

Ripples

from the Community Circle Players at Riverwalk Theatre

Season 34 • Number 3
October, 2022

228 Museum Dr. • PO Box 12249 • Lansing, MI 48901 • 517-482-5700 • Office Hours: Tues.-Fri. 10 am to 5 pm • e-mail: RWT@riverwalktheatre.com • web site: RiverwalkTheatre.com

fab-u-lation: the act of inventing or relating false or fantastic tales

This “fabulation” process takes us on a multi-layered journey with an all-too-human protagonist in this social satire about an ambitious, haughty African-American woman. Undine Barnes Calles’ husband suddenly disappears after embezzling all of her money. Pregnant and on the brink of social and financial ruin, Undine retreats to her childhood home in Brooklyn’s Walt Whitman projects, only to discover that she must cope with a crude new reality. Undine faces the challenge of transforming her setbacks into small victories in a battle to reaffirm her right to be.

Director Rose Jangmi Cooper initially wanted to direct *Fences*. Then not being able to get the rights turned out to be more a blessing than a curse, as it led her to *Fabulation*. Once she realized it was a Lynn Nottage script (she wrote *Sweat*, in which Rose played “Cynthia” at RWT in 2019,) Rose was all-in.

This is Rose’s first main-stage directing gig at Riverwalk, though she has lit up the local theatre scene in recent years, acting and directing with Ixion Ensemble and playing “Othello” in The Curtainless Theatre’s *The Play’s the Thing*, followed by playing “Cynthia” in Riverwalk’s *Sweat*.

During the shortened-by-Covid 2020 theatre season, Rose directed the virtual play #Matter and performed in Riverwalk’s virtual productions of *EA (Eater’s Anonymous)* and *Working*. Last November



she was on the live stage, tackling the challenging role of “Faye” in *Skeleton Crew* for Ixion Ensemble.

Rose’s “Fabulation Squad” includes multiple local award-winning actors and crew, along with several new faces and returnees to the stage. Rose reports a genuine feeling of open collaboration, each committed to giving their all in telling this wonderful story.

“After the cast list was announced, many people said that I picked the ‘Black All-Stars of theatre in Lansing.’ I beg to differ. I picked the All-Stars of Lansing theatre.”

We look forward to these actors’ returning in future shows! (Vanessa Mazhangara, Wulf Hogan, Norrlyn-Michael Allen, Janell Hall, Julian Van Dyke, Timetra Horton, Lorenzo Lopez, Jillian Tosolt, Ny’kieria Blocker, Teriah Nicole, and Jordan Taylor)

According to Rose, “Vanessa Mazhangara — our ‘Undine’ — feels like a hidden treasure that I uncovered, as breathtakingly beautiful as she is deeply talented. I feel blessed to watch her bring her magic to her role. And witnessing her and Wulf Hogan play off of each other, gives me goose bumps. They take ‘chemistry’ to a whole new level.”

Note: *Fabulation* contains strong language and adult subject matter.

It opens Thursday, October 20. Riverwalk requires our audience to be masked; Thursday, 7 pm shows are sold at half capacity for greater social distance. Plan on arriving about 30 minutes early to avoid long lines and parking issues. Call 517-482-5700 for reservations.



Director Rose Jangmi Cooper (L) directs “Undine” (Vanessa Mazhangara)

WHAT’S ON AT RIVERWALK

🗓️ October 20-30 - **FABULATION - or the RE-EDUCATION OF UNDINE** - SerioComedy by Lynn Nottage, Directed by Rose Jangmi Cooper - Main Stage

★ 10am - Noon, Saturdays, Oct. 29 and Nov. 12 & 26 - **FREE WORKSHOPS ON PLAY WRITING FOR EMERGING PLAYRIGHTS CONTEST** (See page 2.)

A 7pm, Wed. Nov. 2 & 10am, Sat. Nov. 5 **AUDITIONS for Lola/Simon & Angels in KINKY BOOTS** Directed by Kelly Stuitable (See page 3.)

