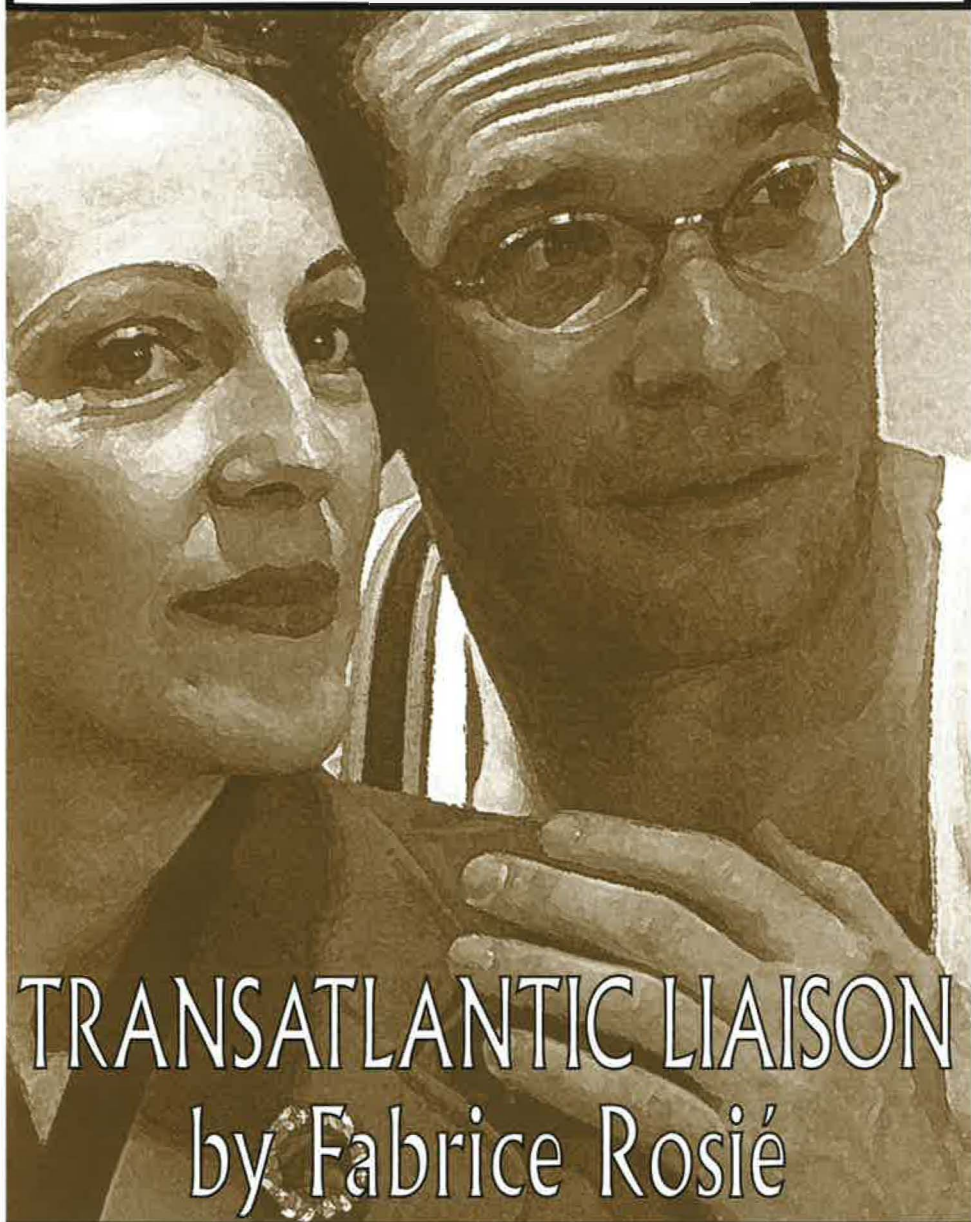


**THEATRE
THREE**

THE theatre-in-the-round at the Quadrangle

JAC ALDER, Executive Producer-Director, presents



TRANSATLANTIC LIAISON

by Fabrice Rosié

SHOW SIX / 2002-2003 SEASON / Mar 6 - Apr 12 '03 / THE PARIS-DALLAS PROJECT
The English language premiere of this season's Paris stage hit, the true story of an unlikely
love affair between French authoress Simone de Beauvoir
and Chicago novelist Nelson Algren.

