

THEATRE THREE

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Theatre Three's Playbill is a Publication of



#### **Theatre Three**

In The Quadrangle 2800 Routh Street Dallas, Texas 75201

Norma Young
Founding Artistic Director

Jac Alder
Executive Producer-Director

Executive Editor Jac Alder

Editor Sharon Fowler

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#### Reflections On Theatre-In-The-Round

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series being published in Theatre Three's Playbill abridged by Jaye P. Brinkman, based on interviews with Jac Alder, Theatre Three's Executive Producer-Director.

What do you think audiences get from theatre-in-the-round? "Theatre Three audiences relish the sense of participation with the drama that theatre-in-the-round affords. Most of the time, the intimate proximity of actor to playgoer promotes a psychological intimacy impossible to achieve in large theatres where the actors perform behind a proscenium arch and the playgoers sit in an adjacent room looking through the stage's frame."

**Does producing in-the-round influence play selection?** "Sure. We pick plays and musicals that benefit from the Intimacy. Spectacle plays like *Cyrano* ... or even *Amadeus* might have to be unfairly abridged to fit our space. Likewise a *Hello, Dolly*. At the same time, much of Theatre Three's work is visually complex and some large-scale musicals and 'big' plays have been designed to work handsomely in our space. I remember particularly Charles Howard's elegant set for Oscar Wilde's *Woman Of No Importance* and Harland Wright's beautiful painting and design for *Assassins* that simply but completely provided a setting for each of its many scenes."

What about acting? Is it different here? "Experienced actors who've not worked arena or in-the-round stages like ours must often make a big adjustment. The technique required for acting on our stage requires a supported voice, clean diction and many other vocal attributes needed to work on large proscenium stages. But some aspects of projecting can make an actor look false. I personally like actors who best can be expansively expressive and still make their character's actions real and truthful. It's a mistake to think you have to cut work down to, say, film size. It just looks flat on our stage. And the more expressively an actor moves, the better. Body language often communicates inner emotion when an actor's facial expression might not be seen by the whole house. It's not easy to accommodate to our stage's demands."

"With the audience so right-in-your-face, you don't have the security of pretending they're not there. And audiences talk! I don't know what they're thinking of, sometimes! We hear them!"

What do they say? "One of my favorite recollections is from our production of *Hedda Gabler*. The stage manager came out in the blackout to change some props on the set and overheard a man say to his wife, 'Sherlock Holmes couldn't figure this one out!' Talking during the blackout is not too bad, but it's surprising how free people feel to comment during the scenes, and much of the time the actors can hear the comments. In a '40's play (I think it was *Present Laughter* by Noel Coward), one audience member kept doing a fashion commentary. When each new costume came on stage, he'd comment, 'Love the shoes, hate the hat!' or something similar. Someone familiar with the script of *The Fantasticks* kept saying the punchlines ahead of the actors. And it was quite unconscious."

Good stories. Any more? "Lots! Like the man who snitched cookies from a tray on a table just in front of him. I guess he longed for the days of dinner theatre. Or the policeman who offered to hold a gun for a character who was supposed to be frightened of the prop gun in his possession. Or when Billie Dawn got slapped by Brock (in Barn Yesterday) and her earring flew into a patron's lap who exclaimed, 'My god, he really hit her!' in a loud, outraged voice. In Come Back, Little Sheba years ago two women offended by a truly innocent smooching scene got up to leave in protest. But, rather than going out the audience exit, they actually left Lola's stage house. That's how involved they were. Of course, they couldn't get out that way, so they had to turn around and cross the stage again and find the audience exit. The poor actors were non-plussed and hated it. But I've always thought it demonstrated the power of our particular performing environment."

(To be continued ....)



