

COMPANY NEWS

AN ABUNDANT NEW YEAR

We're gearing up for our next production: Beth Henley's sweeping, grand, funny, moving and heartfelt play, *Abundance*. And we have two more Salons on deck as well. In the meantime, here's what our talented company of theatre artists have been up to:

MARY BACON is currently playing Mary Todd Lincoln in the world premiere of the new play *The Widow Lincoln* by James Still at the Ford's Theatre in Washington DC through Feb 22nd. A great reason to visit the capital!

EVE BIANCO did a workshop of a new play late this past fall called *citibabi.net* written by her classmate from Juilliard, Jeffrey Stafford. She continues to do audiobooks under a pseudonym so no one knows it's her (because they are that good); she has done a few voice-overs for a popular pharmaceutical and has spent much of the fall in and out of high schools throughout the 5 boroughs with her daughter, Ali, who is applying for next fall.

DARYL BORNSTEIN certainly had a busy and exciting year. It included designing sound for the Northern Stage production of *White Christmas*, seven months mixing *Rock of Ages* on Broadway, teaching a master class on "Sound Reinforcement for Barbershop Quartets", and producing, recording, and mixing the inaugural season of the "Theatre Initiative" for WNET/Channel Thirteen. Among the nine Off Broadway plays shot and broadcast, was Richard Nelson's *The Apple Family Plays* featuring actor supreme and TACT Sound Designer, Stephen Kunken. He is starting off 2015 producing a very exciting jazz trio recording featuring Native American flutist Joseph

CONTINUES ON PAGE 4

FEB 17 TO MARCH 28, 2015

ABUNDANCE

by

BETH HENLEY

directed by

JENN THOMPSON

The regional theatre movement, which began in this country in the 1960s and 70s, had many positive ramifications: it brought quality theatre to a vast and largely underserved population, it created a regular theatre-going public, and it introduced many to the great works of theatrical literature. It also had some interesting and unanticipated consequences. It created a new and unusual class of playwright - those writers who have made a career writing for this new audience, but who haven't received the kind of national recognition that, say, would be given to writers whose work appears regularly on Broadway. For when a playwright's work is presented in production in Louisville, KY and Washington DC, and Costa Mesa, CA, for example, a central core audience is never created. Such is the case with the work of Beth Henley.

Elizabeth "Beth" Hecker Henley began her theatre career as an actress, earning a BFA in Acting from Southern Methodist University in 1974. While still an undergraduate student, she penned her first play, *Am I Blue*, which was produced at SMU in 1973. Henley's national reputation was launched with her second play, *Crimes of the Heart* which was introduced at the Actors Theatre of Louisville in 1979, then moved to the Manhattan Theatre Club in 1980, where it won the Pulitzer Prize in the Drama for 1980-81. It then moved to Broadway's John Gold Theatre for a run of over 500 performances, closing in 1983 with several more accolades including a Tony Nomination for Best Play. The Broadway run was followed by a successful motion picture version, for which Henley received an Academy Award nomination for Best Adapted Screenplay. Despite

CONTINUES ON PAGE 2

this success early in her career, *Crimes of the Heart* is her only play to receive significant national attention, and the only one commonly known by most people.

While many of her plays remain unknown even to theatre aficionados, Henley continues to be a prolific writer with sixteen stage plays, including *The Miss Firecracker Contest*, *Abundance*, and most recently in 2013, *The Jack-sonian*. She also has seven screenplays and screen adaptations to her credit, including the screen adaptation of *Crimes of the Heart*, *Nobody's Fool* starring Rosanna Arquette, *True Stories*, which she co-wrote with David Byrne and Stephen Tobolowsky, and *Come West with Me*, which is an adaptation of *Abundance*.

Abundance, Henley's seventh play, premiered in 1989 as a commission by South Coast Repertory, a regional theatre in Costa Mesa, California, before heading to New York's Manhattan Theatre Club in 1990. It was later staged at San Francisco's Actors Theater in 1992 and the Signature Theatre in Washington, D.C. in 1994. *Abundance* marked a significant turning point in Henley's career as her first play outside of the Southern Gothic genre. It also differed in form from her previous works by adopting an episodic style that offered a cinematic view of the Westward Expansion of the United States through the eyes of women over a span of twenty-five years. Frank Rich of *The New York Times* commended this change, calling it Henley's "most provocative play in years, a departure to be cherished."