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 Blue, The Tavern, Look Back in Anger, Mrs. McThing, The Little Foxes, Waiting for Godot, The Member of the Wedding, Physician in Spite of Himself, Don Juan in Hell*; 1962-63: *To Gettysburg, And Someday I'll Die, Rock-a-bye Charlie, Hurlie Victorious, The New Drunkard, All the Way Home, The Hostage, Two for the Seesaw, Julius Caesar, Light Up the Sky*; 1963-64: *Zoo Story, The American Dream, The Time of Your Life, Night of the Iguana, Count Dracula (Or a Musical Mania from Transylvania), Champagne Complex, The Caretaker, The Emperor Jones*; 1964-1965: *Alice in Wonderland, Oh Dad Poor Dad Momma's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feelin' So Sad, The Little Hut, Thurbur Carnival, The Tender Trap, Tea and Sympathy, Of Mice and Men*; 1965-1966: *The Solid Gold Cadillac, In White America, The Glass Menagerie, Write Me a Murder, Thieve's Carnival, Dark of the Moon, Visit to a Small Planet, The Devil's Disciple, Cat's Eye, Stop the World I Want to Get Off*; 1966-67: *The Boyfriend, EH? Pantaglieze, 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 Greasepaint the Smell of the Crowd, The Miracle Worker, The Venetian Twins, The Fantasticks*; 1969-70: *Tartuffe, The Adding Machine, Loot, Celebration, Hedda Gabler, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*; 1970-71: *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 Philanthropist, Colette, The Venetian Twins, The Rainmaker*; 1972-73: *Twice Over Lightly, Company, The Irregular Heart of Monsieur Ornifle, And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little, The Emperor Jones, The Front Page, School for Wives*; 1973-74: *Canterbury Tales, The Boys in the Band, The Importance of Being Earnest, Electra, Ragatske, Godspell, Scuba Duba*; 1974-75: *Gingerbread Lady, Twigs, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, That Championship Season, The Misanthrope, Whispers on the Wind, Furlie*; 1975-76: *When You Comin' Back, Red Ryder 2, Shelter, Member of the Wedding, A View from the Bridge, Seven Keys to Baldpate, Corral, S'Wonderful*; 1976-77: *Fallen Angels, Jeepers Creepers Here's Harry!, Road to Rome, Little Mary Sunshine, In Celebration, Tartuffe, 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 When the Rainbow Is Enuf, Present Laughter, Yip Yip Hooray!, Drinks Before Dinner, Taking Away of Little Willie, How I Got That Story*; 1980-81: *A Woman of No Importance, House of Flowers, The Miss Firecracker Contest, Spider, Bedroom Farce, Rise and Shine, The Elephant Man, Father Dreams*; 1981-82: *Billy Bishop Goes to War, Working, Design for Living, Physician in Spite of Himself, The Gondoliers, Close of Play, Eden Court, Splendid Rebel, The World of Paul Crume*; 1982-83: *She Stoops to Conquer, True West, Sweeney Todd, Man and Superman, 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 Threshold, Charlotte Sweet, A Day in Hollywood A Night in the Ukraine, The Actor's Nightmare, The Wake of Jamie Foster, School for Wives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead, Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You*; 1984-85: *You're Gonna Love Tomorrow, Quartermaine's Terms, Arms and the Man, Foxfire, Angry Housewives, Outside Waco*; 1985-86: *Little Shop of Horrors, Painting Churches, Homefront, Anything Goes, A...My Name is Alice, Season's Greetings, Infidelities*; 1986-87: *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Patio! Porch, The Showoff, A Little Night Music, Animal Farm, Lies and Legends*; 1987-88: *A Luv Musical, Light Up the Sky, Benefactors, Waltz of the Toreadors, Personals, Safety, Toppirls, El Gesticulador*; 1988-89: *Claptrap, Clap Yo' Hands, Taking Steps, The Middle of Nowhere, A Quarrel of Sparrows, The Colored Museum, Hunting Cockroaches, The Fantasticks*; 1989-90: *Broadway, The Fantasticks, The Traveling Lady, Nothing Sacred, Woman in Mind, The Road to Mecca, Groucho A Life in Revue, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*; 1990-92: *Joanna's Husband David's Wife*; 1992-93: *Carole Cook in Dress Up!, Stringbean, Waiting for Godot, Heartbeats, The Fantasticks, The Heidi Chronicles, Homeward Bound, Amateurs*; 1992-93: *Shirley Valentine, Assassins, Born Yesterday, Denise LeBrun in Revue, The Piano Lesson, Risky Games, Diary of a Madman, Droid*; 1993-94: *A Small Family Business, Ball Games, Wholly Moliere, Shadowlands, The Fantasticks, Always Patsy Cline, Hello and Goodbye*; 1994-95: *The Knife Thrower's Assistant, Fortinbras, Tiger Lady, Mandragola, The Frogs, The Fantasticks, Lucky Stiff, Black Nativity, A Tale of Two Cities, Manchild in the Promised Land*; 1995-96: *Pump Boys and Dinettes, 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 Southern Belle Tolls, Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All to You, Into the Woods, Sylvia, Blithe Spirit, Once on This Island, Arcadia, A Grand Night for Singing, Black Nativity, The Fantasticks*; 1997-98: *Burn This, Nice People Dancing to Good Country Music, Amphitryon, Racing Demon, Dreams from a Summer House, Old Wicked Songs, Rise & Shine, June Moon*; 1998-99: *Old Wicked Songs, Death Defying Acts, The Three-penny Opera, We Won't Pay We Won't Pay, The Miser, Triumph of Love, Gross Indecency The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde, As Bees in Honey Drown, Lady in the Dark*; 1999-2000: *Beyond Therapy, The Boy Friend, Broken Glass, The Women, 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, Saturday Night, Art, The World Goes 'Round*; 2001-2002: *The Unexpected Guest, Over the River and Through the Woods, Absurd Person Singular, Spinning Into Butter, God's Man in Texas, Side Show*; 2002-2003: *The Great Sebastians, A Class Act, Comic Potential, Beguiled Again, Copenhagen, Paris-Dallas Project, Batho, the Musical*