🎵 December 8-18 - **A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD** - Family Musical by Arnold Lobel, Directed by Tom Ferris - Main Stage

A December 11-12 - Sun/Mon, 7pm - **AUDITIONS for MISERY**, Directed by Ayden Soupal

A Dec. 19-20 - Sun/Mon, 7pm - **AUDITIONS for KINKY BOOTS, remaining roles**, Directed by Kelly Stuitable

🗓️ February 9-19 - **MISERY** - Thriller by William Goldman based on the Stephen King novel, Directed by Ayden Soupal - Black Box Stage

🗓️ **PLAYS:** (both black-box & main stage) 7 pm Thurs.; 8 pm Fri. & Sat.; 2 pm Sun. Fri./Sat./Sun. \$15 (\$12 sr/student/military) **Bargain Thursdays \$12/\$10**

🎵 **MUSICALS:** 7 pm Thursdays; 8 pm Fri./Sat.; 2 pm Sundays - \$24 (\$20 sr/student/military) (\$12 age 12 & under)

A **AUDITIONS** - more info at riverwalktheatre.com/auditions

★ **SPECIAL EVENT:** More info at RiverwalkTheatre.com

Bell Book & Candle a Magical Evening

Bell Book & Candle was a pleasure to see on the Black Box stage.

To begin with, visually the smart set (set designer Leroy Cupp, built by Leroy, Bob Nees and Tom Ferris), was perfect. The set was nicely dressed as well (Mara McGill) with excellent paint choices (Scenographer Ric Sadler), all enhanced by spot-on lighting (father/son duo Ted and Tim Daniel).

Costumes, ranging from evening gowns to lingerie, were a colorful feast for the eyes (Amanda Macomber) and Leon Green's sound design/tech was solid. Intimacy Coordinator Amanda Tollstam made certain those scenes were believable, not always an easy task. AD/Stage Manager Jan Ross made sure everything moved smoothly.

So with such a fine canvas, under Director Amy Rickett's talented hand, her cast couldn't help but shine. Caila Conklin as the austere witch Gillian Holroyd gave us a multilayered performance as she fell in love accidentally.



L to R: Nick Lemmer, Margo Guillory, Caila Conklin, Lewis C. Elson, Jeff Magnuson

And who could blame her with such a romantic leading man? Riverwalk newcomer Lewis C. Elson brought great energy to the stage as the oftentimes confused but most sincere Shep Henderson.

Aunt Queenie as played by another newcomer, Margo Guillory, was delightful and looked wonderful in the various gowns she wore.

As Gillian's warlock brother Nicky, Nick Lemmer was both adult and adolescent — you could see him changing all the traffic lights to green to ease his journey. Love the haircut too!

Jeff Magnuson was beyond charming and funny as the tipsy author Sidney Redlitch — I have to say he took focus when he was all too briefly on stage. And last but not least, kudos to Pepper who gave us a stellar performance as Pyewacket the Cat. Such round yellow eyes!



All in all, a magical evening.

Jan Lockwood



Complete details are available
at the Riverwalk website
by scanning this QR code.



Emerging Playwrights is a play-writing competition sponsored by Riverwalk Theatre. The competition is open to **high school students** in Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties.

Students in grades 9-12 are invited to write short one-act plays and submit them to the competition. Five plays will be selected for production and each author will receive a \$1000 prize.

Free Workshops on Play Writing:

- * 10am - Noon, Saturday, October 29 at the Wilson Community Center, 101 W. Cass Street, St. Johns, MI - This session will be led by Roger Rochowiak, Published Playwright
- * 10am - Noon, Saturday, November 12 at Mason High School, 1001 S. Barnes St., Mason, MI - This session will be led by Mark Sundermann, Script Writing Teacher
- * 10am - Noon, Saturday, November 26 at Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Drive, Lansing, MI - This session will be led by Janet Colson, Published Playwright

Student may register at www.riverwalktheatre.com/emerging-playwrights

A U D I T I O N S



Musical Comedy by Harvey Fierstein, Music by Cyndi Lauper • Directed by Kelly Stuitable-Clark • Musical Director: Carin McEvoy • Choreographer: Karyn Perry • Stage Manager: Rita Diebler

AUDITIONS for Lola/Simon & Angels 7pm, Wed. Nov. 2 & 10am, Sat. Nov. 5

AUDITIONS for Remaining Roles 7pm Sun/Mon, Dec. 19&20

SHOWS: March 2-5 & 9-12

Charlie Price has reluctantly inherited his father's shoe factory, which is on the verge of bankruptcy. Trying to live up to his father's legacy and save the business, he finds inspiration in the form of Lola, a fabulous entertainer in need of some sturdy stilettos. This unlikely pair finds more in common than they realized... and discover that when you change your mind, you can change your whole world.