Abundance, like many plays that have been produced mainly in regional theatres, has been largely overlooked by theatre audiences and professionals alike. While *Abundance* has yet to see a Broadway production, it has been applauded for its strong script with an imaginative vision of Pioneer life for women in the nineteenth century and was heralded by Sylvie Drake of the *LA Times* as "Henley's most thoughtful and accomplished...play to date."

ABUNDANCE

by *Beth Henley*

Directed by JENN THOMPSON

FEB 17 - MARCH 28, 2015
Opens **Sunday, MARCH 1st**
at **6:00pm**

TALK-BACKS with the cast following every Sunday Matinee.

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Tuesday - Thursday	7:30 PM
Friday, Saturday	8:00 PM
Saturday, Sunday	2:00 PM

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: BETH HENLEY



Elizabeth "Beth" Hecker Henley (1952) is an American writer best known for her quintessentially southern plays that feature strong, complex female roles. Henley is best known for *Crimes of the Heart*, her 1978 play that earned a Pulitzer Prize, "Best American Play" from the New York Drama Critic's Circle, and a Tony nomination. The Mississippi native has been an active member of the Dallas, Los Angeles, and New York theatre communities. Henley currently teaches in the theatre department of Loyola Marymount University and continues to have her work produced all over the country.

MEET THE CAST OF ABUNDANCE



**TED
KOCH**



**TODD
LAWSON**



**KELLY
MCANDREW**



**TRACY
MIDDENDORF**



**JEFF
TALBOTT**

MAIL ORDER BRIDES

ENTERING THE WORLD OF *ABUNDANCE*

Fair and gentle reader,

can we be useful to you? Are you a stranger desiring a helpmate or searching for agreeable company that may in the end ripen into closer ties? If so, send us a few lines making known your desires. Are you bashful and dread publicity? Be not afraid. You need not disclose to us your identity. Send along your correspondence accompanied by five cents for every seven words, and we will publish it under an alias and bring about correspondence in the most delicate fashion. To cultivate the noble aim of life and help men and women into a state of bliss is our aim.

- *Matrimonial News*

283 - A gentleman of 25 years old, 5 feet 3 inches, doing a good business in the city, desires the acquaintance of a young, intelligent and refined lady possessed of some means, of a loving disposition from 18 to 23, and one who could make home a paradise.

287 - An intelligent young fellow of 22 years, 6 feet height, weight 170 pounds. Would like to correspond with a lady from 18 to 22. Will exchange photos: object, fun and amusement, and perhaps when acquainted, if suitable, matrimony.

228 - If there is a gentlemen of honor and intelligence between the ages of 35 and 50 who wants a genuine housekeeper, let him write to this number. I am a widow, 34 years old, weight 110 pounds, 4 feet and 5 inches in height: am brunette and have very fine black hair.

292 - A girl who will love, honest, true and not sour; a nice little cooing dove, and willing to work in flour.

In the early days of westward travel, when men and women left behind their homes and acquaintances in search of wealth and happiness, there was a recognized need for some method of honorable introduction between the sexes. This need was readily fulfilled by the formation of a periodical devoted entirely to the advancement of marriage. Throughout the 1870s, '80s and '90s, that periodical, to which many unattached men and women subscribed, was a newspaper called *Matrimonial News*. The paper was printed in San Francisco, California, and Kansas City, Missouri. It was issued once a week and the paper's editors proclaimed that the intent of the material was the happiness of its readers.

According to the *Matrimonial News* business manager, Stark Taylor, the paper would "bring letters from a special someone to desiring subscribers in hopes that a match would be made and the pair

would spend the rest of their life together."