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Cover photo by Andy Hanson Playbill Editors: Jac Alder, Kimberly Richard

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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. Last 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 and Dr. William E. Tanner. 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 performance...

- There will be a 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.

IN MEMORIAM

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 Jr., M.D., Anne Weeks Jackson, Jim Jackson, Masha Porle, Carolyn Ryburn, Frank Rey, Mary Blanche Scales, Charlotte E. Schumacher, Evelyn Wilke, Martha Roselyn Wright, 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.

SEASON SPONSORS



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 TACA. Major corporate season sponsors include American Airlines, The Dallas Morning News, and WFAA Channel 8.

THE PHOENIX CAMPAIGN

Dear Playgoer,

The first person who made a donation to Theatre Three got no pleasure from it. That person was a relative of our Founding Director, Norma Young, who left Norma a \$3000 inheritance. Norma, in turn, used that money to start us up. I've always thought it sad that Norma's great aunt never saw what her bequest made possible. Now forty-one years later, Theatre Three has provided pleasure to tens of thousands of playgoers and an artistic home for dedicated, gifted artists.

The Phoenix Campaign is our annual drive for individuals. Without it, the theatre would never have risen from the ashes of the late eighties' difficult economics. This season, we face similar issues due to post 9/11 economics and budget cuts from the City of Dallas.

