

**THEATRE
THREE**

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JAC ALDER, Executive Producer-Director presents

SPINNING INTO BUTTER



A New Play By Rebecca Gilman

SHOW FIVE/ 2001 - 2002 SEASON / Jan 24-Mar 3, 2002

1961: The Reluctant Debutante, The Lady's Not for Burning, Home of the Brave, Liliom, Born Yesterday, Sabrina Fair, Waiting for Godot; 1961-62: Six Characters in Search of an Author, The Moon is the Tavern, Look Back in Anger, Mrs. McThing, The Little Foxes, Waiting for Godot, The Member of the Wedding, The Man in Spite of Himself, Don Juan in Hell; 1962-63: To Gettysburg, And Someday I'll Die, Rock-a-Lula, Charlie Victorious, The New Drunkard, All the Way Home, The Hostage, Two for the Seesaw, Juliet, Night Up the Sky; 1963-64: Zoo Story, The American Dream, The Time of Your Life, Night of the Iguana, Dracula (Or a Musical Mania from Transylvania), Champagne Complex, The Caretaker, The End of the Road, The Little Hut, Thurber Carnival, The Tender Trap, Tea and Sympathy, Of Mice and Men; 1965: The Solid Gold Cadillac, In White America, The Glass Menagerie, Write Me a Murder, Thieve's Carnival, The Moon, Visit to a Small Planet, The Devil's Disciple, Cat's Eye, Stop the World I Want to Get Off; 1966: The Friend, Eh? Pantagleize, The Innocents, Stop the World I Want to Get Off, The Great Sebastians, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum; 1967-1968: Gallow's Humor, The Cave Dwellers, The Roar of the Greasy Paint the Smell of the Crowd, The Miracle Worker, The Venetian Twins, The Fantasticks; 1969-70: The Addie, Adding Machine, Loot, Celebration, Hedda Gabler, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum; 1971: The Skin of Our Teeth, The Last Sweet Days of Issac, Misalliance, Come Back Little Sheba, Nobody Loves an Albatross, Anything Goes; 1971-72: The Play's the Thing, The Me Nobody Knows, Indians, The Protopist, Colette, The Venetian Twins, The Rainmaker; 1972-73: Twice Over Lightly, Company, The Importance of Being Earnest, Electra, Godspell, Scuba Duba; 1974-75: Gingerbread Lady, Twigs, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, That Thing Called Season, The Misanthrope, Whispers on the Wind, Purlie; 1975-76: When You Comin' Back, Red, She's a Member of the Wedding, A View from the Bridge, Seven Keys to Baldpate, Corral, S'Wonderful; 1977: Fallen Angels, Jeepers Creepers Here's Harry!, Road to Rome, Little Mary Sunshine, In Celebration, The Fantasticks; 1977-78: Robber Bridegroom, The Learned Ladies, Ladies at the Alamo, Porter Please!, After the Fall, Candide, Sleuth, Otherwise Engaged; 1978-1979: The Runner Stumbles, The Shadow Box, Happy End, Jumpers, The Miser, Starting Here Starting Now, Side by Side by Sondheim, Small Craft Warnings; 1979-80: New York Idea, Chicago, The Seagull, For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide, How Is Enuf, Present Laughter, Yip Yip Hooray!, Drinks Before Dinner, Taking Away of Little Willie, That Story; 1980-81: A Woman of No Importance, House of Flowers, The Miss Firecracker Contest, The Room Farce, Rise and Shine, The Elephant Man, Father Dreams; 1981-82: Billy Bishop Goes to Sea, Design for Living, Physician in Spite of Himself, The Gondoliers, Close