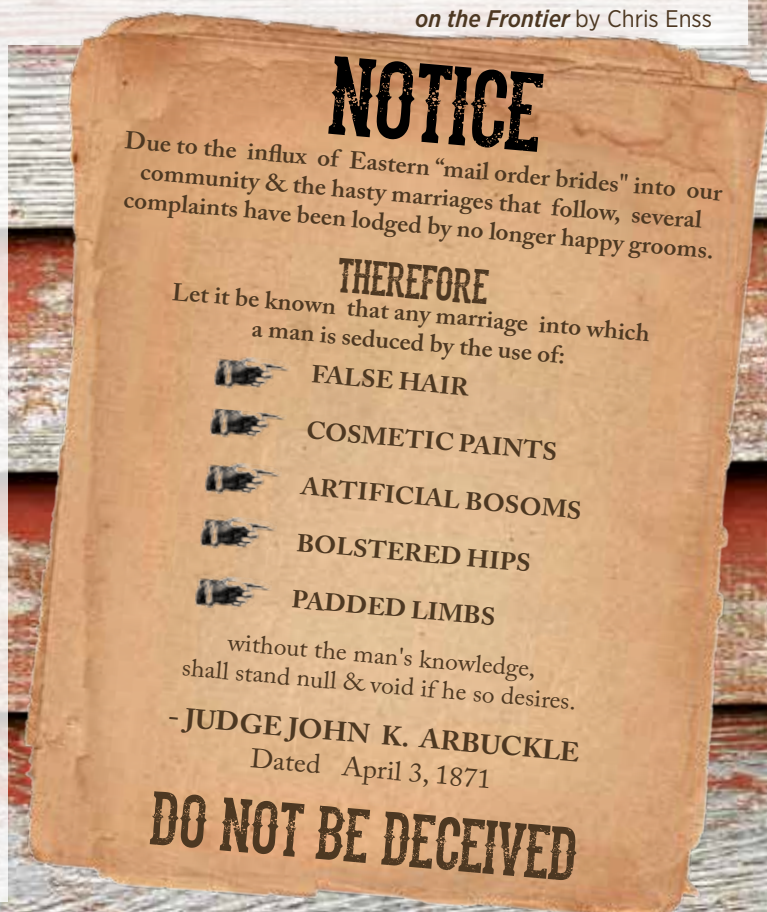
A code of rules and regulations, posted in each edition of the paper, was strictly enforced. All advertisers were required to provide information on their personal appearance, height, weight, and their financial and social positions, along with a general description of the kind of persons with whom they desired correspondence. Gentlemen's personals of forty words or under were published once for twenty-five cents in stamps or postage. Ladies' personals of forty words or under were published free of charge. Any advertisements over forty words, whether for ladies or gentlemen, were charged a rate of one cent for each word.

The personal ads were numbered, to avoid publishing names and addresses. Replies to personals were to be sent to the *Matrimonial News* office sealed in an envelope with the number of the ad on the outside.

Every edition of the *Matrimonial News* began with the same positive affirmation: "Women need a man's strong arm to support her in life's struggle, and men need a woman's love."

It is estimated that in the three decades the paper was in existence more than 2,600 couples who advertised with the newspaper corresponded, exchanged photos, and eventually married.

- from *Hearts West: True Stories of Mail-Order Brides on the Frontier* by Chris Ess



COMPANY NEWS

Continued

Firecrow (Grammy and NAMY winner), pianist Clifford Carter (James Taylor, 24th Street Band), and drummer/percussionist Doug Yowell (Susanne Vega, Duncan Sheik), mixing house sound for "The View", as well as gearing up for the second season of the WNET's Theatre Initiative.

After a summer where she directed *Death Trap* and appeared in *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (directed by fellow TACT company member, Terry Layman), **NORA CHESTER** spent the autumn recovering (beautifully) from a bilateral knee replacement and managed to appear in one of the original pieces with The Dare Project in November. She is looking forward to all the exciting projects coming up for TACT in 2015.

CYNTHIA DARLOW and her glorious husband **RICHARD FERRONE**, enjoyed peaceful holidays here in the "Big Apple". The new year includes the recording of her 16th book, in the "Miss Julia" series, by Ann B. Ross, and a continuing workshop of *In a Roundabout Way* by former TACT guest artist Kim Sykes, and directed by TACT founding member, Paul Hecht. It deals with the fascinating relationship between Mary Todd Lincoln and her mulatto seamstress and confidante, Elizabeth Keckley. There will be a performance at Guild Hall in East Hampton late March.