Fortunately for us, donations from individuals (yes, you!) have always been a major support. Furthermore, Theatre Three has earned most of its income. More 81% of last season's cash budget came from tickets sales and other earned revenues. Add these two strengths together and we have a plan for keeping that Phoenix bird in flight.

I'm confident that you, like I, believe there's value in continuing to gather here regularly to celebrate the human heart and mind. Indeed, in these post 9/11 days, there's more value than ever. Please help. 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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☐ (for gifts in increments of \$500)
DIRECTOR'S COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP
(to support outreach, audience development and artistic administration)

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(to support salaries and benefits for the resident acting company)

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(to support royalties to composers, lyricists, and playwrights)

☐ (for gifts in increments of \$50)
BACKSTAGE BENEFACTORS
(to support stipends for Theatre Three's intern staff)

Write your total contribution in the blank...

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THEATRE THREE presents the sixth show of the 2002-2003 season...

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By Fabrice Rozié

Artistic Staff:

Director: John McLean

Set Design: Harland Wright Lighting Design: Mike Garner Sound Design: Bear Hamilton
 Costume Design: Patty Korbolic Williams Wigs and Make-up: Ryan Matthieu Smith

Cast:

*Elizabeth Rothan
 as Simone de Beauvoir

*Matthew Stephen Tompkins
 as Nelson Algren

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

Music

Musical Director: Terry Dobson Original Music: Areski Belkacem Music Transcriptions:
 Jack Degelia "Simone's Song" Sung by Brigitte Fontaine Cello: Camilla Boatright
 Arabic Theme *Zalim*: Aksul Mansurof Violinist: Lorre Lynn Trytten

Production Staff:

Production Manager: Linda Harrison Master Carpenter: Jeffrey Schmidt
 Carpenters and Painters: Rebecca Pense, Trey Albright, Greg MacPherson, & Jonas Houston
 Prop Master: Linda Harrison
 Electricians: Carl Munoz, Nick Jirasek, Jonas Houston

Production Stage Manager: *Harland Wright

Production Assistant & Floor Manager: Susannah Linnett & Rebecca Pense
 Light Board Operator: Melanie Lang Assistant to the Director in Paris: Gabrielle Reiner

Scene Synopsis: (There will one fifteen minute intermission.)

Act I:

- Prologue — Breast Cancer
 Chapter 1
 1. Stay Young: Paris
 2. Saint - Germain - des - Prés
 3. The Earliest Times
 4. Chicago: Nelson's apartment
 5. Now: Paris
 6. The Agreement: Chicago
 7. Driven to Work: Paris
 8. Projects

- Chapter 2
 1. The Two Lives: Mexico
 2. The Explanation
 3. The Doubt
 4. Free Love
 5. Marriage Proposal: New York
 6. The South: Algeria
 7. The Three Writers
 8. The Arabian Nights
 9. The Return: Paris

Act II

- Chapter 3
 1. The Disappointment: Lake Michigan
 2. The Ultimatum
 3. Wounds
 4. Pledges of Friendship
 5. For Evermore
 6. Starting Point: New York
 7. The Loss
 Epilogue: Indian Summer, Paris — Ten Years Later

Special Thanks to:

The Quadrangle for rehearsal space
 Theatre Three's Guild for the new beverage cooler

BIOGRAPHY OF THE DIRECTOR



John McLean (Director of *Transatlantic Liaison*), a former Dallasite, lives in Paris, France where he is busy pursuing his varied careers in acting, directing, and early music. He has continued his theater studies by working with Leonid Keifitz, the noted Russian director of the Vakhtangov school in Moscow, Jack Waltzer the New York acting teacher and coach, and he is a member of the Jack Garfein studio in Paris.

He returns to the Quadrangle where, some thirty years ago, he directed the first theatrical presentation in what was then an empty meeting space: *The Madwoman of Chaillot*, for the Dallas Community Theaters combined production that year. The show was a hit with critics and audiences, and most importantly, perhaps, helped to inspire Jac and Norma to build Theatre Three in the same location. Due to this fact, John says (only partially joking) that he considers himself the Godfather of Theatre Three!

