rochester Convention Center on May 2. The keynote speaker was County Executive Maggie Brooks, who gave a short address. The festivities were hosted by Jennifer Johnson of News10 NBC-WHEC.



Jennifer Johnson with RWN Award recipients Gretchen Woodworth and Meredith Powell.

Powell and Woodworth were chosen for their creativity, innovation, dedication to their work, as well as community activism and volunteerism. Eligibility requirements for nominees included community involvement, demonstrated leadership and less than ten years in their chosen fields.



TANYS Award recipients (clockwise from top) Michael H. Arve, David Spiro, and John Clay.

An Enemy of the People Wins Honors

Joan Luther, adjudicator with the Theatre Association of New York State (TANYS) awarded Black Sheep Theatre's production of Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* with four Roving Adjudicator Awards, in March of this year. (See photo gallery, previous page)

Honored for Excellence in Artistic Direction was Louie Podlaski, for his conception and design of the production's poster and publicity materials. Ms. Luther stated that in designing the poster, Podlaski had created "a work of art."

Honored for Meritorious Achievement in Acting was John Clay, for his portrayal of Morten Kil. For Excellence in Acting, Ms. Luther recognized two Black Sheep actors: David Spiro for his role as Dr. Thomas Stockman; and Michael H. Arve, for his role as Peter Stockman.

Podlaski, Clay, Spiro and Arve will be honored at the TANYS Festival in November. Details to follow!

Black Sheep Announces Special Packages

Starting in October, Black Sheep will be offering two distinct season ticket packages for our theatre patrons and supporters!

Season Subscription

Your season subscription includes front-row seating to all four of our major, full-scale productions*, currently *Rashomon* by Ivor Benjamin, *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes, *Hedda Gabler* by Henrik Ibsen, and *Macbeth* by William Shakespeare. Includes "Meet and Greets" with cast and crew when offered. Just \$43 includes all four shows. That's over 25% savings off the "at the door" price!

Membership Package

An even better deal! Your Black Sheep Membership Package includes all the benefits of a Season Subscription, plus exclusive admission to all Black Sheep events – including readings, music and dance concerts, poetry readings, food samplings and wine tastings, the Festival of New and Emerging Artists, "Meet and Greets" with cast and crew, lectures, master programs and TANYS adjudications. All this, and more, for just \$81. Save 30% off the "at the door" price!

Actual performance and event dates will be announced in October. Season Subscriptions and Membership Packages will be available starting October 1, by calling the Box Office at (585) 746-7616.

*2009 season is subject to change.