FRANCESCA DI MAURO is in her second year as a licensed social worker at Andrus Children's Center while continuing her training as a drama therapist. Daughter Chiara is now in high school and husband Ryan - one of TACT's founding and "emeritus" members - has started his own fine wine distribution company, Imperial Wines and Spirits. Francesca still does voiceovers and misses the stage, but enjoys it vicariously through her TACT cohorts.

SCOTT ALAN EVANS, reports that working on TACT's December Salon of *French Without Tears*, by Terence Rattigan, was a particularly delightful experience. He's a big fan of Rattigan's work, of course, and was honored to work with the wonderful cast which included company members Jeremy Beck, Kelly McAndrew, Victoria Mack and Anthony Roach and some very talented and very game guest artists: Curt Bouril, John Fitzgibbon, Wesley Taylor and Brendan Titley.

Collaborating with cellist Lawrence Stomberg, **JONATHAN FAIMAN** performed a series of all-Beethoven concerts last fall. Their collaboration continues in the new year with performances at Concordia College and in Pennsylvania. Jonathan is holding teaching positions at Hoff-Barthelsson and Concordia College and staff accompaniment positions at Concordia and Larchmont Temple. He continues his work as MD and assistant-MD at public schools in Westchester County and has recently joined the Musician's Union 802.

Following *The Killing of Sister George* at TACT this fall, **MARY LOUISE GEIGER** designed lighting for Dael Orlandersmith's new piece *Forever*, now running at Long Wharf and at New York Theatre Workshop beginning in April. She is also designing *The Other Place* at Virginia Stage. February includes *Chapatti* at Cincinnati Playhouse and a new piece choreographed by Myles Thatcher for San Francisco Ballet.

DELPHI HARRINGTON and Woody Regan, her collaborator, have been asked to return to the Metropolitan Room, to perform their Cabaret show, *Cowardly Swann*, which they premiered last Spring. The show is a mélange of the songs of Noël Coward and the

writing team of Flanders and Swann, with cogent anecdotes about their lives, a little gossip, and a lot of fun. You can make a reservation to *Cowardly Swann* by contacting the Metropolitan Room (212)-206-0440. Performance are: Wednesdays at 7pm, February 25, March 25, April 15, and Saturday at 1pm, May 2.

Following her performance in *The Killing of Sister George*, **CYNTHIA HARRIS** has been busy lining up her next projects. She is very much looking forward to the Spring Gala on May 11th and hopes you will join us for the celebration!

SIMON JONES continues on tour with *Blithe Spirit* with TACT Dame Angela Lansbury. After a sell-out two months in LA, he's on to San Francisco, Toronto, and Washington DC. For details see www.blithespirittheplay.com. The tour ends on March 29th. He was also heard on BBC Radio 4 in an adaptation of Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett's *Good Omens* over the holiday season.

DARRIE LAWRENCE is happily working at the Denver Center Theatre Company in a new play, *Appoggiatura*, by Pulitzer nominated James Still, director Risa Brainin. It is a beautiful piece of theatre writing and she is enjoying the challenge. It is not a musical, but there is music and it flows organically from one moment to the next. It is set in Venice which she now must visit! She worked at the Denver Center 30 years ago, and although the theatre remains the same Denver has transformed. She feels a bit like Rip Van Winkle: nothing is like it used to be. Denver is a vibrant, exciting, world class city with a very lively downtown scene and too many good restaurants to sample even in an



Margot White and Caitlain O'Connell in *The Killing of Sister George*.
Photo by Marielle Solan



Cynthia Harris & Margot White in
The Killing of Sister George

eleven week stay. In late March Darrie will be in Indianapolis (another city that has transformed) to do *On Golden Pond*. Life is good.

TERRY LAYMAN is playing Joe Keller in *All My Sons* at The Swine Palace Theatre on the campus of LSU in Baton Rouge through the middle of February. When he comes back to town, he'll begin preparing to direct TACT's April Salon, Arthur Miller's *The Man Who Had All the Luck*.

VICTORIA MACK will spend a couple weeks in February workshopping a new play by and with Theresa Rebeck at the Denver Center New Play Festival. She's very proud to be Theresa's go-to-gal to play evil rich New York City girls who sweep in and ruin everything! In March and April she'll be taking a collection of 10-minute plays by Amy Herzog and Dave Read, which she stars in and produced, to Santiago, Chile, to perform at two major cultural centers.