of Play, Eden Court, The World of Paul Crumie; 1982-83: She Stoops to Conquer, True West, Sweeney Todd, Man and Boy, Don Juan in Hell, Tomfoolery, Morning's at Seven, The Crashing of Moses Flying By, The Quality of Mercy; 1983-84: For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow is Enuf, Second Thoughts, The Sweet, A Day in Hollywood A Night in the Ukraine, The Actor's Nightmare, The Wake of Jamie, For Wives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You, Gonna Love Tomorrow, Quartermaine's Terms, Arms and the Man, Foxfire, Angry Housewives, The Way We Were; 1985-86: Little Shop of Horrors, Painting Churches, Homefront, Anything Goes, A...My Name is Alida, Greetings, Infidelities; 1986-87: Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Patio/ Porch, The Showoff, A Little Night Music, A Little Farm, Lies and Legends; 1987-88: A Luv Musical, Light Up the Sky, Benefactors, Waltz of the Tormentors, Personals, Safety, Topgirls, El Gesticulador; 1988-89: Claptrap, Clap Yo' Hands, Taking Steps, The Yip Yip Hooray, A Quarrel of Sparrows, The Colored Museum, Hunting Cockroaches, The Fantasticks; 1989: The Fantasticks, The Traveling Lady, Nothing Sacred, Woman in Mind, The Road to Mecca, The Revue, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum; 1990-92: Joanna's Husband David; 1993: Carole Cook in Dress Up!, Stringbean, Waiting for Godot, Heartbeats, The Fantasticks, The Fantasticks, Homeward Bound, Amateurs; 1992-93: Shirley Valentine, Assassins, Born Yesterday, The Piano Lesson, Risky Games, Diary of a Madman, Drood; 1993-94: A Small Favor, Ball Games, Wholly Moliere, Shadowlands, The Fantasticks, Always Patsy Cline, Hello and Goodbye; 1995: The Knife Thrower's Assistant, Fortinbras, Tiger Lady, Mandragola, The Frogs, The Fantasticks, Stiff, Black Nativity, A Tale of Two Cities, Manchild in the Promised Land; 1995-96: Pump Boys and Dime, The Gingerbread Lady, All in the Timing, The Cocoanuts, The Price, Our Town, The Fantasticks, Black Nativity, Tobacco Road, All I Really Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten; 1996-97: Murderer, For Whom the Bell Tolls, Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All to You, Into the Woods, Sylvia, Blithe Spirit, Arcadia, A Grand Night for Singing, Black Nativity, The Fantasticks; 1997-98: Burn This, Dancing to Good Country Music, Amphitryon, Racing Demon, Dreams from a Summer House, Old, Rise & Shine, June Moon; 1998-99: Old Wicked Songs, Death Defying Acts, The Three-penny Opera, Pay We Won't Pay, The Miser, Triumph of Love, Gross Indecency The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde, Bees in Honey Drown, Lady in the Dark; 1999-2000: Beyond Therapy, The Boy Friend, Broken Glass, The Company, Major Barbara, Mizlansky Zilinsky or Schmucks; 2000-2001: I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change!, How the Other Half Loves: The Happy Times (Nov 22 - Jan 7, 2001); Saturday Night: Art; The World Goes 'Round; 2001-2002: The Unexpected Guest (Jul 5 - Aug 12); Over the River and Through the Woods (Oct 11 - Nov 25); Absurd Person Singular (Dec 6 - Jan 13); Spinning Into Butter (Jan 24 - Mar 3); God's Man in Texas (Mar 14 - Apr 21); Side Show (May 2 - Jun 9)