Upcoming Show at Theatre Three!



Bat Boy: The Musical, A Musical by Farley, Flemming, and O'Keefe
 April 24, 2003 — May 31, 2003

An off-Broadway musical/horror show about a half boy/half bat creature discovered in a cave in West Virginia that manages to be funny, touching, inventive, and unpredictably delightful.

For Tickets and Information, Call Theatre Three's Box Office at 214-871-3300, option #1 or
 Check Theatre Three's website at www.theatre3dallas.com



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Continued by
 popular demand! Performances
 Th at 7:30, Fri & Sat at 8:00, Sun at 2:30!

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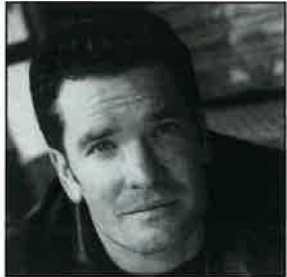
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BIOGRAPHIES OF THE ARTISTS



Elizabeth Rothan (Simone de Beauvoir) is thrilled to be returning to Theatre Three's stage after her magical appearance in this season's opening show, *The Great Sebastians* for which she received a critics choice award. She holds a MFA from Rutgers University. Her New York credits include Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and Carol Churchill's *Top Girls*. Regionally, she has been seen in numerous productions, most memorable being

Steel Magnolias, *Marvin's Room*, *Moon Over Buffalo*, and Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. In the Dallas area, she worked with Adrian Hall in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* at the Kitchen Dog Theater. She's worked on two new productions: one at the Dallas Theater Center's Big D Festival called *Quake*, and the other with Tony award winning writer Mark Medoff on *Gunfighter*, *A Gulf War Chronicle*. Also at the Dallas Theater Center: *Be Aggressive*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Christmas Carol*.



Matthew Stephen Tompkins (Nelson Algren) has acted in over fifty plays on the stages of New York, Seattle, and Dallas, and is excited to be making his debut at Theatre Three. Other Dallas/Ft. Worth credits include Stage West/Allied Theatre as Stanley in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Astolfo in *Sueno*, the Creature in *Monster*, Circle Theatre as Tony in the Joe DiPietro smash hit *The Kiss at City Hall*, and Adam in

Someone Who'll Watch Over Me; with Classic Theatre Company in the title role in *Othello*, Valmont in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, King Herod in Oscar Wilde's *Salomé*; with Wickerplane Theatre as Lenny in *Of Mice and Men*, and Dim in *A Clockwork Orange*; with 11th Street Theatre as King Henry II in *Becket*, Polo in a *Hatful of Rain*; with Theatre Quorum as Colin in *No One Sees the Video* and Steamengineman in *The Water Engine* at the Addison Centre Theatre. Matthew is a four time winner of the Dallas Theatre Critics Forum Award for Outstanding Actor, and a recipient of the Dallas Observer's Best Actor Award in the Annual Best of the Best Review. A member of SAG/AFTRA/Equity, Matthew has over 40 television/film notes to his credit, over twenty-five national commercials, and is pleased to have starred in and co-produced the upcoming sci-fi thriller *Radiant* to be released in the Fall of 2003. Matthew is represented by the Kim Dawson Agency.

A Word from the Playwright



This play is inspired by the 304 letters that Simone de Beauvoir wrote in English to Nelson Algren, from their meeting in 1947 to their separation in 1964. Also borrowed are several dialogues from *The Mandarins*, a novel which describes their love story.

Beauvoir often evoked Algren in her other writing: in a story about a voyage to the United States, in long passages from her memoirs, and in several letters to Sartre. These variations do not appear here. Nor do Algren's letters to Beauvoir.

During the beginning of their affair, just after the war both Beauvoir and Algren experience success. In 1949, he receives the National Book Award for *The Man with the Golden Arm*, and she publishes *The Second Sex*.

Their meeting in 1947 is pure chance, and a relationship appears unlikely, as everything seems to separate them: the Atlantic, their conceptions about the work of the writer, their personalities, and their availability to invest themselves in a great love.