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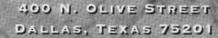
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Written and Directed by TED SWINDLEY

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George Sealey, Associate Producer
Vicki Eckard, Supervising Musical Director/Arranger
Raymond Thompson, Technical Director
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#### For Theatre Three

Terry Dobson, Musical Director
Vern McKinney, Technical Director
Linda Blase, Lighting Director
Deidre Moser, Costume Designer
Jac Alder, Stage Manager
Robert Jean Argent, Set Design
Renee LeCuyer, Wig/Hair Stylist

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#### **RUSTY RAE\*** (Patsy Cline)

originates from California where her first starring role was as Rosie in Bve Bye Birdie. She was only fifteen and had been interested in theater for a very short time. The showbiz bug hit her so hard that by the time she was eighteen, she had her first pavina role in Beach Blanket Babylon. After a three year stint with BBB, she moved on to a country and western band where she played bass guitar and sang.

Longing for the theater, she once again returned to the stage in American Jukebox, which eventually brought her to Texas.

Once here, Ms. Rae joined Casa Manaña in Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up? as well as its hilarious production of Nunsense in which she, as Sr. Robert Anne, had the privilege of working with the best ensemble of characters. During that same time period she also barrel-raced her way through the movie Pure Country. And, you might have even seen her in a Ruud-Rheem commercial.

Moving from this arena of craziness to the world of country and western music again, this time around Ms. Rae formed her own band, Rusty Rae & Midnight Highway. She and the group currently perform throughout the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. Ms. Rae recently won Female Vocalist of the Year from the Metroplex Country Music Association. She would like to dedicate her performance to the memory of Paula Kaye Evans Wallace.

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#### SHARON BUNN\* (Louise Seaer. The Fan)

and Theatre Three have enjoyed a long and productive association. Audiences have recently seen her as Poppy in Small Family Business, Janice in Risky Games, Sara Jane Moore in Stephen Sondheim's musical Assassins and as Dorothy in Amateurs. For Lean Theater, she has completed productions in We Won't Pay! We Won't Pay! by Dario Fo and the theater's premiere production of ... And Miss Reardon Drinks A Little



With Lean Theatre Productions, she co-adapted Rod Serlina's Patterns with Thurman Moss for Richland College's 1992 summer production, Miss Bunn's favorite roles at Theatre Three include Weill Women and Mrs. Lovett in Sweeney Todd as well as roles in Woman In Mind, Season's Greetings, Quartermaine's Terms, Safety, Light Up The Sky, A Little Night Music, The Elephant Man, Gingerbread Lady, Angry Housewives, Anything Goes, Company, Canterbury Tales and Close of Play. Miss Bunn has appeared on the stages of the Dallas Theater Center, the Plaza Theater, the Greenville Avenue Theater, Fort Worth's Casa Manaña and stages in Los Angeles and Chicago.

She has received numerous local awards including Best Actress for Top Girls and Sweeney Todd. In addition to appearing in local commercials, Miss Bunn has also appeared on film with Gene Hackman in Full Moon In Blue Water, Roy Scheider in Night Games, Steve Martin in Leap Of Faith, with Goldie Hawn in Swing Shift and with Susan Dey In Bed Of Lies, an ABC TV Movie-of-the-Week. She was most recently seen in the television film, Starkweather: Murder In The Heartland.

Understudy: Liz Piazza-Kelley\*\*

Theatre Three operates under an agreement with the Actor's Equity Association (AEA), the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

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J.D. Miller

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True Love

Cole Porter

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Bill Bailey

Traditional

Public Domain

San Antonio Rose Reprise

**Bob Wills** Bourne Co.

Note: Song titles are followed by composer/lyricist and publishing company

Musicians

Terry Dobson, Piano; Jim Parsons, Drums; Christopher Renauist, Bass; Sonny Franks, Guitar/Banjo

#### About The Director

#### J. TED SWINDLEY (Writer and Director)

For over fifteen years, Ted Swindley has directed and produced over 200 plays. Some of his outstanding directorial credits include world premieres, classics and musicals including Carnal Knowledge, Pacific Overtures, Follies and Cat On A Hot Tin Roof as well as rotating repertory projects such as Havel's The Memorandum with Giraudoux's The Madwoman of Challliot. Thornton Wilder's Our Town and The Skin of Our Teeth and Les Liaisons Dangereuses with The Importance of Being Earnest.