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PLAYGOER INFORMATION AND SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The **Hoblitzelle Foundation** kindly awarded Theatre Three a grant for installing a new air-conditioning system for the facility. This June, work began on these enhancements. The work has been completed and we sincerely thank Hoblitzelle for its generosity.

CONTRIBUTORS to the Threshold Campaign whose bricks have not yet been installed include Paul and Barbara Bierbrier. Theatre Three looks forward to adding their names to the threshold bricks at the entry to the theatre, and extends sincere thanks to these generous individuals.

Regarding Theatre Three...

Theatre Three is a 501(c)3, not-for-profit cultural institution founded in 1961 by Norma Young. It serves to celebrate and honor the three essentials of theatre for which she named it: gifted playwrights, talented theatre artists, and adventurous audiences.

Regarding this performances...

- There will be one fifteen minute intermission. Concessions are available in the lobby.
- Cameras or recording devices of any kind are prohibited.
- Please turn off (or silence) all cell phones and pagers.
- Please finish refreshments in the lobby.

For theatre goers with disabilities...

- Please feel free to call upon our staff for assistance.
- Wheelchair locations are available at stage level.
- Half of the seats may be reached by handrails.
- A wheelchair-accessible restroom is next to the box office.
- Handicapped parking is next to the Dream Café and the new Sigel's, The Epicurean.

Regarding parking...

All parking is free. Surface parking surrounds The Quadrangle. Garage (tower) parking is accessible just off Routh on Laclede Street.

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Contributions have been made in memory of or from the estates of...

Sam Catter, Bill Dallas, Scott Everheart, Paula Goodlet, Oliver Hailey, Lloyd W. Kitchens, M.D., Anne Weeks Jackson, Jim Jackson, Masha Porte, Carolyn Ryburn, Frank Rey, Mary Blanche Scales, Charlotte E. Schumacher, Evelyn Wilke, and Norma Young.

Beginning with the 1996-1997 season, all memorial gifts, unless otherwise designated are placed in the theatre's new permanent building endowment fund.

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Theatre Three is supported by its Board of Directors, by subscribers, by funds from the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs, and The Texas Commission on the Arts. Supporters also include The 500, Inc., and TACA. Major corporate season sponsors include American Airlines, The Dallas Morning News, and WFAA Channel 8.

Theatre Three continues its 2001-2002 season with

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ABOUT REBECCA GILMAN AND *SPINNING INTO BUTTER*



Rebecca Gilman

Rebecca Gilman likes to make people think. "Theatre is a place for complicated ideas. I try to write the kind of plays I always liked, plays that challenge people to think about themselves," says Gilman in a Chicago interview. This Alabama native hesitates to talk about herself, but prefers to write plays that reveal more about the audience.

Spinning Into Butter is not Rebecca Gilman's first controversial play. *The Glory of Living*, Gilman's 1997 success, is about child abuse and the horrors a confessed murderer reveals and was chosen as one of *Time* magazine's best shows of 2001. *Boy Gets Girl*, which premiered at Chicago's Goodman

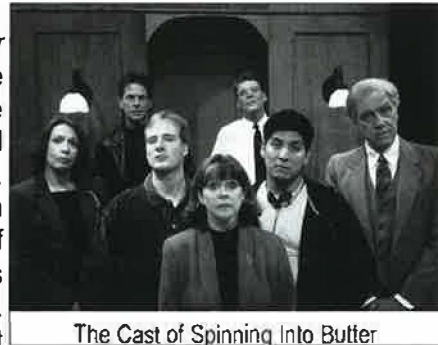
Theatre during its 1999-2000 season, is about stalking and the treatment of women in a sexist society. Gilman has been awarded several honors including the Robert L. Stevens Award from the Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays, The Osborne Award, London's George Devine Award, The Evening Standard Award, and an After Dark Award. She has won four Joseph Jefferson Awards for Best New Play for *The Glory of Living*, *Spinning Into Butter*, *The Crime of the Century*, and *Boy Gets Girl*. Rebecca Gilman's plays have been produced at several theatres throughout the United States, London, and Vienna.

The intensity of *Spinning Into Butter* comes from Gilman's realization that people aren't really talking about racism. They're talking around those issues and she wanted people to think about their feelings honestly. "Political correctness has its good side," Gilman explains in a 2001 interview with Lyn Gardner of London's *The Guardian*, "Being self-conscious about how we refer to people is a positive thing. But it is very easy to learn the jargon but not change attitudes. Politicians, corporations and universities are very adept at it." Gilman understood the extent of the problem when she saw a poll that resulted in 5% of those polled admitting to being a racist while 80% said they knew a racist.