We welcome all gender expressions, ethnicities, abilities, and body types at our auditions. Please come as your full authentic self! As we seek to honor the artistic intent of

authors Cyndi Lauper and Harvey Fierstein, Lola/Simon (both young and old) will be cast using BIPOC actors, and our Angels will be male-identifying actors in drag.

CHARLIE PRICE: A bit confused, a bit unfocused, a hero hiding under a victim's mantle - Gender: Male - Age: 25 to 35 - Vocal range: C3-B4 - Rock tenor

YOUNG CHARLIE: Charlie as a seven-year-old boy. Lost, quiet, reflective. Gender: Male - Age: 7 - Vocal range: G4-D5

LOLA/SIMON: A prize fighter's physique draped in satin. A talented drag queen with a killer voice and winning ways. BIPOC. - Gender: Male - Age: 30 to 35 - Vocal range: E3-B4. Star singer with incredible stage presence. R&B/pop voice with ability to riff

YOUNG LOLA/SIMON: Lola as a ten-year-old boy who already knows he's destined to wear high heels. BIPOC - Gender: Male - Age: 10 - Vocal range: G3-D5

NICOLA: Charlie's long-term girlfriend. Driven, uncompromising. - Gender: Female - Age: 20 to 30 - Vocal range: E3-F#5. Strong belt

LAUREN: Beautiful, strong working class girl - Gender: Female - Age: 20 to 30 - Vocal range: Bb3-F#5. Strong belt and pop influences.

DON: Lola's nemesis. Burly hyper-masculine bear of a factory worker. Sings up to D5 for the finale - Gender: Male - Age: 20 to 40 - Vocal range: A2-F4

PAT: Official office manager with a wild side. Lola's love interest. - Gender: Female - Age: 20 to 40 - Vocal range: Bb3-F#5. Strong voice with rock/pop sound

TRISH: Factory worker with a husband and kids to worry over - Gender: Female - Age: 20 to 40 - Vocal range: Bb3-D5 Strong voice with rock/pop sound

GEORGE: Factory manager keeping up traditions. Reserved. - Gender: Male - Age: 30 to 50 - Vocal range: G#2-D4

THE ANGELS: The drag performers who populate The Blue Angel Nightclub. Star dancers that sing well. These are actors that identify as male, in drag - Gender: Male - Age: 20 to 30 - Vocal range: Bari-tenor/tenor with pop/rock sound. Up to C5

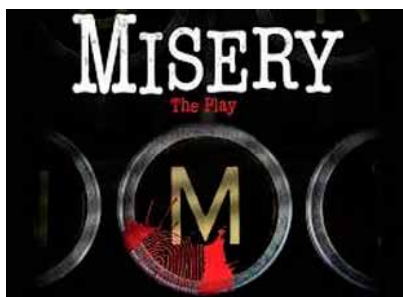
MR. PRICE: Charlie's father. - Gender: Male - Age: 50 to 80 - Vocal range: G2-F4

SIMON SR: Lola's father. An unforgiving tower of anger. - Gender: Male - Age: 30 to 50

HARRY: A contemporary of Charlie's but his opposite. Successful, self-aware and confident. - Gender: Male - Age: 25 to 40 - Vocal range: F#3-F#4

RICHARD BAILEY: Nicola's boss. An overtly attractive and successful man. - Gender: Male - Age: 30 to 50

ENSEMBLE: Hooligans, Factory Workers, Pub Patrons, Photographers, Club Patrons



Thriller by William Goldman, based on the novel by Stephen King

Directed by Ayden Soupal

Auditions: Sun. & Mon., Dec. 11-12, 7 pm - Shows: February 9-19, 2023

Car-accident-injured romance novelist is rescued/imprisoned by his "number one fan," who forces him to write as if his life depended on it. Three roles open to any race: novelist Paul, crazed fan Annie, investigating officer Buster. More info at Riverwalktheatre.com/auditions

PERUSAL SCRIPTS for all shows are available at the Riverwalk office, Tuesday - Friday, 10 am - 5:30 pm. Call 517-482-5700 to check availability: rwt@RiverwalkTheatre.com audition forms are available online at www.riverwalktheatre.com/auditions.html

MEMBERSHIP

still funds at least a quarter of show budgets plus general operating expenses to maintain our building and staff.