He holds a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Houston, a Master of Arts from Baylor University and a Bachelor of Arts from Furman University in Greenville, SC. He has studied at the Lincoln Center Institute and the Institute of European Studies in Vienna, Austria. He trained at the Guthrie Theatre in Minneapolis.

Mr. Swindley Is the founding artistic director of Stages Repertory Theatre, the second largest theater in Houston. There he implemented such diversified programming as: Texas Playwrights Festival for which he won national recognition in 1986 from the Wall Street Journal and BackStage Magazine; StageSchool, a series of classes to sharpen, discipline and liberate the skills of writers and performers; and, EarlyStages, a year-round daytime theater for adults and children, entertaining the audiences of today while educating those of tomorrow.

Named to Esquire magazine's register of Americans for Outstanding Achievement in Arts and Letters and featured in Southern Living Magazine in 1988, Swindley was also the recipient of the Los Angeles Dramalogue Award for outstanding direction. He has won national attention for his direction of the world premiere of Moonlight and Valentino by Ellen Simon (daughter of Neil Simon) which starred Carlin Glynn (The Trip To Bountiful) and Mary Stuart Masterson (Fried Green Tomatoes). He has also guest directed for the Texas Shakespeare Festival, Stage #1 in Dallas, Duke University - Emanuel Azenburg, Producer, Children's Theatre Festival of Houston and Chopstick Theatre In Charleston, South Carolina.

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#### **Artistic Staff**

#### **National Company**

RANDY JOHNSON, National Producer In 1992. Johnson produced the hit musical Always...Patsy Cline as a special 60th anniversary tribute to the late performer in Atlanta as well as a benefit for the Los Angeles AIDS project, "A Commitment to Life," which started Barbra Streisand, Billy Joel, Elton John, Natalie Cole and Liza Minnelli. He recently completed a new concert act for Beauty and the Beast star, Paige O'Hara. Under the artistic direction of the late John Houseman at the University of Southern California, Mr. Johnson capped a collegiate career at the Edinburgh Festival in the British premiere of Stephen Sondheim's Foilies. In legitimate theatrical venues, he has produced the critically acclaimed Los Angeles production of The Normal Heart, starring Richard Dreyfuss and Kathy Bates. His directing credits include productions of Leader of the Pack with Andrew Stevens and Rostyn Kind in Canada, Grease. Tennessee Williams' Androgyny Mon Amour, Beehive, Night Club Confidential, I Am Annie Mae, Godspell and The Rocky Horror Show.

Vicky Eckard, Supervising Musical Director/Arranger: A native of South Carolina, her collaboration with Ted Swindley began in 1989 when she was appointed: Resident Musical Director at Theatre on the Green in Greenville, SC. She has been musical director and conductor for many of Mr. Swindley's productions, including Foilles, A Day in Hollywood/A Night in the Ukraine, Big River and Red. Hot and Cole. She has supervised and played numerous productions of Always...Palsy Cline throughout the country, including most recently the San Diego Repertory Theater, The George Burns Theater in Detroit, and on the stage of the Grand Ole Opty in Nashville.

#### **Theatre Three**

TERRY Dosson, Musical Director, has been Theatre Three's Musical Director since 1980, providing direction and accompaniment for over 35 musical productions. Most recently he worked with Executive Producer-Director Jac Alder In their presentation of Ball Games. Mr. Dobson is also the Director/Conductor of ENCORE!, the small group ensemble from the renowned Turtle Creek Chorale.

VERN McKinney, Technical Director, is in his third season at Theatre Three. A graduate of Angelo State University, Mr. McKinney has acted, directed or designed numerous shows. As an actor, he was last seen at Three Below in Mammet, Dammit! His most recent design work includes Vital Signs, H.M.H. Pinafore and Into The Woods. Mr. McKinney has directed The Woods, Sexual Perversity In Chicago, No Sex Please, We're British and Grandma Duck is Dead. In 1992 Mr. McKinney and Mark Hadley began the New Artists Theatre Company. Their next production, John Brown's Body, will open in April.

Linda Blass, Lighting Director Her association with Theatre Three began with Woman In Mind. Subsequent designs at Theatre Three include musicals, dramas and comedies in every season since that Initial assignment. Ms. Blase is also an accomplished photographer and documents many of Dallas' dramatic productions.