More than anything, Beauvoir has been with Sartre for more than fifteen years, which has provided her with a basic, primary love without depriving her of other contingent loves. At the same time, Algren is failing to start a family with his first wife Amanda, whom he marries twice, and divorces for the last time in 1955.

Now the curtain has risen.

Beauvoir and Algren are forty years old. They are turning their backs on youth and engaging in a love that is absolute but not exclusive, still unusual in the society of their time and intensified by a combination of links that include them but also extend beyond them.

This staged encounter resonates with the memory of this love between writers, a love at once impossible and unflinching. For in spite of the unfeasibility of living together, in spite of the break-up, and in spite of death, such love has survived.

The letters, the novel, are witnesses to this day.

Le spectacle qui s'ouvre s'inspire des 304 lettres que Simone de Beauvoir adressa en anglais à Nelson Algren, de leur rencontre en 1947 à leur séparation définitive en 1964. Il emprunte également quelques dialogues des *Mandarins*, roman qui met en scène leur histoire d'amour.

Beauvoir évoqua souvent Algren dans ses autres écrits: un récit de voyage aux États-Unis, de longs passages de ses mémoires, plusieurs lettres à Sartre. Ces variantes n'apparaîtront pas ici. Non plus que les réponses d'Algren à Beauvoir.

Lorsque débute après guerre leur liaison, Beauvoir et Algren accèdent au succès. En 1949 il reçoit le National Book Award pour *L'Homme au Bras d'Or*, et elle publie *Le Deuxième Sexe*.

Bref, leur rencontre est en 1947 un coup du hasard, et leur entente s'annonce improbable, car tout semble devoir les séparer: l'Atlantique, leur conceptions du métier d'écrivain, leurs personnalités, leur disponibilité à s'investir dans un grand amour.

Plus que tout, Beauvoir forme alors avec Sartre un couple depuis plus de quinze ans; ce qui lui assure un amour nécessaire sans la priver d'amours contingentes. À la même époque, Algren échoue à fonder une famille avec Amanda, sa première femme, qu'il épouse à deux reprises et dont il divorce une dernière fois en 1955.

Voilà, les trois coups viennent de retentir et déjà le rideau se lève.

Beauvoir et Algren ont maintenant quarante ans. Ils tournent le dos à la jeunesse et s'engagent dans un amour absolu mais pas exclusif, encore singulier dans la société de leur temps et démultiplié par une combinatoire de liaisons qui les englobe mais les dépasse.

Le face à face qui commence entre en résonance avec le souvenir de cet amour d'écrivains, amour à la fois irréalisable et irréductible. Car à l'impossibilité de vivre ensemble, à la rupture et à la mort, un tel amour a finalement survécu.

Dans lettres, un roman, en témoignent encore.

Fabrice Rozié

ABOUT SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

In 1947, when Simone de Beauvoir visited America and mentioned Chicago, her friend, Mary Guggenheim, suggested that de Beauvoir call on Nelson Algren. The next day, Guggenheim had some concerns about giving Algren's phone number and address to de Beauvoir without his consent. Algren's response was simple, "Who is this 'Simon Boo-doir' anyway???"

Simone de Beauvoir was the eldest daughter of a strict Catholic mother, and a lawyer who would have preferred a career in theatre. Her bourgeois upbringing encouraged her to be well-educated, but assumed she would be a wife and mother. She rebelled against society's expectations by refusing to marry immediately and rejecting her mother's Catholicism. She had attended several private schools and had always been an excellent student. She valued her independence and intended to attend college and become a teacher to earn her own living. In 1926, she began studying philosophy at the Sorbonne. She was only the ninth woman and the youngest student ever. In 1929, she met Jean Paul Sartre, a man who would become a leading existential philosopher and one of the most important people in de Beauvoir's life. She took second place (behind Sartre) on her philosophy examination. As planned, she taught philosophy to support herself.