WE'RE COUNTING ON YOU FOR A SECURE FUTURE!

Actor — \$15-24, Ripples, voting on board members & Members Choice favorite show award.

Technician — \$25-49, Ripples, voting, program listing

Stage Manager — \$50-99, Ripples, voting, program listing, and one comp ticket

Director — \$100-249, Ripples, voting, program listing, two comp tickets

Producer — \$250-499, Ripples, voting, program listing, four comp tickets

Star — \$500-999, Ripples, voting, program listing, six comps, name on theatre seat

Angel — \$1000+, Ripples, voting, program listing, 12 comp tickets, name on a theatre seat and on the donor board in the lobby

THREE WAYS TO JOIN: go to riverwalktheatre.com

- click "more" then "get involved" to join online — OR phone Mike with your credit card info 517-482-5700 — OR just mail a check to Mike at the office, P.O. Box 12249, Lansing 48901. We're 501c3 tax deductible.

RIVERWALK

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Ripples is published by Riverwalk Theatre. Submit info to Editor Jane Zussman (jszussman@gmail.com) or Riverwalk Manager Mike Siracuse (rwt@riverwalk-theatre.com) 517-482-5700 or at RiverwalkTheatre.com



P.O. Box 12249
 Lansing MI 48901

Next to Impression 5,
 228 Museum Drive, south
 off Michigan Avenue,
 across from the
 Lansing Center

Exec Committee Report

Greetings from your new RWT President, Brian Farnham, taking over after the seven-year reign of Jeff Magnuson. Thanks, Jeff! Other officers elected are Administrative VP Kate Clark, Production VP Shannon Bowen, Secretary Elisha Smith, and returning Treasurer Michele Booher-Purosky.



I'm thrilled to announce our **\$10,000 GRIT grant from the Arts Council of Greater Lansing**. It's no secret that the arts and culture sector in Greater Lansing was hit especially hard during the pandemic shutdown. The Arts Council of Greater Lansing was keenly aware of the struggles the arts community had been facing and applied for and received a grant to create their Gaining Recovery in Transition (GRIT) Grant Program, providing a total of \$200,000 in recovery funds to Greater Lansing's arts and culture community. Riverwalk appreciates the work the Arts Council of Greater Lansing!

We also got an **\$18,500 Operations Grant from MACC (Michigan Arts & Culture Council)** a competitive grant program that provides operational

support to arts and cultural organizations whose primary mission is to provide an experience, including a learning experience, that is based in a specific arts or cultural discipline.

Other grants pending. Stay tuned!

The Arts Council rented Riverwalk on Tuesday, October 4 for the keynote speech in their **Creative Placemaking Summit**. This was a super cool opportunity to bring some new faces into RWT. I was there to give an introduction and let their attendees know about our upcoming season.

We kicked off our strategic planning process with board members and certain guests (Tom Ferris, Leroy Cupp, Joe Dickson, Liane Zimny.) Our goal is to have a five-year plan by January next. Making great progress!

The Board also approved our hosting longtime CCP member and playwright **Roger Rochowiak's staged reading of his new comedy, Social Distancing; or How to Kill a Party** on October 8. Riverwalk stalwart Tom Ferris directed a day-long process with local actors, ending with a public staged reading that was videotaped for future promotion purposes. Thanks to Roger and producer Elliott Smith for accepting donations on behalf of Riverwalk Theatre.

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contains strong language and adult subject matter

Fabulation

or the Re-Education of Undine

A Serloc comedy in Two Acts by Lynn Moltage

Directed by Rose Jangmi Cooper

OCTOBER 20-23; 27-30, 2022



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