DEIDRE Moser, Costume Designer, is in her second season at Theatre Three. Ms. Moser's costume designs have been featured in Cold Shoulder Production's recent The Theory Of Total Blame. Deep Elium Opera Theatre's The Mikado and in the Shakespeare Festival of Dallas' 1993 Target Tour to local schools and colleges. Theatre Three productions include DROOD!, Wholly Moliere, Shadowlands, Assassins, Ball Games, and most recently, The Fantosticks.

ROBERT JEAN ARGENT, Set Design, spent a significant port of his life in Eastern France where he pursued interest in the visual and performing arts. Interested in cooking and wines, Mr. Argent plans all his travel around visits to famous eateries, especially those with strong reputations for use of indigenous foodstuffs. He worked as a designer for the Colin Players in Metz. France before his assignment at Theatre Three.

RENEE LECUYER, Wig/Hair Stylist Her work in makeup, hair, wigs and wardrobe spans print, commercials, video, film and live productions. She has worked with such celebrities as Kevin Costner, Joe Pesci, Brian Keith, Leslie Ann Warren, Barbara Barrie, Paul Winfield, and many more.

#### **Encore Donations**

ENCORE Campaign Contributors — Stars, Leading Men and Women, Supporting Players, Production Assistants — are matching, dollar for dollar, the 1993 Texas Commission On The Arts Grant which Theatre Three received from the Commission's Theatre Panel. This panel (consisting of theater professionals gathered from all over Texas) voted us the TOP SCORE of ALL theaters in the state! Every dollar contributed by you will be matched and will help to guarantee the production of our end-of-season attractions. Contact the Administration Office at 871-2933 to learn how you may participate in this exciting campaign. The following list reflects current ENCORE donations as of December 31, 1993.

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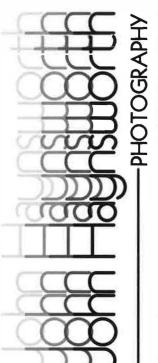
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Terry Dobson, Musical Director, Assistant to Mr. Alder Laurence O'Dwyer, Associate Director

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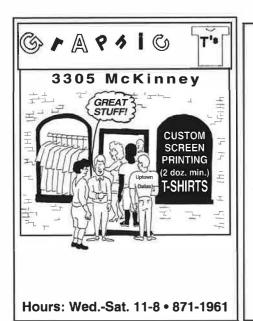
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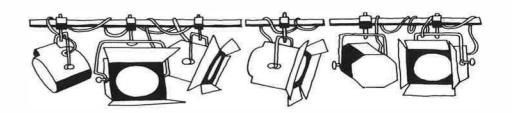


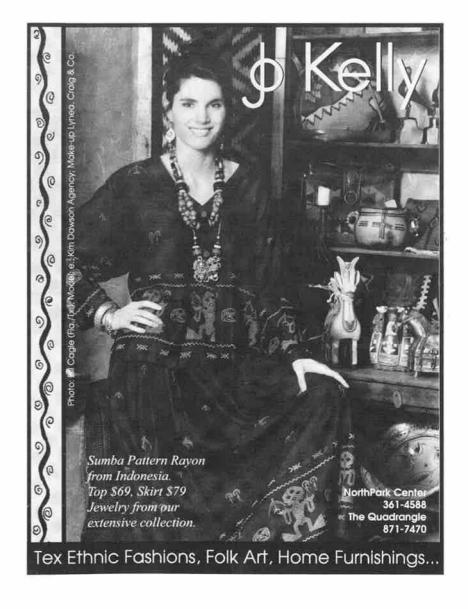
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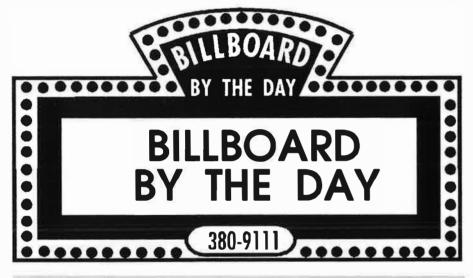




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