De Beauvoir and Sartre's relationship deepened, but their partnership was not simply romantic. De Beauvoir resisted marriage, considered work an alternative to marriage and motherhood, and often commented that Sartre was not a terribly warm lover. Instead, de Beauvoir and Sartre were intellectual associates and soul mates who espoused and developed existentialism. This philosophy emphasizes the importance of the individual, an individual's freedom, the choices that individual may make and the responsibilities that result from those choices. Together, de Beauvoir and Sartre agreed that they would love other people freely and that they would always be completely honest with each other. She began writing extensively, weaving various themes of existentialism into her writing. Her first novel, *L'Invitée*, was published in 1943, followed by *All Men are Mortal* in 1946, and *The Blood of Others* in 1948. De Beauvoir was a reflective writer who often used her own life to demonstrate various themes of existentialism. Her autobiographies reveal her loves, doubts, fears, beliefs, and include details about those closest to her, such as her mother's and Sartre's last days alive. Her many autobiographies include *Memoirs of A Dutiful Daughter*, *The Prime of Life*, *A Very Easy Death*, *All Said and Done*, and *Adieux, A Farewell to Sartre*.

In 1949, she published *The Second Sex* and was amazed by the reaction. Men hissed at her. Some women thanked her for writing the book, while others were resentful, because she seemed to be criticizing their lifestyle. De Beauvoir had always been curious about the situation of women. *The Second Sex* traces the evolution of women's role through history and mythology. De Beauvoir states that men have assigned women the role of "Other" or "second" sex. Instead of being objectified by men, de Beauvoir believed women have the right to make certain choices about their lives. Critics complained that she made too many generalizations about the contemporary Western woman and feminists complained that she suggested that women should reinvent themselves to be more like men instead of changing a male dominated society. Even de Beauvoir accepted that this book may have been too general. Although de Beauvoir did not consider herself a feminist until she was in her sixties, she did work tirelessly for French women to have the same rights as men and encourage women's participation in politics.

Because of her writing career, political ideas, and philosophy, de Beauvoir was often asked to speak at various engagements all over the world. It was during a visit to New York that Mary Guggenheim suggested that she meet Nelson Algren. The attraction was immediate and intense. Algren was a sort of tour guide for de Beauvoir and she savored his unusual view of Chicago. After they parted, de Beauvoir was sometimes depressed and her letters reflect how passionately attached she was to him. She wrote about every detail of her Paris life, talks about (but never criticizes) Sartre, and even gossips about various philosophers. If she had a question about America, she asked Algren. She often asked about American women and how they lived their lives. He wrote her, suggesting books she should read. Through letters, their affair continued but they did plan extensive vacations together and de Beauvoir made every effort to spend extended periods of time with Algren. *The Mandarins* is a fictionalized version of the affair and *A Force of Circumstance* briefly mentions Algren. However, the distance was too much and the affair ended sadly for de Beauvoir, bitterly for Algren. Algren was one of her greatest loves. When she died in 1986, she was buried wearing his silver ring.

ABOUT NELSON ALGREN



Simone de Beauvoir and Nelson Algren

In the 1960's, Russell Banks, a student, budding writer, and friend of Nelson Algren, invited Algren to be guest speaker at the University of North Carolina. The university arranged for him to stay in a beautiful inn and agreed to pay for his expenses during his visit. Algren, uncomfortable in the extravagant surroundings, declined the offer of the inn and instead chose to stay with Banks and his wife in their cramped simple home. Algren did keep a diary of everything he ate and drank at his friend's house and after the speaking engagement, he submitted the list of expenses to the university. The university refused to pay. Algren arranged for a friend who claimed to be a lawyer or at least had stationary that appeared to be from a lawyer's office to write threatening letters to the university. The university still refused to pay, Algren submitted the story to the local newspapers. Soon the negative publicity overwhelmed the university and a check was issued to Algren for the full amount of \$62.80. Algren repaid Banks and proved once again that he was willing to test authoritative establishments.