Ross Morgan, Amy Mills, & Pam Dougherty

Gilman chose to set her play at a small liberal arts college, because that is the last place a person would expect to find racism. When this highly educated group of people is confronted about the problems of racism, they simply do not know how to react. Gilman pulled from some of her personal experiences during her academic career to develop the setting. As an undergraduate she attended Middlebury College in Vermont and Birmingham Southern College. She studied English during graduate school at the University of Virginia and immediately after finishing that program, she



The Cast of *Spinning Into Butter*

ABOUT REBECCA GILMAN AND *SPINNING INTO BUTTER*, CONTINUED



Sergio Antonio Garcia & Amy Mills

entered the playwriting program at the University of Iowa. In the play, the administration is too concerned about their reputations to really listen to students' ideas and to recognize their needs. Patrick Chibas, a minority student who has been offered a scholarship, and is persuaded to accept the administration's narrow idea of who he is in order to pay for the education he deserves. He becomes frustrated after realizing

the administration doesn't acknowledge his background. Greg Sullivan seems like another pre-law student who just needs to add another extracurricular activity to his resume. He learns what the administration does not seem to comprehend — how to honestly talk about racism. His change of attitude is one sign of hope for the younger generation of students and in sharp contrast to the stagnant ideas of the older administrators. Sarah Daniels, the Dean of Students, has the best intentions for all of her students, but when this crisis arises, she must confess her own complicated ideas about racism. Sarah has spent her career analyzing African-American society and hiding behind the language where Gilman sees many people hiding when asked about racism. These unexpected reactions from characters who should be able to comprehend and reasonably handle the situation is one of the most interesting aspects of *Spinning Into Butter*. Gilman explains, "I wanted to play with people's expectations of the characters and force them to think about their own buried, unadmitted racism."



Amy Mills

The title *Spinning Into Butter* is based on *Little Black Sambo*, a controversial, but popular 1899 children's story about a black boy named Sambo. As Sambo is walking through the jungle, tigers confront him and threaten to eat him. One by one, he gives each tiger a different piece of his new clothing to appease them. Soon the tigers start fight over who looks best in Sambo's clothes. In their frustration, they start chasing each other around a tree and actually spin into butter. Sambo collects his clothes and runs away. Sambo's father finds the melted butter and takes it home for Sambo's mother to make pancakes. The story ends with Sambo happily eating buttered pancakes. While many people believe the story to be a charming children's fantasy, others feel that the depiction of family of color is racist. Even today, there are still extremely heated debates about the appropriateness of this book. It is an excellent example of people talking about what they think racism is and trying to grasp a different point of view.

Spinning Into Butter is an opportunity for everyone to stop and reevaluate their own opinions and the stereotypes that seem to trap society. However, this play is just the beginning of a discussion. Rebecca Gilman is quick to point out, "I've sometimes felt that people thought that I ought to solve racism in this play. But it's only a play. You can't solve racism with a single play, any more than you can solve it with a 10-point bullet plan."

Permission for this production has been granted to Theatre Three by Dramatic Publishing,
311 Washington Street, PO Box 129, Woodstock, IL, 60098

SPINNING INTO BUTTER

ARTISTIC STAFF:

Director: Jac Alder

Set Design: Harland Wright

Lighting Design: Mike Garner

Costume Design: Patty Korbolic Williams

Production Manager: Linda Harrison

Carpenters and Painters:

Jeffrey Schmidt, Linda Harrison, Lane Pianta,
Niko Fruechting, Douglas Couch

Propmasters:

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Master Electrician:

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Electrician:

Jonas Houston, Nick Jirasek

Production Stage Manager:

*Terry Dobson

Production Assistants:

Rebecca Finley and Niko Fruechting

Light and Sound Operator:

Niko Fruechting

Floor Manager:

Rebecca Finley

CAST:

*Amy Mills — Dean Sarah Daniels

Sergio Antonio Garcia — Patrick Chibas

*Robert Prentiss — Professor Ross
Collins

*Pam Dougherty — Dean Catherine
Kenney

*Ross Morgan — Dean Burton Strauss

Chris Messersmith — Mr. Meyers

Michael Turner — Greg Sullivan

* indicates members working under Actor's Equity
Association contracts in this production

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES:

Act One:

Scene 1: A morning at the beginning of the
school year.; Scene 2: One week later; Scene
3: Two weeks later; Scene 4: Later that day;
Scene 5: The next week; Scene 6: The next
day
There will be one 15 minute intermission.