KELLY MCANDREW is currently in rehearsal for TACT's production of *Abundance!* It's her first full production with the company. You can see her in the hit indie film *Appropriate Behavior* which opened in January in New York and select cities. She can also be seen in Season 3 of *Orange is the New Black* which will be released on Netflix in June.

GREG MCFADDEN appeared on *Person of Interest* on January 2nd (CBS.com) and can be seen in *Mozart in the Jungle* on Amazon Prime.

MACKENZIE MEEHAN is currently in Boston rehearsing a new play at The Huntington Theater called, *The Second Girl*. "With Eugene O'Neill's classic *Long Day's Journey into Night* as a backdrop, *The Second Girl* is set in the downstairs world of the Tyrone family kitchen in August 1912. Two Irish immigrant servant girls and the chauffeur search

for love, success, and a sense of belonging in their new world in this lyrical and poignant world premiere by Ronan Noone (*Brendan, The Atheist*) and directed by Campbell Scott. "The play will open on Jan 28th and closes Feb 21st. Please visit www.huntingtontheatre.org for more info.

LAUREN MILLER recently directed the very fun *Chris Pappas Presents...Chris Pappas' Facebook...LIVE!* in Solocom at the People's Improv Theatre, which will return to comedy stages across the city in the coming year. She continues to collaborate with Amios' 10 minute play series Shutz, and is busily and eagerly reviewing scripts for newTACTics' 5th season, coming to TACT in June 2015.

JAMES MURTAUGH and his wife Alice have been living a season of "All In The Family" for the past three months. Their daughter, her husband and his grandchild have been living with them while their East Side apartment is under construction. James said, "And to think I thought Archie Bunker was being cruel when he referred to his son in law as meathead! Actually, it allowed us to get very close to our grandson whom we will sorely miss when they move back." He is also eagerly awaiting the arrival of his second grandson in late February just around the time his Mother, God love her, will be celebrating her 101st birthday.

MARGARET NICHOLS is in the middle of other creative throes at the moment, creating a multimedia digital online download program titled "Bliss. Here. Now." to be launched by Spring of 2015. She hopes to be bringing practical yet powerful meditative techniques to people all over the globe!

JOHN PLUMPSI directed a terrific cast in TACT's Salon *I'll Leave It To You* by Noël Coward in November. Audiences were de-

lighted, and he was humbled and gratified by the kind comments on the production from our TACT patrons. Thank you again! He is currently appearing Off-Broadway in *Soul Doctor*, and continues to teach at Montclair State University.

LIV ROOTH is in rehearsals for David Ives' *Lives of the Saints* at Primary Stages, directed by John Rando. This is an evening of seven one acts, three of which are brand new, never before seen bundles of Ives-ian joy! This is her fourth play with the absolutely wonderful Mr. Ives, and her second with the extraordinary John Rando. Previews begin Feb 3, and the show runs at The Duke on 42nd St. through March 27.

DAVID STALLER, Founding Artistic Director of Gingold Theatrical Group; produces and directs the monthly Project Shaw (now in its 10th year) at Symphony Space. GTG will present its annual SHAW NEW YORK festival (details to follow, check our website), which will include a full production of a Shaw play along with symposiums, concerts, and a reading of one of the specially commissioned new plays. David, a frequent speaker on all things Shaw and human rights, will be teaching an undergraduate course with Andrew M. Flescher in 2015 at Stony Brook University, focusing on Shaw, Humanities and Ethics. Visit www.GingoldGroup.org

JENN THOMPSON had a busy fall/winter directing productions at Denver Center Theatre (*Vanya, Sonia, Masha and Spike*) and Pioneer Theatre in Salt Lake City (*Peter and the Starcatcher*). She is happily back in NYC and excited to be working on TACT's *Abundance* - which begins February 17th.

JEFF TALBOTT: After being out of town most of the fall, first with *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at Pioneer Theatre in Salt Lake City and *A Christmas Story* at the Cleveland Playhouse, Jeff is thrilled to be back in NYC and even more thrilled to be starting rehearsals for TACT's production of *Abundance*. He continues to write, and is hard at work on a new play and also a new musical with his writing partner, Will Van Dyke.