Nelson Algren Abraham was born in Detroit in 1908, but spent most of his life in Chicago. His father was a garage mechanic and his mother owned a candy store in a very poor immigrant neighborhood. After graduating from the University of Illinois with a B.A. in journalism in 1931, Algren moved to Texas and lived in an abandoned gas station. Based on his Texas experiences, he wrote *So Help Me*. So eager to write, he stole a typewriter and served four months in jail. His first novel, *Somebody in Boots*, was a disappointment, earning mixed reviews, and sold only 750 copies. The depressed author was hospitalized for a brief period of time.

Although his first novel was not a success, Algren had begun to form his style. He appreciated the ugliest side of urban life and dedicated his creative life to giving a voice to the silently suffering vagabonds, prostitutes, homeless bums, and the extremely poor working class. He did not romanticize or glamorize these people that the world wanted to ignore. Instead, he revealed the gloom, corruption, and the unusual efforts of these most desperate people to build their lives.

He spent World War II in France as a part of the United States Army Medical Corps. After the war, he continued to write with the financial help from an award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and a grant from Chicago's Newbury Library. In 1949, *The Man with the Golden Arm* was published and it became his greatest success. Algren won the National Book Award and Otto Preminger invited Algren to write the screenplay for the film that was released in 1956. Despite the success of the film, the experience of producing it was an emotionally stressful one. Algren and Preminger argued and Frank Sinatra only agreed to play the lead character after Marlon Brando refused. Algren later sued Preminger. The 1950's were a productive time for Algren. *Chicago*, *The City on the Make* was published in 1951 and *A Walk on the Wild Side* was greeted with great anticipation in 1956. Algren sold the film rights quickly, but when critics were not as impressed with the new work, Algren tried to kill himself.

His unlikely affair with Simone de Beauvoir reveals his greatest insecurities. During his affair with de Beauvoir, Algren was contemplating remarrying his first wife, Amanda Kontowicz. Eventually they did remarry, only to divorce two years later. *The Man with the Golden Arm* is dedicated to her. Algren wanted de Beauvoir to marry him and live with him in Chicago, but de Beauvoir insisted that she could never leave Sartre or her life in Paris. Also, while de Beauvoir thrived on her success, Algren couldn't understand how she dealt with all of the attention. He was always afraid of failure and the idea of public failure haunted him. Gradually, he ended the affair by simply not responding to her letters. He was bitter about his affair with Simone, hated to speak about it, and would threaten to end an interview if the subject came up. When *Force of Circumstance* was published in 1965, Beauvoir wrote him, but his only response was angry and painful. They never spoke again. On May 9, 1981, he died. His posthumously published works include *The Devil's Stocking*, a novel about Hurricane Carter, and a 1952 essay, *Nonconformity: Writing on Writing*. De Beauvoir was surprised to learn that despite his angry comments about her, he kept every letter she wrote him.

What's Going on at Theatre Three!

SAVE THIS DATE!

SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2003
For Theatre Three's Gala

*Swinging Into the Forties
With Theatre Three*

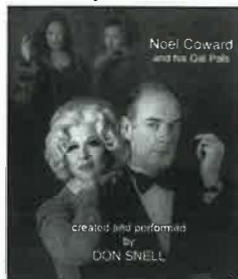
Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Theatre Three
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Dallas, Texas 75201

Attire: Vintage Chic or Cocktail Party
Early Bird Ticket Price: \$100 each (if you
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SHOW TWO: AUG 22 - SEPT 28, 2002



A CLASS ACT Music and Lyrics by Ed Kleban, Book by Linda Kline and Lonny Price

This perceptive, passionate, and amusing musical biography of Ed Kleban, the lyricist of a *Chorus Line*, spins out the story of a life dominated by a passion for theatre, and penchant for women, and a monumental talent

SHOW THREE: OCT 10 - NOV 16, 2002



COMIC POTENTIAL A Comedy by Alan Ayckbourn

Favorite Theatre Three playwright, Alan Ayckbourn has looked into the future to write about backstage television when robots will act in soap operas, and everyone's getting confused about what's real!

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The Paris-Dallas Project
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