Act Two:


Scene 1: Two hours later; Scene 2: A few
days later; Scene 3: Much later that night;
Scene 4: Early the next morning; Scene 5: A
few hours later; Scene 6: A couple of hours
later; Scene 7: The next day

BIOGRAPHY OF THE DIRECTOR



JAC ALDER (Executive Producer-Director of Theatre Three and Director of *Spinning Into Butter*) One time a wise board member of Theatre Three told me "No job should be a life sentence." As oppressive as most jobs are, I guess he was right. Still, that guy worked for Frito Lay. I notice that the longer I do my job, the richer the experiences become. To get the chance to work with talented people on a play that risks a great deal to say a great deal seems to me far from being oppressive — it even seems a privilege. I love being at the service of the theatre and its audiences, though I do grind my teeth in my sleep from the worries of it all. (I know I seem cheerful and optimistic, but my dentist is alarmed, nonetheless. It's like that old commercial... "only his dentist knows for sure".) The

subject of *Spinning Into Butter* is a personal challenge. My first directing assignment at Theatre Three in 1962 was a play by a black...uh, that is to say an "African American" playwright..., Ossie Davis, the comedy *Purlie Victorious*. Long interested in questions of social justice, long sure I've been on the right side of all of those issues, and having a particularly long concern for issues concerning African Americans (I've progressed through all those politically correct labels from Negro to black to African American), I'm still challenged on getting the whole subject right — as are we all. Something I appreciate about Rebecca Gilman's voice in this conversation is the sly and sometimes risky humor she finds in these serious struggles. I never trust someone who can't laugh. Or some one who doesn't laugh. I never trust any of us escape harm or escape doing harm from confusions that race provides in our culture. So we have to talk. And listen to talk. And the theatre's such a great place to listen to talk. I want a "life sentence" of it!



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Production

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BIOGRAPHIES OF THE ARTISTS

Pam Dougherty (Dean Catherine Kenney) made her professional debut in Theatre Three's 1977 production of *Otherwise Engaged*. She then went on to appear in leading and sometimes award-winning roles on virtually every other professional stage in North Texas, notably Fort Worth's Stage West. Pam is the first Texan to serve on the National Council of Actors' Equity, is a Tony voter, and is represented exclusively by the Mary Collins Agency. Thrilled to be re-united with old friends, she is living proof that you can come home again.



Pam Dougherty



Sergio Antonio Garcia

Sergio Antonio Garcia (Patrick Chibas) is returning for his second T3 production. He was the Sailor in last season's Kander & Ebb review *The World Goes 'Round*. Other theatre credits include ensemble in *Sweeney Todd* at WaterTower Theatre, Chino in *West Side Story* at Garland Summer Musicals, The Baker in *Into the Woods* at Richardson Children's Theater. He has performed operas in both Italy and New York and done industrial work in Las Vegas and Dallas. He has a BFA in Voice and Music from UNT and attended AMDA in New York City. Many thanks & blessings to family and friends for



Chris Messersmith



Amy Mills

their love and support. God bless America!

Chris Messersmith (Mr. Meyers) A survivor of three seasons with national touring companies, Chris makes his debut at Theatre Three. His theatrical credits include productions at WaterTower Theatre, Dallas Children's Theatre, Jubilee Theatre, and Pegasus Theatre. He has played both starring and featured rolls on the Emmy Award winning series *In Search of Heroes*. Chris can be heard each week as Tim, in the syndicated radio comedy/drama, *Just South of Normal*.