If you are looking for a starry TACT constellation, check out **MARGOT WHITE** and **MARK ALHADEFF**, both of whom are the understudies MTC's Broadway production of *Constellations*, now running through March 15th. Ruth Wilson and Jake Gyllenhal have nothing on our TACTors!

Our 2014/15 season is made possible, in part, by public funds from the **New York State Council on the Arts**, a State agency.

2014-2015 SEASON

SALON SERIES

First Plays by Premier Writers

I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU

by Sir Noël Coward

Directed by John Plumpis

Music by David Broome Stage Manager: Kelly Burns
with

Jeremy Beck*, Darrie Lawrence*, Victoria Mack*, Ron McClary*,
MacKenzie Meehan*, James Prendergast*, and guests: Jacqueline
Antaramian, Annie Chang, Brandon Jones, & Lindsey Kyler



Curt Bouril, Wesley Taylor, Anthony Roach, Jeremy Beck & Brendan Tittley
in FRENCH WITHOUT TEARS



Curt Bouril & Victoria Mack
in FRENCH WITHOUT TEARS



Wesley Taylor & Kelly McAndrew
in FRENCH WITHOUT TEARS

FRENCH WITHOUT TEARS

by Terence Rattigan

Directed by Scott Alan Evans

Music by Amir Khosrowpour Stage Manager: Kelly Burns
with

Jeremy Beck*, Victoria Mack*, Kelly McAndrew*, Anthony Roach*,
and guests: Curt Bouril, John Fitzgibbons,
Wesley Taylor, Brendan Tittley



Victoria Mack & MacKenzie Meehan
in I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU



Jeremy Beck
in I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU



Darrie Lawrence & Ron McClary in I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU



The CAST of FRENCH WITHOUT TEARS



The Cast with TACT Artistic Director, Scott Alan Evans (center), in a "Talk-Back" with the audience.
I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU

NEXT IN THE SALON

THE MAN WHO HAD
ALL THE LUCK

by Arthur Miller
1944

April 17 - 20

For some, life is an endless
toil, while for others only good
things happen in this intricate
modern fable.

COME BLOW YOUR
HORN

by Neil Simon
1967

May 15 - 18

When sensible young Buddy
leaves home to follow in his
older brother Alan's swinging
Manhattan bachelor footsteps,
the family is thrown in disarray.



22nd SPRING GALA

Honoring

CYNTHIA HARRIS

MONDAY, MAY 11, 2015

Special Guest

ANN HAMPTON CALLAWAY

University Club

1 West 54th Street, NYC

6:30 Cocktails

7:30 Dinner/Live Auction/Entertainment

Festive Dress

For more information, or to request an invitation, call TACT at 212-645-8228 or email Lauren at lauren@tactnyc.org

UNHEARD. UNSEEN. UNEXPECTED.

5th Annual
NEW PLAY
FESTIVAL

June 3 - 25, 2015



At the **TACT STUDIO, 900 Broadway, Suite 905, NYC.**

For more information check www.tactnyc.org;

email newtactics@tactnyc.org

or call the TACT office at **212-645-8228**

SAVE THE DATE

NEWTACTICS

TACT

7

SIMON
RATTIGAN
MILLER
MARCUS
HENLEY
COWARD
SEASON
2014/15

900 Broadway, Suite 905
New York, NY 10003



INSIDE! » CHECK OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING AT TACT THIS WINTER/SPRING!

NEXT ON THE MAINSTAGE

ABUNDANCE

by Beth Henley
1989

February 17 - March 28

FOLLOW US ON



MAIL ORDER BRIDES

Find out how to become one (circa 1867) and prepare for the journey of your lifetime in *Abundance*.

page 3

DON'T MISS TACT'S

SALON SERIES

First Plays by Premier Writers continues

page 6

SAVE THIS DATE:

MONDAY
MAY 11
2 0 1 5

See why on page 7

WINTER NEWS

Our 2014/15 Season is well under way. Discover what TACT has been up to so far this season and what exciting work is still to come. Be sure to mark your calendars for May 11 and TACT's Spring Gala. And don't miss the inside track on what our stellar company of actors have been up to.