Amy Mills (Dean Sarah Daniels) has appeared onstage at T3 for over 20 years in such shows as *Into the Woods*, *Pump Boys and Dinettes*, *Second Threshold*, *Heartbeats*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *A...My Name is Alice*, and most recently *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change!* She has performed at Casa Manana, Bass Hall, Dallas Theater Center, The MUNY, Northshore Music Theatre, Arkansas Rep, The Cape Playhouse, Dallas Children's Theater, Stage West, and the Dallas Summer Musicals.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE ARTISTS, CONTINUED

She teaches acting at Mountain View and El Centro Colleges and hides out in Oak Cliff with her husband, actor Doug Jackson, and their two daughters, Emily and Abigail.

Ross Morgan (Dean Burton Strauss) is pleased to make his debut with Theatre Three. He has appeared locally with Casa Manana in 1776, at Stage West in *Our Town* and *I Hear the Rolling Thunder*, at Kitchen Dog Theater in *Some Explicit Polaroids*, and the Granbury Opera House as Norman in *On Golden Pond*, with one of his favorite actresses on earth, Jeanne Evans. Ross has performed with numerous companies across the nation, including The Cleveland Playhouse, Cleveland Opera, Playhouse on the Mall (NJ), and the Herbert Bergoff Playwrights' Foundation (NYC). Mr. Morgan would like to pay special tribute to Bill Garber, director emeritus of The Fort Worth Theatre — "my mentor, my dear friend, and as far as I'm concerned, the father of the legitimate theatre in Fort Worth, where I grew up, and where I have most happily landed."

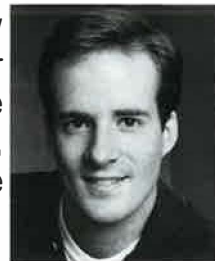
Robert Prentiss (Dr. Ross Collins) was last seen as Starkwedder in Theatre Three's first production



Ross Morgan



Robert Prentiss



Michael Turner

this season, *The Unexpected Guest*. He has played leading and co-starring roles in twenty-four feature films and has guest-starred on eight television episodic series. Robert has produced four independent films. He recently directed two short films for Trick Dog Films, and will direct his first feature, *Best Western* in the spring of 2002. Go Lakers! A.O.G.

Michael Turner (Greg Sullivan) is appearing on the T3 stage for the first time since playing Mickey (the poor twin) in the musical *Blood Brothers*. He has most recently appeared as Hans Brinker in the Dallas Children's Theatre's production of *Hans Brinker or The Silver Skates*. Some of his favorite roles include Finch in *How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying*, Tommy in *The Who's Tommy*, and Jim in *Joined at the Head*. He also played W.E. in the Dallas Children's Theatre's *The Great Gilly Hopkins*. Michael studied theatre for two years at the acclaimed Meadows School of the Arts at SMU before receiving a BFA in theatrical performance from Baylor University. He has also appeared in several television commercials and *Walker, Texas Ranger*.

THE PHOENIX CAMPAIGN

Dear Playgoer,

This year has been an extraordinary time for Theatre Three. This fall, we celebrated our fortieth anniversary in grand style with some dear friends. In Theatre Too!, *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change!* continues to run successfully. The theatre continues to grow and thrive.

However, after the events of September 11th, it has been hard to focus on celebration. I usually write a letter of appeal for the Phoenix campaign at about that time, but it seemed an untimely and unreasonable task. Instead, I turned my focus to our 40th anniversary and remembered this theatre's incredible history of rejuvenating stories of perseverance, reassurance, hope, and accomplishment.

The Phoenix Campaign was named for the mythical bird that rose from the ashes. It's a name evocative of a time when we weren't really sure whether Theatre Three would reach its 40th anniversary. Now as this nation tries to raise itself from the ashes, and the needs of our society change, please continue your support for Theatre Three. Do something extraordinary and support an organization that strives to delight, entertain, and inspire. If you haven't contributed yet, please consider doing so using the blank at the right. Thank you.

Sincerely,



JAC ALDER, Executive Producer-Director

YES, list my name in support of Theatre Three's PHOENIX FUND DRIVE for this year. In these extraordinary times, I'd like to help as follows:

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